Rambler

Newsletter of the
Ottawa Valley Mobile
Radio Club Inc. (**OVMRC**)
Volume 48, Issue No 6

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Club Meeting · · · · · · **Jan 15**
Graduation & RAC Update

Club Exec. Meeting · **Jan 22**

Rambler Deadline · · · **Feb 6**

Next Club Meeting · · **Feb 19**
Homebrew

Talk to Santa

The Talk to Santa was held on Dec 13 and 14th, 2003 at the Museum of Science and Technology. Our Santa was Denis Cartwright, VA3DWC, and on Saturday, Dan Doctor, VE3XDD was writing the certificates for the 81 children that the elves, Bill, VE3NOD, Maurice André, VE3VIG and I, VA3PUR talked to. On Sunday, Maurice André was writing the certificates for the 50 or so, children that talked to Marc, VE2MKE and Bill, VE3NOD. All children were given certificates and candy canes.

We also received some publicity as a reporter from Le Devoir took pictures and did an interview, which appeared in the Monday Dec 15th. And on the Saturday, our faces appeared on the new RO during the news broadcast.

The Museum co-ordinator Graham Wilkes, was very pleased as the number of children participating and their parents or guardians, made up a large number of those who visited the Museum that weekend. ❖

OVMRC 2m FM Simplex Contest

(provisional rules)

These rules are currently provisional. Although it is unlikely there will be any significant change be warned that dates, times or other details could be amended over the next month. Final setting of the rules will likely be done by February.

Date & Time

Saturday 8th May 2004 (to be confirmed) from 12 noon to 4pm *local time*.

How to participate

Using the 2m simplex frequencies (check the RAC band plan) and avoiding the 2m calling frequency of 146.520, make contact with as many stations as you can. Call "CQ OVMRC contest" or "CQ contest" or work stations making such calls.

Pre-arranging contacts by use of repeaters, telephones or otherwise is not allowed, nor in the spirit of the contest.

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Rambler

Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club Inc.
P.O. Box 41145
Ottawa, Ontario
K1G 5K9

OVMRC Executive (2002-2003)

President	Ken McKenzie, VA3NEK 829-4884, va3nek@rac
Vice-President	Peter Noel, VE3DPN 774-0185, ve3dpn@rac.ca
Treasurer	Ken Gill, VA3KJG 748-0218,
Secretary	Patricia Rowan, VA3PUR 744-1814, va3pur@rac.ca

Standing Committee Chairpersons

Amateur Radio Exhibit	Maurice-André Vigneault, VE3VIG 749-9010, ve3vig@rac.ca
Amateur Radio Training	Bob Shaw, VE3SUY 737-9443, lycott@istop.com Ernie Jury, VE3EJJ 728-3666
Accredited Examiner	Bob Kavanagh, VE3OSZ 225-6785, ve3osz@rac.ca
Field Day	Adam King, VA3PIP 831-9970, va3pip@rac.ca
Historical	Larry Wilcox, VE3WEH 747-5565, ve3weh@rac.ca
Flea Market	Vacant
Membership	Adam King, VA3PIP 831-9970, va3pip@rac.ca
Newsletter	Bill Hall, VA3WMH 830-5580, va3wmh@rac.ca
Publicity & Programs	
Radio Operations	Patricia Rowan, VA3PUR 744-1814, va3pur@rac.ca
Technical	Jake Guertin, VA3TQX 253-3732, va3tqx@sprint.ca
Emergency Preparedness	Ken Halcrow, VE3SRS

OVMRC Repeater

147.300 MHz(+)
444.200 MHz(+)
53.030/52.030 MHz

OVMRC web page
http://www.ovmrc.on.ca
Webmaster: John Rodger,
VE3JR, jcr@magma.ca

NextMeeting
Jan 15
Rambler Deadline
Feb 6

OVMRC Life Members

Ralph Cameron	VE3BBM
Doug Carswell	VE3ATY
Gerry King	VE3GK
Doreen Morgan	VE3CGO
Ed Morgan	VE3GX
Bill Wilson	VE3NR

Club Website

The OVMRC **Rambler** is available on-line at the club website:

http://www.ovmrc.on.ca/rambler.htm

Sponsors

The **OVMRC** acknowledges the following organizations for their support of our activities by providing them with courtesy copies of the Rambler:

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RAMBLINGS

Ken Mckenzie
VA3NEK

I want to thank all the members of the Ottawa Valley Mobile radio Club for their support. I realize that there wasn't a huge slate of candidates for me to defeat in my quest for the Presidency but it has been heartening to hear the comments of support that I have heard.

It is tough times for Amateur radio and it is not an easy choice to take on the responsibility of this historical group. We have just celebrated the thirty fifth year of VE3JW, it is the forty second year of the club's existence and our membership is dropping about ten percent each year.

Challenging times to say the least!

The Internet, walkie-talkie cell phones that will let you talk from Quebec City to Victoria, FRS watch radios that need no license. All of these things are taking away from the perceived value of Amateur Radio. The fact that we are no longer looked at or required as the line of first response for communication issues in an emergency. All of these and the aging Amateur population are contributing to the decreasing numbers of people being interested in Amateur radio.

Amateur Radio has never been an easy thing, you have to study and write exams for every privilege that you obtain. All of the above other things come easy, buy the computer and hook it up, pay for the service and you are set. Amateur Radio is and has always been something that an individual could be proud of and should be but times have changed. Many young people don't know what an Amateur is and why would they want to go through the trouble, Blackberry, SMS and Mike are all their methods of communication these days. They know nothing of SSB, PSK and FM is where the good music is.

So how do we deal with this challenge!

I don't profess to have any answers but I have an idea. Let's try and make it fun!

Nobody REALLY wants to work all the time and Amateur Radio can be work. Many of us find it fun and enjoy the challenge, so if we can learn to make things fun and enjoyable we might be able to interest others into joining our Club and Amateur Radio.

I don't have any magic answers but I do know that we have a wonderful group of people in the OVMRC, people who share a passion for Amateur Radio and if we can pass that passion along to others we can make our hobby grow. How can someone pass up having fun!

Got an idea? Think of something that maybe fun? Pass it along, we have a group of interested people who maybe able to help and we need your support and help.

As to suggestions, I got a telephone call from VE3RKW and Eric had a question and a suggestion.

His question or compliant, depending on how you want to take it, was "Why don't we email out the Rambler?". I didn't have an answer and this was the first time that anyone had ever asked me this. Eric's suggestion was that we should email the Rambler to members who would like to receive it in this format.

I realize and told Eric that the Rambler is available to all Amateurs on our website http://www.ovmrc.on.ca but he had a valid suggestion. I don't know how much interest there is in members wanting to have the Rambler delivered as an Adobe PDF files or even if there is an interest, so I pose the question to the members as to whether there is an interest in having the Rambler emailed to them.

If you have an opinion, either way, I would appreciate you taking the time to drop me an email and let me know whether this is something you would like to see us deal with. My email address is va3nek@rac.ca. ❖

2M Contest Rules Continued from page: 1

Once you have logged a particular station you cannot log it again, **unless** it is a mobile station which has moved to a different city location (see details of what is a 'location' in the next section). Mobile stations calling CQ may want to indicate their current location.

Note, there is a **condition on a repeat logging**. A repeat logging cannot be made if it results in a station being the same consecutively in the log. For example, if contact 6 is with VA3STL you cannot log that station again as contact 7, even if the station is mobile and moved to another location. Work another station first and then it is possible to make a repeat contact but only if the mobile station is in a different location to the earlier logging(s).

If you decide to call CQ, listen first to see if a frequency is in use. Remember, just because you cannot hear anything does not mean that a QSO is not going on, you may not be in range of one of the stations but you could be within the other's range. Follow good operating practice; listen, ask if the frequency is in use and listen again, then repeat the process until satisfied it is not in use.

What to exchange

When a contact is made you need to exchange the following information: callsign, contact number, location (use the city electoral ward or district for this) and whether or not you are a OVMRC club member or if you are operating a club station. Mobile stations give their current location. The location is important for the location multiplier and longest distance QSO award.

Maps of the wards or districts of Ottawa and Gatineau can be found, at the following web locations;

Ottawa

http://atlas.city.ottawa.on.ca/mapping/atlas/maps/wards/Ottawa_Wards_Councilors_Urban_Photos.pdf

Gatineau

http://www.ville.gatineau.qc.ca/gatineau/pdf/districtsnouveauxnoms.pdf

Stations outside Ottawa and Gatineau use the local town, eg. Carleton Place

Do not feel that this is all you should exchange, you are encouraged to talk to the other station if you want - find out how long they have been a member, for example.

Record each contact on a log sheet and number it sequentially.

Example 1

VA3NEK from VA3STL, please copy number 4, Osgoode member.

Example 2

VA3STL from VE3%%%, please copy number 1, Kemptville, non-member.

Continued on page: 4

MEETING MINUTES

Patricia Rowan
VA3PUR

Dec 18th, 2003

The meeting opened with our illustrious president Ken VA3NEK at the podium. Our guests were Gerry Trottier, VA3GLT and Chuck O'Dell, VE3PFF.

In response for Assistance wanted, Ken Gill, VA3KJG mentioned a R8 Cushcraft antennae that he wants to install.

It was announced that the graduating class will be presented to the members at the Jan. meeting. The February meeting will feature Home Brew Night and the March meeting will see a demonstration by a Vendor and a talk about antennas is also proposed.

A new contest was proposed, a 2 meter FM contest on Simplex frequencies, by Alan Steele VA3STL@rac.ca . This would run on a Saturday from 12 p m to 4 p.m. on all channels. More details will follow, as this will be explained in a further article in the Rambler.

Our guest speaker, Mr. Chuck O'Dell was our guide on the CASARA project. This also will be a featured article in the Rambler.

Ken Halcrow, our emergency response coordinator, brought us up to speed on the Trailer. $700 has been spent to put the trailer in good shape for the winter and the search for additional equipment is in progress. This is 1976 Corsair trailer, it has been repainted, rewired and it is 17 feet long. Wrap-around consoles have been installed as well as a new floor which will be painted in the spring.

Peter Noel VE3DPN was introduced as our new Vice President. Our treasurer, Ken Gill, VA3KJG reported that our funds are in the range of $16,842 of which $4000 has been spent and the rest has been budgeted.

Ken also mentioned that for Morse code there has been a new character introduced, the @ sign which can now be sent with the letters A C run together.

Adam King VA3PIP reported that we have 89 members and that Alan Steele will co-chair the Field Day arrangements with himself.

Jake VA3TQX gave us an update on the repeater, that he has had permission from the Dept. of Public Works to raise the Antennae.

Bob Shaw VE3SUY told us about the Class of 2003. 11 successfully completed the exam for Basic, 1 for the Advanced and 6 for Morse Code sending. The Morse code receiving exam is still to come. He also mentioned that paddles training would be offered next year as well as keyers.

The 50/50 draw for $24.00 was won by Bernard Baker, VA3BGB. Door prizes went to Adam King who took a Crest, Steve VE3SPC who received a World Clock and the 2 tickets for a Senator's game went to Bob Sharp VA3RCS.

André VE3CLW proposed that a question be put to all and the answer provided at the next meeting. The question is: How does one make a magnet with only one pole? ❖

Contest Rules continued from page: 3

Example 3

VA3GLT from VE3JW, please copy number 23, Alta-Vista, club station.

Power Limit

For this contest the maximum power you can use is 50W

Scoring

QSO points

Contact type	Points
Non OVMRC member	1
OVMRC member	2
Club station	5

Club stations are VE3JW and VE3RAM. Note VE3RAM will be the emergency trailer and it will likely move its location during the contest.

Multipliers

This comes in two stages

1. Total number of locations contacted
2. The highest power level you used

Power	Multiplier
10W or less	2
over 10W to 50W	1
over 50W	0

Final calculation

Final score = Total QSO points x Locations x Power

Example calculation

You contacted 8 club members, 6 non club members and the club station VE3JW, who were in 5 different locations (some contacts were in the same location) and you used your handie-talkie at 5W of power.
Total QSO points = 1 x 6 + 2 x 8 + 5 x1 = 27
Multiplier for locations = x5
Multiplier for power = x2
FINAL SCORE = 27 x 5 x 2 = 270

Disqualification

Disqualification will result if stations break the rules of the contest or the rules under which they are licensed to operate.

Some example situations that would invoke disqualification are

* Use of a repeater to pre-arrange contacts.

* Using the 2m calling channel 146.52MHz

* Not following the band plan - do not forget the simplex frequencies are effectively 'channelized'. **Do check the band plan.**

* Intentional interference to other users, contesters or not.

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WEB RESOURCES

Alan Steele
VA3STL

Project Time!

Happy New Year to you all and I hope you had a great holiday season.

Well it is the start of a new year and we are well into winter. That means it is a good time to think about amateur radio projects and perhaps finish off some uncompleted ones, or start a new one. So in this Web Resources I aim on focusing on ideas for possible projects.

Kits

A good way to occupy winter evenings and weekends is a kit. For me it is a winner twice over as I find the building as enjoyable as the use. Kits are a great way to get into construction as you get all the parts and detailed instructions, which almost guarantees success. There are a number of companies offering kits for amateurs, many of which are QRP rigs or related accessories. I do not want to go into all the suppliers I am aware of, since I aim on covering QRP and QRP kits in a later article. However, let us mention some of the larger kit suppliers.

Ten Tec offers built rigs and also supplies kits. You can find their full range of amateur equipment at http://www.tentec.com/Amateur.htm

At the top of the page you will see a link to different types of kits. If your license class permits you to build transmitters, then you may be interested to check out their list of transceivers, which includes a 2m FM transceiver kit and CW QRP rigs. See http://www.tentec.com/Xcvrkit.htm

Or check out their transverters if you want to try and put your HF rig onto VHF, see http://www.tentec.com/Xvertkit.HTM.

Even if you do not want a transceiver then they also have receivers and accessories, see and http://www.tentec.com/amaccyKit.htm.

In the accessories you will find kits for microphones, dummy loads, SWR bridges and microphone speech processor.

If you want more transceiver kits then check out Small Wonder Labs. http://www.smallwonderlabs.com/

Here you can find single band CW transceivers, including the tiny Rockmite and the new DWS series of rigs using direct digital synthesis (DDS) which gives a wider band coverage than many of the crystal or inductor capacitor tuned kits. Small Wonder Labs is also unique in offering kits specifically focused for PSK. Check out these kits at http://www.smallwonderlabs.com/

Indeed the Warbler 80m PSK kit is likely cheaper than some of the interfaces sold for linking computers to transceivers.

For more ambitious kits there is Elecraft, who had a very productive year producing a new DSP kit for the K2, transverters (for any rig), the new KX1 dual band transceiver and their minimodules. See the full range at http://www.elecraft.com/

Antennas

This is always a good area for projects for the amateur. I dealt with this topic in an earlier Web Resources, so will not spend too long on this here. I would like to point out a monster project undertaken by N3RR and detailed at http://users.erols.com/n3rr

This page gives some great insight into this major project undertaken by N3RR in establishing a 134ft tower, with a significant number of antennae on it. Details of the system design, including costing, are given and show the result of a professional approach to a significant project. The tower even made the front cover of CQ.

Well you do not need to go that far for a project. Here is a very modest one for a dual band 2m/70cm antenna http://www.eham.net/articles/7005

Operating

A project does not have to involve building something. Just getting on the air and operating your station can be made into a project if you set a goal or purpose. An excellent example of this is to be found at http://www.ae5x.com/80m.html

AE5X describes how his project on 80m DXing came about and offers some guidance if you want to try too. He includes "some exciting moments" and even sound files. This is a very nice page and worth a read for some inspiration.

You could translate AE5X's approach and apply it to your favourite band or to a band that you have not spent much time on.

AE5X also does outdoor QRP operating and his page detailing this is at http://www.ae5x.com/qrp.html

If operating out in the wilderness appeals, then check out the Adventure Radio Society at http://www.arsqrp.com/

The ARS's journal, the Sojourner, is published on the web and so you can read about others who take there radios into the outdoors. In the latest edition (at the time of writing this) Wayne Burdick, the co-designer of Elecraft's rigs, describes how the new KX1 transceiver came about. Here is an insight into the evolution of a professional amateur radio project. The article is at http://www.arsqrp.com/ars/pages/back_issues/2003_text/1203_text/N6KR.html

Another easy way to set a project is to target an award. It could be working all 50 US states (WAS), or 100 countries (DXCC). The ARRL has a number of different awards described at http://www.arrl.org/awards/

But the ARRL is not the only source of awards. Of course RAC has them http://www.rac.ca/opsinfo/awards.htm

as well as many other amateur radio organisations and individuals. A new one from the Trans-Provincial Net is the Towns & Cities Award, http://www.tpn7055.ca/tpnaward.html

The other award through TPN is the Canadian Provinces award, http://www.tpn7055.ca/cpa.html

Besides awards, new bands or DX goals you could try a new mode. Maybe return to CW or try a digital mode. I have been having great fun on PSK31 in the last few months and I have a personal project targeting for WAS at QRP levels on PSK. For information on the digital modes check out the information at http://home.teleport.com/~nb6z/

Another mode, if we can apply that term here, is the IRLP. This could prove to be an interesting operating project. Using your FM

WEB RESOURCES *(Continued)*

HT you can talk to hams in the UK, USA, Europe and even Antarctica. Details can be found on the official IRLP homepage at http://www.irlp.net/

Computers

The IRLP and PSK31 involve the use of computers. There are plenty of projects on the computer for an amateur; here are a few brief suggestions.

Start eQSLing. Make an eQSL card and when you make a contact, check if they are registered users of eQSL and if so send your eQSL card. To use eQSL is free although donations are requested, especially to gain access to certain features. Check it out at http://www.eqsl.cc/qslcard/

Do not worry about designing an eQSL, the site leads you through easy steps to producing your eQSL.

Of course another project is to use your wordprocessor and graphics programs and produce your own paper cards. With colour printers and colour photocopying you can quite easily generate cards. To help you do this check out the following sites

http://www.nemr.net/~aschmitz/qslcard.html

http://www2.arrl.org/news/features/2002/06/14/1/?nc=1

http://www.hfradio.org/wb8rcr/

The last link is for some free Windows software to design your own QSL card.

Of course if you are QSLing you need to keep a log. You may be using paper logs or no log at all. Another project is to get organised with some logging software. There are quite a number of programs out there, as a starting point here are three.

DXKeeper is a part of the DXLab suite of free software. It can be found at http://www.qsl.net/dxkeeper/

You could make a project centred on DXLab and installing and using the transceiver control software (known as Commander), PSK31 software (known as WinWarbler) and mapping/location software (known as DXView) plus the other software. Check out the whole collection at http://www.qsl.net/dxlab

If you do not use the Windows operating system then there is 'jLog' which is written in java and so can be run on any operating system with java (including Windows). Its home page is http://jlog.org/

Another free Windows logging application is Lux-Log, it can be found at http://www.qsl.net/lx1no/lloq_win.html

Check out some screenshots of it in action at http://www.qsl.net/lx1no/ll_snap.html

It looks comprehensive.

I have to say I do not use any of these pieces of software (I run Linux, but may try jLog), however for the opinion of others check the eham.net product reviews of logging software at http://www.eham.net/reviews/products/27

As a final project suggestion what about your own web site? Perhaps you have amateur radio information, anecdotes or an equipment collection that you may want to share with others, or perhaps you just want to describe yourself and your station so your contacts can find out a little more about you. Producing a web page is not too difficult and you likely will have the software to do it on your computer now, perhaps in an 'office' type package or in a browser (eg. Netscape has Netscape Composer in it). To help you, borrow a book from the library or search the web for tutorials. Internet service providers often provide web space for subscriber's pages, or register with QSL.NET who provide free hosting of web pages for radio amateurs. See http://www.qsl.net/

I have registered with QSL.NET and have added 'produce a web page or two' to my large list of projects to be done. If it goes well I may write about my experience in producing a web page in a future article. If you have your own web pages, or set one up in the near future, do let me know and I will include it in a future article.

I hope this has given you an idea or two for a project. Do not forget to exercise sensible caution when using the web for information, services or software. Till next time.

73
Alan
VA3STL
va3stl@rac.ca

Contest Rules continued from page: 4

Awards

Awards will be given to the highest score in the following categories

* highest scoring base station,
* highest scoring mobile station,

* highest scoring newcomer. (A newcomer is defined here as someone licensed in the last 18 months. This allows graduates from the last two OVMRC classes to aim for this award. Note: this award does not preclude the same station from winning any of the other awards.)

* contact over the longest distance (fill in your furthest QSO on your summary sheet).

Awards will be in the form of a certificate.

All scores will be published in the Rambler.

Not got a 2m FM transceiver?

In the spirit of having fun and meeting club members it is encouraged that club members that would otherwise operate solo (base or mobile) team up with a member who has not got 2m capabilities. A pair operating as a team can submit a single entry form under both names/callsigns. To help with log checking though please use only one callsign for QSOs.

A list will be kept of club members willing to share their station with another member, or members looking for a station to operate with. These lists will only contain club members.

Finally...

Have fun and if you are a mobile unit be safe on the road.

For further information or questions see

Alan Steele VA3STL (va3stl@rac.ca) or Gerry Trottier VA3GLT (va3glt@rac.ca)

Summary sheets will be published later.❖