



The **NEWSCASTER**

The Official Publication of the Winnipeg Amateur Radio Club

<http://www.mts.net/~warc>

November 2008

IRLP # 1066

VE4BB

Christmas Party Come out for the Festivities

Date: **December 8th, 2008**

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place: **Dakota Collegiate**
661 Dakota Street

And now for a word from the President By Geoff, VE4BAW

For those of you who missed the visit to the University of Manitoba Engineering Labs. .. shame on you. Well maybe not shame on you, after all you're the one that missed a terrific experience. Many Club members told me that they found it fantastic, no really, they said fantastic, not merely interesting or useful.

Witold Kinsner, ve4wk, was our host, with Derek Hay, ve4hay was our facilitator. I am not going to describe our tour. If you were there, no explanation is required and if you were not, well ... you missed a terrific experience. A number of clearly committed UM faculty were present and outlined the capacity and value of these first class laboratories.

You might not have missed it forever. Dr. Kinsner has proposed that we can consider the UM Engineering Facility as a second home. We have been offered opportunities to return, have our meetings and tour the facility. How can we refuse? In fact I am not going to refuse. The University of Manitoba Engineering Faculty is our second home.

There is an enlightened self interest in the presentations by the Engineering Faculty. Like educational institutions everywhere they want participants, [students]. Speaking personally if we want Manitoba to move forward we need to have a strong engineering capacity. There is a shortage of engineers in this province. Ah, if I were younger I would look upon this potential opportunity with anticipation and jump on the chance to become a student [my degree is mathematics so perhaps there is yet still hope for me].

And now for something completely different ... don't forget the Christmas Party! There will be surprises and fun for all! On behalf of your entire executive, we wish you all a Happy Holiday Season and the best DX for the New Year.

Other Important Dates:

WARC: Monthly Meeting dates - Dec. 8, Jan. 12, 2009,
Feb. 9, Mar. 9, Apr. 20 (3rd Monday), May 11,
June 8.

WSC: 2nd Thurs. of month - Breakfast Garden City Inn

ARES: Dec 6th - SKYWARN Recognition Day
Dec 16th - current and future EMO initiatives

Other:

WARC: Executive for 2008- 2009

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| President | Geoff Bawden | ve4baw at rac.ca |
| Vice-Pres | Albert Sousa | albert.sousa at shaw.ca |
| Treasurer | Sue Collings | collings at mts.net |
| Secretary | Ruthie Maman | rmaman at mts.net |
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| Program | Vacant | |
| Director at Large | Robert Iwacha | ve4rai at mts.net |
| Past President | John Pura | ve4qv at rac.ca |

Our Vision

To increase public awareness and respect for Amateur radio; to provide education and support in all aspects of the hobby to our members in a social atmosphere.

| Freq | Prov/ State | | UTC |
|-----------|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 7.055 | MB | Trans Prov | 17:00 local |
| 3.747 | MB | Evening Phone | 19:00 local |
| 3.937 | ND | North Dakota | 00:30 |
| 3.735 | SK | SK Public Service | 01:00 |
| 3.750 | NWON | NW Ontario | 01:15 |
| 3.700 | AB | AB Public Service | 01:30 |
| 3.660 | MB, SK, AB | Prairie Traffic | 01:30 |
| 7.055 | MB | Trans Prov | 08:00 local |
| 3.743 | MB | Mb Morning WX | 14:30 |
| 14.140 | CA | Trans-Canada | 18:00 |
| 7.055 | | Aurora | 23:00 |
| 3.860 | MN | Minnesota | 23:00 |
| 145.450 | WW | MB IRLP | 02:00 Wednesday |
| 147.390 + | MB | Morning | 09:00 Local |
| 147.390 + | MB | MRS Thursday | 21:00 Local |
| 147.390 + | MB | MRS Sunday | 21:00 Local |
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WPGARES
By Jeff, VE4MBQ -Emergency Coordinator

We skipped having a General Meeting in NOV and instead ran an Information Session for prospective members TUE 18 NOV. Approximately twenty-five local Amateurs who provide volunteer Amateur communications for the Manitoba Marathon but aren't ARES members were invited. Follow-up telephone calls were made to remind invited guests about the session (could only locate published telephone numbers for fifteen of the invitees). Ten prospective members ultimately attended the session. As EC I made a presentation addressing:

- What ARES is (philosophy or actual group)
- ARES Role
- Winnipeg ARES Inc. organizational details.

We had three "information stations" set up as well as a refreshment station. Guests could visit pre-assigned ARES volunteers to learn more about Emergency Operations, Scheduled Public Service Events or ARES Equipment. WPGARES Webmaster Don Gerrard VE4DWG did a presentation focusing on some of our permanent Emergency Stations. Thanks to our volunteers VE4s: XYL, YYL, GWN, DWG, SYM, KAZ, SE, HK, HAZ, WTF and MBQ.

Tom Mills VE4SE and Ruth Mills VE4XYL recently completed the Winnipeg Emergency Management Course offered by the City of Winnipeg Emergency Program. This course is run approximately four times per year and we generally are allotted two seats per class. Over the past three years over 16 WPGARES members have attended the WEM Course. The next course dates are 27-29 JAN, 17-19 MAR and 12-14 MAY. Any WPGARES members interested in the JAN session should let me know A.S.A.P.

VE4WWO CANWARN Net Controllers are planning to operate VE4WWO periodically through SKYWARN Recognition Day SAT 6 DEC (we're not planning to be on the air overnight this year). For additional SRD information please see the article on page 55 of the DEC 2008 QST.

Our next General Meeting is TUE 16 DEC 1900h at Sir Wm Stephenson Library 765 Keewatin Street. Don Mackinnon VE4DJ, Planning Director Manitoba EMO is scheduled to give us a presentation on current and future EMO initiatives of interest to ARES members.

What have you done to "promote amateur radio this week"

That line we credit to an old News stalwart, Peter Parker with using in his old VK1 and VK3 casts many years ago and it still stands true -WLA

Amateur Radio Service Centre Industry Canada
 P.O. Box 9654, Postal Station T
 Ottawa, Ontario, K1G 6K9
 Telephone: (613) 780-3333
 Toll free: (888) 780-3333
 Fax: (613) 998-5919
 E-mail: spectrum.amateur@ic.gc.ca
http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/epic/internet/insmt-gst.nsf/en/h_sf01709e.html

IRLP Node 1066
 145.450 MHz -600 KHz
 (VE4WRS)

Comments or if you just want to reach us :
Winnipeg Amateur Radio Club
C/O VE4WSC
598 St. Mary's Road
Winnipeg, MB R2M 3L5

Voice from above greets local Ham radio operators
Posted By Lake of the Woods Enterprise Staff

Contact with operator transmitting from space station an out of this world experience for amateur radio enthusiasts

"This is W5KWQ Richard Garriott aboard the International Space Station does anyone copy?"

"W5KWQ this is VE3JJA in Sioux Narrows, Ontario. Yes I copy."

Amateur radio enthusiast Woody Linton has logged untold hours talking to other Ham radio operators around the world since he took up the hobby back in 1976. However, he regards this brief exchange with space tourist Garriott on Oct. 21 as among the most memorable as it was his first contact with an operator transmitting from outer space.

"There are special frequencies that amateur radio can talk on," Linton explained. "The space station transmits and invites responses and the operator speaks to people around the world. Clear as a bell."

Years ago, Linton contacted the Russian Mir space station which acknowledged the transmission via remote relay. This latest contact was the first time his call sign was answered by another person.

"It wasn't a conversation. There were a lot of callers waiting to speak to him," Linton said. "He acknowledged receiving the transmission and my making contact with the space station."

Linton prepared for the event by installing special software on his home computer which determined when the orbiting space station was within range of his radio signal. He believes the line of sight exchange occurred as Garriott was passing over Saskatchewan.

Two days later Kenora ham radio operator Chris Bigelow also contacted the space station from his own amateur radio station. From the low angle of the transmission from space, Bigelow calculated the space station was about 1,000 kilometres away, passing over Iowa.

"It was kind of exciting," Bigelow recounted of the communication. "It was a quick exchange of call signs acknowledging the official contact. He said it was his last pass over the States and he was going to pack up the radio before coming down."



As the International Space Station speeds across the sky over Saskatchewan, Woody Linton in his Amateur Radio Station speaks briefly with space tourist

Richard Garriott about the flight's progress

The following morning Bigelow admits it was odd watching the astronaut he spoke to 15 hours earlier give a press conference on CNN from the capsule recovery site in Kazakhstan. Linton and Bigelow consider themselves to be very fortunate to have made the contacts.

For space tourist Richard Garriott, operating a radio station from space is carrying on a family tradition. Garriott is the famed creator of the Ultima computer game series and son of former NASA astronaut Owen Garriott. During his career, Garriott Snr. completed two space missions, 60 days aboard Space Lab in 1973 and 10 days on the Space Shuttle Columbia in 1983. In addition to conducting experiments in the weightless environment of space, Owen Garriott operated the first amateur radio station from orbit which has become an important aspect of the American, Russian and now the International space program.

Richard Garriott became the first second generation American in space and the sixth private astronaut client of Space Adventures when he blasted off aboard a Russian Soyuz spacecraft to the International Space Station on Oct. 12.

For more information about amateur radio and how to get involved, check out the Radio Amateurs of Canada website at <http://www.rac.ca> Article ID# 1297438


DIAMOND IMAGE

Floyd Rolph VE4 FDR

835 Cavalier Drive Tel: (204) 888-3227

Winnipeg, MB R2Y 1C6 Fax: (204) 831-6400

- South Western & Victorian home decor
- ty Beanie Babies
- Balloon bouquets & decorating
- Gifts
- Printing eg: Business cards, letterhead, envelopes
- Wedding invitations



News from the Net

RAC Bulletin 27E

November 3, 2008 - The Government of Ontario has tabled legislation intended to improve road safety by banning the use of some kinds of electronic devices by drivers. While the target of Bill 118 was intended to be cellular communication devices, the draft bill is written so broadly that many Amateurs are concerned that Amateur Radio mobile operation could be banned by the bill's provisions.

RAC has already taken steps to protect the interests of Amateurs in that province. RAC President Dave Goodwin VO1AU/VE3AAQ has written to Minister Bradley specifically requesting that Amateur Radio be excluded from the scope of the bill. This letter reminded the minister that similar legislation in Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Quebec explicitly or implicitly protects mobile Amateur Radio operation. A careful reading of the bill reveals that any exemptions will be contained in regulations. RAC will shortly meet with Ontario transportation officials to make the case for protecting mobile Amateur Radio operation. This will be done in conjunction with the Canadian Association for Rallysport (CARS) Executive Director Alastair Robertson VE3RAA -- RAC

RAC Bulletin 28E

RAC Field Services Announces HF Emcomm Frequencies. As the result of extensive research, a list of designated Canadian HF Emergency Communications frequencies has been created. Radio Amateurs of Canada National Emergency Coordinator Ken Oelke VE6AFO, National Traffic System Coordinator Hew Lines VA7HU, National Amateur Radio Emergency Database Manager Drew Watson VA7DR and Special Advisor Pierre Mainville VA3PM, worked in consultation with RAC Section Managers to compile the list. Frequencies and modes of operation have been pre-determined for use of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) during an emergency or disaster occurring anywhere in Canada. The RAC Field Services Organization reminds all operators that no Amateur Radio station or group has exclusive ownership of any frequency, although common sense and courtesy dictates that other stations would keep clear of frequencies being used for communications related to emergency or disaster operations anywhere in the world. -- RAC

RAC Bulletin 29

Amateurs on 600 Metres

Industry Canada has accepted an RAC proposal whereby selected Canadian radio amateurs would be permitted to operate in the vicinity of 500 KHz. These amateur operations would support Canada's efforts to action

a proposal on the agenda of the 2011 World Radio Conference (WRC2011) which, if adopted, would create an amateur allocation in the 600-meter band. Industry Canada have authorized RAC to recommend amateurs who would be licensed to operate in the 504 to 509 KHz band with a maximum power of 20 watts ERP and bandwidth up to 1 KHz. Stations operating in this band would be technically operating under Special Developmental Licenses although they would all be radio amateurs. Distinct call signs would be used and the licenses would be renewable annually subject to the amateur demonstrating the research he has carried out. More information will follow shortly in the pages of TCA or via subsequent bulletins.

NATIONAL HF EMCOMM FREQUENCIES

RAC has suggested these frequencies and tactical designations for use during real or simulated emergencies. See <http://www.rac.ca/fieldorg/racares.htm> for ARES Info

SSB Frequencies Tactical

75 M - 3.675 MHz LSB Alpha
40 M - 7.135 MHz LSB Bravo
20 M - 14.135 MHz USB Charlie
17 M - 18.135 MHz USB Delta
15 M - 21.235 MHz USB Echo
10 M - 28.235 MHz USB Foxtrot

CW Frequencies Tactical

80 M - 3.535 MHz Golf
40 M - 7.035 MHz Hotel
20 M - 14.035 MHz India
17 M - 18.075 MHz Juliett
15 M - 21.035 MHz Kilo
10 M - 28.035 MHz Lima

Digital Frequencies Tactical

80 M - 3.596 MHz Mike
40 M - 7.096 MHz November
20 M - 14.096 MHz Oscar
17 M - 18.096 MHz Papa
15 M - 21.096 MHz Quebec
10 M - 28.096 MHz Romeo

DX URLS to Change

Latest 25 DX spots page
<http://www.dxsummit.fi/text/dx25.html>
Latest 1000 DX spots page
<http://www.dxsummit.fi/text/dx1000.html>
Latest 10000 DX spots page
<http://www.dxsummit.fi/text/dx10000.html>

Software authors who wish to implement data exchange with the new DX Summit should visit <http://www.dxsummit.fi/technical.aspx> for information on data formats and URLs. -- WIA

UPDATE ON XW-1

We have an update on the upcoming Chinese amateur radio satellite update XW-1. According to Michael Chen BD5RV, the XW-1 will be launched into a Sun synchronous orbit to an altitude: 499 kilometres with an inclination of 98 degrees and an orbital period of 94 minutes. It will be powered by a 16 amp hour Lithium Ion battery that will recharge off solar cells that will be a part of the spacecraft. XW-1's ham radio payload will consist of a Morse beacon operating at 435 MHz plus a linear transponder for 2 meter and 70 centimeter operations and an FM repeater operating crossband from 2 meters also up to 70 centimeters. A digital store and forward transponder on these same bands round out the gear which Chen says will way in at 5 point 2 kilograms. -- *WIA*

QRP OR IS THAT WSPR-ING

We heard last week about the creator of the WSJT weak signal application well, Joe Taylor has also been busy on another application called the Weak Signal Propagation Reporter or WSPR - Whisper. Back on Friday, 31 Oct, Bob VK7KRW had a two way contact with Richard, N2JR, in Virginia, USA. on the 80M band, over a distance of 16300Kms and both stations were running 2 watts, yes, only 2 watts! Bob's antenna is an Inverted V dipole and Richard was using a Butternut ground mounted vertical. The SNR at that stage was around -25dB. Bob VK7KRW has been recently experimenting with WSPR on the HF bands (15, 17, 20, 30, 40 & 80M) and he has had a number of QRP contacts into the UK, EU, JA, USA, Canada and ZL. Bob mentioned that he reduced power to 1W and he was still received by Richard but unfortunately heard nothing in return at that power level. Later that evening Bob received an email from Pat, F6IRF, who runs the WSPR net, confirming that we had set a new world distance record for a two way QRP contact on the 80M band. Bob mentioned that stations in the Northern hemisphere are desperately looking for more stations in the southern regions so if people want



something to experiment with, try WSPR. A call went out on the VK7 Regional News and records started to tumble with Dick VK7DIK making a bilateral contact with Joe Taylor K1JT over a distance of 23352 km on 40m with just 5 watts. Congratulation to Bob, Richard, Dick and Joe. The powers just keep reducing and distances just keep increasing. Larry WB3ANQ was able to get through to VK6DI using just 5mW (+7dBm) over a distance 18615 Km. WSPRnet.org has all the information required and links to the software. URL is: <http://wspnet.org/drupal/> --*WIA*

Maples Collegiate launches Balloon **By Jeff Cieszecki**

The mission of BCube 2008-B was a huge success. We continued to work out launch and tracking procedures, a constant learning curve (that we are keeping up with). From a HAM radio perspective, we have generated interest with staff and students in the school by sharing what we have and continue to do with our WinCube Project. We will continue to draw students and staff into the project, with hopefully more students and staff getting their amateur radio certification to become fully immersed in our project work. small steps.



OPERATING PRACTICE

**Extracted from a document
by Mark - ON4WW**

Who among us has obtained his driving license by merely taking a theoretical exam? Nobody has.

In Belgium, until the basic ham license came along, there has never been any form of education on how to make a QSO. After the theoretical exam the newborn licensees are unleashed on the ham bands. The resulting operating was not always nice to listen to. In the analogy of taking a driver's exam, imagine you only take a theoretical exam, get your driver's license, and then you can hit the roads and drive a vehicle which you have never steered before. Well, this is exactly what is happening with hams.

During the first years as a ham the author, just as anybody else, has made mistakes (he still does, but much less). With this article he wants to give a boost to both newcomers and old-timers to quickly sound as a 'pro' on the bands. The mistakes he made originated many times by listening to the 'not so good' operating practices of some of the old-timers. They are not to blame. Clear guidelines on how to communicate on ham bands have never existed.

One must not underestimate the importance of good operating practices. In the end, all our transmissions can be intercepted by anybody, be it hams, listeners, official observers, etc. The technical aspect of our hobby is one matter. If we use our equipment and make on the air contacts, we enter the second matter, i.e. we represent our nation on the airwaves; we are very visible.

To make successful transmissions on any frequency and in any mode some simple rules must be observed. Would you please follow me in the quest for good 'Operating Practice'?

1. HAM LANGUAGE

Know the 'Ham Language'. Get acquainted with the correct Amateur Radio Language. Don't say 'Radio four', but 'readability four'. Master the phonetic alphabet, CW abbreviations, the Q code and the number code (73/88) as if they were a second mother language before getting on the air.

Always use the phonetic alphabet in a correct manner: A is Alfa, and not Alabama. This will be further discussed in chapter 8 (PILEUPS).

2. LISTEN

As a new ham you'd like to start transmitting as soon as possible, of course. Take it easy, take your time, stay away

from that microphone, morsekey or keyboard. First get comfortable with ALL the functions of your transmitters/receivers before attempting any transmissions. The transmit part needs special attention, as it is here one can make his first 'on the air' mistakes.

Initially learn to LISTEN. Whoever listens at first, will be much more successful in making good and enjoyable contacts. The chapter PILEUPS deals in depth with this important issue.

3. CORRECT USE OF YOUR CALLSIGN

Use your callsign in a correct way. You have to take a serious exam in order to enjoy this hobby. Be proud of your callsign, it is unique. Only if you use it in a correct way are you making legal transmissions. Ever hear the callsign 4ZZZZ on VHF? As far as I'm aware of, we are dealing with a transmission from a station from Israel and not from Belgium. ON4ZZZZ is the correct callsign. A callsign comprises of a prefix AND a suffix. Even on the HF bands this reprehensible practice can be heard. For analogy, if your car has been stolen, will you report half of the alphanumeric of the number plate to the police, or the complete lot?

4. BE POLITE

This is the shortest but undoubtedly most important chapter in this document. At all times, be polite! Your transmitted signal is being heard by a lot of folks and agencies. We'll elaborate on this issue in the 'Conflict Situations' chapter. You'll go a long way by being polite, in our little ham world or in the outside world.

5. SOME TIPS FOR MAKING VHF/UHF REPEATER CONTACTS

A lot in the following chapters is dedicated to specific situations while chasing for DX contacts (long distance) on the HF bands. A majority of these points also apply when working on the VHF/UHF bands.

Specifically, on the VHF/UHF bands the use of repeater systems (relay stations) is primarily intended to increase the operational range of mobile and portable stations. Fixed station operators should keep this in mind. If two fixed stations can make a two-way contact without the use of a repeater, why would it be opportune for them to use a repeater for a long winded QSO?

Whoever makes use of a repeater must take into account he has not the 'monopoly' on its use. This applies in fact for contacts on all frequencies. On non-repeater frequencies the 'first come, first served' (and somehow 'keep') principle is used. On repeater systems this principle should not prevail.

Everybody must get a shot at this very useful medium, especially the mobile and portable stations.

During a repeater QSO, it is a good (almost imperative) habit to leave a short pause in between 'overs'. In that way, someone else can make a quick call or intervene in the ongoing QSO. By immediately pressing the PTT (Push to Talk) button after an over, this possibility is effectively prevented. Think about it.

6. HOW TO MAKE A QSO? WHAT CAN I TALK ABOUT?

Some newcomers are astonished during their first encounters on the ham bands by the many QSOs in which only the callsigns and reports are exchanged. It doesn't have to be this way, of course. In the beginning I disliked this myself as I enjoyed long and elaborated QSOs. I was a real 'ragchewer'. There is nothing wrong with that. However, in time though I switched from long to very short QSOs. Everyone has their own preference.

Although we exercise a mainly technical hobby, our QSOs do not have to be limited to purely technical matters. A healthy balance is necessary. Radio amateurism is not intended to chit chat about groceries. Let your common sense be your guide.

Topics we must avoid include religion, politics and of course commercial advertisements. It is also forbidden to broadcast, ie. one way transmissions of either long winded announcements or music programs.

The Belgian basic license manual implements for the first time an 'Operating Practice & Procedures' chapter and explains how to make a QSO. What follows is a concise repetition and some additions:

- a. Before commencing a transmission on a given frequency, always check thoroughly if this frequency is in use by other stations;
- b. If the frequency is clear, call CQ (general call -CQ possibly derives from 'I seek you'-). Pat, W5THT has the following explanation on CQ from the pre-wireless days). See Chapter 7 'How to call CQ?' which expands in detail on the proper way to CQ;
- c. The sequence on how to place callsigns during a contact is straightforward; first name the callsign of your counterpart, then yours. Example (you are ON4ZZZZ): 'Thanks OM, microphone back to you. ON4XXXX (de) ON4ZZZZ' (end of your transmission). An easy way to remember this: you always have to be polite.
- d. Always end a transmission with your callsign. If making many short transmissions during a QSO,

- identify with your callsign at least once every five minutes (some countries: 10 minutes);
- e. Leave a short pause in between 'overs'. In that way, someone else can make a quick call, or intervene in the ongoing QSO. Keep in mind that one day 'you' may be the one receiving a distress call! Be ready for it.
- f. Do not elaborate about a zillion things during one over. Keep your transmission short and concise as to give your counterpart ample time to respond to your topics before he forgets about what you were actually talking. Remember many times you are talking to someone in a language that is not their native tongue. Give them time to comprehend what you are saying;
- g. On phone, say 'over' when you hand over the microphone to your counterpart. In amateur radio this is strictly not necessary, but often handy. Experience will teach you when to use 'over' and when not;
- h. On CW, end your transmission during a changeover with the letter K (from 'Key'). Also 'KN' can be used; this is more specific and means you only want to hear the station whose callsign you just sent to come back to you;
- i. On CW the end of a QSO is marked by the letter string 'SK' ('Stop Keying'). The QSO is completely finished after you sent 'SK';
- j. On phone a QSO is never ended with 'over and out'. Either say 'over' during a microphone handover, or say 'out' at the very end of the QSO, which is then completely finished.

Someone brought the following to my attention. As amateurs progress in their 'ham career' they seem to forget they were once newcomers themselves. Indeed, one can often hear amateurs call 'CQ DX' on the HF bands, after which they are called by a 'local' station (which is no long distance for them at that moment). Often this local operator gets a verbal beating and is left behind in disbelief or anger. This cuts both ways. The local newcomer should understand that if someone calls 'CQ DX' he shouldn't call that station at that point in time. On the other hand, the experienced ham should remember his early days when he did exactly the same because he wanted to work 'a new one', and be considerate towards the newcomer.

In such a situation I usually give a short report, log the station and tell him that I'm actually looking for DX. The newcomer usually understands the hint and will pay better attention next time, while he's still happy to have logged a new one... and that's what counts! So... give everybody a chance for a QSO and don't forget your early days!

7. HOW TO CALL CQ?

Make sure the frequency you want to use is clear. You don't do this by mere listening but also by effectively asking if that frequency is in use. For example, on SSB after having listened for a while, ask 'Is this frequency in use?', followed by your callsign. If no response, repeat this question, followed by your callsign. If again no response, the frequency is yours to call CQ.

On CW and RTTY send 'QRL?'. Some think a 'question mark' is sufficient. It is not as it can be confusing. If on a given frequency there is ongoing traffic (which you don't hear), someone else on that frequency may interpret your question mark as if you are asking for the callsign of a station on that frequency. A 'cop' scenario may arise (see chapter 12).

'QRL?' cannot be misinterpreted by anyone, it means you want to know if that frequency is clear for you to use. A question mark in this situation is meaningless and may mean several things.

On CW you get possibly one of the following answers if the frequency is in use:

- a. R (Received-Roger)
- b. Y (Yes)
- c. YES
- d. QSY

If by coincidence you landed on a 'hot frequency' (especially if used by a DXpedition or a rare DX station), chances exist you may get shouted at. Don't worry, don't react, just move to another frequency. Or figure out -by listening, not by asking- who the 'DX' is and work him.

Lots of problems can be avoided by following the first rule of operating (whether casual or DX): LISTEN. This golden rule used in combination with the magic word 'QRL?' will keep you out of trouble if you are looking for a clear frequency to call CQ.

- a. When calling CQ, don't do as follows: call CQ ten times, followed by your callsign twice and then listen. Better to do this: call CQ twice and give your callsign ten times (I exaggerate, four times is sufficient!).
- b. The most important aspect when calling is not the word CQ, but your callsign. If conditions aren't too good, it is important the station at the other side of the globe (yeah, cool!) hears your callsign rather than the word CQ. Too many times I've heard operators call CQ 15 times, give their call once, and then say 'listening for any call now'. This is senseless.

Practice makes perfect. If you are not experienced, listen for a while to others to sharpen your teeth. You will quickly develop your own style to make successful and pleasurable QSOs.

8. PILEUPS

Once bitten by the DX chasing bug, you will frequently enter PILEUPS. When a rare DX station appears on the bands he quickly will raise a large group of amateurs wanting to work him. At the end of a QSO the crowd starts calling the DX station instantaneously and all stations call on top of each other. This is called a 'pileup'.

Not only rare resident DX stations generate pileups. Quite often DXpeditions are organized to activate countries (entities) where ham radio is almost non-existent or to uninhabited islands. The purpose of these expeditions is to contact as many hams worldwide in a short timespan. Obviously contacts with these expeditions should be AS SHORT AS POSSIBLE in order to give as many people as possible a shot at a new one. Hence, the expedition operator is not interested in your QTH, equipment or name of your dog.

What is the best way to get as quickly as possible in the log of a rare DX station or Dxpedition?

LISTEN LISTEN and then LISTEN again.

And, why should I listen? Because those not listening won't be as successful.

Indeed, by careful listening an operator will have more success in breaking through a pileup and log the rare DX faster.

By listening, one gets acquainted with the behavior of the DX station and the rhythm in which he works. Also you will find out if the DX works SPLIT. During the listening period you have ample time to check and doublecheck the send and receive parts of your station:

- a. correct choice of antenna?
- b. SPLIT function activated?
- c. Transmitter (and amplifier) correctly tuned on a CLEAR frequency?

Often this last part is done ON the frequency of the DX station! Bad! This results in a reaction by the so called 'COPS' (see chapter 12) and spoils the pleasure of many because the DX station can't be heard anymore.

- a. Before making any attempt to transmit: be sure you heard the DX station's callsign correctly.

We often enter a pileup following a spot from a DX Cluster. Often the spot is incorrect! Make sure you heard the

callsign of the DX correctly. This will prevent you from receiving the much feared return QSL card with the message 'NOT IN LOG', 'NON EXISTING CALL' or 'NOT ACTIVE THAT DAY'.

An experienced DX station will turn to SPLIT operation if he perceives too many stations are calling and the pileup becomes unmanageable. By working SPLIT his transmit frequency stays clear and the callers will hear him well.

A not so experienced DX station will continue working SIMPLEX and finally goes QRT because he can't control the pileup anymore.

In such a situation, you yourself can play an important role during your QSO with the DX station. Gently suggest to him the time has come to switch to SPLIT operation (of course only if there are too many callers!). The other DXers will be grateful if you manage to persuade the DX station to change to SPLIT mode!

Here are most of the different pileup situations:

-- Continued next month.

Contest Calendar

Extracted from <http://www.sk3bg.se/>
& <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal>

December

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|-------|--------|
| ARS Spartan Sprint | | 0200Z | Dec 2 |
| ARCI Topband Sprint | | 0000Z | Dec 4 |
| 10 meter NAC | CW/SSB/FM/Digi | 1800Z | Dec 4 |
| NCCC Sprint | | 0230Z | Dec 5 |
| ARRL 160-Meter | | 2200Z | Dec 5 |
| TARA RTTY Melee | RTTY | 0000Z | Dec 6 |
| Great Colorado Snowshoe Run | CW | 0200Z | Dec 6 |
| Wake-Up! QRP Sprint | | 0400Z | Dec 6 |
| | And | 0430Z | Dec 6 |
| | And | 0500Z | Dec 6 |
| | And | 0530Z | Dec 6 |
| TOPS Activity | | 1600Z | Dec 6 |
| NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint | CW | 0130Z | Dec 10 |
| NA High Speed Meteor Scatter Rally | | 0000Z | Dec 11 |
| NCCC Sprint | | 0230Z | Dec 12 |
| Russian 160 Meter | CW/Phone | 2100Z | Dec 12 |
| 28 MHz SWL-Contest | CW/Phone | 0000Z | Dec 13 |
| ARRL 10-Meter | | 0000Z | Dec 13 |
| MDXA PSK DeathMatch | PSK | 0000Z | Dec 13 |
| SKCC Weekend Sprintathon | | 0000Z | Dec 14 |
| Lighthouse Christmas Lights QSO | All | 0001Z | Dec 13 |
| UBA Low Band | CW/SSB/Digi | 1700Z | Dec 13 |
| UBA Low Band | CW/SSB/Digi | 0600Z | Dec 14 |
| SSA Månadstest nr 12 | SSB | 1400Z | Dec 14 |
| SSA Månadstest nr 12 | cw | 1515Z | Dec 14 |
| MOON | CW/Digi/SSB | 1900Z | Dec 17 |

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|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| NCCC Sprint | | 0230Z | Dec 19 |
| AGB-Party | | 2100Z | Dec 19 |
| Russian 160-Meter | | 2100Z | Dec 19 |
| MDXA PSK DeathMatch | PSK-31/PSK-63 | 0000Z | Dec 20 |
| Russian Digital + SSTV | Digi | 0000Z | Dec 20 |
| OK DX | RTTY | 0000Z | Dec 20 |
| Lighthouse Christmas Lights | | 0001Z | Dec 20 |
| "Memory Lives Forever" | CW/SSB | 0500Z | Dec 20 |
| Croatian | CW | 1400Z | Dec 20 |
| International Naval | | 1600Z | Dec 20 |
| Feld Hell Sprint | HELL | 2100Z | Dec 20 |
| ARCI Holiday Spirits Homebrew | | 2000Z | Dec 21 |
| Run for the Bacon QRP | | 0200Z | Dec 22 |
| SKCC Sprint | | 0100Z | Dec 24 |
| SSA Jultest (1) | CW | 0800Z | Dec 25 |
| SSA Jultest (2) | CW | 0800Z | Dec 26 |
| DARC Christmas | | 0830Z | Dec 26 |
| RAC Winter | | 0000Z | Dec 27 |
| Stew Perry Topband Challenge | | 1500Z | Dec 27 |
| Original QRP | | 1500Z | Dec 27 |
| RAEM | | 0200Z | Dec 28 |

January, 2009

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|-------------------------|--------|-------|-------|
| ARRL Straight Key Night | CW | 0000Z | Jan 1 |
| Happy New 21th Century | CW/SSB | 0000Z | Jan 1 |

The Christmas Party

So far all seems to be going ahead for the Christmas Party. The party is on the 8th of December. The next WARC meeting. I would like to thank those that have stepped up to help. As of now there is going to be a reading done by Adam. David will be having a visit from a friend. There is also a best decorated hat/handy talky contest. There is some very cool prizes for this. The prizes are supplied by VE4HK Dick. In the season of giving. There will be a quest speaker. Her name is Tamara Mares. She is trying to help the world one step at a time. She will be talking about various organizations, and up and coming Missionary work to Cuba. Could use some help, with the entertainment and food. For the entertainment, well if you can play a tune, or a musical instrument. And would like to show another side, let me know. This could include any sort of skit. Or if everyone wishes to just have a meet and greet, let me know. If any one wishes to help with food or entertainment, give me a call, at 669-4260.

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|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------|--------|
| DRCC New Years Crawl | JT65A | 0000Z | Jan 1 |
| DRCC New Years Crawl | JT65A | 0700Z | Jan 1 |
| SARTG New Year | RTTY | 0800Z | Jan 1 |
| SCAG Straight Key Day | SKDCW | 0800Z | Jan 1 |
| AGCW Happy New Year | | 0900Z | Jan 1 |
| DRCC New Years Crawl | JT65A | 1200Z | Jan 1 |
| IRTS 80 Metres Counties | CW/SSB | 1200Z | Jan 1 |
| DRCC New Year | Olivia | 1300Z | Jan 1 |
| 10 meter NAC | CW/SSB/FM/DIGI | 1800Z | Jan 1 |
| NCCC Sprint | | 0230Z | Jan 2 |
| ARRL RTTY Roundup | RTTY | 1800Z | Jan 3 |
| EUCW 160m | | 2000Z | Jan 3 |
| | And | 0400Z | Jan 4 |
| Vytautas Magnus Trophy | CW/FM/SSB | 0700Z | Jan 4 |
| Kid's Day | SSB | 1800Z | Jan 4 |
| ARS Spartan Sprint | | 0200Z | Jan 6 |
| NCCC Sprint | | 0230Z | Jan 9 |
| 070 Club PSKFest | PSK-31 | 0000Z | Jan 10 |
| Hunting Lions in the Air | | 0000Z | Jan 10 |
| NCCC Sprint | | 0230Z | Jan 10 |
| MI QRP January | CW | 1200Z | Jan 10 |
| Midwinter | CW | 1400Z | Jan 10 |
| North American QSO Party | CW | 1800Z | Jan 10 |
| SKCC Weekend Sprintathon | | 0000Z | Jan 11 |
| NRAU-Baltic | CW | 0530Z | Jan 11 |
| Midwinter | Phone | 0800Z | Jan 11 |
| NRAU-Baltic | SSB | 0800Z | Jan 11 |
| DARC 10-Meter | | 0900Z | Jan 11 |
| NCCC Sprint | | 0230Z | Jan 16 |
| NCCC Sprint | | 0230Z | Jan 17 |
| LZ Open | | 0400Z | Jan 17 |
| CQ UT | CW/SSB | 0600Z | Jan 17 |
| Hungarian DX | | 1200Z | Jan 17 |
| UK DX | RTTY | 200Z | Jan 17 |
| Feld-Hell Club Sprint | Feld-Hell | 1700Z | Jan 15 |
| North American QSO Party | SSB | 800Z | Jan 17 |
| ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes | | 1900Z | Jan 17 |
| SSA Månadstest nr 1 | CW | 1400Z | Jan 18 |
| SSA Månadstest nr 1 | SSB | 1515Z | Jan 18 |
| Run for the Bacon QRP | | 0200Z | Jan 19 |
| MOON | CW/Digi/SSB | 1900 | Jan 21 |
| NAQCC | Straight Key/Bug Sprint | 0130Z | Jan 22 |
| NCCC Sprint | | 0230Z | Jan 23 |
| CQ 160-Meter | CW | 2200Z | Jan 23 |
| REF | CW | 600Z | Jan 24 |
| YLISSB QSO Party | SSB | 0000Z | Jan 24 |
| REF | CW | 0600Z | Jan 24 |
| BARTG RTTY Sprint | | 1200Z | Jan 24 |
| UBA DX | SSB | 300Z | Jan 24 |
| SPAR Winter Field Day | | 1700Z | Jan 24 |
| SKCC Sprint | | 0000Z | Jan 28 |
| NCCC Sprint | | 0230Z | Jan 30 |
| YLISSB QSO Party | CW/RTTY | 0000Z | Jan 31 |
| SARL Youth Day Sprint | | 0700Z | Jan 31 |
| YLRL YL-OM | CW | 1400Z | Jan 31 |

QTX~**By Derek, VE4HAY**

Did you know:

- ☞ CAMP 807 will be hosted at Atikokan in 2009. This notice from the Secretary of the Fort Frances region ARC
- ☞ Santa, please bring me this - Here an interesting link about a huge antenna project. The scale of this project takes my breath away. Maybe something for Hi Q. <http://www.1982crew.com/PHP-Nuke/PDF/K9LTN.pdf>
- ☞ In case you missed the tour we had at the university of Manitoba last month, here is a link to some pictures that were taken - http://www.pbase.com/sousaa/warc_field_trip
- ☞ Even more photo's are viewable on Mark's photo site <http://www.flickr.com/photos/mblumm/sets/72157609801775585/show/>
- ☞ VE4GWN sent in these web site for zone maps etc. <http://www4.plala.or.jp/nomrax/hammaps.htm>
- ☞ That Santa has been secretly asking your spouse what you want for Christmas, and they don't know what to say. So how about a hint...

Now wasn't that tour exciting. I found it totally amazing the work they were doing there, but found it strange that in the RF testing room (the one with all the comes to absorb the signals, my cell phone rang and I received a call. I really would have thought that the room would have been enveloped like a Faraday cage so that no outside signals could interfere with the test. I hope you all got at least one little piece of information out of the tour as well.

One behalf of the my family I want to wish everyone a Happy Christmas with family & friends, and a great New Year. While these supposed tough times may or may not affect you we can take some solace in the fact that at least the bands are slowly starting to improve

Minutes for November 10th, 2008**Submitted by Ruthie, VE4CRS**

At press time I have not been able to determine who took the minutes for the meeting we held after the tour of the lab's at the UofM. So maybe next month we will have minutes.

