



In the photo left to right:

Arthur Smith VA3BIT, Joe Lemieux VE3EUS, Chris Wiesner VE3CUZ, Peter Noel VE3DPN, Beth Webster VA3CEW, Michel Barbeau VE3EMB, Maurice-Andre VE3VIG, Ernie Jury VE3EJJ, Larry Wilcox VE3WEH.

Missing: Robert Plante VA3SHO, Bill Hall VA3WMH, Doug Lackey VE3DLJ, Cam Milne VA3FO, Robert Cherry VE2AGE.

## MINUTES, OVMRC GENERAL MEETING, November 19, 2009

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The President, Michel VE3EMB, called the meeting to order at 19:35. There were 31 people in attendance.

### 2. GUESTS AND VISITING AMATEURS

Jean VE3DNI, Jean-François VA3FTF, Heidi, Kenneth VA3NEK and Kieran VA3KS.

### 3. PROGRAM

Alan VA3STL presented a very comprehensive talk on amateur radio projects for both, the beginning and advanced builder. He discussed some of the reasons for building equipment, the

basic tools needed for the job, the types of kits available, some of the main suppliers, and some of the resources available to builders. He contributed a complete kit for a radio receiver of his own design for a door prize. The large number of questions directed at Alan during and after the talk confirmed the high level of interest that local amateurs have in this topic.

Building is generally cheaper than buying. It can meet very specific needs,

## OVMRC Executive 2009-2010

### President:

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### Secretary:

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## Standing Committee Chairpersons

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### Publicity & Programs:

Vacant

### Radio Operations:

Doug Lackey, VE3DLJ

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### Newsletter Editor:

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### Webmaster:

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*For information about the duties and responsibilities about all Executive and Chair positions, please visit the OVMRC forums, Member section or contact any member of the Executive.*

## Sponsors

The OVMRC acknowledges the following organizations for their support of our activities:

- **Acceptable Storage**, Ottawa, ON
- **Bytown Marine**, Ottawa, ON
- **Elkel Ltee.**, Trois-Rivières, QC
- **Kenwood Electronics Canada Inc.**, Mississauga, ON
- **Ottawa Camping Trailers Ltd.**, Ottawa, ON
- **Travel-Mor Trailer Sales**, Ottawa, ON

The club's web site is hosted by **Magma Communications Ltd.**  
[www.ovmrc.on.ca](http://www.ovmrc.on.ca)

## OVMRC Life Members

Maurice-André Vigneault, VE3VIG

Ralph Cameron, VE3BBM

Doug Carswell, VE3ATY

Doreen Morgan, VE3CGO

Ed Morgan, VE3GX

Bill Wilson, VE3NR

## OVMRC Repeaters

147.300 MHz(+)

444.200 MHz(+)

## Amateur Radio Exhibit

**VE3JW**

Web site:

<http://ve3jw.tripod.com>

Canada Science & Technology  
Museum

*The Rambler is the official newsletter of the Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club Incorporated and is published 11 times a year (monthly, except for July). Opinions expressed in the Rambler are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the OVMRC, its officers or its members. Permission is granted to republish the contents in whole or in part, providing the source is acknowledged. Commercial use of the contents is expressly prohibited. Submit articles to the editor or by e-mail to:*

it improves technical skills, it provides a great source of satisfaction, and items built can generally be fixed if they break. Because building is not necessarily intuitive, breaking a project down into distinct units can help make it much more manageable.

In addition to the usual pliers and wire cutters, other tools useful for the amateur radio builder include a multi meter, a soldering station (which provides much better temperature control than a simple soldering iron), a de-soldering tool, copper cuttings for cleaning the tip of soldering irons and needle files.

Throughout his talk, Alan emphasized safe workshop practices. An extractor should be used to remove rosin flux fumes from the shack, hands need to be washed, especially when using lead solder and both, safety glasses and a wrist grounding strap, should be worn.

Kits are an efficient way to build amateur radio projects because the design has already been done, the circuit board and the parts are provided, there are no nasty chemicals to manipulate, cabinets are normally available at the time of purchase, and a finished project is relatively quick to attain. There is often support available on chat groups and these groups can be helpful in choosing the right kit.

Suppliers of amateur radio kits include Elecraft (the leading supplier), Byonics, Coastal Chipworks, The DZ Company (DZkits), Hendricks, QRPme, Small Wonder Labs, Ten-Tec and Wilderness Radio (NorCal and Sierra brands). Mono band kits and receiver kits are cheaper to buy than multi band kits or transceiver kits. SWR meters and other amateur radio accessories such as baluns, dummy loads, noise generators, transverters and tuners are also available in kit form.

Kits should not be built in a rush. A thorough inventory of kit parts should be made before starting to build. Parts are easily tracked when stored in individual compartments such as those found in fishing boxes. FETs and similar parts need to be protected from static. The value of resistors needs to be checked. It is often best to solder parts one at a time. The

beginning amateur will need to get used to winding toroids and aligning using signals such as those from WWV and CHU.

Alan also discussed home brewing amateur radio equipment. He recommended starting with a simple proven circuit diagram, perhaps from a source such as *QST Magazine*. The equipment that is to be home brewed should preferably be something that will be useful. A first step is often the collection and salvaging of used parts. Parts themselves can sometimes spark an idea for a project. Learning to solder can be accomplished with junk parts. It is important to read and ask questions. The knowledge of electronics accrues with time. Home brewed equipment rarely work the first time. Diagnosing problems is part of the building process. Alan showed a microphone foot switch constructed from a computer mouse, a simple direct conversion receiver and an antenna tuner, all equipment made in his brewery. He illustrated the "Manhattan," copper plate and "dead bug" technique of mounting components. He also talked about Arduino boards, which are finding their way, not only into beacons, keyers, meters and temperature sensors, but also into toys and clothing.

Alan mentioned many of the resources available to the amateur radio builder including *The ARRL Handbook for Radio Amateurs*, *The Electronics of Radio*, *Experimental Methods in RF Design*, *Hints and Kinks for the Radio Amateur*, *Low Power Scrapbook*, *More QRP Power and QRP Basics*. For more information, visit Alan at [VA3STL@wordpress.com](mailto:VA3STL@wordpress.com) and at <http://VA3STL.wordpress.com>.

## 4. COMMITTEES

### 4.1 Amateur Radio Exhibit

#### a) Planned Upgrades to Club Station

Maurice-André VE3VIG reported that a number of projects to upgrade the Club station VE3JW have been presented to the Canada Science and Technology Museum and that he was awaiting feedback.

### 4.2 Amateur Radio Training

#### a) Radio Theory Course

Ernie VE3EJJ reported that seven students remain in the radio theory course offered by the Club. Students have now been exposed to half of the course material.

### 4.3 Membership

Joe VE3EUS reported that the Club now has more than 90 members.

### 4.4 Publicity and Programs

The chair of that committee is vacant. The Club is seeking a volunteer to fill it.

### 4.5 Radio Operations

Doug VE3DLJ congratulated Ante VA2BBW who, for the first time, recently conducted the Welcome Mat Net. Twelve amateurs checked into that net. The audience responded in support with a very warm round of applause. Ante is a likely candidate for the Christmas Morning Net.

### 4.6 Special Events

Peter VE3DPN and Beth VA3CEW encouraged all to attend the Club Christmas party to be held December 17 at the Canada Science and Technology Museum. Participants should indicate what dish they plan to bring. Club members, their significant others, guests and members of other clubs are welcome.

### 4.7 Website

Chris VE3CUZ offered to link the blogs and other sites of radio amateurs to the Club website. Amateurs are encouraged to join the Club forum and the Club mailing list.

## 5. BUSINESS

### a) Sale of Surplus and Obsolete Equipment

Maurice-André VE3VIG acted as auctioneer of surplus and obsolete equipment accumulated by the Club over the years. Much of that equipment came from donations. Members and visitors were able to buy equipment at interesting prices. It will come as no surprise that many items failed to find a home!

## 6. UPCOMING CLUB MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Club executive will be held on Thursday, November 26 at 19:00 at the Canada Science and Technology Museum.

The Club Christmas party will be held on

December 17 at the Canada Science and Technology Museum.

## 7. DOOR PRIZES AND DRAWS

The door prizes were won by Darin VE3OIJ, Hervé VA3RKO, Joe VE3EUS, Kenneth VA3NEK, Michel VE3EMB, Pat, Paul VA3PAN, René VA3FTF and Stan VA3SMM. The 50/50 draw (\$21.50) was won by David VE3ZZU. Girl Guide cookies, for which names are drawn from the latest list of OVMRC Forum participants, were won by Kenneth VA3NEK and by students of the radio theory course.

## 8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 22:00 at which time the audience was invited to continue discussing amateur radio build projects with Alan VA3STL. Subsequently, many of the attendees proceeded, as is customary, to the local coffee shop to talk radio. All are welcome to join in after the meeting.

## 9. SIGNED

Joe VE3EUS, Secretary

## MAKING ROOM FOR THE ESSENTIAL

We are very fortunate, at the Canada Science and Technology Museum, to have good cooperation with the Administration. Not only they provide space for our Amateur Radio Exhibit but also, they have allowed us a small storage area for our spare parts.

We have been using this space for VE3JW needs and recently, for donations to our Club. To such extent that it became difficult to walk into this area.

Lately, as donations of equipment to the OVMRC increased, we were running out of room to store it while waiting for takers. We decided to have members of the OVMRC help us out in storing the donations.

At the Nov 19 OVMRC monthly meeting, all the donations were on display on the stage of the CSMT Auditorium. Some of them were put aside as door prizes for that evening, and some lesser value items were

free for the taking for members to store and enjoy at their home.

For the more important items, members were asked to contribute a sum to the OVMRC for the enjoyment of the items while stored at their home, the understanding being on a non-refundable, non-returnable basis.

In this way, we have insured that the donations are being used by Amateurs, members of the OVMRC, in order to satisfy the donors' intention to the Club, and at the same time we have amassed a nice sum totaling \$250.00 for the Club's operation.

We can now use the limited space at the Museum to fit an additional metal filing cabinet, graciously donated by Ed Morgan, VE3GX, that will be used to file Club Administrative and Historical materiel which we had to keep in boxes on the floor.

A win-win situation for all. And what a coincidence! Alan, VA3STL, gave us a very interesting presentation on kit building just prior to the distribution of the spare inventory. A timely occasion to fill up on parts and accessories for the many projects that Alan had sparked in the minds of the attendance.

Enjoy kit building!

Maurice-André Vigneault, VE3VIG  
Amateur Radio Exhibit Group, VE3JW



Filing cabinet in place in our storage area. Ed Morgan VE3GX and Doreen Morgan VE3CGO were kind enough to donate it to the club. It is certainly needed to store our increasing volume of club records. Thanks again Ed and Doreen and to Joe Lemieux VE3UES for assisting with moving it.

Larry Wilcox, VE3WEH





From left to right are: Sandy Haggart VE3HAZ, Santa Claus - Jolic Nicolas, Joe Lemieux VE3EUS, Dan Doctor VE3XDD, and Larry Wilcox VE3WEH.

## “Talk to Santa” at the Canada Science & Technology Museum, Dec. 5, 6, 2009

by Larry Wilcox VE3WEH

In December 1960, the first annual “Children’s Christmas Party” was held with Gerry King VE3GK as Santa Claus. There were presents, cartoons, games and food. This event became one of the most popular of our annual activities. I became involved as the Coordinator for the “Talk to Santa” event at the Museum in 1997. Over the years since, we have had many of our Club members acting as elves as well as some Amateurs from other clubs.

This year was no exception. It was just like Magic seeing their eyes light up as they talked to Santa Claus at the North Pole! Just have a look at the photos! This annual event was a resounding success again, thanks to our new Special Events Chair, Peter Noel (no relation to Santa!)

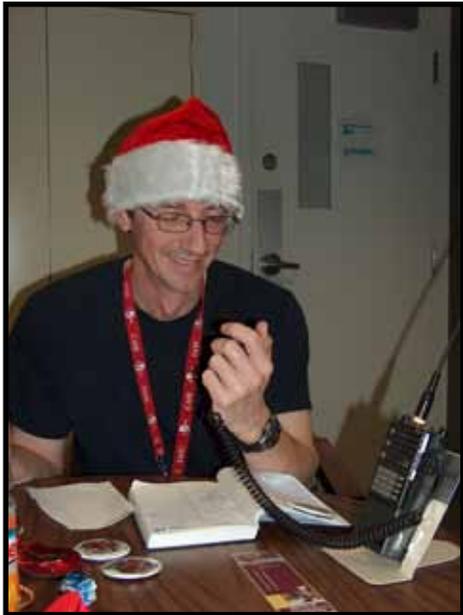
VE3NJS. Peter organized the event but, unfortunately, was unable to attend. A total of 105 children spoke with Santa at the North Pole through the magic of Amateur Radio! Our very courteous Santa Elves included Arthur Smith VA3BIT, Joe Lemieux VE3EUS, Sandy Haggart VE3HAZ, Dan Doctor VE3XDD, and yours truly.

During the two days, we offered children an opportunity to “Talk to Santa.” Through the magic of a special long distance FM frequency to the North Pole, Santa spoke to each child via the magic of Amateur Radios held by his elves. The sound of Santa’s reindeer bells was heard by many of the children as they told him of their wishes for Christmas and wished him Merry Christmas in return. One child excitedly exclaimed to one of our elves, “How can Santa be at the North Pole right now, he’s going to be on Parliament Hill in two hours?” Our elf was at a loss for words!

All the children were presented with an outstanding green, bilingual, certificate to confirm they had indeed spoken to Santa at the North Pole. Santa’s elf, Dan Doctor VE3XDD, typed up the certificates for the children and signed them before giving each child their certificate along with a candy cane, compliments of the Museum.

As I write this, Dasher, Dancer, Blitzen, Donner, Comet, Cupid, Prancer, Vixen, and Rudolph the Red nosed reindeer, are waiting patiently for their race around the world to deliver Christmas presents to these and millions of other children. Most of the children were quite modest with their wish list. They asked Santa for a variety of toys, many of them electronic. Interestingly, the Wii and cell phones were requested most often. Santa was kept busy writing his long list of requests and wishing all of them and their families a “Very Merry Christmas!”

A big thanks to Santa Claus, (Johic Nicolas, a very effective bilingual Santa from the Aviation Museum) and to all of his Elves who made this such a successful event! The Museum appreciates your help and was very pleased with the turnout.



Santa, Johic Nicolas.

Photos courtesy of Larry Wilcox, VE3WEH



Art VA3BIT and two children with their father.



Elves Joe VE3EUS checking radio and Dan VE3XDD.



Sandy VE3HAZ with very happy girl speaking to Santa.

**Next Club Meeting**

**17<sup>th</sup> Dec**

**CSTM**

**Bring a dish**