

West Island Amateur Radio Club Bulletin

February 2009

President's Message

WI ~ ARCS:

On the home front:

Good news! My brother-in-law, Tom, VE3TWD is recovering at his home North of Prescott, ON after a femur replacement and some rehab. Hopefully he will back on the bands in the near future after he digs out the accumulation of "junk" in his shack. About a week ago my son and I drove down to Brockville and attended the BARC breakfast at Bud's by the Bay at 08:30 on Saturdays. Getting up at 05:00 for the trip takes some doing, but we joined the BARC gang along with my XYL and Tom's XYL who were already there after visiting Tom at the Ottawa General Rehab the previous day. The BARC group is quite an assortment of talents, many of whom frequent the Ontars Net on 3755 kHz. I spent the rest of that weekend at Tom's QTH stoking the wood stove while the XYLs visited Tom at the OG Rehab.

Back at the home QTH, I bought a DTV tuner to keep my old Sony NTSC set happy after 2009-FEB-17 deadline for US programs to go digital and guess what! Not unexpectedly I was faced with the dreaded NO SIGNAL caption of the set screen. I had noted that the analog signals (except for the locals) from the antenna were fast receding into the noise, before I bought the DTV tuner. Of course antenna failures are bound to happen in the deep of winter ... that just is an old amateur radio fact. My guess (and I am not about to climb the tower) that one side of the twin lead from the antenna feed point to the preamp on the antenna has become disconnected ... after all the damn thing is about 35 years old. Yes, I could pay for cable or satellite, but there is no fun in that. From the brisk sales of DTV tuners, I would say there are still a lot of over the air analog sets still out there. When the warmer weather arrives, I have a few more antennas "up my sleeve". It is interesting that this Apex-Digital DTV tuner has an RJ45 jack for something referred to as a "Smart Antenna" by CEA. I am looking into this. Many of the DTV standards, for those willing to browse through them, are on the ATSC.org site.

January 2009 meeting:

The 2009 Canadian Ski Marathon (which is now history) was discussed noting the request for volunteers for the 7th and 8th of February. For the mobiles at the checkpoints you had to have a 50 Watt VHF rig possibly with some deployable high-gain antennas and backups. Part of the operation was conducted on VE2RM on the 7th of Feb. The trail was Lachute to Buckingham this year. The Trivia net on Fridays 17:00-18:30 on RWI run by Wayne, VE2WRH is performing well, but we need some more advertising of this operation to attract more participation. Spread the word! The rest of the meeting was a discussion on what the members present would like to see/participate in this year for events at our meetings. A few suggestions were put forward for topics and they are on the list, but we may send out a survey form to reach more members for other suggestions.

February 2009 meeting:

Bob, VE2AXO will give us a presentation on QRP operating with examples from an ARRL member. There will be a further survey on topics for our meetings although we have some good indicators from the January meeting survey.

Reminders:

Your membership dues for 2009 are now due ... as they say. Please make sure you fill in the membership form and obtain a signed receipt when submitting your dues to the TREASURER. The forms should be available at the meetings and are on the club's WEB site (shell.pubnix.net/~wiarc). Online submission of the forms has been turned OFF. Again, filled hardcopy MUST be given to the TREASURER.

C U on Feb 16th ... de .ken. VE2KLF

What Happened

*Minutes of the January 2009 WIARC meeting
by Bob Loranger, VE2AXO*

The meeting began at 19:58. Ken VE2KLF presides and welcomes all 13 attendees. Keith, VE2MTL is away on vacation.

The details of the Monday January 19, 2009 meeting are as follows.

1. **New Hams:** The President announces the new hams whom obtained their licence in December: C. Robitaille VE2RFI, Peter Paizis, VE2PVP, Lee Tessier VA2XTL, Steve Tessier VA2UFP and present at the meeting, Joe Vasr, VE2JQE.
2. **Ski Marathon:** Volunteers are welcome. You need a 2mtr rig with 50W output capability because there are a lot of dead spots. Warm clothing is highly recommended. Andy VE2DNN indicated that he might attend.
3. **Section Training Coordinator:** Ray, VA2RY mentioned that there is a need for 8 new ones within the RAC organization to support the training of qualified operators for ARES.
4. **Birthday party:** via MARC, we have been advised that Don VE3RM will celebrate his 80th birthday on January 24 at Le Vieux Chateau Restaurant in Hawkesbury. Festivities start at 18:00. All hams are invited.
5. **Trivia Net:** Ken VE2KLF commented that it is going fine. It runs on Friday from 17:00 till 18:30 on VE2RWI.
Good job Wayne, VE2WRH.
6. **Echolink/IRLP:** This subject seemed mysterious for most of us and that could be a great topic for a presentation this year. We have to find a guest speaker to tell us all about Echolink and IRLP.

After the coffee break, Ken told the audience that the Westminster fund had been invested in a GIC. Thus clearly making the fund a specific item in the WIARC financial statements.

Ken reported that he had been invited to attend a breakfast held by the Lester B. Pearson school board. At the breakfast, he viewed a video of activities at the Science and Technology Day held in May 2008. Ken has asked for a copy of the CD so it could be shown at one of our monthly meetings. Standby! The club is

planning to participate again next May. It was suggested that we should consider having a PSK31 station added to our roster of equipment at the Science Day.

Ken told us all that we needed the input of the members for ideas on presentations they would like to see in the coming months other than the traditional Show & Tell and Field Day. Having a Dxpediton was brought up but it is doubtful it could be done in view of the prohibitive cost and the lack of suitable locations, essentially islands in our case because DX entities are beyond our financial capabilities. Equipment check and VHF antenna contest are 2 subjects. Public awareness of Ham radio is still a subject of interest that needs attention. Members wishing to express their ideas on subjects they would like to hear/see about at the meeting should bring it up to our attention either via e-mail or at the regular meeting. This month, George, VEGNH had the lucky 50/50 number. He gave his proceeds to the club. Thank you George.

The meeting adjourned at 21:55 EST. See you at the February 16, 2009 meeting.

73 de Bob VE2AXO

A Message from the Editor

Well do to time restrictions and other matters the Bulletin is another reduced edition. Other than that all is well at the home front. Numerous WIARC News Flashes have hit the airwaves over the past month. One of the most interesting was the contact with the International Space Station. I look forward to seeing you all at the meeting Monday (YES I WILL BE THERE!!!) where we can discuss the direction of the club's Bulletin.

Morrie VE2BWS

Next meeting, February 16th

CWers

New Years 2009 may have come and gone but it's never too late to resolve to help preserve and encourage CW activity across our amateur bands. To celebrate the New Year, come and join the NAQCC (North American QRP CW Club), a club for any and ALL CW enthusiasts around the world.

Our members include "Big Gun" contesters, hard-core QRPers, experimenters, ragchewers and SWLers; young and old alike. As different as we may be, we all share one thing in common, and that is our love for CW.

We welcome all who want to help support CW and have at least some interest in using QRP from time-to-time. Our club runs monthly sprints and challenges. Plus we sponsor some additional special on-air activities during the year.

Membership is free and once you join you're automatically a lifetime member! So sign up today and help us keep CW alive and well.

Visit our web site at <http://www.usatek.net/~yoel/>. You'll find info on all of our various activities plus an online membership application.

We look forward to your support and hope to soon see your call added to our membership roster.

73,
Paul/KD2MX
NAQCC Membership Recruiter

On behalf of:
Tom, WY3H - NAQCC President
John, K3WWP - NAQCC Vice President
Larry, W2LJ - NAQCC Asst. Publicity Director
Dave, VA3RJ/VE3JDR - NAQCC Publicity Officer

International Year of Astronomy

The International Year of Astronomy Special Prefix Callsign starts January 1st 0h UT and ends Feb 27th 23:59 UT Feb 28 2009.

All Canadian Amateurs are encouraged to use it to commemorate Galileo Galilei's first look through an optical instrument towards the heavens. The Special Prefixes are:

VE changes to CG
VA changes to CF
VO changes to CH
VY changes to CI

The official kickoff date for IYA is January 10th and on that date many astronomy clubs across Canada and around the world will be participating in local astronomical activities. Displays at Shopping Malls, talks in Public Libraries, star parties for the public will be happening. I am also encouraging those amateur Radio operators who are affiliated with the RASC (Royal Astronomical Society of Canada) that might have local IRLP access to visit node 9005 the Vancouver Reflector on January 10th to join in the across Canada IYA Net.

To find out more about this unique ham radio Special prefix and related projects visit <http://www.hamiya2009.info>

Malcolm Scrimger, VE7DAO