

## From the Gavel...



Well, here we are: December. We finally made it through 2009. The rapidly changing economic climate made life particularly trying for many. Fortunately, as a club we made it through another year relatively unscathed, something that I attribute to the dedication and continued support of our club members. I believe the worst is behind us and things will get better. Indeed, the holiday season is approaching, a time to get together with family and friends to celebrate. I know I'm looking forward to the down time with my family.

The past twelve months have treated the Mississauga Amateur Radio Club fairly well. For the most part everything we set out to do was accomplished. The year started off with the club well-along in the planning stages for Hamex. Asim (XAP) was Co-Chair and had a large contingent of MARC volunteers helping to organize the various aspects of the hamfest including registration, table sales, raffle tickets, parking and so on. March 28 came along and under dry, sunny conditions everything came together nicely. Financially, the event was as successful as we could have hoped for both MARC and the Peel Amateur Radio Club. It is still a significant revenue stream and helps greatly with the running of our club and the various activities we do. And I'll say if it weren't for the volunteers, Hamex wouldn't be the success it is today.

As spring rolled on we held our annual club elections in which a number of changes were made to the Board of Directors. Yours truly became the new President, Rick (IMG) "shifted seats" becoming first VP, Ki (PEN) landed the second VP spot and Asim took on the role of Secretary. Our only "veteran" was Scott (NMI) who returned for a second year as Treasurer. Thank you everyone for your support! Our Field Day committee was also hard at work putting the finishing touches on this year's

event, held again at the Meadowvale Conservation Area. Lorne (CXT) and Tom (TWG) headed up the committee with Tom working his charm at securing the permit for the location. We were a 10A designation this year and from what I've heard we won our class. Congratulations to everyone involved! With Field Day in the history books the club year drew to a close so that we could all enjoy some time off over the summer.

September brought the start of the new club year and a large turnout at the first general meeting. It was great seeing everyone again. Throughout the year a small committee comprised of Rick, Michael (TKI), Lorne, Thomas (TMB), Bryan (BLJ) and myself worked on securing space at a Mississauga Fire Department hall to house our new 6m repeater (which went on the air in September). Unfortunately, we were unable to come to an agreement with the city and the project was shelved, though there is always the possibility it could be resurrected in the future. Also occurring in early fall was the second annual West GTA Simulated Emergency Test held by the various ARES groups in the area. My understanding is it was successful, as was a SET organized by the City of Mississauga in which Mississauga ARES participated for the first time. Good job Daniel (NI) and Michael and the rest of the ARES members!

So, this brings us to the end of 2009. We've weathered the storm. We've grown as a club. And we've accomplished most of the things we set out to do. Thank you MARC members for all your hard work this year. I want to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and see you in 2010.

73 --- Jeff Stewart VA3WXM

### This Month

1. From the Gavel
2. Commentary
3. Club Calendar
4. HelloWorld, A Life In Ham Radio
4. Technical Web Site of The Month
5. Bluetooth Mobile Transceiver Operation
6. Silent Keys
6. Education Update
8. Contesting Tip
8. Working The RAC Winter Contest
11. 2008 The Communicator Index
11. 2009 The Communicator Index
12. RAC Application Form

### 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.

## Commentary



It is December and the winter weather is with us. Jeff Stewart, VA3WXM, our president, in From the Gavel, has given us some reflections the accomplishments of the previous year.

December is a short month with only one General meeting. The meeting on December 10<sup>th</sup> will be the Pot Luck Dinner. There will be no meeting on Thursday December 24<sup>th</sup> as I am sure club members will be busy with the season's festivities.

In keeping with the spirit of the season I am sure we are all looking for things to fill the "Ham Stocking". The next two articles may be of interest to you.

Read the book review, Hello World, A Life In Ham Radio. This book is a glimpse into what it is like to be an Amateur Radio Operator.

In Bluetooth Mobile Transceiver Operation, Lorne Jackson, VE3CXT, gives us a first hand view of setting up and operating the TalkSafe Bluetooth interface.

In Education Update, Earle Laycock, VE3XEL has described the 2010 Advance and CW course schedule.

See the Contest Tip and the Technical Web Site of the Month for additional interesting reading.

For the newbie or those just becoming interested in contesting, the article on Working The RAC Winter Contest is sure to give some insights into contesting.

Lastly, we have the 2008 and 2009 The Communicator Index where you can look up the articles published in these two years.

The Communicator is one of MARC's methods for communicating information to club members and is your newsletter. Let me know what you would like the newsletter to be and what you would like it to include. I solicit your input on topics for articles i.e. antennas, kits you have built, great operating experiences, operating tips, book reviews, etc. for consideration by the technical committee.

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 look forward to hearing from all you budding or aspiring authors. Your experience is what makes amateur radio what it is. Let's hear from you.

I can be reached at any club meeting or via email at va3tpv@rogers.com (remove spaces).

## Executive Directors

President	Jeffrey Stewart, VA3WXM
1st Vice President:	Rick Brown, VE3IMG
2nd Vice President:	Ki-Hup Boo, VA3PEN
Treasurer:	Scott Gregory, VA3NMI
Secretary:	Asim Zaidi, VE3XAP
Past President:	Rick Brown, VE3IMG

## Club Managers

Membership Manager	Dave Harford, VA3DFH
Education Manager	Earle Laycock, VE3XEL
House / Visitor Host Manager	Murray Yewer, VE3JMY
Newsletter Editor	Edward Spingola, VA3TPV
Net Managers HF Net	Michael Brickell, VE3TKI
VHF Net	Lorne Jackson, VE3CXT
Repeater Manager	David Shilling, VE3XDS
Assistant	Michael Brickell, VE3TKI
Assistant	Sheldon Pimentel, VE3SPJ
Assistant	John Lorenc (Sr), VA3XJL
Trustee	John Duffy, VE3DRZ
Club Station Manager	Rick Brown, VE3IMG
Assistant	Stefan Bejusca, VA3OBR
Assistant	Asim Zaidi, VE3XAP
Field Day Joint Chairman	Lorne Jackson, VE3CXT
Joint Chairman	Thomas Godden, VE3TWG
FSV Manager	David Malar, VA3MLR
Assistant	John Duffy, VE3DRZ
Program Manager	Thomas Bernard, VA3TMB
Assistant	Lorne Jackson, VE3CXT
Webmaster Manager	Dave Harford, VA3DFH
Assistant	Rick Brown, VE3IMG
Legal Consultant	Lorne Jackson, VE3CXT
Public Info/ Media Relations	Tony Champion, VA3QC
Education Basic Course Prime	Earle Laycock, VE3XEL
Advanced Course Prime	Thomas Bernard, VA3TMB

## Audit Committee

Auditors Coordinator	Basil Burgess, VE3JEB
----------------------	-----------------------

## Public Service

ARES Emergency Coordinator	Dan Goodier, VE3NI
Assistant	Thomas Bernard, VA3TMB
Assistant	Michael Brickell, VE3TKI
Assistant	David Malar, VA3MLR
Assistant	Bob Boyer, VE3XBB
Assistant	John Duffy, VE3DRZ

CANWARN Manager	Peter Mosher, VA3PKM
Special Events / Walks Manager	Bob Boyer, VE3XBB

## Special Interest Groups

Contests Manager:	Asim Zaidi, VE3XAP
Assistant	Rick Brown, VE3IMG
QSL Manager	Michael Brickell, VE3TKI

## CLUB CALENDAR FOR 2009/2010

### December, 2009

01 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
03 Thu Exec Meeting  
04 Fri ARRL 160 Meter Contest  
06 Sun Sunday Brunch – Shopsy's  
06 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net  
07 Mon Basic Class 12  
08 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
10 Thu Club Meeting - Annual Christmas Potluck night  
11 Fri ARRL 10 Meter Contest  
13 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net  
14 Mon Basic IC Examinations  
15 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
17 Thu Radio Night at Club Station  
17 Thu ARES Meeting  
18 RAC Canada Winter Contest  
20 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net  
22 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
24 Thu Christmas Eve - NO club meeting  
27 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net  
29 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net

### January, 2010

03 Sun Sunday Brunch – Shopsy's  
04 Mon Advanced Class 1  
05 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
07 Thu Exec Meeting  
11 Mon Advanced Class 2  
11 Mon CW Class 1  
12 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
14 Thu Club Meeting - Speaker's night  
18 Mon Advanced Class 3  
19 Mon CW Class 2  
19 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
21 Thu ARES Meeting  
25 Mon Advanced Class 4  
25 Mon CW Class 3  
26 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
28 Thu Club Meeting - Speaker's night

### February, 2010

01 Mon Advanced Class 5  
01 Mon CW Class 4  
02 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
04 Thu Exec Meeting  
07 Sun Sunday Brunch – Shopsy's  
08 Mon Advanced Class 6  
08 Mon CW Class 5  
09 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
11 Thu Club Meeting - Speaker's night  
16 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
18 Thu ARES Meeting  
22 Mon Advanced Class 7  
22 Mon CW Class 6  
23 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
25 Thu Club Meeting - Speaker's night

### March, 2010

01 Mon Advanced Class 8  
01 Mon Advanced Class 7  
02 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
04 Thu Exec Meeting  
07 Sun Sunday Brunch – Shopsy's  
08 Mon Advanced Class 9  
09 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
11 Thu Club Meeting - Speaker's night  
15 Mon Advanced Class 10  
16 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
18 Thu ARES Meeting  
22 Mon Advanced Class Ex  
23 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
25 Thu Club Meeting - Speaker's night  
29 Mon Advanced Class Ex  
30 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net

### April, 2010

01 Thu Exec Meeting  
04 Sun Sunday Brunch – Shopsy's  
06 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
08 Thu Club Meeting - Speaker's night  
13 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
15 Thu ARES Meeting  
20 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
22 Thu Club Meeting - Speaker's night  
27 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net

### May, 2010

02 Sun Sunday Brunch – Shopsy's  
04 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
06 Thu Exec Meeting  
11 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
13 Thu Club Meeting - Speaker's night  
18 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
20 Thu ARES Meeting  
25 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
27 Thu Club Meeting - Speaker's night

### June, 2010

01 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
03 Thu Exec Meeting  
06 Sun Sunday Brunch – Shopsy's  
08 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
10 Thu Club Meeting - Speaker's night  
15 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
17 Thu ARES Meeting  
22 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net  
24 Thu Club Meeting - Speaker's night  
26 Sat ARRL Field Day Contest  
27 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net  
29 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net

### 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.

## *Hello World: A Life In Ham Radio*

By Ed Spingola, VA3TPV

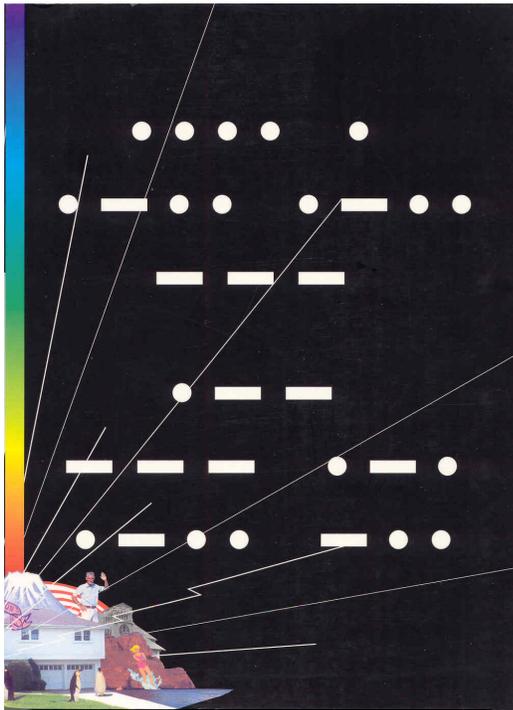
Hello World: A Life in Ham Radio (Danny Gregory, KC2KGT, and Paul Sahre, KC3KHN) (Princeton Architectural Press, 2003)

Every once in a while a unique book comes along that attracts attention. Hello World: A Life in Ham Radio is such a book. This is not a book intended for Hams. The intended audience of Hello World is the rest of the population that has never heard of Amateur Radio or contemplated why anyone would want to pursue such a hobby. However, seasoned Hams will also enjoy reading Hello World.

Hello World is not a tutorial about Amateur Radio. Rather, Hello World gives the reader a glimpse of what it is like to be an Amateur Radio Operator through the collection of 369 full colour QSL cards of the late Jerry Powell, W2OJW, starting from his first contact on June, 27, 1928 through to November 11, 1994.

The story starts sometime in 2001, when Danny Gregory, stumbled upon a three-ringed binder full of an odd collection of paper sized post cards at a local flea market. The binder contained the special QSL card collection of Jerry Powell, W2OJW. Neither Danny nor his friend Paul Sahre were hams at the time. In fact they had not heard of Amateur Radio. However, the odd collection of paper sized post cards so intrigued Danny, that he purchased the three-ringed binder of cards. This started Danny and Paul on a voyage of discovery. They were so intrigued with what they discovered that they ultimately became hams themselves.

Hello World is a gallery of domestic and foreign QSL cards in full colour. Some of the QSL cards are reproduced full size, while other cards are reproduced with a few cards per page.



What is unique about this book of 256 pages is that the authors researched the call signs, places, and dates evident on the cards. Through their research, the authors have given a glimpse of the stories behind the people, places, and history of the time of the contacts. These stories are included along with the cards which are arranged in chronological order. Included in the book is a fold out map showing the locations of all the contacts.

Throughout the book the authors have given information on various aspects of Amateur Radio. Included are descriptions on the beginnings of Amateur Radio, the Amateur's Code, a layman's overview of radio technology, ionospheric propagation, DXing and DXpeditions, call signs, station logs, Public Service, and Morse Code.

The authors have communicated the unique joy of Amateur Radio and its affect in shaping the life of Jerry Powell.

Hello World highlights the joy of Amateur Radio. The endless possi-

bility of contact with persons unknown but sharing in a common fraternity. Hello Radio is about the possibility of a contact with exotic places and the experience which is so unique to Amateur radio. As far as technology has progressed in the last 150 years, the majority of the world has never used a telephone, or the internet. Amateur Radio is still a viable resource in today's so called modern world.

In summary Hello World is a very readable introduction to the world of Amateur Radio for both the general public and the seasoned Ham. Hello World is good addition to your library or the coffee table.

## **Technical Web Site of The Month**

By Ed Spingola, VA3TPV

While surfing the internet, I discovered the Luxorion web site by Thierry Lombry, ON4SKY. This site is devoted to Astronomy and Amateur Radio. The link below is the sites Home page where you will find links to various topics.

<http://www.astrosurf.com/luxorion/menu-qls.htm>

What caught my eye on this site was "The History of Amateur Radio" link where you will find a brief history of Amateur Radio in 18 pages.

This site is definitely worth a bookmark in your internet browser.

## Bluetooth Mobile Transceiver Operation

By Lorne Jackson, VE3CXT

With the coming into force of Ontario's Bill 118, you are no longer permitted to use handheld electronic devices while driving. The authorities want both of your hands on the steering wheel. This of course applies to cell phones and so consumers are purchasing Bluetooth interface devices such as Bluetooth enabled earsets and head sets which allow them to operate their cell phones wirelessly and hands free. The Bluetooth devices usually operate at a frequency of 2.4GHz. My problem is that I find that the earsets hurt my ear canal, and so I purchased the solCHAT Bluetooth speakerphone which mounts on my car's windshield and contains a loudspeaker so that I can operate my cell phone wirelessly. This device is solar powered so after charging it initially in the car lighter socket, thereafter its solar battery is charged by sunlight. The solar battery butts up against the glass of the windshield, and is held on to the glass via two rubber mounts that are held in place by pushing them in thereby creating a lower air pressure than the surrounding atmosphere.

The question then arises, can I also operate my mobile amateur radio transceiver wirelessly via the Bluetooth interface device, be it a Bluetooth enabled earset or head set or a solCHAT device? I have in my car a Kenwood D-700A VHF/UHF mobile transceiver. I know that Ontario hams (and taxi drivers) were given a three year exemption on switching from a hand held microphones to a hands free microphone, but practicing law in the criminal law field has taught me that police routinely pull cars over and I have no confidence that the cop on the beat seeing you holding a microphone in your hand will know about the exemption. You will then likely get pulled over and have to spend 20 minutes showing him or her your documentation including a copy of your ham licence (i.e. the wallet sized card from IC). To avoid this, I decided to go wirelessly and so I purchased the TalkSafe device for mobile radios manufactured by the British company RPF Communications. They make a model for HT's and a model for mobile radios. The one for mobile radios is Model TS-062-801.

I also purchased the company's matching cable for my Kenwood rig. My rig uses a modular RJ-45 jack into which the Kenwood microphone plugs. The cable has at one end



an RJ-45 modular plug to plug into the radio. At the other end are five wires terminating in hook-like clips. Accompanying the cable is a plastic connector housing into which you are to insert the five clips and they are supposed to hook on to the little windows in the housing and stay put. You are given in the package instructions as which holes in the connector housing the respective clips are to be inserted. Unfortunately, the clips tend to back out of the housing if any strain is put on them and so after much grief I finally found a method to keep them in place, namely to coat the end of the housing, after inserting the clips into their respective holes, with a thin

coating of DAP tub and tile caulking which comes in a tube, over which I applied a thin layer of Lepages Household cement (which is a glue). After a few hours these materials will have hardened significantly and will prevent the backing out of the clips. You can then plug the completed connector into the TalkSafe unit. This connector brings into the unit PTT, Microphone and ground connections, and is a crucial part of the hookup.

There are two other cables coming out of the unit. First a power cable to plug into your car's lighter socket. Second, a cable that you must plug at one end into the TalkSafe unit and at the other end into the external speaker jack of your radio; this cable also has another speaker jack attached to it into which you must plug the plug from your external speaker. There is a SPKR button on the unit which allows you to direct the receive audio to your external speaker or alternatively to your Bluetooth interface be it your Bluetooth earset or head set, or a solCHAT type of device. There is also a TMR (timer) button on the unit to time your transmissions, but I have not used that.

The unit DOES NOT operate on a VOX basis. Instead, after you have paired the TalkSafe unit to the Bluetooth interface device (see Bluetooth interface device manual on how to do this, but note, unlike with pairing a cell phone you need not enter any codes and in fact there is no way to enter codes, but rather the Bluetooth interface device and the TalkSafe device just find each other), you transmit by pressing the call button on the Bluetooth interface: just tap it and then take your finger away. It keeps transmitting until you tap it again to stop

transmitting. You can adjust audio levels via a trimmer inside the unit. There is a LED that glows red while your PTT is on. There is another one that flashes blue until pairing occurs and then it stays solid blue.

I also purchased at a computer repair shop (Compuresource on Dundas Street) a RJ-45 splitter which allows me to plug both my Kenwood microphone and the TalkSafe into the microphone socket on the radio, so that I can choose which I would like to use without unplugging either. That cost \$5.00.

That's it in a nutshell.

The unit works well. The only annoyance was the problem with the clips coming out of the connector, and once I solved that it was an easy installation.

Radioworld does not sell the mobile TalkSafe unit any more. I purchased mine from a U.S. supplier: Cheapham.com

Notes:

- 1.) RPF Communications web site <http://www.rpf-comms.com/8.html>
- 2.) Cheapham web site <http://www.cheapham.com/TalkSafe.html>
- 3.) Scoche web site <http://www.scosche.com/products/sfID1/217/sfID2/219/productID/1723>
- 4.) [http://rpf-comms.com/doc/Radcom\\_sep07.pdf](http://rpf-comms.com/doc/Radcom_sep07.pdf)

## ***Silent Keys – In Memoriam***

*With regret, we record the passing of these Amateur Radio operators, former MARC members.*

VA3UXC, Donald Brown, of Mississauga, ON, on Sept 27, 2009, at age 76.

VE3EGM, Ernest Meyer, of Mississauga, ON, on Sept 20, 2009, at age 96.

## ***Education Update***

***By Earle Laycock, VE3XEL***

### **2010 Education Courses:**

When you are tired of playing with all of your Christmas toys, you might want to stretch your mind in the new year. MARC is offering two courses beginning in January 2010.

### **Advanced Course:**

Our very popular Advanced course is being taught again by Thomas VA3TMB and Basil VE3JEB. This boot camp style course begins Monday January 4 at the Meals On Wheels/Canadian Red Cross building, 2445 Dunwin Drive, west of Glen Erin Drive and north of Dundas Street. Classes run from 7PM until about 9PM. You should have your Basic qualification to take this course and an inquisitive mind. The instructors will lead you through the material at an easy pace and the Industry Canada exam will be given as part of the course. The fee is \$30 for MARC members and \$60 for non-MARC members. Show up on registration night if you are interested in taking the course. The RAC Advanced Study Guide CD-ROM will be used as the class text. You may purchase your RAC Advanced Study Guide CD-ROM through any local ham radio supplier, RAC or wait until January 4th and order it through the class. The Industry Canada examination will be held in the classroom on March 29th as part of the course.

### **CW Course:**

If there is enough interest, MARC will hold a CW class beginning Monday Jan 11th 2010 (a week later than the Advanced Class !) also at the Meals On Wheels/Canadian Red Cross building, 2445 Dunwin Drive, west of Glen Erin Drive and north of Dundas Street. Classes will run from 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM Monday evenings. Students should have a desire to learn Morse Code and be willing to practise 20-30 minutes per day. The Industry Canada examination will be given as part of the course which is expected to run until early March, depending upon the progress of the class. You will need to be able to copy at 5 WPM for 3 minutes and send for another 3 minutes. The instructors will be Frank VE3HTX and Earle VE3XEL. Keys will be provided and computer aided instruction will be used. The course is free to MARC members and \$30 for non-MARC members. Contact Earle VE3XEL at "ve3xel @ yahoo.ca" (remove blanks) or 905-823-1345 if you wish to take this course or show up for registration on January 11th 2007 at 7 PM.

See you in January !

73,  
Earle VE3XEL

## **Amateur radio operator ADVANCED LICENSING COURSE**

January 04 to March 29, 2010

**Mondays 7pm to 9pm**

Red Cross Meals-on-Wheels,  
2445 Dunwin Drive, Mississauga.

Fee including certification exam:

**\$30 for members**

**\$60 for non-members**



This 10 week Boot-Camp style training provides a high assurance of your success. Expect one hour of home work a week.

[www.marc.on.ca](http://www.marc.on.ca)



## Contesting Tip

By Ed Spingola, VA3TPV

The seasoned contester already knows these words of wisdom for you can here these amateurs on the band a week before the big event. For the newbie, start your contest preparations early before the contest start. Friday afternoon

is a bit late to start looking for contest software or the contest rules or having the added surprise that you're antenna system or logging PC has a few new bugs. Prepare your equipment well ahead of the contest start time.

## Working The RAC Winter Contest

By Ed Spingola, VA3TPV

I will be the first to admit that my style of operating is more casual than contest competitive. However, the Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC) sponsored contests are two of the contests that I enjoy. RAC sponsors the Canada Day Contest each July 1st and the Canada Winter Contest each December. I find that the RAC contests have an atmosphere of casual friendliness. There does not seem to be that drive to speed off to the next QSO point or multiplier. There is usually some casual conversation with the usual July 1<sup>st</sup> or season's greetings. There are of course some competitive entrants who fail to smell the roses and would prefer to seize the moment to speed off into the ionosphere in search of the next QSO point. For the contest beginner, the RAC contests are a good place to gain experience.

### Intent, Bands and Modes

All amateur radio operators throughout the world are invited to participate in the RAC Canada Day and RAC Winter Contest. The intent of the contest is to work as many contacts within Canada on the following eight contest bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, 6 and 2 meter bands using CW and Phone. RAC Contests are unusual in that both CW and Phone may be used during the same contest period.

### Contest Period

This year the RAC Winter Contest is held on December 19th, from 0000 to 2350 UTC.

### Suggested Frequencies

The RAC Contests have suggested frequencies of operation which make it somewhat easier to find other contestants. The RAC suggested frequencies are: CW – 25 kHz up from the band edge and for SSB – 1850, 3776, 7075, 7225, 14175, 21250, and 28500 kHz. In practice, you will find contestants on or about these frequencies. In crowded bands, you will need to scan the band for contacts. Check for CW activity on the half-hour.

### Contest Exchange

The contest exchange in the RAC contests for stations in Canada is a simple RS(T) (Readability, Strength, Tone) signal report and province or territory. Stations outside Canada send RS(T) and a serial number starting at 001 for

each contact. As an example, we here in Ontario would give the exchange <your call sign> 59(9) ON. ON represents the postal abbreviations for the Canadian call areas given in the multiplier section of the article.

### QSO's

As with any contest, there has to be a method of ranking the participants. Each contact that you make counts for a specific number of points. The RAC contests allocate a hierarchy of points to each contact. RAC uses the following point allocations: Contacts with stations in Canada or VE0's are worth 10 points. Contacts with stations outside Canada are worth 2 points. Contacts with RAC official stations are worth 20 points. The RAC official stations are: VA2RAC, VA3RAC, VE1RAC, VE4RAC, VE5RAC, VE6RAC, VE7RAC, VE8RAC, VE9RAC, VO1RAC, VO2RAC, VY1RAC, and VY2RAC. You may work any station once on each of the two modes (CW and phone), on each of the eight contest bands.

Duplicate contacts, called DUPS, on each mode on each band are disqualified.

It is prohibited to make CW contacts in the conventional phone sub-bands and phone contacts in the conventional CW sub-bands. Contacts or soliciting QSOs through a repeater during the contest period is not allowed.

VE0's (International waters). VE0 call signs are only intended for use when the amateur radio station is operated from vessels that make international voyages.

### Multipliers

Multipliers are used in calculating the final score of your contest activity. Most contest software that supports the RAC contests will calculate your score but you should be familiar with how this is done in order for you to formulate a contest strategy as to which contacts are worth more effort to capture.

The RAC contests have thirteen possible multipliers. These multipliers are the 10 provinces and three territories. Each multiplier may be counted once on each mode on each of the eight contest bands. The multipliers, with their postal abbreviations and prefixes are: Nova Scotia [NS] (VE1, VA1, CY9, CYØ); Quebec [QC] (VE2, VA2); Ontario [ON] (VE3, VA3); Manitoba [MB] (VE4, VA4); Saskatchewan [SK] (VE5, VA5);

Alberta [AB] (VE6, VA6); British Columbia [BC] (VE7, VA7); Northwest Territories [NT] (VE8); New Brunswick [NB] (VE9); Newfoundland and Labrador [NL] (VO1, VO2); Nunavut [NU] (VY0); Yukon [YT] (VY1); and Prince Edward Island [PE] (VY2). Certain special Canadian prefixes in use at the time of the contest may also apply; however there may be no more than 13 multipliers on each band/mode meaning that a multiplier may only be used once for each mode on each band. Please use the multiplier abbreviations noted above. In some contests you have earned a "Clean Sweep" when you have made at least one contact on each band and mode in all of the possible sections.

## Final Score

Your final score is the total QSO points from all modes and bands multiplied by the total number of multipliers from all bands.

## Busted Contacts

Busted calls are call signs incorrectly logged. The penalties assessed during log checking for a busted call, miscopied exchange, or "not in the log" QSO are there to create an incentive for accurate copy. No, a penalty is NOT an accusation of cheating...it's just a "mistake fee" like the five yards assessed for an off sides infraction in football. There is a lot of confusion about what the penalty consists of: first, the bad QSO is removed, as should be expected. Then, a number of QSO points equivalent to the number of penalty QSOs are subtracted from your total - actual additional QSOs are not removed from the log. For example, should I bust an intercontinental QSO in RAC Canada Winter Contest, that QSO will be deleted from my log and an additional points depending upon the contact type, RAC station, International, Canadian station, or multiplier will be subtracted from my total. This is sufficient penalty for me to slow down and get all the information right before logging the contact - and that's one of the reasons we have ham radio contests!

## Category Notes

An amateur may enter the RAC contest in one of the following 9 categories. Each category is eligible for a certificate or award.

- Single Operator All Bands High Power (>100 watts)
- Single Operator All Bands Low Power (max. 100 watts output)
- Single Operator QRP (max. 5 watt output) All Bands & Single Band
- Single Operator All Bands CW only, any authorized power
- Single Operator All Bands PH only, any authorized power
- Single Operator Single Band, any authorized power
- Multi-Operator Single Transmitter High Power (>100 watts)

- Multi-Operator Single Transmitter Low Power (max. 100 watts output)
- Multi-Operator Multi-Transmitter, any authorized power

As can be seen from the above categories, there is a place for the single operator running barefoot (without a linear amplifier boosting their transceiver's output power) to multi-operator and multi-transmitter stations running the legal limit high power.

## Awards

Most contests award a certificate or a plaque to the top-scoring entrant(s) in each category. See the RAC Contest Rules<sup>1</sup> for more information on the RAC Canada Contest awards.

An additional benefit of entering a RAC contest is that these contacts can also be used for other awards and certificates issued by the Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC) and other amateur radio organizations within Canada. Confirmation of the contact in the form of a signed QSL card is usually required to apply for an award. Some of these other awards are as follows:

- Worked All RAC (WARAC) Award
- Canadaward
- Maple Leaf Awards
- Worked All VE (WAVE) Award
- Worked All Canada (WACAN) Award
- Worked All VO (WAVO) Award
- Zone 2 Award

A more extensive list of Canadian awards and specific details of the above listed awards is given on the RAC web site and also in The RAC Operating Manual.

## Log Submission

Paper mail entries must contain a summary sheet showing score calculation, a dupe sheet listing calls worked on each mode on each band, a multiplier check sheet and log sheets. Log sheets must show time (UTC), band, mode, callsign of station worked, exchanges sent and received, and points claimed for each QSO. New multipliers must be clearly marked in the log.

An entry greater than 100 contacts should be submitted in digital form by email or on a 3.5" MS-DOS formatted diskette.

All entries either electronic or paper must be postmarked or electronically submitted, by January 31, 2010. Electronic entries will be confirmed by an electronic email.

Send email entries to

[canadawinter@rac.ca](mailto:canadawinter@rac.ca)

Send paper entries to:

Radio amateurs of Canada  
720 Belfast Road, Suite 217,  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1G 0Z5.

## Entry form or Cabrillo format

Paper mail entries must contain a summary sheet showing score calculation, a dupe sheet listing calls worked on each band, a

multiplier check sheet and log sheets. Log sheets must show time (UTC), band, mode, call of station worked, exchanges sent and received and points claimed for each QSO. New multipliers must be clearly marked in the log.

Any entry of 100 or more contacts should be submitted in digital form by email or on an MS-DOS based diskette. The majority of contests today require logs to be submitted in the Cabrillo text format via email. In the Cabrillo format each information field i.e. frequency, date, callsign, exchange, etc. starts at a specific location in a QSO record facilitating the computerized checking and cross checking of log files. The latest version of the Cabrillo log format is V3.0.

### RAC Cabrillo QSO Template.

```
-----info sent----- -----info rcvd-----
QSO: freq mo date time call rst exch call rst exch
000000000111111111122222222223333333333444444444555555555666666666777777777778
12345678901234567890123456789012345678901234567890123456789012345678901234567890
QSO:***** ** yyyy-mm-dd nnnn ***** nnn ***** ***** nnn *****
QSO: 21000 CW 2009-12-19 1044 VE3KZ 599 ON K4BAI 599 103
QSO: 14000 PH 2009-12-19 1050 VE3KZ 59 ON VE5RI 59 SK
QSO: 50000 PH 2009-12-19 1055 VE3KZ 59 ON VE3DC 59 ON
QSO:146520 PH 2009-12-19 1055 VE3KZ 59 ON VE3DC 59 ON
END-OF-LOG
```

Note that each field starts at the same location on each QSO record. It is this consistency of location that makes the Cabrillo format computer readable.

### Contest Logging Software

Several logging programs support the RAC Contests. QRP Canada has a free logging program for the RAC contest on their web site at

[http://www.qrp-canada.com/wp/?page\\_id=41](http://www.qrp-canada.com/wp/?page_id=41)

Another program is RAC Contest Log 1.7 by N3FJP at

<http://www.n3fjp.com/RAC.htm>

N1MM Logger also supports the RAC contests.

<http://www.n1mm.com/>

As a cautionary note, whatever logging program you choose to use or if you roll your software, the prudent thing to do is to become familiar with this program before contest start.

So sharpen your pencils. Turn on your logging software and get active.

### Contesting Strategy

The topic of contesting strategy would fill several newsletter articles ranging from propagation and band planning, dealing with sleep deprivation, and contact strategy to name a few topics. I will deal with the latter topic.

See the following link for a description of the RAC Contest entry log in the latest version of the Cabrillo format

<http://www.rac.ca/en/rac/programmes/contests/files/RAC%20Cabrillo%20V3.0.pdf>

A more general description of the Cabrillo format with sample files for various contest logs may be found at

If you are entering the contest via a paper log, then you will require the RAC Canada Winter contest entry Form given on the RAC web site<sup>1</sup> or in the November/December issue of the Canadian Amateur.

Two strategies to making contacts during a contest, each with their own merits are:

- 1) Camp-on ("running" – calling CQ)
- 2) Search and pounce.

In the camp-on method, also called "running" you operate from a single frequency calling CQ. You will get many replies. This method is good for achieving many contacts on a specific band. The strategy is that there are more amateurs operating in the contest searching the bands than operate camp-on.

In the search and pounce method, you search the band(s) looking for key contacts like multipliers which will have a greater impact to increasing your score.

Obviously no one method would produce the highest score. A mix of camp-on and search and pounce is usually employed.

That's all there is to it. See you in the contest.

This article has given a brief explanation of the RAC Canada Winter Contest rules. The full official RAC Rules are given on the RAC website<sup>1</sup>.

### Notes:

- 1.) RAC Contest Rules

<http://www.rac.ca/en/rac/programmes/contests/>

## 2008 The Communicator Index

- 2007 -2008 Education Update (Laycock) : Feb. Vol. 11.02
- 2008 – 2009 Simulated Emergency Test (SET) (Goodier) : Sep. Vol. 11.09
- A “Real” Ham’s Test (Anonymous): Dec. Vol 11.12
- Aruba Trip Notes (Goodier) : Mar. Vol. 11.03
- DXing for Beginners By A Beginner (Ernest) : Apr. Vol. 11.04
- Frequently Asked Questions About RAC ARES and NTS (RAC) : May Vol. 11.05
- How Many Hams does It take to Change A Lightbulb (Anonymous) : Nov. vol.11.11
- I’ve Got My License – Now What? (Laycock) : Mar. Vol. 11.03
- Letters to the Editor , (Jackson) : Apr. Vol. 11.04
- Letters to the Editor , (Champion) : Apr. Vol. 11.04
- Letters to the Editor , (Brickell) : Apr. Vol. 11.04
- Letters to the Editor , Missing Q-Signals (Gorsline) : May. Vol. 11.05
- Mississauga ARES Emergency Preparedness Exercise (Brickell) : Nov. Vol 11.11
- Mississauga ARES Emergency and Disaster Radio Operating Procedures (Goodier) : Mar. Vol. 11.03
- My First Transmitter (Jackson) : Jan. Vol. 11.01
- Personal Disaster Preparedness (Covington) : Jun. Vol. 11.06
- Portable Tower (Shesffer): Dec. Vol 11.12
- QSL cards – What are they and how do you exchange them? (Dean) : Oct, Vol. 11.10
- Q Signals (Anonymous) : Apr. Vol. 11.04
- SOS (Clayton) : Apr. Vol. 11.04
- Standing Wave ratio (Cauvin) : Nov. Vol 11.11
- The new VE3MIS Club Station (Brickell) : Feb. Vol. 11.02
- The Roving Reporter (VA3BOW): Jan. Vol. 11.01
- The Roving Reporter (VE3YV): Feb. Vol. 11.02
- The Roving Reporter (Hermette): Mar. Vol. 11.03
- The Roving Reporter (VA3JSG): Jun. Vol. 11.06
- The Roving Reporter (VE3DVG): Sep. Vol. 11.09
- The Roving Reporter (VA3MLR): Oct. Vol. 11.10
- The Roving Reporter (VE3JMY): Nov. Vol. 11.11
- The Roving Reporter (VA3MDB): Dec. Vol. 11.12
- The Wouff Hong (Anonymous) : Sep. Vol. 11.09
- Tiger tail (Goodier) : Apr. Vol. 11.04
- Two meter Wavelength Optimum Spaced Cobical Quad Antenna (Wendt) : Jun. Vol. 11.06
- You Might be A Ham if (Anonymous) : Sep. Vol. 11.09
- VE3MIS 2 metre repeater IRLP and EchoLink – part 1, How To Use it (Lorenc) : Nov. Vol 11.11
- WebSDR on 20m, 40m, and 80m (University of Twente): Dec. Vol 11.12
- Web Site Report (Harford) : Feb. Vol. 11.02
- What’s in Your ‘Go’ Kit? (Harris) : Jan. Vol. 11.01
- Where Am I? Everything You’ve Always Wanted to Know About Coordinates and Grid Squares But Were Afraid to Ask. (ARRL) : May Vol. 11.05
- Working Your First Amateur Satellite (Langdon) : Oct. Vol. 11.10

## 2009 The Communicator Index

- A Brief History of VE3MIS – Part 1 (Zaidi): Jan, Vol. 12.01
- A Brief History of VE3MIS – Part 2 (Zaidi): Apr, Vol. 12.04
- A Christmas Ham (Lobenstein): Jan, Vol. 12.01
- Amateur Radio Band Plans Part 1 (Spingola): Nov Vol. 12.11
- Amateur Radio Contest FAQ (Roos): Jun, Vol. 12.06
- ARES and Packet Radio Part 2 - Part 1 (Goodier): Jan, Vol. 12.01
- ARES and Packet Radio Part 2 (Goodier): Feb, Vol. 12.02
- ARES: NVIS AS-239 Antenna (Melland): Mar, Vol. 12.03
- ARRL Field Day Tips (ARRL): Jun, Vol. 12.06
- Bluetooth Mobile Transceiver Operation (Jackson): Dec, Vol. 12.12
- Cancer Fighter John Kanzius K3TUP (SK) (Dakss): Mar, Vol. 12.03
- Contesting Tip (Spingola): Dec, Vol. 12.12
- Contesting In The RAC Winter Contest (Spingola): Dec, Vol. 12.12
- Dual G5RV (Reisenauer): May, Vol. 12.05
- Education Reflections (Laycock): Apr, Vol. 12.04
- Education Update (Laycock): Sep, Vol. 12.09
- Education Update (Laycock): Dec, Vol. 12.12
- Einstein On Radio (Einstein): Sep, Vol. 12.09
- Fall Antenna System Tune-Up (Spingola): Sep, Vol. 12.09
- Ham Radio Helps Sailors (Ontario Sailor Magazine): Oct, Vol. 12.10
- Hello World, A Life In Ham Radio (Spingola): Dec, Vol. 12.12
- Hillbilly Ham Operates His Rig (Hamoprater): Feb, Vol. 12.02
- M3 FPM-1 Frequency/Power Meter Kit (Spingola): Nov Vol. 12.11
- Ontario Bill 118 (Gov. of Ont.): Oct, Vol. 12.10
- On The Road with GPS (Lorenc): Oct, Vol. 12.10
- Public Service Don’t’s and Do’s (Craigie): Jan, Vol. 12.01
- PSK31 Operating Aid (Spingola): Sep, Vol. 12.09
- QuickMix (Spingola): Sep, Vol. 12.09
- S-Meter (Spingola): Oct, Vol. 12.10
- Silent Keys, Dec., Vol. 12.12
- The Balcony Buddy 2 Meter Antenna (Blake): May, Vol. 12.05
- The Hammond Radio Museum (Laycock): Jun, Vol. 12.06
- The Invisible War (Spingola): Nov Vol. 12.11
- The Roving Reporter (VA3TPV): Jan, Vol. 12.01
- The Roving Reporter (VE3NI): Feb, Vol. 12.02
- The Roving Reporter (VA3JACQ): Apr, Vol. 12.04
- The Roving Reporter (VA3WXM): Sep, Vol. 12.09
- The Roving Reporter (VE3DRZ): Oct, Vol. 12.10
- The TAK-tenna™ (Butler): May, Vol. 12.05
- VE3MIS 2 Meter Repeater IRLP and Echo Link – Part 2 (Lorenc): Feb, Vol. 12.02
- Where Are You (Spingola): Nov Vol. 12.11
- Why 50 Ohm Coaxial Cable (Spingola): Oct, Vol. 12.10
- 40 and 80 Meter Dipole Antenna (Buchanan, Bruce): May, Vol. 12.05

## RAC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/TCA SUBSCRIPTION OPTIONS

For two- or three-year memberships or renewals please contact the RAC Office given at bottom of this page.

Please enter applicable choice(s)

Please indicate New or Renewal:	
1 year RAC membership; (includes \$45.00 subscription for TCA) @\$50.00 plus GST or HST as applicable Total \$52.50 in BC, AB, SK, MB, ON, QC, PE, NT, NU Total \$56.50 in NL, NS, NB	
1 year RAC membership only; for a blind person <u>NO MAGAZINE</u> @\$20.00 plus GST or HST as applicable Total \$21.00 in BC, AB, SK, MB, ON, QC, PE, NT, NU Total \$22.60 in NL, NS, NB	
Family membership; price per extra family member @ \$20.00 plus GST or HST as applicable per year (one TCA per family) (Does not apply to simple subscriptions.) Total \$21.00 in BC, AB, SK, MB, ON, QC, PE, NT, NU Total \$22.60 in NL, NS, NB	

## CONTACT INFORMATION

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Call sign:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>City/Town:</b>
<b>Province:</b>	<b>Postal Code:</b>
<b>Family Member Name</b>	<b>Family Member Call sign:</b>
If you enter something on line above, a charge of \$20.00 (plus taxes) will be added to your membership	
<b>Family Member Name</b>	<b>Family Member Call sign:</b>
If you enter something on line above, a charge of \$20.00 (plus taxes) will be added to your membership	
<b>Email:</b>	<b>Telephone #:</b>

## DONATION OPTIONS

Donation to the RAC Foundation enclosed	\$
Donation to the Defence of Amateur Radio Fund enclosed	\$
Donation to the Youth Education Programme enclosed	\$
Donation to the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES ) Programme enclosed	\$
<b>Grand Total:</b>	\$

## PAYMENT OPTIONS (Cheque or)

<b>Visa/MasterCard No:</b>	<b>Card Expiry Date (MM/YY):</b>
<b>Security code on back of card (CVV2):</b>	
<b>Name of person credit card is issued to:</b>	



### Mail to:

Radio Amateurs of Canada Inc.  
720 Belfast Road, Suite 217  
Ottawa, ON, K1G 0Z5  
Telephone #: 614-244-4367 or  
877-273-8304, Fax: 613-244-4369  
Email: rachq@rac.ca