



Ottawa Amateur Radio Club

Groundwave

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Check out our Web Page: www.oarc.net

January 2009

Once again the Canadian Ski Marathon is spooling up. This year we are looking forward to much more "normal" conditions and by that I mean snow!

The CSM depends on ham radio volunteers to provide important and timely safety and logistical communication for the benefit of the skiers. The amateur radio CSM web page (<http://radio.admin2.ca>) is up and running with 2009 information and assignments are already being filled. If you would like to volunteer this year, please email Harold VA3UNK (radio1@admin2.ca). Although he can't promise anything, assignment requests are generally first-come, first-served.

Please join us the second weekend in February (7th-8th) and help make the 36th our best year yet!

The January Talk will be Software Defined Radio and the speaker is Marcus Leech.

See you at the meeting.

Happy New Year,

Ian Jeffrey, VE3IGJ
Editor



JANUARY MEETING 7:30 pm, Wednesday, January 14th in the Honeywell Room at Ottawa City Hall

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Articles may be submitted for use in this publication provided that they portray events or activities that promote Amateur Radio. Letters and comments are also welcome. Submissions may be made by mail addressed to the Editor care of the OARC, or by e-mail to "ve3igj@rac.ca". Deadline for submissions occurs three days after the regular monthly meeting of the OARC.

Please support your local radio organisations. They support you!

Club Information

The Ottawa Amateur Radio Club Inc. is an association of Radio Amateurs devoted to the promotion of interest in Amateur Radio communications in the National Capital Area and to the advancement and achievement of club members.

Regular Meetings of the OARC Inc. are held on the second Wednesday of each month (except July and August) in the Honeywell Room which is on the second floor of Ottawa City Hall, formerly Regional Municipality of Ottawa Carleton Headquarters, on Lisgar Street. Meetings commence at approximately 19:30 hours. Further details about each meeting is elsewhere in this publication.

Executive Meetings of the OARC Inc. are normally held on the first Wednesday of each month at 19:30 hours. Contact the President to confirm the date, time and place of the next meeting.

The CAPITAL CITY FM Net meets every Monday (except some holidays) at 20:00 hours on the club repeater **VE2CRA 146.940(-)** to pass traffic and to make announcements of interest to Amateurs in the National Capital Region.

The SWAP Net is a service provided and conducted by Ed Seib, VA3ES. This feature appears on the Capital City FM Net. To list items and make inquiries, got to <http://www.ncswapnet.ca>. You may reach Ed at 613-738 8924 or e-mail him at va3es@rac.ca.

The POT-HOLE Net is a SSB/HF net sponsored by the Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club and is conducted every Sunday at 10:00 hours on **3.760 MHz**. All amateurs are welcome to check in.

The POT-LID CW Net is an informal slow-speed CW net sponsored and conducted by Ed Morgan, VE3GX, and meets every Sunday, except during July and August, at 11:00 hours on **3.620 MHz**, to promote interest in CW and CW procedures.

The QCWA CHAPTER 70 Net meets every Monday evening at 19:30 hours on repeater **VE3TEL 147.030(-)**. You do not have to be a QCWA member to participate.

The Ottawa Valley VHF/UHF SSB Net is sponsored by the West Carleton ARC. Look for it every Tuesday night (except the first Tuesday of the month) around 21:00 on **144.250**, (roll calls after net on 50.150, 432.150, 222.150, and 1296.100.) Horizontal polarization is preferred.

The Ottawa Amateur Radio Club bulletin "Groundwave" is published and distributed to club members by mail. Publication dates may vary but it is hoped that the bulletin arrives at its destination before the events listed in it have expired. The bulletin is not published for July and August when meetings do not occur. Every effort is made to provide accurate information in the bulletin, however we are all human and mistakes can be made. The OARC accepts no responsibility for any damages that may result from this. The opinions expressed in this bulletin are those of the author.

Voice (VHF) 146.94/146.34 100Hz CTCSS required
 (UHF) 443.300/448.300

VE3TVA Amateur Fast Scan Television Repeater
 Video/audio beacon & input 439.25 MHz (audio sub. 443.75)
 Video/Audio output 914 MHz (FM)

IRLP Node 2040 146.94/146.34 (VE2CRA/VE3RC)
 (Code 411 for info) (Code 204 for activity)
 (Code 88 for time)

For further information please contact the Repeater Chair.

Note: The IRLP link is not connected to ECHOLINK. Please do not try to connect using the alpha keys on your keypad. It just confuses the operator.

Note: The IRLP link is disabled during the Capital City Net each Monday. It is disabled from 2000 to 2145 Mondays except for May to August when the link is disabled from 2000 to 2020.

VE3TEN

Tuning in the beacon so that it makes sense requires you tune to **28.175** on CW and read the tone that is there . The spaces between the elements are the higher tone. If that doesn't work, tune to **28.175.28** on lower sideband for better results.



December Minutes

Meeting commenced at 1930 hrs.

Visitors:

Margret Tidman (YL de VA3DGN), Helen, (Chris' Friend), Verna (VE3ASM) and Sidney (VE3GVI) Moorcroft.

Announcements:

Sidney, VE3GVI, reminded us of the Christmas Day net on VE3TWO.

Microprocessor Project: David Conn

David presented three possible streams, depending on the interest shown for them.

(I) PICAXE Group 1 (6 Weeks)-- For the newcomers to PICAXE, this project will be an introduction to inexpensive microprocessors with a small iambic keyer as the goal.

(II) PICAXE Group 2-- (7 Weeks) A continuation of last year's work, exploring interconnection with keyboards, displays, I2C devices, EEPROM, and building upon the programming of the previous course.

(III) PIC Group 1-- (~7 Weeks) A new stream, using the MicroChip PIC-Kit2. This is the most flexible of the PIC devices, with a large amount of free software (1000's of programs related to amateur radio). Very fast and flexible, the PIC is already in use by local amateurs in various pursuits.

Each project's hardware cost will be about \$75 depending on various factors at the time of purchase. At the January OARC meeting there will be a sign-up sheet for the classes. At that time a \$30 deposit will be required for the hardware so that the project leaders can purchase the kits in bulk to get the best price. Spare kits from last year's project may be available at the January meeting.

WCARC Beacons: Doug Leach

Doug (VE3XK) of the West Carleton Amateur Radio Club operates several beacons which are useful for testing equipment, aiming antennas, and propagation

Dates to Remember

2009

- Feb. 7, 8 Canada Ski Marathon
- Apr. 8 Homebrew Night
- Jun. 10 OARC AGM and Elections
- Jun. 27, 28 Field Day
- Jul. 1 RAC Canada Day Contest
- Sep. 12 Hamfest
- Sep. 30 Membership Renewal Deadline
- Nov. 4 Joe Norton Award Subm. Due
- Dec. 19 RAC Winter Contest

analysis. For more information visit the WCARC website at

[<http://www.wcarc.on.ca/beacons.html>](http://www.wcarc.on.ca/beacons.html)

- 6m: VE3WCC-50.009MHz CW
- 2m: VE3WCC-144.297MHz CW
- 1.25m: VE3WCC-222.063MHz CW
- 70cm: VE3WCC-432.358MHz CW
- 33cm: VE3WCC-903.365MHz CW

RAC Winter Contest: Dave Green
Dave (VE3TLY) asked for operators to operate from home during the RAC Winter Contest to cover currently unallocated hours. The club and its members have the privilege of operating under the call VE3RAC for the contest.

Hamfest: Ed Sich

Ed (VE3WGO) has been negotiating with the city of Ottawa for the Carp fairgrounds, and it appears that there is a conflict which will require us to change the date of the Hamfest from our traditional Labour Day Weekend (Saturday), to the following Saturday, (12 Sept 2009). Please stay tuned as more details will follow.

Trivia Night:

The December meeting is the night of our Trivia Contest, with "Net Control" hosted by none other than our own, inimitable, Richard Hagemeyer (VE3RGM, VE3EMH, VE3CTD, VA3UNW, VE3U NW). At the outset Richard presented us with a number of "rules", and a caveat the he could elect to change the rules at any time. This led to

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mk's Words

That was a quick month. Isn't this is the time of year when I hunker down and wait for winter to come and go? So where's the time for hunkering? It started with a little antenna work for someone who NEEDED to get back on 40/80. Just as antennas that go up in sleet storms work better than those that go up in balmy July days, it turns out that antennas that are put up for someone else work better than the same antenna installed at your own QTH. I don't know why, but it seems to be so. Anybody care to put up an antenna for me?

Next was the "Rally of the Tall Pines" up around Bancroft. Typically this event brings out almost as many hams as the ski marathon. The difference is that most of them are rally enthusiasts first and hams second. It makes operating a bit different from the usual public service event. This time no volunteers destroyed their cars. Unlike previous recent years, there were a few medical incidents, but everyone was released from hospital in short order. If nothing else, it's never boring.

Just to round out the list there was an EMRG / Ottawa ARES meeting and a work session, yet another Basic exam, a few days at Collegeville and another shot at world domination of the ARRL 160m CW contest. One never knows how the score stacks up against everyone else, but we DID manage to work the elusive Manitoba. With over a thousand QSOs and over 80 ARRL sections and countries in the log we have a shot. Not bad for a band that those not "in the know" pretty much write off as useless.

Down time doesn't seem to be on the calendar any more.

Trivia night was another terrific funfest, although now I think I shouldn't be eligible for questions that are straight from the exam question bank. (By the way, the answers to the questions last month's column seem to have disappeared in the editing process. I'll try again at the end of this month's column.) Now would be a good time to recognize the work that VE3Ytz has done through the year to ensure the line up at the monthly

meeting is always first rate. -Thanks. As Dave and Dave mentioned at that meeting, January is the deadline for the 2009 version of the OARC project. Give it some thought. Don't hesitate to give the Daves a call if you need more info.

Coming up is another Basic exam, another 160m contest, the RAC Canada Winter Contest (and maybe a return to the Diefenbunker). Then there is always another session at Collegeville. Then of course the Canadian Ski Marathon is coming up. Get ready for a tap on the shoulder from Harold, VA3UNK. This year will be number 21 for me, and I'm not the longest serving ham in the crew. More about the CSM next month.

I don't know what (if anything, beyond random clumping) is behind the recent run of people getting their amateur licence, but it is sure nice to see. Welcome to those of you who are new to the game. I expect that once you dip your toe in, you will have a ton of questions. Fire away. I'd say "don't be shy", but I know how well that works. Anyway, just remember than we were all there once. The old timers among us are often still a little baffled by some of the newer digital modes.

Speaking of questions, and the answers, here are the answers to the questions from last month's column.

The DT23 is a VHF transceiver.

71.

6360.

Now, see if you can put up any sort of antenna in that Christmas tree.

.. 73 mk
VE3FFK

WCARC VHF/UHF Beacons

The WCARC VHF/UHF weak signal beacons are now operational into the nested half-wave stacks of KU4AB horizontal omni antennas at 25 ft as of 14:30 UTC Friday. The location on my tower at FN15wg is temporary and we hope to move the setup well away from active local VHF/UHF amateurs next summer.

Look for the beacon "VE3WCC FN15wg" CW identification on 903.356 MHz, 432.358 MHz, 222.063 MHz, 144.297 MHz and 50.009 MHz. All of those frequencies were selected because they were on clear 1 KHz allocations in the beacon sub-bands. That said, there is an annoying carrier just above the 6m beacon, which is not always present. As amateur radio is supposed to be exclusive on 6m it should not be there without identifying in accordance with amateur radio rules. I don't know where it is coming from and would welcome anybody giving me a clue to its direction. It seems like southwest from here.

The stacked antennas should launch most of the power at an elevation angle of 20-30 degrees above the horizon, whereas the original single KU4ABs radiated a lot of energy straight up. That means some of you locals may not receive the beacons at the same signal strength as before we changed to stacked antennas. I will be very interested in any signal reports.

Spread the word in your VHF/UHF contacts as we need reception reports from near and far. Further information at <http://www.wcarc.on.ca/beacons.html>

Vy 73

Doug Leach - VE3XK
WCARC Beacon Committee Chair

North-East Regional Director's Report

The monthly meeting of the Regional Directors was held on November 25, starting at 2330Z.

One of the issues brought up at the meeting was much of the information on the Club Pages at the RAC website is old and obsolete. I would appreciate if you can check out the information for clubs in your area. If you notice any abnormalities please let me know.



Thanks to an enormous amount of work by Geoff Smith, VA3GS the 4th edition of the RAC Operating manual is now available from Radio Supply stores across Canada. We will not be selling them from RAC HQ.

Industry Canada has moved the Amateur Radio Service Center to Sault Ste. Marie effective immediately. It's nice to see the ARSC moved to the North East Ontario Region. This is the call sign issuing office only and all policy decisions will still be made in Ottawa.

On another good news front, here is some comforting numbers from Jim VE2VE, VP Technical Services who maintains a data base on the number on Amateurs in Canada. On June 1, 2008 there were 56656 Amateurs in Canada, and as of December 1 there were 57063 Amateurs. That is an increase of 380. In North / East Ontario we have 18 new Hams. While we are not beating them away, it is a trend in the right direction and throws cold water on the death of Amateur Radio.

As emissaries of RAC I would encourage you to mention at your club meetings that membership in RAC benefits all Amateurs in Canada. We still need these new hams to join RAC.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all the most calm and peaceful wishes of this season. I hope you and your family get to enjoy some time together. And a new radio under the tree wouldn't hurt.....

And as Dickens Tiny Tim would say...."God bless us each and every one". If you have any questions or concerns please email me at ve3xt@rac.ca.

73, Bill VE3XT, North East Ontario Regional Director



EMRG—Ottawa ARES

Skills and Equipment Required for Emergency Communications Volunteers

Quite often when I'm talking with an Amateur that I think would be a great asset for EMRG, they point out that they have nothing to offer. After a bit more talking it becomes clear that they do have a great deal to offer, they just misunderstand what is required. The reasons most often given for this perceived lack of value are; a lack of operating experience, not being comfortable in a fast paced radio situation, a lack of equipment, or a lack of technical skills.

To be a useful EMRG volunteer, able to provide an effective emergency communications solution in the community, there are really only 2 requirements; an Amateur radio license, and a willingness to help. All the perceived deficiencies people think about are non issues, while the various everyday skills each person brings are what really make EMRG succeed.

EMRG is a volunteer organization and like all organizations there are many things that need to get done, such as planning, training, membership records, web page updates, building things, organizing events and even taking out the trash. To be an effective and healthy organization requires a lot of people with different skills and interests. The skills you use everyday at work and home are required and useful in EMRG.

Some people just aren't comfortable talking on the radio, at least not when passing messages. EMRG exercises and training can help people gain more confidence and there are jobs to do in an emergency that do not require talking on the radio or at least not very often. The pace of radio communications varies with the location. Net control is a busy position, so someone with the skills and experience is important. Many contesters are familiar with this fast pace. Other locations such as the Red Cross headquarters will be fairly busy, since much of the traffic will be destined for that location. Still other locations such as a shelter only require local traffic, so the pace is much slower.

If you really don't want to talk on a radio in an emer-

gency you can chose not to. There are plenty of ways to put your effort into making sure EMRG is ready when called and let others do the talking. There are people required to manage equipment being handed out from storage, delivery of equipment and planning shift changes, or liaising with incoming volunteers. There are plenty of things to do that don't require a lot of talking on the radio, or lots of messages to handle.

Owning a radio is definitely not an issue. There are three key sites in Ottawa that have radios permanently installed for use in an emergency, so only radio operators are required. In most locations there will be at least 2 people, but only 1 radio is required. EMRG also has a supply of radios which can be packed as kits for taking to a shelter or using in a vehicle, plus there are several EMRG members who have extra radios they will lend in an emergency. Having equipment is good, but it is not a requirement and should not stop anyone from joining EMRG.

Many Amateurs believe everyone else has strong technical skills and that this is important for Emergency Communications. In fact, there are many Amateurs who do not have strong technical skills and an emergency is not the time to be trying to wire radios together. When EMRG deploys to provide communications support in an emergency, it is with pre planned, pre package and pre tested solutions that EMRG members are familiar with. An emergency is not the time to start wiring things together adhoc in the hopes it will work. While there is some technical work to create these solutions initially and to maintain them, this can be done by a smaller number of people who do have these skills.

Some of the best EMRG members joined with just a license and willingness to help. If you thought you don't have what is required, think about it again, and feel free to ask some questions. I'm sure you have a lot to offer EMRG.

Peter Gamble – (ve3bqp@rac.ca) www.emrg.ca
EMRG – Team Leader, Ottawa ARES





(Continued from page 3)

much jovial and spirited commentary from the competitors! Many hilarious and challenging questions were presented; various homemade "noisemakers" were used to gain the attention of the Net Controller, The loudest and largest operated by Ralph (VE3BBM).

After more than 150 questions, the victors emerged as Team "BOB": Mike (VE3FFK), Glen (VE3XRA), and Robert Montreuil (studying for ticket). Gift certificates for Lee Valley tools and Tim Horton's were presented to the top two teams.

\$19.50 was won in the fifty/fifty draw by VE3UNW. The meeting was ended at 21:15 as the coffee urn started to pour.

RAC Bulletins

The International Year of Astronomy special prefix call sign use starts January 1 0h UTC and ends Feb 27 23:59 UTC.

All Canadian Amateurs are encouraged to use it to commemorate Galileo Galilei's first look through an optical instrument towards the heavens. The Special Prefix are VE changes to CG, VA changes to CF, VO changes to CH, and VY changes to CI .

The official kickoff date for IYA is January 10th and on that date many astronomy clubs across Canada and around the world will be participating in local astronomical activities. Displays at Shopping Malls, talks in Public Libraries, star parties for the public will be happening. I am also encouraging those amateur Radio operators who are affiliated with the RASC (Royal Astronomical Society of Canada) that might have local IRLP access to visit node 9005 the Vancouver Reflector on January 10th to join in the across Canada IYA Net.

To find out more about this unique ham radio Special prefix and related projects visit <http://www.hamiya2009.info>

Malcolm Scrimger, VE7DAO



The Radio Amateurs of Canada Field Services Organization has created an ARES-Alert system for Radio Amateurs who are part of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service or other Canadian Emcomm unit. The email-based system is provided as a means to alert Radio Amateurs of emergencies or disasters, or threat of same, where Amateur Emcomm services are or may be required. It will also serve to advise stations of the need to avoid or monitor frequencies that are being used in an emergency event anywhere in the world. Any Canadian Radio Amateur may register to be added to the email list. Full name, call sign and QTH are required. This is not a "chat" reflector and only national officials of the RAC Field Services Organization will have authority to initiate messages. To be added to the list, or for further information, please see <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ARES-Alert/> ."

Bob Cooke VE3BDB
RAC Vice President Field Services

The recently introduced RAC ARES Operations Training Manual has met with widespread approval from the Amateur Radio community and is even being requested by Emcomm groups in other countries. Plans are that it will be printed in a handy and portable hard copy form early in 2009. The editor, RAC National Training Coordinator David Drinnan, VE9FK, is making further updates for inclusion in the manual.

Once published, the new training resource will be offered for sale on the RAC On-Line Store. It will continue to be available for downloading, free of charge, at <http://www.rac.ca/fieldorg/RACARESTrainingManual.htm> .

Bob Cooke VE3BDB
RAC Vice President for Field Services

Membership Application/Renewal
Ottawa Amateur Radio Club Inc., Box 8873, Ottawa, Ontario K1G 3J2

- Single (\$25, \$20 after Feb 1)
- Family (\$30)
- Junior (\$15, under 18 years of age)
- New Ham (Free if licensed in current Membership year)
- Emailed *Groundwave* Mailed *Groundwave* (add \$5.00)



Please Note: Membership year is September 1 to August 31

Family Name: _____ First Name/Initials: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov: _____ Post Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-mail address: _____ (For *Groundwave* mailing)

Callsign(s): _____

Qualifications: Basic Advanced Morse Code
Year Licensed: _____ RAC Member? Yes

Other Family Members

Name: _____ Callsign(s): _____

Qualifications: Basic Advanced Morse Code
Year Licensed: _____ RAC Member? Yes

Interests: _____

Comments/Suggestions: _____

All members who are in good standing on or before the December General Meeting will be eligible for a free one-time name badge. Members who wish a second or replacement badge may purchase one at the Club Price (approx \$7.50 plus tax). Ordered badges will be available in January.

OARC NAME TAG Yes Second or Replacement Yes

ORDER DETAILS - As to appear on badge:

First Name _____ Call Sign _____