

THE
OVMRC

RAMBLER

Volume 33, Number 9 October, 1990

AMATEUR RADIO IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA - 1990

by Bob Baillargeon, VE3MPG/OK&AIO

It has been almost six months since I left Canada for Czechoslovakia back in late February. Going to this country as a volunteer to teach English was to be an adventure. Planning such a trip in less than three weeks was an immense undertaking. I wondered what ham gear to take along. In the end, due to the amount of luggage I had packed, I decided against any ham gear. Whatever I needed could be shipped. I left February 28 with enough clothes, soap and teaching material to last for six months.

Being stationed in Prague, so the organizers told me in Canada, was to be fun. A big city can offer many things despite its having formerly been under a communist regime. Landing in Prague was another experience. Winds swept across the runway at almost 80 Km/hr. that morning. Landing was touchy. Many gripped their seats. The passengers were also warned not to take photographs during the landing. Curious. I had a good look around at this point and noticed several Iraqi troop carriers parked at the far end of the terminal building. Clearing customs was simple. Since our group had been invited by the new Civic Forum Government, processing of official papers took little time. I realized much later how lucky we had been in a nation buried in irrelevant paperwork and redundant bureaucracy. We arrived at Charles University in Prague an hour later and were met by student representatives. Chaos reigned here. English was spoken by few locals and Slovak and Czech by even fewer of the Canadians. Diplomacy and any

resemblance of organized discussion went by the board. A long flight coupled with little sleep, left our nerves frayed. Another volunteer and myself raised our hands and declared that wherever the organization wanted us, we would go. Our destination was to be the city of Kosice to the east. All that was left to do was to find our student representatives and get some transportation organized.

Kosice ... it reminded me of a black and white movie of ... 1947 - 1950 vintage

Our young reps spoke little English, but very fluent Slovak. We obtained enough information about Kosice to dismay us. It is located over 700Km. to the east near the border of the USSR and Hungary. A train trip would be twelve hours. Since it was then 11 a.m., another twelve hours meant we would not reach our destination until almost midnight. We decided to take a flight to Kosice. After racing to the Canadian Embassy to register our presence in Czechoslovakia, we headed back downtown to pick up our mountain of luggage and flag a taxi for the airport. The flight left sometime after 5 p.m. and we arrived in Kosice at 7:30p.m. dog tired after travelling for 24 hours.

Kosice in March looks like a city after a bomb attack. Close your eyes and go back to the year 1947 or the early 1950's to see what Kosice looks

like. It reminded me of a black and white movie of that vintage, filmed in a mid-western American town. The population of 240,000 is employed mainly by a huge steel mill about 10Km outside the city. A grey pall hangs over the city -- pollution from the mill. All of the buildings are varying shades of grey. Uniformity in this society extends not only to building colors but to the architecture of the hundreds of tenement flats extending as far as the eye can see. A huge statue of Lenin still stood in front of the abandoned Party Headquarters. (Lenin statue was removed in early May - whereabouts unknown!)

Toward the end of main street, called Leninova, lies the Technical University of Kosice. There are 8,000 students enrolled here. The large main building is covered in a thick grey dust from the mill. The grounds look as if they have not been cared for in years. Most of the buildings look as if they need major renovation work. OK3KAG, the amateur station of the University, is located on the top floor of a three story building at the heart of campus. It's easy to spot. The roof is covered with several full band yagis and wire antennas. The main transceiver is a twenty-year old Yeasu FTDX-505. A small homebrew transceiver is used for SSB and CW HF operation sits on another desk. A two meter rig sits close by. A 2 Kw linear amplifier, using Russian tubes, completes the station.

The now renamed Czech and Slovak Federative Republic (CSFR) has approximately 4,000 licensed

Czechoslovakia - Continued page 8



THE
OVMRC

RAMBLER

Volume 33 Number 9, October, 1990

**OVMRC EXECUTIVE
1990-1991**

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CLUB CALENDAR

GUEST SPEAKER

**18 Oct Meting
VE3MPG/OK8AIO
Bob Baillargeon
(see page 1 article)**

**Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 24 October
at Chuck's, VE3PDK**

**RAMBLER
Article submission
deadline
24 Oct
at the Executive
meeting**

**OVMRC FLEA MARKET
April, 1991**

**Bunny Hunt
May, 1991**

**NEXT MEETING OF THE
OVMRC**

**18 October, 1990
1930 hours**

*Room #1
Multi-service*

Centre

*1480 Heron Road,
(East of Alta Vista Dr. near
Baycrest Drive on south
side of Heron)*

OARC FLEA MARKET

*RA Centre, 2451 Riverside Drive, Ottawa
Sunday, 21 October, at 8 a.m. (7 a.m. for vendors)
Talk-in on VE3CRA - 146.34/94 - Admission \$3.00*

RAMBLER COMMITTEE

Editorial Board

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Jerry Wells, VE3CDS
Ken Barry, VE3KJB

Circulation

Mike Beausoleil, VE3BGP
Fred Haire, VE3NJF
Eric Still, VE3OTT
Kevin Still

AMATEUR RADIO NETS

POT HOLE NET - Sundays 1000 hrs. 3.760 MHz (includes Swap Net
WAP NET - (Ed Morgan, VE3GX regular feature of Pot Hole Net and Capital City FM
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.

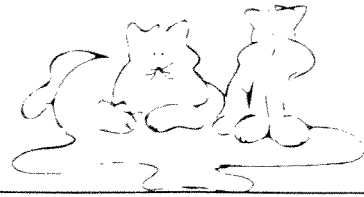
CUMBERLAND EMERGENCY NET - Wednesdays 1930 hrs. 147.03 MHz

THE WISE OWL NET - Fridays 2000 hrs. 147.30 MHz

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

Strays

by Doug Carswell, VE3ATY



For those of you who made it to the September meeting, there was a good opportunity for an eye ball. The business session was short. We had more than 80 people in attendance. The guest speaker gave us an insight into the events that will have taken place on restructuring Amateur Radio by the time you read this issue of the Rambler. He pointed out that comes the 1st of October we will be operating under the new set of rules - there will be many amateurs getting their advanced ticket through the "grandfather" or as Evelyn pointed out "grandmother" provisions. Some will breath a sigh of relief and some a sigh of disappointment. However, I believe that, for us to survive, we have to give the rule-makers a reason for keeping us around. There were some interesting questions which were rooted in the natural desire of radio amateurs to pose a variety of conundrums.

In the next short while, I hope that some member of the Executive will be in touch with you personally, as **there are a number of chores that need to be done.** One of the items on

our program agenda this year is a **2 meter transmitter hunt.** I am not sure of the ground rules, but it will involve locating a transmitter that will operate every twenty to thirty minutes for 10 minutes. The objective of the exercise is to locate the transmitter. One member of the Executive, who likes the phrase - "and who shall remain uncaymous," suggested that the transmitter be buried in the ground with only the rubber ducky protruding. Not to be out-done, another member suggested that we enclose the antenna in a reed. So the Tx's location is not going to be obvious. If you have any ideas for a piece of direction finding apparatus that could be of use to your fellow amateurs for two meters, please pass it along. **If you have any ground rules that should apply - let us know.** It is obvious that we need a reasonably acceptable prize for being the party first to locate the Tx - and we are on the hunt for same. (In the Champlain Radio Repeater Association - their traditional prize is a one-way trip to Calabogie.)

With respect to other matters, we have **approximately 35 students enrolled in the course this year** and if we follow the traditional pattern, about 15 of these will make it to the far end and join the ranks of our illustrious group.

Made it down to the Kingston flea market. Big mistake. It emptied my wallet for the next several months. I can only hope that the car doesn't react badly to a 25-watt dual bander. (It does a cross-band repeater trick - not that I expect to operate in that mode.) Also got some copper weld in preparation for antenna season. You know it's approaching that time when the birds start to fly south. (Did you know that plovers leave at the end of July.) The 9-band Windom in the July issue of QST just got the old heart pounding as I speculated about winding a 6 to 1 balun.

Well that's it for this early hour (5:30 A.M.) Strays. Look forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

Don't forget we are meeting at the Ottawa - not Gloucester - Multi-Service Centre.

73's Doug - VE3ATY

OCTOBER 1-- "A" DAY

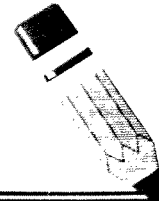
Effective 1 October, all Amateurs, by virtue of restructuring, are deemed to hold an Advanced Amateur Radio ticket and have all the privileges accorded that level of proficiency. This means that all you Amateurs, who have been reluctant to check into the Pot Hole Net on Sunday mornings at 10 a.m. on 3.760 MHz on CW, may now do so on phone. Surely, this will not dampen your enthusiasm for advancing your Amateur Radio skills and you will continue to strive to achieve 15 WPM on CW and to increase your knowledge of radio.

DELEGATED EXAMINERS MAY TEST MORSE CODE

Correcting a statement made at the last OVMRC meeting that all Code tests had to be conducted by DOC, it has been confirmed that Delegated Examiners may conduct these tests.

Secretary's Minutes

by Acting Secretary, Lee Demone, VE3OWD



MINUTES OF OVMRC GENERAL MEETING - 20 SEP 90

1. President Doug, VE3ATY, opened the meeting, held in Room #1, Multiservice Centre, 1480 Heron Road, at 1940 hrs, welcoming about 80 members and guests. He recognized the following guest and congratulated him on obtaining his ham licence two weeks ago:

Jay Maniate VE3SGU

2. President Doug next expressed his thanks to Archie, VE3NJY, for his good work in finding this location for Club Meetings until we can return to the Museum.

3. He reminded all present to register at the door and receive a ticket for the door prizes: a balun kit for the winning amateur and a package of floppy disks for the winning non-amateur.

4. He also warmly welcomed the youngest member of the club - Vik, VE3BSV, who, he noted, is to be congratulated for acing the DOC licensing exams.

5. Doug enquired if any members had any technical problems requiring assistance. He noted that he had the solution to Vice President Jeff, VE3RCI's, problem of securing an antenna to a tree (without climbing and falling). Jeff also solicited assistance in diagnosing the problem with a recalcitrant garage door opener. There were numerous suggestions from the floor among which, it is to be hoped, one will solve Jeff's problem.

6. President Doug next called for Executive Member reports.

7. Membership Mike, VE3BGP, reported that we have 115 paid up members to date.

8. Vice President Jeff, VE3RCI, solicited members' assistance in identifying a potential guest speaker for the October meeting.

9. President Doug drew attention to the September RAMBLER which is without doubt one of the better editions ever published by the Club through the excellent efforts of Editor Chuck, VE3PDK.

10. Editor Chuck, VE3PDK, drew members' attention to the interesting

article, written and produced at his own expense, by Brice, VE3EDR, (affectionately known as Captain Bligh to his volunteer crews), on summer cruising in the Caribbean. Its a tough life being a blue water sailor and a ham!!

11. Chuck also noted that he had received a cheque for \$10.00 from CARF for an item reproduced from the RAMBLER in TCA.

12. George, VE2OWW, also received a cheque for \$10.00 for an item he wrote for the RAMBLER which was reproduced in TCA. George has generously donated his cheque to the OVMRC.

13. President Doug reviewed the following correspondence received during the summer break:

a. a letter from SINCLABS describing their products which include a 10 to 2 meter transverter and coax cable supplies;

b. a letter from Brice, VE3EDR, describing a contact with a Science and Technology Museum in Florida and suggesting a possible link with the Museum of Science and Technology here in Ottawa. To be followed up.

c. a letter from Bruce Corby of Colonel By Secondary School requesting assistance in organizing an amateur radio class at the school to start in January 91. (President Doug called upon any members who would be willing to undertake this, observing that he himself was already over extended with the Club course.)

d. a letter from Mike Graham, now living in Oshawa, commenting on the draft copy of the Club History and offering suggestions.

14. President Doug reported that the current amateur course is up and running with 35 students. In response to a query, he said they could make room for another student or two, observing that attrition would soon pare the numbers if past history is an indicator.

15. Vice President Jeff reminded members that he was looking for input for his DX Column in the RAMBLER.

16. Vice President Jeff next introduced the evening's Guest Speaker, Brian Williams, VE3QS, of the Depart-

ment of Communications, whose subject was the changes to the Amateur Radio Service coming into effect 1 Oct 90.

Brian noted that the changes coming, which were arrived at with the cooperation and inputs of the National Organizations and individual hams, are aimed at making it easier to obtain a licence at the entry level. The high failure rate under the old system suggested a need for change.

Although the new regulations have not yet been officially proclaimed, they are, for most intents and purposes, considered to go into effect on 1 Oct. Indeed, the first exams under the new regs are scheduled for 10 Oct.

Under the new regs there will be only ONE amateur certificate, but it will have the facility for several upgrade endorsements. The Basic Qualification, which is a prerequisite for this licence, will consist of a 100 question multiple-choice exam on basic theory, regulations, RFI suppression and wave propagation, with a pass mark of 60%. (NO Code required). This gives the ham privileges above 30 MHz.

Upon passing a 5 WPM receive and transmit code test an endorsement to operate below 4 MHz using commercial equipment with an input power of up to 250 Watts will be awarded.

Upon passing a 12 WPM receive and transmit code test an endorsement to operate on all bands, in all modes, using commercial equipment with an input power of up to 250 Watts will be awarded.

Upon passing an advanced examination, an endorsement permitting the use of homebrew gear, output power of 1 KW, in all modes will be awarded.

Brian also indicated that deregulation of the sub-bands was coming. Its main thrust is expected to be:

a. below 10 meters - any mode of transmission may be used as long as the bandwidth does not exceed 6 kHz;

Minutes Continued page 6

EDITOR'S CORNER

by Charles King, VE3PDK



Sap runs in the spring, but the the creative juices of writers seems to flow more freely in the fall. At least that is my impression from the number of articles that have come in for this month's Rambler. The lead story is a particularly welcome one; one for which I have been waiting for almost six months. I knew it would be worth waiting for.

Ken Barry's *Novice News* column is off and running with an excellent article again this month. This column will run for the duration of the Amateur

Radio Course, unless there is a demand from novices for it throughout the year.

Larry Woram, VE3WLN, has come up with the latest word on tariffs on amateur radio gear imported from the U.S. There was clarification needed on this question, especially after erroneous information was published in the *Groundwave* a short while ago. You can believe this article is accurate. In view of Larry's place of employ-

ment, you might say this information is "straight from the horse's mouth."

Lastly, information from CARF on a new band plan and from DOC via CARF frequency allocations makes us realize that Amateur Radio restructuring is finally here. This latter information is published in chart form so that you can post them in the shack. They are printed back to back so that you can cut them out without ruining other articles in the *Rambler*.

FREQUENCY LIMITS		OPERATOR'S QUALIFICATIONS						MAX BAND WIDTH				
		Basic	Basic & 5 WPM	Basic & 12 WPM	Basic & Advance	Basic, 12WPM & Advance	MAX BAND WIDTH					
									Basic	Basic & 5 WPM	Basic & 12 WPM	Basic & Advance
Lower Limits MHz	Upper Limits MHz											
1.800	2.000	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	6 kHz
3.500	4.000	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	6 kHz
7.000	7.350	-	-	X	-	X	-	X	X	X	X	6 kHz
10.100	10.150	-	-	X	-	X	-	X	X	X	X	1 kHz
14.000	14.350	-	-	X	-	X	-	X	X	X	X	6 kHz
18.068	18.168	-	-	X	-	X	-	X	X	X	X	6 kHz
21.000	21.450	-	-	X	-	X	-	X	X	X	X	6 kHz
24.890	24.990	-	-	X	-	X	-	X	X	X	X	6 kHz
28.000	29.700	-	-	X	-	X	-	X	X	X	X	20 kHz
50.000	54.000	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	30 kHz
144.000	148.000	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	30 kHz
220.000	225.000	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	100 kHz
430.000	450.000	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	12 kHz
902.000	928.000	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	12 kHz
1,215.000	1,300.000	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Not specified
2,300.000	2,450.000	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Not specified
3,300.000	3,500.000	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Not specified
5,650.000	5,925.000	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Not specified
10,000.000	10,500.000	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Not specified
24,010.000	24,250.000	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Not specified
Maximum DC Input Power to TX		250W	250W	250W	1 kW	1 kW	1 kW	1 kW	1 kW	1 kW	1 kW	

X = any emission is permitted subject to max band width
 Courtesy CARF NEWS Bulletin 14-90 -- presentation modified.

Minutes - Continued from page 4

b. 10 meters and above - any mode of transmission may be used as long as the bandwidth does not exceed 10 kHz.

There were numerous questions from the floor on various aspects of the new regs and band deregulation. There are obviously many points still to be clarified in the new DOC circulars to be issued in October.

17. President Doug thanked Brian for coming out and briefing the membership on the new regs, a topic of profound interest to all present.

18. CARF Director, Dan Holmes, VE3EBI, made a presentation of a CARF Hall of Fame plaque to Ron Belleville, VE3AUM, for his

numerous contributions to amateur radio and his public service. Ron was introduced by Ron Mclean, VE3---, who has known him for 40 years. He noted that Ron was first licensed in 1951, while serving at Fort Churchill, MN, and has since retired twice: from the Navy and the RCMP. Although many tales could be told of Ron's exploits, the tender age of many present precluded any recounting.

On receiving his award, Ron, VE3AUM, thanked Dan and CARF for the honour bestowed on him. He noted that he enjoyed hamming from the first minute, and it has not lost any of its appeal over the years. It has led to visits with fellow hams in England and Moscow and contacts with personages of note. (He confessed, in the presence of many witnesses, of effect-

ing an illegal phone patch between Cardinal Leger in Africa and his brother, Governor General Leger in Ottawa, about 10-12 years ago.) Ron also thanked his long suffering XYL for her forbearance in the face of his engrossing hobby.

19. President Doug noted that the Club Constitution and By-Laws needs an overhaul and that a committee consisting of Alan, VE3LNH, Pat, VE3KJQ and Chuck, VE3PDK, has been tasked to prepare revisions for the consideration of the membership.

20. CARF Director Dan, VE3EBI, drew tickets for the door prizes with the lucky winners being Rod, VE3ROD, and John MacSteven.

21. There being no further business, President Doug called for a motion to adjourn. So moved by Ken, VE3KJB

VOLUNTARY BAND PLAN		
BAND METERS	FREQUENCIES MEGAHERTZ	MODES
160	1,800 - 1,840 1,840 - 2,000	CW & RTTY at 1,830 - 1,840 Phone
80	3,500 - 3,725 3,725 - 4,000	CW & RTTY at 3,600 - 3,645 Phone & SSTV at 3,840 - 3,850
40	7,000 - 7,050 7,050 - 7,100 7,100 - 7,150 7,150 - 7,300	CW CW, Phone & RTTY at 7,070 - 7,080 CW (US Notice CW lies here) Phone & SSTV at 7,170 - 7,180
30	10,100 - 10,150	CW & RTTY at 10,140 - 10,150
20	14,000 - 14,095 14,095 - 14,099 14,100 14,101 - 14,350	CW & RTTY at 14,070 - 14,095 Packet BEACONS - DO NOT TX HERE Phone and SSTV at 14,225 - 14,235
18	18,068 - 18,110 18,110 - 18,168	CW & RTTY at 18,100 - 18,110 Phone
15	21,000 - 21,100 21,100 - 21,450 21,149 - 21,151	CW & RTTY at 21,070 - 21,100 Phone, SSTV at 21,330 - 21,350 & BEACONS BEACONS - DO NOT TX HERE
12	24,890 - 24,930 24,930 - 24,990	CW & RTTY at 24,920 - 24,930 Phone
10	28,000 - 28,200 28,200 - 29,300 29,300 - 29,510 29,510 - 29,700	CW & RTTY at 28,070 - 28,150 Phone SATELLITE DOWNLINK - NO TX HERE Phone, FM Phone & Repeaters

Courtesy CARF News Service, Bulletin 14-90, 15 Sept 90 - presentation modified.

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM HERE AND THERE



by Pat Brewer, VE3KJQ

It appears that amateur radio clubs do not generally sit idle over the summer. Here are some news and views from a few clubs across the country.

In the **Calgary Amateur Radio Assoc. Key Klix**, president Alan VE6TZY, doesn't see the new regs as having a detrimental effect on the hobby. He refers to it as a "turning point in Canadian Amateur Radio history." He goes on to say that "I am certain that our standards will not lower, in fact if many of the new entrants have experience in computing hopefully they will be able to teach some of us OMs things we don't know." The VHF Section of CARA had a very successful meeting in June at the Carling O'Keefe Brewery. Apparently Jim VE6AUZ has his own pipeline to the main vats and annually invites all members to "the souce of the suds". It appears that the Digital Group has an agreement with BCTEL to establish nodes at each of their mountain top stations. This might provide linking to the coast. The Calgary Fire Department had nothing but praise for the help of Amateur Radio operators for the Calgary Stampede parade. The Deputy Chief said, "It may be said that you call yourselves amateur radio operators, but from my perspective from what I saw on the morning of July 6 the word professional comes to mind."

The **London ARC Bulletin** has detailed instructions on using VE3LON repeater. Among its features are autodialing (one per member) and a fancy reverse patch. On the reverse patch you can call the

repeater and then alert a specific Ham by dialing their autodial code. The repeater will announce "Call for VE3XXX" and then you can answer by turning on the autopatch. If the call is not directed then anyone is free to connect to the caller. Neat eh? Here is a list of some of the World's more famous Hams: HS1A-King of Thailand, EA0JC-King of Spain, K7UGA-Barry Goldwater, FO0GJ-Marlon Brando, JY1-King of Jordan, and I0FCG-President of Italy.

As usual there is lots happening in **Northern Ontario**. The **Sudbury ARC** has embarrassed us here in Ottawa (into action I hope) by linking repeater VE3RVE into Southern Ontario by the T.F.M.C.S. link system. They link via North Bay, Dwight, and Haliburton to VE3RPT, the hub, in Uxbridge. It's a long haul, but it works. The **Manitoulin ARC** was busy as usual over the summer. Members operated Field Day, put up a new wide coverage repeater, provided communications for a marathon and a car rally, and finished off with the second annual Garden Party BBQ attended by 49 people. All this gleaned from the *SARCommunicator*.

The **Scarborough ARC** were not idle over the summer. They were quite busy at Field Day despite lots of rain. There were 40 members manning a total of 10 transmitters for the entire 24 hour period. The Senators/Satellites senior division of SARC were involved in a Seniors Showcase at Scarborough Town Centre (a shopping centre about

three times the size of Bayshore). Club members also helped man the station at the Canadian National Exhibition. From these activities a total of 100 names were assembled of people interested in taking an amateur radio course.

The big news in the **OARC Groundwave** this month is the announcement that our own **Jeff Wilson VE3RCI** was given the annual Joe Norton Award at the September meeting. The award this year was \$690 and was well deserved. Our club continues to benefit from Jeff's hard work and many talents. If you're looking for the next Ottawa area amateur directory you will have to wait until 1992. Work will start next year and Dave Parks VE3GSA at 225-1206 is looking for help. The amateur radio station at Scout Headquarters, VE3SHQ, is looking for Scouters who are amateur radio operators to help out. The station is also looking for used equipment. If you can help call Robert Michaud VE3PAD at 825-4126.

The local **Pioneer ARC Teleparc** reports that the Telephone Pioneer Net has been restarted on Sundays at 2000 local EDT just below 3760 KHz. The club has applied to New Horizons for a grant to establish a video repeater. Also, you may not have realized that Heath have shut down all their Canadian outlets. They still have 64 US outlets, but ten of them will be closed by year end.

That's the long and short of it for this month.

amateurs. Many more are shortwave listeners. Fewer young people are becoming amateurs because they are more interested in computers, videos and disco music. Another reason for the slow growth is the cost of commercial amateur gear. The average salary is about 3,000 Krowns a month, the equivalent of 50-60 dollars. You can do the math yourself to figure that few here can afford a rig from the big three manufacturers.

The amateurs here think that improvements in their economy and currency standard will take five to ten years. I think that is optimistic. Economic and technological help is needed now to bring their factories to current western standards. The government wants to avoid borrowing because they must repay with hard currency. All of the eastern block countries face this dilemma.

To become a licensed amateur in CFSR prior to the revolution, one had to endure investigation by the state secret police. Neighbours, employers and friends were questioned about you. If satisfactory answers were obtained a license was granted. If you were a non-conformist and rejected the Party line, you were denied a license. ZVAZARM is an association for cooperation with the military to which amateurs must belong.

After the 1968 Prague uprising, some restrictions were enforced. Some hams were forced to flee to other countries because of their activities during those hectic days. News poured out via amateurs working clandestine stations at different locations across Prague and in other parts of the country. Many were expelled from the Communist Party and blacklisted. Many good jobs were denied them as a result.

On November 17, 1989 a peaceful revolution spread across this nation. Students across Czechoslovakia protested en masse and industry sup-

ported them. The communist regime collapsed. Since my arrival, the country has gone through three name changes. Some changes have also occurred in amateur radio. Packet has been given the go-ahead, but only three or four amateurs in the country have experimented with it. Lack of information about the mode and the cost of equipment are factors that will affect its popularity in the future. Czechoslovakia is one of the last countries in Europe to become active on packet. Even with the borders now open, the hams here say not many changes are perceived because of the standard of living. A small company in Moravia, the country's middle province, is tooling up to produce ham gear at this time. It was started by four enterprising amateurs. There are clever amateurs in this country but the economic situation will hinder the progress of amateur radio for years to come.

Four Slovak amateurs have helped to make this story more credible and gave additional insight into how controlled amateur radio was before the revolution. Rasto, OK3TSM was the first amateur I met at the university and happened to also be interested in computers. He's a computer science student. My first day in the shack when I requested a phone patch and had some concerns about third party agreements he said "Don't worry about it, Perestroika is here now, we can do it." Mike, OK3DX is the manager of the airport in Kosice. Bell, OK3WDX, is an electronics student was also in the shack that first day. And finally Stan, OK3WM, is Mike's uncle and a 55-year-old retired flight navigator for CSA, the country's national airline. Mike wanted to become a flight navigator like his uncle but his lack of membership in the Communist party barred aspirations for this career. His limited knowledge of English was a factor too. Such problems supposedly no longer exist. Stan pushed Mike to become an amateur in 1966. His first rig was an

HW101 and a dipole. Mike then taught 15 year old Rasto the code and theory needed for getting a license. Stan has helped Rasto tune his antennas for 160 meters. He has 85 countries confirmed on the top band and VK6HD was worked with 10 watts and a dipole. Rasto's rig is Czech made.

Stan has 310 countries confirmed and the five band DXCC certificate #1047. He uses an Icom 751, a cubical quad and a double Zepp for the lower bands. Mike also could apply for five band DXCC but finds the cost prohibitive.

Packet radio is in its infancy here. The restrictions were lifted in January. I had my packet gear sent over. Thanks to Alan Boyce, VE3LNH for testing and putting the stuff together for me. In this part of Slovakia, the only activity heard on packet is from Hungary located about 20 miles to the south. I've established several contacts into Budapest from Kosice. Attempts to obtain information on other active packet users have been fruitless.

Amateur radio in this country exists in its purist sense. Homebrewing is the norm here as commercial gear is out of reach for most amateurs. What do amateurs here want to see for the future? Less bureaucracy. The questioning by the Secret Police has been dropped now. They see no changes in the availability of commercial gear as hard currency is scarce. Bell, OK3WDX, says that he would like to produce HF antennas and become a capitalist.

My stay in this country was helped through the efforts of the above mentioned amateurs and their club station OK3KAG. I want to thank all of those amateurs across Ontario and in the Ottawa area for the phone patches and message handling. Amateur radio is alive and well in Czechoslovakia.

P.S.:A note of interest to SWL's - the jamming equipment used against Radio Martina (beaming propaganda to Cuba from the U.S.) was manufactured in Czechoslovakia.

DX de YOU

by 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 Betty, VE3ZBB

Betty approaches DXing from a different perspective than the DX hounds we all hear trying to bust pile-ups. She loves to ragchew on CW, so while her DX contacts might not be considered rare, you can rest assured that these DX operators will stop for a chat instead the usual 30 second 599 signal exchange. This summer she has worked

PZ1AV (Surinam) 1329Z 21.013 CW;
YU2CEU (Kruno, Yugoslavia) 1958Z 21.127;
XE1FAA (Puebla, Mexico) 0036Z 21.014;
WP4IXO (Puerto Rico) 0315Z 21.107;
SM4CPW (Rettvik, Sweden) 2043Z 18.069;
LA5SAA (Norway) 2235Z 18.071;
LZ1AK (Sofia, Bulgaria) 0157Z 14.058;
CM8DE (Cuba) 0227Z 7.013 and
OK3DG (Bratislava, Czechoslovakia) 0254Z, 7.013.
Keep up the international goodwill via the HF bands.

From Lee, VE3OWD

I won't label Lee a DX hound, but judging from this list of DX goodies he must be a very skilled operator. These were worked during the summer:
UJ8KA (Tadzhikistan) 0223Z 21.045 CW;

4K3BB (Soviet Arctic) 0123Z 21.019 CW;
TF3CW (Iceland) 0022Z 21.029 CW;
6W6JX (Senegal) 1423Z 18.080 CW;
UM8BA (Kirghiz SSR) 0208Z 18.077 CW;
UF6DZ (Georgian SSR) 0221 18.081 CW;
9H1HZ (Malta) 0349Z 14.210 SSB;
HR1KAS (Honduras) 1340Z 14.168 SSB;
UI8BBW/UA1T (?? USSR) 0126Z 14.011 CW;
ES5MC (Estonia) 1327Z 14.043;
ZD8Z (Ascension Is.) 0038Z 14.034 CW;
UF6FHM (Georgian SSR) 0326Z 14.015 CW;
YO3CD (Romania) 0129Z 10.105 CW;
FG5ED (Guadeloupe) 0617Z 14.003 CW;
UZ0ZWA/UA0X (Karaginskiy Is.) 0646Z 14.020 CW;
VK3IM/m (Melbourne, Australia mobile running 60 watts) 0806Z 14.027 CW; and
UH8EA (Turkmen SSR) 0340Z 21.196 SSB - a NEW one for Lee, only "UG" to go to have all the USSR call areas confirmed! If I hear one Lee, I'll give you a call.

Just typing up these logs is making me very frustrated. I'm sitting here in my new QTH, high on a hill in Cumberland, with no HF antenna! I have to wait for the leaves to fall from my Maple trees before I can slap on Bob, VE3KLK's nifty sling shot/fishing reel gizmo to shoot my halyard lines over the branches I've picked out for my still-to-be-made G5RV antenna. Consequently, I cannot give you any up to the minute loggings or whatever because I haven't been active or even listening since July. So gang, it's up to you to keep me abreast of what you're doing on the bands so that I can tell the others. Fall is here for sure now, so lets all get active. I expect that after October 1, there will be a lot of new "advanced" amateurs chasing DX on 20m and 15m SSB (myself included), so let's hear how you're doing. 73 for now, Jeff.

MONEY TALKS

We all know that money talks. Mine speaks in Morse Code and has a limited vocabulary --

It says only one abbreviated sentence -- dah-dah-dit dah-di-di-dit!

NOVICE NEWS

by Ken Barry, VE3KJB

By the time you read this, you will be well into the classes in Morse Code. As Pat Brewer, VE3KJQ, said at the September 18th class, there is no way you can become proficient enough in Morse Code to pass the exam if you do not practice daily.

"What is the best way to practice at home?" you may ask. Well, there are several ways. One way is to get some sort of code practice set. It can be as simple as a key, a battery and a household buzzer. Now, an untreated household buzzer make a raucous racket. To increase its pitch and make it sound more like actual radio signals, insert a tiny matchstick wedge between the vibrating armature and the contact spring attached to it. A drop of adhesive will keep the wedge in place.

Battery powered solid state oscillators are available at low prices in both factory assembled and kit form. The kits can be put together in an hour or less. Units of this type are compact, light weight, readily portable, and have a pleasing tone that closely resembles radio signals.

The exact system or method of code practice you will follow depends on whether you will work alone or with a partner. It is a much easier undertaking if two people work together. They can check each other's mistakes and, in general, accelerate each other's progress.

Let's assume you have a partner. In addition to the code practice set, you will need a supply of ruled paper and a soft pencil. Have your partner sit next to you so that he can hear the oscillator. Now take the daily newspaper, select an article and tap it out on your key. Continue this for five minutes. When you are done,

check your partner's copy against the newspaper article and mark his mistakes.

Now hand the oscillator to your partner and have him sent an item for you to copy. Keep this up for twenty minutes, check for errors and take note of which letters or numbers need more practice.

This system has two advantages. The first is that if you make a deal with a partner to practice once a day, you will be less inclined to cancel out than you would if you were practicing on your own. The second is that a certain amount of pride is involved, causing you to put make a greater effort when someone is watching you.

Let's assume that you cannot find a suitable partner. The only thing that has changed is that you must now beg, borrow or buy a small tape recorder. Take that newspaper and send from it for fifteen minutes, recording the code with the tape recorder. The next night, play back what you recorded the previous night. Now mark your mistakes and take note of letters and numbers that need more practice.

Another method of practice is to pick up the phone and dial 825-0786 and stand by with your pencil and paper. You will hear Morse Code sent at the same speed that is currently being used in the classroom.

If you have access to a shortwave radio that will receive the amateur bands, there is W1AW, a station sponsored by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) in Newington, Connecticut. This station broadcasts Morse Code at various speeds from 5 words per minute.

The station is on the air throughout the day, but their slow code practice at 5, 7.5, 10, 13 and 15 WPM, can be heard on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at the following times 0200 Universally Coordinated Time (UTC)*, 1300 UTC, 2300 UTC and on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays at 2000 UTC, and again on Sundays at 0200 UTC. Code is transmitted on the following frequencies:

1.818 MHz,
3.5815 MHz,
7.0475 MHz,
14.0475 MHz,
21.0775 MHz,
28.0775 MHz,
50.08 MHz, and
147.555 MHz.

All of these home study schemes will work if you practice faithfully every day. However, the first two methods have an advantage in that you not only get practice in receiving, you get the added bonus of practice in sending. Don't forget, you must pass an exam in sending as well as receiving.

Don't let the instructors bamboozle you with electronic terminology. We all know that a SEMICONDUCTOR is a part-time bandleader; CHIPS are what you eat with dip; DIODE is a poem so embarrassing you want to die; and a TRANSISTOR is the closest female relative to a train.

Good luck and keep plugging away - until next time, 73.

*Add 5 hours to UTC for Eastern Standard Time (see page 12-8 of the *Study Guide*).

