From the Gavel…

Greetings and welcome to the final MARC newsletter for the 08/09 club year. This is my first "Gavel" as your new President so hopefully you will still be awake by the time you finish reading it!

I remember the first meeting I attended back in 2001. It was early September when I made my way down to the Scout Hall on King Street. I was greeted almost right away by a fellow named Art Sinclair (VE3SQG). We shook hands and he welcomed me to the club. The meeting got underway a little after 7:30 that evening, the delay being attributed to an inside joke that we were waiting for Michael (VE3TKI) and Lorne (VE3CXT) who were almost invariably the last to arrive. I don't remember much of the content of the meeting but I do remember I was introduced to a number of friendly people that night. By the end of the evening I could tell that this was an active and dynamic club; this was the club I wanted to belong to.

Less than a year later I was approached by Lorne (who was club President at the time) to consider becoming involved in the MARC executive. The Treasurer position was opening up and after mulling it over I agreed to throw my name in the ring. I won the position and my first duty was to draft my first ever budget. The other club executives were very helpful and provided their suggestions. The budget ultimately was approved at a subsequent club meeting and thus began my two-year journey as MARC Treasurer.

Fast forward to 2008. After a few years of being a less-than-involved club member I decided to make a point of attending more meetings. We were no longer at the same meeting spot but I enjoyed seeing the old faces again and was happy to see many new ones. In early 2009 after some discussions with

some MARC executives I was asked to consider running for MARC President. "Wow" I thought, club president. I wasn't sure if I could make that kind of commitment and asked to think it over for a few days. The President's position is a very important one, I thought. You're the leader of the club; you're the one who runs the meetings; you're the one who has their finger on the pulse of an organization comprising over 100 members. This was not a decision to be taken lightly.

A few days would pass and I decided I would go for it. The elections were held in April and lo and behold, I was elected the next MARC President! (Well, to be honest I won by acclamation but the effect was still the same.) So, here I am today: Putting pen to paper or, actually, fingers to keyboard, and drafting my first Gavel.

The point of all of this? Well, I guess what I'm trying to say in so many words is "get involved". Our club is a reflection of our members. Many of our members are involved but there is always much that can be done, such as participating in the upcoming Juvenile Diabetes walk, working the upcoming RAC Canada Day Contest for a few hours, or joining us at Field Day. We always welcome people who want to help.

In closing I just want to say thank you all for your support of MARC. Have a safe and relaxing summer and see you in September!

Jeff Stewart VA3WXM

Sunday Brunch
Sunday brunches are held on the first Sunday of each month. Time is 9:30AM at Shopsy's, 6986 Financial Drive Unit 5 Mississauga (at the corner of Mississauga Rd and Derry Rd). All are welcome to come out and have an opportunity to chat in an informal setting.

Club Nets
2 Metre Tuesday Night Phone Net Join in on the chatter starting at 8:30PM every Tuesday on the club repeater. Hosted by various net controllers. 145.430MHz Tone 103.5 Minus (-) offset. Contact our VHF Net Manager, **Lorne (VE3CXT)**, if interested in becoming a net controller.

75 Metre Sunday Night Net Starts at 8:30PM every Sunday. Hosted by various net controllers. Contact our HF Net Manager, **Michael (VE3TKI)**, if interested in becoming a net controller.

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Commentary

The big day is almost here and you can sense the excitement in the air. Field Day is an event for most active hams to show off their skills and have fun at the same time. Those 24 hours usually bring up many emotions starting with the excitement of setup and the anticipation that goes with it. This is then followed by the joy of the first QSO and the promise of many more. Surprises are galore when you get a special station or work that rare DX station. When Mother Nature decides to play her cruel tricks, be it a thunder shower or poor band conditions, frustration quickly sets in. Whatever the combination, it is an emotion soup at the end of the day but if you ask anyone who participated they only remember Field Day being awesome.

So the big question is, are you ready? I am convinced that field day is a great opportunity to try out something new, be it putting up a special antenna, working a new mode or even learning to use a different rig. I'll admit that I am all excited about the upcoming field day. I hope to see all of you at the site and look forward to the experience once again.

On another note, as discussed in the meetings in the last few months, we have been looking for a new editor to take on publishing The Communicator, going forward. The newsletter is the soul of the club and after three years of being the editor, I believe that the newsletter needs fresh ideas and a new steward. I am happy to announce that Ed Spingola, VA3TPV has agreed to take on the role of the editor starting from the September 2009 issue. After speaking with him, and I can assure you that the newsletter has a great future.

Without your constant support in the form of ideas, suggestions and article submissions, we would not have such a fine newsletter month after month. I thank you all for that. I request that you extend Ed the same support you gave me in the last three years.

MARC is a fine club and together we can keep it that way or maybe make it even better. The club has each one of us to thank for that.

73,

Thomas VA3TMB.

The Communicator Newsletter of the Mississauga Amateur Radio Club

CLUB CALENDAR FOR 2009

June, 2009
01 Mon NEWS
02 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
04 Thu Exec Meeting
07 Sun Sunday Brunch - Shopsy's
07 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
09 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
11 Thu Club Meeting - Members night
14 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
16 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
18 Thu Radio Night at Club Station
21 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
23 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
25 Thu Club Meeting - Pot Luck Dinner
27 Sat ARRL Field Day Contest
28 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
30 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
30 Tue RAC Canada Day Contest

July, 2009
05 Sun Sunday Brunch - Shopsy's
11 Sat IARU HF World Championship
25 Sat IOTA

Provisional Schedule Below...

August, 2009
01 Sat North American QSO Party
02 Sun Sunday Brunch - Shopsy's
07 Fri Worked All Europe DX Contest
15 Sat North American QSO Party

September, 2009
01 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
03 Thu Exec Meeting
06 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
08 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
10 Thu Club Meeting - Speaker's night
11 Fri Worked All Europe DX Contest
13 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
15 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
17 Thu Radio Night at Club Station
20 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
22 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net

24 Thu Club Meeting - Member's night
27 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
29 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net

October, 2009
01 Thu Exec Meeting
04 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
06 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
08 Thu Club Meeting – Speaker's night
11 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
13 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
15 Thu Radio Night at Club Station
18 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
20 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
22 Thu Club Meeting - Member's night
23 Fri CQ WW DX Contest
25 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
27 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net

November, 2009
01 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
03 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
05 Thu Exec Meeting
07 Sat ARRL Sweepstakes
08 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
10 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
13 Thu Club Meeting - Speaker's night
15 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
17 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
19 Thu Radio Night at Club Station
21 Sat ARRL Sweepstakes
22 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
24 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
26 Thu Club Meeting - Member's night
27 Fri CQ WW DX Contest
29 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net

December, 2009
01 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
03 Thu Exec Meeting
06 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
08 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
10 Thu Club Meeting - Speaker's night
13 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
15 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
17 Thu Radio Night at Club Station

NOTES
1. Meetings start 7:30PM at St. Thomas A Becket Church Hall, 3535 South Common Court unless otherwise noted.
2. Brunch is at 9:30AM unless otherwise noted.
3. Classes are from 7:00PM - 9:00PM at Meals On Wheels at 2445 Dunwin Drive

Visit our website: http://www.marc.on.ca for any updates of the calendar.

The Hammond Radio Museum

By Earle Laycock, VE3XEL

Thanks to Easter displacing us from our usual club meeting at St. Thomas A Becket Anglican Church, I had opportunity to visit the Hammond Radio Museum in Guelph with other club members. I was surprised at how much the museum had expanded from my last visit which I sadly admit was quite a while ago.

In fact, the founder Fred Hammond VE3HC welcomed me the last time I visited the museum and Fred became a silent key in 1999. I remember the first time I met Fred. Here I was, a new ham in the early 1990's meeting a legend of his time. Someone who was friends with such folks as King Hussein JY1 (SK) of Jordan, met me at the door and shook my hand as if he'd been waiting my arrival for decades! Fred was that type of person: very humble, very genuine, a real gentleman and ambassador for amateur radio.

That night Fred took us around his museum and showed us each piece on display, lovingly giving us the history of each item. The highlight for me was the spark-gap transmitter which Fred obligingly fired up much to our delight and amazement. The ozone was heavy in the air as the high voltages jumped around the device! Glorious!

This visit was different. No Fred but we were met by the museum's curator, Nori Irwin-Hahn VE3AQZ and Lloyd Swackhammer who has provided a lot of unique radios and accessories to the museum from his personal collection.

Figure 1Curator Nori VE3AQZ points out the MARC plaque. She promised that she hadn't just mounted it for our visit either. The plaque holds an important position just outside the museum's radio shack.

Fred apparently had his preferences and never had any Heathkit equipment in his museum nor transistor radios. Now there are displays of both, kindly donated by other collectors.

Figure 2Many of us went to sleep dreaming about building and owning a Heathkit !

The most impressive item this time was a backup transmitter from the USS Missouri where the Japanese surrendered to end WWII. This equipment appeared to be made of amour plate steel and weighed so much that Fred could not place it his museum originally because the second floor could not take the weight. Apparently the United States decided to scrap this particular transmitter and someone informed Fred. He was told he could have it but had to supply his own truck to haul it back to

Guelph. Fred obliged and just made it across the border when the US Government had second thoughts. Too late!

Fred said he didn't want to return the transmitter but that all were welcome to visit the equipment as often as they wished. And Fred would keep his word, probably offering coffee and cookies to any who came by.

The Hammond Manufacturing Company paid the bills for Fred's museum and was called to produce parts for the

Avro Arrow, Canada's mach 2 supersonic fighter jet. The Conservative government under John G. Diefenbaker cancelled the Avro Arrow in February 1959. To add insult to injury, all plans, parts and jets were to be destroyed under government supervision…even mock-ups. This must have been too much for Fred to endure since one flight computer managed to survive this directive and is now on display in the museum.

Various club members enjoying the museum, including Ki VA3PEN and his XYL.

Asim VE3XAP is always on the look-out for DXing equipment for VE3MIS's Club Station. Looks like he may be getting a few ideas here…

In the early years, radios were powered by batteries which had to be recharged and sometimes leaked. My father-in-law came from a poor family and ruined a brand new pair of pants carrying batteries for his parent's radio. To avoid such calamities, Rogers in Toronto began manufacturing radios that could run off house power. In the early days, you just screwed in an adapter to the light bulb socket and ran the power cord directly into the Rogers "Battery-less" Radio. The callsign CFRB stands for "Battery-less Radio". Here is a classic Rogers radio.

Besides being a piece of craftsmanship, the Rogers "Battery-less Radio" could be plugged into the house wiring avoiding expensive and messy batteries!"

Hopefully these pictures and stories have convinced you to visit the Hammond Radio Museum and spend some time viewing the history of radio in Canada.

For more information call the Museum at 519-822-2441, extension 590. Or, email the Curator, Nori Irwin-Hahn at curator@HammondMuseumOfRadio.org

**The Hammond Radio Museum
595 Southgate Road
Guelph, Ontario
N1G-3W6**

To view the website, go to:
http://www.hammondmuseumofradio.org/index.html

ARRL field day tips and techniques that everyone can use

From http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2009/05/28/10840/

Many amateurs treat ARRL Field Day (June 27-28) as a contest, even though it isn't one <http://www.arrl.org/fieldday>. But if your idea of Field Day fun is to go for the highest score possible, ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X, offered the following suggestions at the ARRL Field Day Forum at the 2009 Dayton Hamvention.

1) You will get many more stations in your log by calling CQ than by tuning the dial and answering CQs; however, if you're calling CQ and not getting any replies, keep calling. Most major contesters call CQ for several minutes at a time before giving up. Giving up after three or four CQs is giving up too soon.

2) Keep your CQs short and to the point: "CQ Field Day, CQ Field Day, Whiskey-One-Alfa-Whiskey, Field Day." Wait about 5 seconds between CQs -- this gives stations enough time to answer you.

3) Use standard phonetics. "Cute" phonetics don't always get through and they can confuse newer operators.

4) When working a station, you should give your exchange information only once and keep it simple. "Whiskey-One-Alfa-Whiskey, copy three Foxtrot Connecticut, QSL?" If they didn't get all of the exchange, they will ask for a repeat.

5) If you are running a pileup: Once you have pulled a call out of the pileup, give your exchange information first. Here's an example: "Whiskey-One-Alfa-Whiskey, copy 3F Connecticut, QSL?" Don't ask for the calling station's information first -- this will reduce any sense of rhythm and timing in the pileup.

6) If you get a pileup of stations and can't make out an entire call, listen for one letter and ask for it specifically: "The station with Delta only, go ahead."

7) When you get the other station's information, keep your knowledgment simple. "QSL, thanks, QRZ Field Day from Whiskey-One-Alfa-Whiskey."

8) Find a comfortable pace for you and maintain that pace. You will tire quickly if you are screaming into the microphone or trying to work stations too quickly. This leads to inefficiency.

9) Use a headset with a boom microphone and a foot switch -- this frees up your hands to log QSOs. Writing or typing with a mike in your hand slows you down.

10) Go for as many bonus points as you possibly can. Numerous opportunities exist, from copying the Field Day message to sending traffic to using natural power for QSOs.

These tips should help maximize your score on Field Day. Remember: No matter how you choose to enjoy Field Day, maximize your fun, however you define it.

Amateur Radio Contesting FAQ

By Andrew Roos ZS1AN http://www.qsl.net/zs1an/contesting_faq.html

1.   Why take part in contests?

Everyone has their own reasons. Some of mine are: to sharpen my operating skills, to learn to get the most I can out of my equipment, to compete against my peers, to be a part of the community of contesters.

2.   How is the winner determined?

The winner in each category is the station which gets the most points in that category.

3.   How are points scored?

Each QSO will score a certain number of points. The number of points scored for a QSO may depend on the location of the station contacted - for example in the CQ Worldwide DX contest stations on the same continent as yourself count 1 point each, stations on a different continent count 3 points and contacts between two stations both located in North America count 2 points. In other contests, QSOs for certain stations may count for more points than QSOs with others - for example, in the ARRL 10m contest, contacts with stations holding Novice or Technician Plus class licenses count more than contacts with other license classes. In contests which allow you to work in different modes (for example, CW and SSB) the number of points may also depend on the mode.

4.   What is a "multiplier"?

As well as getting points for each QSO, most contests allow you to get multipliers from certain QSOs. For example, you might get a multiplier for every different country (DXCC entity) you work on each band during the contest. Your final score for the contact will then be calculated by multiplying the total of all your QSO points by the number of multipliers you worked. For example, if you worked 100 stations at 2 points per QSO and 20 multipliers, then your total QSO points would be 100 x 2 = 200, and your multiplier is 20, so your final score would be 200 x 20 = 4000 points.

5.   What sort of things count as multipliers?

That depends on the particular contest, so I will give a few examples:

- In the CQ Worldwide DX contest, countries (DXCC entities) and CQ zones both count as multipliers. So if you work 100 countries in 20 zones, you would have a total of 100 + 20 = 120 multipliers.
- In the IARU HF World Championships, ITU zones and IARU member society headquarter stations and IARU officials worked count as multipliers.
- In the ARRL International DX Contest, for stations in North America each country (DXCC entity) worked is a multiplier. For stations located outside North America, every American or Canadian state worked is a multiplier.

6.   Can I work the same station more than once?

Generally you can only work a station once on each band and mode that is allowed during the contest. For example, in an SSB-only contest, you can only work a station once on each band. In a contest that allows both CW and SSB, you may be able to work a station twice on each band, once on CW and once on SSB. But read the rules - the ARRL Sweepstakes, for instance, allows only one contact per station, period.

7.   Do I need a computerized logging program?

To make a serious attempt at an international contest, yes. Most of the smaller stations that enter a contest spend much of their time answering other stations that are calling CQ. This is known as "search and pounce" - you search for a station you need, and then pounce on it by replying to its call. However since you can only work a station once on each band and mode, before you reply to the CQ, you need to know whether you have worked the station before, and unless you have a photographic memory a computer logging program is by far the best way to do this. Contesters are a very friendly bunch, but calling the same station five or six times on the same band during a major international contest will test the patience of even the most saintly participant. Of course if you are fortunate enough to be even moderately rare DX (ZS for example), then you can get by with calling CQ yourself and waiting for a reply, log this on paper and later remove the duplicates ("de-dup" the log) by hand. This is what I did in my first major contest, but after manually de-duping 475 QSOs,

which took me a whole day, I went out and bought a logging program.

Note that for many of the smaller state or national contests, you can get by without a logging program as there are few enough entrants that you can remember who you have worked or look it up on your paper logs. These contests can be great fun and are excellent practise for the "big ones".

8.   What is a "little pistol"?

The high power multi-multi (multi operator multi transmitter) stations are often called "big guns". The "little pistols" are all us low power, single operator stations.

9.   I have a limited budget. What should I spend it on?

Assuming you already have a basic station, then I would suggest you first purchase a computer (which does not have to be new, especially if you are happy to use DOS) for logging; then upgrade your antennas; then upgrade your rig if necessary; and save the linear for last since most contests have a 100W category. If your plan to enter CW contests, then you might want to invest in a narrow filter (maximum 500 Hz) for your existing rig in the meantime, even if you plan to buy a new contesting rig in a year or two. Other people's opinions will differ.

10.   What is "running"?

When a station can stay on one frequency calling CQ and working station after station, this is known as "running". If you can do it then it is a very effective way to make lots of QSOs, although often they will be from the same area so you may not accumulate as many multipliers as you could if you were "searching and pouncing" on needed multipliers. In order to "run" successfully, you need either to have a good signal, or to be a moderately rare multiplier, in order to attract sufficient callers and hold on to your frequency. You also need to be fairly competent at recognizing callsigns, whether CW or Phone, which may be buried in a pile-up. Nobody minds if you take 4 or 5 tries to figure out the callsign of a station when you are search and pouncing and the other station is calling CQ, since you can just listen to his or her CQ call 4 or 5 times without disturbing anyone, and only your own score will suffer. However if you call CQ and then take four or five attempts to get the callsign of the station coming back to you correct, then you had better be a very rare multiplier!

11.   What is "search and pounce"?

Search and Pounce (S&P) means tuning around the band listening for stations calling CQ (or "TEST" as the case may be) and then calling them. It is the easiest way of operating for a beginner, as you can take your time to copy the callsign if necessary without any pressure (except the knowledge that time is points). Depending on band conditions, it may be worthwhile calling everyone you hear, or you may only want to call multipliers that you have not worked already. In either case, listen for the weaker signals that might get lost next to the strong stations (a narrow filter can do wonders), to make sure you don't miss out on a valuable multiplier just because there was a string local station 500 Hz away.

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