

Rec'd Feb 5/90



THE RAMBLER

Volume 33, Number 2 -- February, 1990

THE WISE OWL GOES TO WAR

Henry Greenway, VE3OMU

Did you know that OVMRC supports a Military Net on its repeater, VE3TWO? Every Tuesday evening at 2000 hrs local time, the frequency 147.30/7.90 MHz reverberates with the sounds of war. This is essentially a war of words as the veterans of World War II and the Korean Conflict (I doubt if there are any WWI amateurs on the Net) gather to recall experiences and exchange tall tales of the happenings in these two "adventures."

There has been many a good tale told on this net. Serge, VE3JRG (now a silent key) narrated some of his experiences in the Far East and of his escape just before the fall of Hong Kong. Frank, VE3MSC, the long-time net controller of the Military Net, told stories of his experiences in the Royal Canadian Air Force Telecommunications Branch.

Peter, VE3JLE, who was a teenager in Belgium during WWII, told of witnessing some of the action during the Battle of the Scheldt. The First Canadian Army, along with British and Polish armoured troops cleared the Germans out of the area of the Turnhout Canal. Some of his most vivid memories include a fighter-bomber attack and a tank battle in the area of the Marxplas, near his family home. These made interesting narratives, especially from an eyewitness.

There have been many technical papers presented as well. Sid Shear,



VE3BCL (now a silent key), who maintained the clocks at the Dominion Observatory and worked at CHU Canada, presented an interesting

paper on time via radio broadcast. This was followed by a paper by Brian, VE3MJD on The History of the Great Lakes and Pollution of the Lakes. Herb, VE3DWA, who is a physician, presented papers on medical subjects of topical interest.

Fred, VE2DNQ, related tales of service in the merchant marine during WWII. Fred has an Eskimo name "NAHILECTIGALHKITUK", which he acquired from the Eskimos at Chesterfield Inles. A native watched him hunched over his radio wearing his glasses and a large set of ear-phones. He laughed and kept repeating "nahilectigalhkituk, nahilectigalhkituk." Fred asked the local priest what the Eskimo was saying. He was told that this meant, "man with big ears and four eyes who listens." The name stuck for the duration of his stay in the north.

Chuck, VE3PAP along with George, VE3CAO and Bob, VE3BXG and Vance, VE3CAO, Ray, VE3RT and Paul, VE3NPD reminisced about their years in the Air Force during and following the War. Chuck, VE3PAP always brings us the CARF Newsbulletin for the week.

Some papers have resulted in heated discussion. One in particular, given by this writer on "The Universe and UFOs" resulted in a rebuttal by Arn, VE3SD 'SUGAR DOG' on UFOs. This was the his last contribution to the net before become a silent key. Fred, VE3BAJ for years has reported in and given us news of interest to Hams. Many others, too numerous to mention, have popped in from time to time and made a contribution to the topic under discussion. You just never know what you might hear discussed on this net.

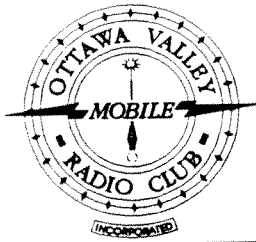
Well, where did it all get started? It seems that the Military Net got its start on VE3URC, the CFB Ottawa

Amateur Radio Club Repeater at Uplands. In a story confirmed by Jerry VE3CDS, Bob, VE3KLG, George, VE3XS and Ed, VE3GX, the Net had a bugle-blowing introduction that caused more than a ripple over the airways. This incident was described by Frank, VE3MSC in his best Sylvester the Cat imitation as "dith-picable." The perpetrator, whose name shall never be revealed, was informed that despite his lack of talent, the sounds were considered musical and not appropriate to amateur transmissions. Naval watch bells were used for a time, but it was never quite clear whether it was four bells in the port watch, three bells in the dog watch or too much port in the wristwatch. Bob, VE3NJI or Art, VE3ZS might have explained this mystery, but the have both become silent keys and the mystery remains.

There are, no doubt, many more interesting anecdotes of the early history of the Military Net. Unfortunately, the custodians of the Net's records were not accessible at the time of this writing. Serge, VE3JRG is no longer with us and Frank, VE3MSC, has been in ill-health and his records were not available. Frank is expected to be back on the Net soon, so why not check in and ask him yourself. You don't have



to be military or even ex-military to check in. Any amateur is welcome. See you next Tuesday at 2000 hrs on 147.30 MHz. Wear your helmet and flak jacket!



THE RAMBLER

VOLUME 33 No.2 - FEBRUARY 1990

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NEXT MEETING OF THE OVMRC

15 February, 1990

Museum of Science and
Technology Auditorium

1930 hours

ANNUAL DINNER Saturday, 24 February

Bring the XYL or OM
and join the group for
super social evening!

Call Jeff, Wilson, VE3RCI
for reservations.

COMING CLUB EVENTS

OVMRC Dinner
Sat. 24 Feb.

Flea Market - 21 April

Field Day - 23-24 June

GUEST SPEAKERS and PROGRAMMES

15 Feb Meeting
History of Telecommunica-
tions in Canada

15 March Meeting
Canadian Forces
Auxiliary Radio System
CFARS
Al Beveridge, VE3SKA

April Meeting
Home Brew/Show and Tell

NEED A RIDE TO THE MEETING?

Call one of the members of
the executive to arrange a lift.
**SEE YOU AT THE
MEETING!**

RAMBLER CIRCULATION COMMITTEE

Pat Brewer, VE3KJQ

Fred Haire, VE3NJF

Eric Still, VE3OTT

AMATEUR RADIO NETS

POT HOLE NET - Sundays 1000 hrs. 3.760 MHz (includes Swap Net

SWAP NET - (Ed Morgan, VE3GX regular feature of Pot Hole Net and Capital City FM
Net. Call Ed 733-1721 for listings and queries.

POT LID NET - Sundays 1100 hrs(except Jul & Aug) 3.620 MHz slow-speed CW.

CAPITAL CITY FM NET - Mondays 2000 hrs 146.94 MHz. Swap Net featured.

PACKET RADIO VOICE NET - Mondays 2040 hrs 146.94 MHz follows Capital City FM Net.

MILITARY NET - Tuesdays 2000 hrs 147.30 MHz.

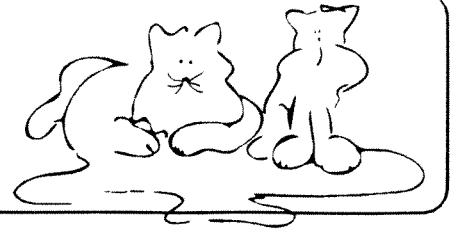
CUMBERLAND EMERGENCY NET - Wednesdays 1930 hrs, 147.03 MHz

THE WISE OWL NET - Fridays 2000 hrs. 147.30 MHz

OVMRC CODE PHONE - 825-0786 24-hr code practice..

STRAYS

Doug Carswell, VE3ATY



The January meeting addressed two interesting topics. One dealt with the OVMRC merging with the Ottawa Amateur Radio Club to form a combined group thereby making better use of our resources - as suggested, by many for CRRL and CARF. The second dealt with microwave communications in the 3 cm region - a band shared, unwittingly by amateurs with police speed radar.

The discussion about joining forces with the other club was a soul search in a limited sort of way. One of my misconceptions was that the most members of our club were also members of the OARC. Pat Brewer, our Membership Chairman, pointed out that only twenty of our Club members were also members of OARC. That changed my view on that one. (Incidentally it was pointed out by Bob, VE3PUE that the Pioneer Club and OVMRC are of equal size and, for the

benefit of the confused lot us, there are more than two clubs in Ottawa).

The success of last years field day clearly demonstrated that by pooling our resources with the OARC, we had a much better field day. (I think, to some extent, we have to keep in mind that the "ball-of-fire" VE3RCI was one of the prime movers behind last year's event.) It follows that the pooling of resources is the primary advantage of merging. However the benefits seemed to stop just about there. Some said that the night we met on was more convenient to them; others said they liked the more informal atmosphere found at our club; some attributed their preference to our club because it was the one that got them started.

Bob Campbell suggested that an association of presidents in the Ottawa Valley could be formed that would meet once or twice a year to discuss common requirements and the shar-

ing of resources. I will pursue Bob's idea over the next while.

Out of all the discussion, I felt the message was 'lets keep the OVMRC running'. It clearly serves the needs of its membership.

Spoke to Merv, VE3CV, the man who has kept the Pot Hoie Net running for many years. We discussed the Net's future. He expressed the desire that the Club take a more active role in keeping the Net on the air. So we are on the hunt for net controllers. Anybody wishing to work as a net controller, please contact me. I think we owe Merv a vote of thanks for the support he has given to the Club as well as the Net by acting as coordinator for over 12 years. Merv, I can assure you we will do what's necessary to keep the Net running.

We will be seeing a film at our next meeting. It is reported to describe the history of radio in Canada and reputed to be "one not to miss." Some of you

CLUB NAME TAGS - A MOTION

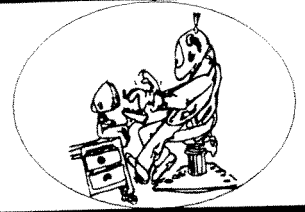
Actual size sample of proposed name tags.

It has been moved by Pat Brewer, VE3KJQ and seconded by Lee Demone, VE3OWD, that the Club purchase name tags for those members who register for one and pick it up at a monthly meeting. The cost of the initial purchase is not to exceed three hundred dollars (\$300.00). Should the demand exceed this amount, a supplementary motion will be presented at a future meeting.

VE3ATY
DOUG
OTTAWA VALLEY
MOBILE RADIO CLUB

THE EDITOR'S CORNER

Chas. King, VE3PDK



THE MORE THE MERRIER

Jim Dean, VE7ZX and Bren Adams, VE6BYG present diametrically opposing views in the January issue of *The Canadian Amateur* on how to cope with flood of new amateurs that will result from "lowered" amateur licensing standards and the anticipated "poor (disgusting) operating procedures they have been accustomed to using on GRS/CB."

Jim proposes "formulating plans ... to deal with individuals causing problems." while Bren proposes a positive approach of assimilating the new amateurs into the "clan".

Lashing out or finding ways to "deal with individuals" may be a tempting approach, but let's consider the possible reactions. If a segment of the hobby is criticized or ostracized for their behaviour on the air, they will become polarized and form a "special interest group" to occupy one or another of the frequencies (which they have a right to do) and continue to communicate with each other in the way in which they feel comfortable. Since they will be out of the mainstream of the hobby, they will not have bonds with other amateurs or clubs. They are not likely to advance nor are they likely to contribute to the hobby nor to change their ways.

Bren's approach, that is to assimilate the new amateurs into the "clan",

is what most clubs are doing today. They meet and greet new or prospective amateurs, show them what a friendly group amateurs are, on the whole, and invite them to become a part of the family. I think Bren is saying "let's make a point of doing it better."

The majority of amateurs will, no doubt, support this positive strategy. The reasons for this view are that

**Doom and gloom
predicted as
the floodgates are
opened,
admitting hordes of
GRS/CB'ers
to amateur radio**

amateurs, by and large, are intelligent people who can see the benefits of a larger cohesive amateur community. They will welcome new-comers much as they, themselves were welcomed when they came into the hobby. Making new amateurs feel at home and part of the family will give the best chance of modifying behaviour on the air to conform to accepted norms. New amateurs will not want to jeopardize their status in this friendly, helpful group into which they have been so warmly accepted.

Expanding on Bren's suggestions, we should attempt to "catch" the prospective amateurs before they are licensed, get them on a formal course or volunteer to act as a mentor to guide them through the process. We should view any breach of on-the-air etiquette with sympathetic understanding -- as an honest mistake. Invite the "offender" to come to a club meeting or invite him or her to visit your shack. Once you are able to make eye-to-eye contact, turn on your best powers of persuasion to get them involved in other amateur activities where they can see how it's done properly. Those few who wont conform will soon find that they have no one to talk to and will, most likely, go back to a system in which they are comfortable with others of the same bent.

Assimilating the new amateur into the hobby is the best way to take advantage of this opportunity to increase the ranks of productive amateurs, who may make significant contributions to the hobby. Their numbers alone may help save the frequencies for use by amateurs for many years to come. If we insist on being purists and elitist, we may have fewer opportunities to show how pure and elite we are as the frequencies are handed over to commercial interests

USE THEM OR LOSE THEM!.

FOR SALE

2-METER HANDIE - Yaesu 207R complete with rubber duckie, spare battery, case, charger, car-lighter adapter, scanner module and manual. Asking \$175 or best offer.

Pat Brewer, VE3KJQ - 825-8721.

Your Ad
FOR SALE
WANT TO TRADE
WANT TO BUY
NEED INFORMATION ON
Amateur Radio, Antennas, Computer Equipment
A free service to Club Members.

**THE CASE OF
THE HUMMING ANTENNA**

George Dew, VE2OWW

The story, which I am about to tell, began over a year ago. Most people who have heard me on two meters in that time have heard at least part of it. I can now tell you all how it ends.

Early last fall, while chatting on VE3TWO on the way to work, I began to get complaints of an objectionable hum on my signal. Various people, depending I suppose on their ethnic backgrounds, described it as sounding like either bagpipes or saxophones. Sometimes it was there, sometimes it wasn't, and it didn't seem to be related to anything in particular.

We quickly ruled out the possibility of ignition noise - the tone was a constant frequency. I began to suspect that it was related to the cigarette lighter power supply for my handheld, but didn't get much further until a chance breakthrough one winter morning.

A solid clue: Dave reported that the hum had suddenly stopped in the middle of my transmission. I reviewed what I had been doing, and realized

that while talking I had parked the car and turned off the headlights. (Try it sometime with a handheld mike and a manual shift - it's an experience!) We now had two factors to contend with - the hum only occurred when I was using the in-car power supply AND had the headlights on. That also explained why it had gradually become more regular: as the season progressed I did more of my driving in the dark.

This turned into a dead end. I couldn't find anything specifically wrong with the power supply, didn't have any more bright ideas, and gradually quit worrying about the noise. In any case, it bothered other people more than it bothered me.

As it began to get dark this fall, my hum again became a regular topic of conversation. A few people suggested the possibility of a ground loop through the antenna - easily checked by switching to the rubber duck. Confirmed: the hum was only there when I used the in-car power supply AND had the headlights on AND was using the trunk lip mount antenna.

Now, assuming that it was indeed a grounding problem, I had to determine whether the base of the antenna should be well grounded or well isolated. Opinion was divided on the subject. Rather than applying any great

theoretical evaluation, I followed a simple train of thought:

1. If it needs to be grounded, how does a mag-mount work?

2. If the problem is caused by DC flowing in the coax shield, isolating one end of the shield should stop it.

3. For experimental purposes it's probably easier to isolate the antenna than to solidly ground it, so I'll try that first.

The results are in. My antenna is now isolated from the body of the car and the hum is gone. Incidentally, I checked the original mounting position and found that the antenna had been well grounded - I measured about 1 ohm between it and a known ground point on the car. Presumably there was a difference in potential between that point and the antenna connector on the radio, and the resulting current flow in the coax shield was causing the hum.

Why didn't I suspect the antenna earlier? I had installed it in the summer, and had used it for several months before the problem surfaced, and just didn't make the connection.

What do the headlights have to do with it? I have no idea. Do you?

CLASSIFIED ADS

Recalling the offer made in the January Rambler to advertise radio items for sale etc., it may be appropriate to warn users of this service that the editor will not accept responsibility for errors in printing and the consequences of such errors. The following case illustrates the possibilities:

Mr. Jones, a bachelor amateur with a live-in housekeeper, had a tower winch he wanted to sell, so he placed an ad in his Club newsletter.

The ad appeared as follows:

FOR SALE. Slightly used wench - cheap for a quick sale.

He complained bitterly about the embarrassment to his housekeeper and about the insulting phone calls he had

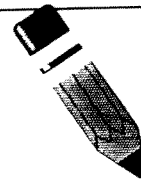
received, so the editor agreed to print an apology, which went as follows:

We regret the embarrassment caused to Mr. Jones over the error made in his ad of last month for the sale of a winch. The incorrect word wench was not in any way meant to refer to his housekeeper who is loving with him.

A third and final ad appeared a month later, which read:
**THE WINCH IS NOT FOR SALE!
MY HOUSEKEEPER HAS LEFT MY EMPLOY!
I AM OFF THE AIR PERMANENTLY AND
I HAVE AN UNLISTED PHONE NUMBER!
I WILL NOT BE USING THE ADS SERVICES OF THIS
PAPER EVER AGAIN!**

CAVEAT EMPTOR! (let the buyer beware) Ed.

MINUTES OF OVMRC GENERAL MEETING 18 JANUARY, 1990



Lee Demone, VE3OWD -- Secretary

1. President Doug, VE3ATY, opened the meeting, held in the Auditorium of the Museum of Science and Technology, at 1935 hrs, welcoming approximately 50 members and visitors.

2. President Doug recognized the following visitors:

VE3ROD Rod Pike
VE3RDZ (VE2BAQ) Ed Sieb
Bill Janes
Jacques Perras
Steve Nickerson

OLD BUSINESS

3. President Doug enquired if there were any errors or omissions in the minutes of the last meeting as published in *THE RAMBLER*. One typo concerning the date of the upcoming June Field Day was noted for correction. Moved by Chuck, VE3PAP, and seconded by Chris, VE3PMR, that the minutes be accepted with the noted correction.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS REPORTS

4. CRRL Director Ray Perrin, VE3FN, reported that:

a. preparatory work for the upcoming WARC Meeting was underway with CRRL being represented by himself, VE3CDF and VE3NR. He also noted the establishment of Defence of Amateur Radio Fund to help underwrite the costs of this work and CRRL's participation on behalf of all amateurs;

b. merger talks are in progress between CRRL and CARF. There will be no premature announcements, and any press releases will be issued jointly by CRRL and CARF; and

c. Dave, VE3GSA, will report on CRRL matters in the future when he is not available.

5. CARF Director Dan Holmes, VE3EBI, reported that:

a. Amateur Radio has been asked to support a joint Canada-USSR fitness program called "FIT TREK 1990", specifically to provide comms for recording the physical activity taking

place in the paired cities of both countries. The required DOC-Ministry of Posts and Electric Comms (USSR) agreements are being negotiated. Ottawa (NCR) is paired with the Soviet city of Neberezhnie Chelny. Interested amateurs in the NCR should contact Therese St. Onge, Tel - 613-239-5209 and F - 613-239-5333;

b. amateur station licensing fees for new and renewed station licences will not be increased for 1990/1991; (Sec Note: this was questioned by a member who heard the fees would increase by \$2);

c. effective 1 Jan 90 Bruce Balla, VE2QO, replace Tom Atkins, VE3CDM, as President of the CRRL. (Tom is now Secretary of Region 2 IARU);

d. St. Catherines Hamfest will be held on Sat, 3 Feb 90, at 124 Bunting Road;

e. TCA and CARF News Service will publish only official press releases as authorized by the CARF/CRRL merger committee;

f. the "Abegweit" QSL cards issued by the PEI Dept of Tourism are incorrect: they should read that "CONTACTS MADE AFTER 1 JANUARY 1960 are valid."

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

6. Membership Pat, VE3KJQ, noted that December *RAMBLER*s were mailed to members who had not renewed. Several renewals resulted, however that was to be the last mailing of "freebie" *RAMBLER*s to lapsed members.

7. Past President Alan, VE3LNH, noted the difficulties that Rambler Editor Chuck, VE3PDK, had experienced in switching over to new procedures and printing technology. Having been involved in the process, he felt that "kudos" should go to Chuck for his hard work which has resulted in the "new look" *RAMBLER*. All present expressed their agreement. Alan also noted the receipt of a letter of thanks from the Museum for the donation of "old radio gear", observing

that one person's "old junk" may be another's prized artifact.

8. Public Relations Jeff, VE3RCI, noted that he would be ramrodding the Club's Amateur Radio Exhibit (ARE) Committee which will assist the Museum with its Comms Exhibit and would be calling on the assistance of last year's members and other Club members and that the Club's annual Flea Market would be held on 21 April at Canterbury High School. He also asked for members' views on holding an annual banquet this winter; the response was favourable with February being the most popular time. Jeff also requested that any members present who had not yet completed his general interest questionnaire, pick one up and do so this evening.

9. Tech Advisor Ed, VE3VLF, reported that the Club's dipole antenna at the Museum would be back in service this weekend or next. (Now US - high SWR)

10. President Doug made the important announcement that his XYL had just passed the CW test after much perseverance. (Congrats to Sue from all present).

11. President Doug asked Alan, VE3LNH, to assist a member who was experiencing a tech problem with his APPLE computer.

12. President Doug invited membership discussion on the merits of having several Amateur Radio Clubs in the Ottawa area as now exists or merging into one large one. The ensuing discussion was wide ranging with many members voicing considered opinions. Among the main points made were: multiple area clubs result in duplication of services, facilities, guests speakers, dilution of available ham community talent; offer different philosophies and points of view and attract people with different interests; offer more opportunities for eyeball QSOs and choices of location and time of meetings. A single large club might

Continued...../7

STRANGER THAN FICTION
or how to make the END the MEANS
Chas. King, VE3PDK

We all know how adaptable, versatile and ingenious amateurs can be in turning any available materials, even their own bodies, to a radio use. Some have been known to (perhaps unwittingly) turn their fingers into a conductor (or is that a resistor), and we know the body can act as a capacitor. Well, Jerry, VE3CDS, our Vice-President, carried these qualities to their extreme at a recent class of the Amateur Radio Course.



Al, VE3SKA, was preparing a demonstration of parallel transmission lines and had a pair of wires stretched between two points in the classroom. One end was well secured to a heavy desk, but the other was precariously wedged into the back of a light-weight chair. The chair was obviously not heavy enough to maintain the tension needed to keep the two wires straight and parallel.

Out distinguished VP stepped in (or rather sat in) with an immediate solution, exclaiming, "I'll be the dummy load!"

Well, as it turned out, he was over-qualified and was replaced by a six-foot table and a "C" clamp.

Minutes Continued from page 6

bring more strength through numbers, talent and energy; might result in fewer meetings of higher quality. In general comments note was made of the successful joint effort of OVMRC/OARC members last Field Day; that some members have strong loyalties to specific clubs (ie, through association with the Museum or the offering of radio courses); many members belong to multiple clubs and find this very much to their liking; the diverse origins of specific clubs, ie, the "mobile" tradition of the OVMRC. Another possibility offered was the idea of an "Umbrella" organization which could serve to coordinate the activities of various clubs to avoid duplication of services, interests, a so-called "Presidents Council." Observing the diverse views on the subject, President Doug summed up and closed the discussion with no further action indicated at this time.

13. Past President Alan introduced the evening's guest speaker, Keith Ballinger, VE3IMT (ex VE2AQU, G8BBP), whose subject was amateur operations in the 10 GHz (3 cm) band. He noted that Keith has been active in VHF amateur ops both in the UK and Canada for many years and is currently the CEO of Ballinger Microwave

Canada Inc, which markets NEC microwave semiconductors.

14. Keith gave an interesting and informative presentation on the current state of amateur operations in the microwave bands with examples of the main technologies (Gunnplexer diodes), operating procedures (finding high points of ground, getting gear there, and meticulous alignment of antennas to accommodate narrow beamwidths), origins and costs (approx \$300) of entering this area of amateur ops. His discussion on microwave technology also ranged into the area of radar performance and problems as a result of numerous questions from the audience indicating a profound interest in the subject. Keith also demonstrated his portable microwave rig, complete with horn antenna, and a small radar dish antenna.

15. Vice President Gerry, VE3CDS, thanked Keith for his excellent presentation, claiming it was the first technical presentation he has understood in years because it was based on to diodes.

16. There being no further business, President Doug called for a motion to adjourn.

So moved by Gerry, VE3CDS and seconded by Chuck, VE3PDK. Meeting adjourned at 2200 hrs.

**OVMRC SURVEY
STATICS**

Jeff Wilson, VE3RCI

Here's some statistics from the OVMRC Membership survey I ran at the November meeting. If you were not surveyed, I will have forms at each meeting, so please ask me for one. If you can't make the meetings, give me a call (837-9598) and we can do it over the twisted pair. I'm also on packet if you prefer @ VE3JF.

OK, so far we have 36 respondents, 34 of them active Hams. Of these: Interests (active or wanting to be) are Packet Radio (71%), AMTOR (15%), ATV (12%), DXing (41% - so where are your reports for the DX de YOU column?); 65% are willing to serve OVMRC in some capacity - great!; 53% are members of other clubs (mostly OARC or PARC); 44% were in last year's Field Day; and 100% are on 2M FM, 85% being FM mobile at times.

As far as what HF equipment manufacturers we trust with our scarce Ham bucks:

35% own Yaesu,
35% Kenwood,
18% Icom,
6% Heathkit and
3% TenTec.

For VHF/UHF rigs we prefer Yaesu 53%, Kenwood 29%, Icom 29% and, Azden 3%.

As far as computers in the shack are concerned, 65% of respondents have them! Of these, 35% have IBM PC or clones, 9% C64, 9% Apple IIe, 6% Heath-Zenith, 3% Amiga, 3% RS Tandy. Nobody has a Mac?

This survey represents about 25% of the active OVMRC membership who come out to the meetings. I would like to get more surveys from the other members to help our executive select speakers and events that will interest the majority of our active members.

Here's your chance to provide your own two cents worth. Let's hear from you if you haven't already been heard from.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



In the December Rambler, the editor decided to "stir up the pot" with a multi-faceted editorial on the plight of the two national organizations and on the two largest of the local clubs. I too would love to see more progress on the merger of the two national organizations. One would hope that, unlike the government, we could proceed with reasonable speed toward a workable solution. There are many problems to overcome. The organizations are now based in two widely separate cities with dedicated volunteer staff based in those two cities. They have separate publishing houses and two sets of educational materials. They publish two very different national magazines. They are always separately represented to DOC. All these differences and others, point out the waste of duplication in services offered. The Americans have avoided all this waste over the years and are stronger for it. A divided national voice in these days of increased pressure on our bands is a great shame. Perhaps if we had spoken with a single voice, the restructuring of amateur radio in Canada would already have taken place. Instead, we wait. We wait for unity, we wait for change and we wait for a rebirth of our hobby in this country. Let's hope it doesn't all happen too late.

The other half of the editorial cuts much closer to home. The editor suggests that OVMRC merge with the OARC to get rid of the duplication of

services. In any argument, facts are OK if they are right, so let's correct a few. It is suggested that both clubs support VE3JW. Ideally, ALL clubs in the area would support VE3JW. We (the OVMRC) have tried several times to encourage just that, but eventually it falls to us to run the station. We are keeping it alive now and we will probably continue to do so with the help of some individuals outside of our Club. The Emergency Measures Amateur Radio Group is deliberately not affiliated with any club, so it can't be said that we support it. Our members may be members of EMARG, but it has nothing to do with our Club. The Santa Claus event at CHEO is run by the Rubber Booters and nothing to do with either club.

My final fact is that there are not a lot of "split loyalties" in the clubs. Of the 145 members of our Club, only 22 are also members of the OARC. The other 123 must see something different and special about this Club that draws them to us. A club is mostly its members. The people themselves make it what it is. I think that is healthy. That we are a general interest Club is not a valid reason to say that we should join with any other general interest club, and leave the "special interest clubs" to go it alone. I don't think that the situation is deteriorating at all. True, membership renewals have been slow this year, but seven less than last year is not bad. If you recall, it was last year that we lost both VE3JW and our meeting

place. Considering these major problems we are doing very well. We are back in our old meeting spot, the course is being held at the Museum, and the future for VE3JW is very bright.

There is nothing wrong with cooperation between clubs on events such as Field Day. I would suggest that an official link between clubs, such as a President's council, might be a good idea. The differences between clubs may be subtle, but they do exist or the membership would not be there. This Club is alive and well, and very different from the OARC. That difference is healthy for both of us.
Pat Brewer, VE3KJQ

EDITOR REPLIES

I think this question has been put to rest after the lively discussion it generated at the January meeting. I only hope that it made some of us realize what a good thing we have in the Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club and that we will be less reluctant to support one of its many activities. How many times have you heard, "a club is only as good as you make it." Well, let's get involved and make it something worth belonging to!

I stand corrected on my inadequate data and I feel a little like the bird which, having gorged itself on barnyard droppings, was sitting on the pump-handle, wondering how it would manage to fly. It took off, but gravity was over-powering and it fell into the jaws of the barnyard cat. The morale of the story is --IF YOU'RE FULL OF (barnyard droppings) DON'T FLY OFF THE HANDLE! Ed.

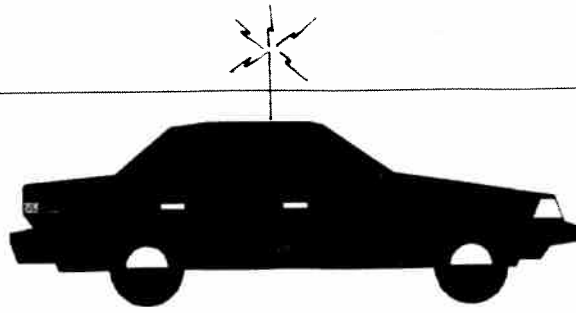
LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL HF NETS

Are there HF nets that you think might be of interest to new amateurs or even to some of the old-timers? Please note its name, frequency, hours of operation and the nature of the net for publication in a future issue of The Rambler.

COMING NEXT MONTH!

Up-date on Customs
Tariff Numbers for
Amateur Radio Gear

NEWS AND VIEWS



FROM HERE AND THERE

Pat Brewer, VE3KJQ

Here is the February round-up of news items gleaned from amateur bulletins from across Canada.

The **Halifax Amateur Radio Club** devotes its entire bulletin to a description of the Maritime Packet net. The first packet net down east was set up by VE1EI and VE1BSN, Mike Shacklock known to many in Ottawa as VE3LAR and by his present call VE1AR. The net has grown to cover from one end of Nova Scotia to the other as well as links to PEI, New Brunswick and New England. Like the Ottawa net, it is now becoming congested.

The **Ottawa Groundwave** has a good tech tip from Larsen on antennas equipped with BNC connectors. *Be sure to clean out dirt or oxidation which can collect on the connector, causing poor transmission. Aerosol contact cleaner is suggested as a cure for the problem.*

The **Teleparc** bulletin of the local **Pioneer Club** contained an interesting article on identifying "kerchunkers," -- people who transmit, briefly turning on a repeater's transmitter without identifying. The practice is illegal. Warren Schall, K9IZV has developed a system to identify the transmitter through its characteristic transmission fingerprint. He uses a memory oscilloscope and an IBM PC to analyze the

following factors of the transmitter waveform signature: initial transient waveforms; frequency calibration accuracy; frequency and amplitude of extraneous hum; audio deviation level; and absolute signal strength. By doing the same analysis of identified transmission, Schall can then link them to "kerchunk" transmissions. This might be a way to identify pagers with problems or deliberate interference on the HF bands. The full article is in the December 1989 *Ham Radio*.

In the *London ARC Bulletin*, there is a report on their well-attended December meeting. There was pizza, home-made muffins and coffee and a visit from Saint Nick to entertain the members. Saint Nick even brought presents for those in attendance.

The **Chatham-Kent Arc Clear Signals** contained the following warning: *"Watch and calculator batteries are very caustic if swallowed by infants or pets. Deaths have occurred after the thin outer covering of the battery breaks down in the stomach acids, releasing deadly chemicals. So please, when changing batteries, be sure to dispose of the used ones safely."*

The **Saskatoon ARC Green Sheet** has a map of the Saskatchewan packet network. Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw and other communities have been linked. There is also a reprint of a

DOC bulletin called *Successful Electromagnetic Compatibility*. It covers such topics as how to avoid interference problems and includes suggestions for station operation. It would be a valuable bulletin for new amateurs and useful to any amateur.

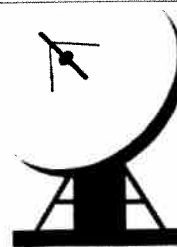
The President of the **Calgary Amateur Radio Assoc.** echoes our Editor's feelings regarding the lack of speed with which the two national organizations are merging. CARA will try to have an amateur radio station at the Calgary Stampede this year. For their assistance with the civic elections, the Club received a cheque from the City of Calgary for \$3000. Is that legal? Perhaps it is if it is considered a donation. There is a proposal before CARA for a portable two meter repeater. It would be used for public service events and emergencies and would weigh no more than 40 kilograms. The cost would be \$6000. I hope our Editor can be persuaded to reproduce the explanation of computer technology. The diagram uses a picture of a toilet to explain how a computer works. For example, the toilet paper roll is "application software" and the seat is the "user interface."

Always remember, when you see a light at the end of the tunnel, it may well be an oncoming express train!

Bob Campbell, VE3KLLK

DX DE YOU

Jeff Wilson, VE3RCI



CQ CQ CQ DX DE VE3RCI! Calling all OVMRC members. Bring me your best DX catches of the month, any mode, any band (yes, VHF and above, too!). This DX column is based on the reports that you provide to me at each monthly meeting. You can also call me at 837-9598 or send me your loggings via Packet Radio to VE3RCI @ VE3JF or VE3NAV. This column will only work if you support it. Let's hear who you've been working.

ON THE HF BANDS

From Henry, VE3OMU

Henry's been making the most of the great conditions on 10 meters. The rest of you better get active before cycle 22 fades to a pleasant memory. Look for the British Isles from 1200Z to 1800Z on CW

GM3HUN (Scotland) 28.022 MHz;
GW3WWN (Wales) 28.035;
GD4AM (Isle of Man) 28.027;
and on SSB GU4XGG (Guernsey) 28.480;
EI1DH (Ireland) 28.565.

Other 10 meter goodies on between 1550 and 1645Z were

RB4NF/RC10 (Ukraine) 28.391;
LY2DM (Lithuania) 28.464;
YL2LW (Latvia) 28.416;
EL7X (Liberia) 28.405;
9H9L (Gozo Is.) 28.540; IS0IBY (Sardinia) 28.544; and
4X6UK (Israel) 28.446.

From Me, VE3RCI

Two new countries for me this month:
HR2BDC (Honduras) Jan 21 0428Z 21.021 CW (QSL AA5ET)
____ (Africa) Jan 25 1336Z 21.017 CW (QSL F6FNU).

Not really DX, but worked my first VY prefix - VY2EA (Charlottetown, P.E.I.) Jan 16 0628Z (both insomniacs I guess) 7.003 CW.

South Africa was on during the Hunting Lions Contest - ZS6WR/L (Lions Club station) Jan 7 0415Z 14.017 CW and ZS6TLV Jan 13 1520Z 28.555 SSB.

Other 10 meter SSB catches were
C6A/N4JQQ (Bahamas) Jan 11 2205Z 28.511;
IC8SCL (Capri Is.) Jan 20 1351Z 28.410;
LZ2WM (Bulgaria) Jan 20 1412Z 28.394;
and down in "our" portion of the band, below 28.300 - GM0ERV/m (YL Shirley in her Oban, Scotland driveway) Jan 20 1556Z 28.270;
RB5ESN (Ukraine) Jan 20 1622Z 28.288; and
G10EJT (N. Ireland) Jan 20 1631Z 28.267.

I'm afraid that's all I got this month. From the OVMRC survey, know you're out there, DXers so please send me some log excerpts for this column. I'm getting self-conscious using my own each month. Let's get ACTIVE while the getting's good!

For those of you who monitor WWV on 5, 10, 15, or 20 MHz at 18 minutes past the hour to get the solar flux, A-index and K-index for use in propagation forecasting, a recently updated publication from NOAA may be of interest - and it's free! For your copy of "A User's Guide to the Space Environment Services Center Geophysical Alert Broadcasts", NOAA Technical Memorandum ERL SEL-79, write to: N.O.A.A. Environmental Research Laboratories, Space Environment Services Centre, NOAA/ERL/SEL- R/E/SE2, 325 Broadway, Boulder, CO, 80303. In response to my request, I received a letter from them last September stating that the memorandum is currently being updated and would be sent when the copies are received from the printer. They also mentioned the tremendous demand for this publication, so get your name on the list soon! All for now, 73 es gud DX!

LIFE MEMBERSHIP APPOINTMENT - A MOTION

Moved by Alan Boyce, VE3LNH, seconded by Pat Brewer, VE3KJQ and Chuck, VE3PDK that **MERV LEMKE, VE3CV** be appointed a Life Member of the OVMRC based on his long-time membership, his having held office on the executive (President 1977-78), his involvement in numerous Field Days, his several technical presentations, his long-term management of The Pothole Net and his consistent support of Club activities. A Life Membership will show the Club's appreciation for this member's outstanding contribution and will add lustre to the Club.