



# The **NEWSCASTER**

The Official Publication of the Winnipeg Amateur Radio Club  
<http://www.mts.net/~warc>

January 2011

IRLP # 1066 on VE4WRS 145.450-

VE4BB

## **S.H.A.R.P.**

*By Rob Striemer, VE4SHS*

**Date: Monday, January 10, 2011**

**Time: 7:30 PM**

**Place: Dakota Collegiate - (In the theatre)  
661 Dakota Street (At Beliveau Rd.)**

### *And now a word from the President*

*By Mark, VE4MAB*

I trust everyone enjoyed the holiday season, ate too much, got all the Ham Radio gear that they told Santa about, and are looking forward to putting it to use in the New Year!

Closing the book on 2010 just means it's time to start making plans for 2011 !!

Why not use the cold winter nights to work on a project for Home Brew Night in April or to clean out the shack and book a table for the Spring Flea Market, or to write an article for the Newscaster.

Andy, VE4RDO, submitted a great article for this issue on his experiences working the OSCARs, and his excitement shows through in the detail that he has shared with his fellow hams in the Newscaster.

Articles such as this are what make learning about ham radio so much fun and perhaps after reading about the OSCARs it will remind you of experiences that you've had that will be perfect for the next issue! How about it??

Stay Tuned

### *Other Important Dates...*

**Newscaster: Deadline February 2, 2011**

**WARC: Monthly Meeting Dates  
February 14, 2011  
D-Star by Don, Gerrard, VE4DWG**

**WSC: 2nd Thursday of month  
Breakfast—Garden City Inn**

**ARES: January 19, 2011 (Note date change)**

**Other: WARC Spring Flea Market  
Sunday, April 17, 2011**

### *WARC Executive for 2010-2011...*

President	Mark Blumm	ve4mab@rac.ca
Vice-Pres.	Ed Horton	edhorton@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Bob Jacobs	rcjacobs@mts.net
Secretary	Jim Sutton	Jim.Sutton@AAAalarms.ca
Membership	Garth Blumm	ve4gwb@gmail.com
Programs	Craig Martin	cmartin@cmu.ca
Director @ Large	Vacant	
Past President	Geoff Bawden	ve4baw@rac.ca



Are you a  
**RAC** member??

<http://www.rac.ca>

**Support the Organization that  
Supports YOU! Join RAC Today!**

### *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*

## ***WARC Meeting Minutes, Dec 13, 2010***

*Taken by Jim, VE4SIG*

Called to order at 1939 hours

### ***Introductions –***

#### ***Minutes of the last meeting –***

It was pointed out that VE4VZ was misidentified as VE4VX. With that correction they were approved by VE4HK and seconded by VE4GVZ

### ***Reports by***

#### ***Secretary – VE4SIG -***

Nothing to report

#### ***Treasurer – VE4RCJ –***

Our bank balance is \$8915.44.

We are moving our accounts from TD to Assiniboine Credit Union (ACU) to save on fees.

The accounts have been audited.

#### ***Membership – VE4GWB –***

Membership is 98 and climbing.

#### ***Programs –VE4CDM –***

December – Christmas Party –we are not having a pot luck but have some special activities planned that should be lots of fun.

January – Shaftesbury High School's balloon launch will be the feature presentation.

February D-Star University

March – tour of CMU (Canadian Mennonite University) on the site of the former #3 Wireless School.

April – Homebrew Nite

May – Manitoba Robot Games

June - still open at this point.

#### ***D-Star Status Report- VE4DWG –***

Duplexer is tuned up and to be installed on Thursday – watch your email for further developments

#### ***ARES – VE4MBQ –***

Next Tuesday is the monthly ARES meeting (at 1845 hrs) and there will be a presentation by VE4GWN on Exercise Ice with the City of Winnipeg and a CBC Video on the 1998 Ice Storm..

#### ***RAC –VE4BAW –***

The RAC Winter contest runs from 0000-2359GMT on 18 Dec.

VE4BAW will be running VE4RAC out of his home at 85 Barrington- looking for volunteers to assist – email him at [ve4baw@rac.ca](mailto:ve4baw@rac.ca).

Insurance major changes to the RAC liability insurance program necessitated by the Underwriter dropping the coverage – the cost is increasing.

You need to be both a RAC Member and a member of an affiliated club to be covered – the cost increase will be discussed in more depth at the January General Meeting.

Operating while driving – NB & AB are both looking at restrictions, ON still has a 2 year implementation period.

#### ***DX – VE4SN –***

Conditions have been good except the ARRL 10M contest – only specific times, but 20M and 15M were wall-to-wall. DXpedition to Kermidit (sp?) Island operating as ZL8X.

#### ***New Business –***

VE4DAR wished VE4MAB a Happy Birthday and presented him with a souvenir pen from the Israel Amateur Radio Club.

In response to the changes to the Liability Insurance Program with it's increased costs it has been proposed to increase membership by \$10 (VE4VZ suggested \$5) and increase the 50/50 draw to \$2. This will be the subject of a longer discussion of the January meeting.

#### ***OSCAR AWARD –***

VE4HK presented the OSCAR Award to Murray Ronald of Prairie Communications (VE4RE). The award was accepted on VE4RE's behalf by VE4VB.

#### ***Presentation to Ruth VE4XYL –***

In recognition of the many hours of work that Ruth has put into feeding the club at events from Field Day to Flea Market to meetings (including this one) a carved wooden sign was presented to her so everyone would always know they were eating the work of "Ruth's Kitchen"

#### ***VE4JNF –***

Informed the members that the house belonging to Ronald Schuse (sp?) had burnt down and several members had stepped in to help him out.

#### ***Program-***

Consisted of a very fun game of Ham Radio Trivia

The meeting was concluded at 2133 hrs.

## *T'was Just Before Christmas* By David, VE4DAR

T'was just before Christmas when brave hams and guests ventured in Winnipeg's cold to Dakota Collegiate. Intrepid Walter VB led Ruthie CRS and me into the cafeteria, where we joined happy folks greeting each other, exchanging cards and making jokes. WARC's Christmas Party was in full swing with 47 guests mingling.



President Mark MAB with his gavel made the agenda travel. Bob RCJ reported a good balance with the treasury secure in a new place (not his cottage!). Garth GWB declared we had 98 paid members. Craig CDM listed interesting programs for next year. However, RAC's insurance news wasn't good cheer. Neverthe-

less, we applaud President Geoff's revitalization moves and anticipate a fine resolution.



As thoughts turn to the Holy Land this time of year it seemed fitting to give Mark a souvenir pen from the Israel Amateur Radio Club for his birthday. Appreciated for her many good "cooks", Ruth XYL was given a beautiful hand crafted sign to honour her place, Ruth's Kitchen. The OSCAR Award, famous in our nation, was awarded by Dick HK in fine oration to Murray Ronald VE4RE. Walter accepted for Murray. Then followed attendance, 50-50, and various other awards. While folks dinned on the delights provided, there was opportunity for all to play a clever Trivia Game composed by Mark. And finally it was time to go home.

Amateur Radio Service Centre  
Industry Canada

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[http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/epic/internet/insmt-gst.nsf/en/h\\_sf01709e.html](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



**Merry Christmas and a  
Happy New Year to all!**

## *The "OSCAR" Award* *By Dick, VE4HK*

The OSCAR Award is presented at the December meeting of the Winnipeg Amateur Radio Club, to a deserving amateur radio operator, typically for long term service to the amateur community.

The OSCAR Award, or Outstanding Service Concerning Amateur Radio began in 1978. The executive of the day wished to recognize outstanding amateur radio operators. The executive meeting where we decided to begin the OSCAR award was the same night as the Academy Awards, in Los Angeles. They were handing out Oscar Awards that evening. In addition, Hams were launching satellites with amateur radios on board, as ballast with NASA rockets, in the late 1970's. The executive decided that we would name our award OSCAR. The only thing left to do was to decide what the acronym OSCAR would stand for. We finally came up with OUTSTANDING SERVICE CONCERNING AMATEUR RADIO.



Murray, VE4RE, receiving the OSCAR Award presented by Dick, VE4HK at Prairie Mobile

Many fine amateurs have achieved OSCAR. Some of the ones Prairie Mobile staff would recognize include Ron Place VE4PL and Tom Blair VE4MJ. No one wins OSCAR. Each recipient has richly deserved OSCAR, for what they have done for the amateur community.

I first encountered Murray Ronald VE4RE in the early 1970's. At that time, very few amateurs had VHF mobiles or handhelds. Murray would lend me high end Icom amateur radio transceivers to use for public service events. He lent me this equipment with nothing more than a handshake and "bring it back when your are finished" That was invaluable in those days.

Murray has donated countless dollars worth of repeaters, duplexers, and test equipment to repeater groups throughout Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Northwestern Ontario for decades. He has also allowed amateurs to use his test equipment and shop to set up repeaters. Murray allows amateurs to install repeaters on several of his towers at no charge. Amateurs would not have the extensive network of repeaters in the region without him.

Finally, Murray allowed Winnipeg Amateur Radio Club Inc. and Manitoba Repeater Society to place our 20 ft Sea Shipping Container on his Dugald Road property, free of charge. Previously, the two clubs stored our spare equipment at a local locker company, saving \$125.00 per month.

. For all these reasons and more, I was pleased to present Murray with the OSCAR Award for 2010-2011. Murray was unable to attend the December WARC meeting. He received his award on December 23, at the Prairie Mobile office on King Edward.



Above: Dick, VE4HK, presenting the OSCAR Award received for Murray by Walter, VE4VB at WARC's December meeting

Sincerely,  
Dick Maguire VE4HK

*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 -WIA

*In Honour of...  
"Ruth's Kitchen"*

They say an army moves on it's stomach and if that is so then t has been "Ruth's Kitchen" that has kept the WARC army moving at all the WARC events such as our Flea Markets, Field Days, Christmas parties, meetings and more!



At our December meeting the WARC membership presented Ruth, VE4XYL with a sign to honour her kitchen....



Ruth... From the bottom of our stomachs, we thank you!

Signed: The entire WARC Membership!

*WSCRC Christmas Luncheon  
By David, VE4DAR*

The Winnipeg Senior Citizens Radio Club held its annual Christmas Luncheon at Polo Park's Canad Inn on December 7.



Forty-two members and guests enjoyed a wide selection of good food from the buffet. Good fellowship was evident in the animated conversations at each table. Laughter induced by some good story telling was a bonus. After the meal there were draws for the raffle and donated gifts were distributed. Folks went home with smiles on their faces.



I'm sorry, but I miss Roman's catered turkey dinner. Apparently it's not available for so few patrons. Perhaps next year? May your Christmas be happy and peaceful.



**WPGARES****By Jeff, VE4MBQ****Emergency Coordinator**

Glen Napady VE4GWN gave us a presentation on City of Winnipeg *Exercise Ice* at our DEC General Meeting based on his experiences during the exercise as well as those of Kent VE4KEH. City of Winnipeg Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Randy Hull was also able to join us and he presented the City's "Lessons Learned" from that exercise. After both presentations concluded there was some discussion on possible 2011 Flood Operations – take home message was 2009-type flood best case scenario and 1997-type plus one foot potential worst case scenario depending on many factors including precipitation and rate of melt. WPGARES members are encouraged to review the 2009 Flood Operations Report – it will soon be posted on our web-site [www.winnipegares.ca](http://www.winnipegares.ca)

Depending on the situation it is very likely that we will be able to use the volunteer services of ARES and non-ARES Amateurs for municipal flood communications. We are constrained though against assigning non-ARES members to rapid deployment teams that may be assigned to a community that could be cut off by flood waters. If you are thinking about joining your local ARES unit JAN would be a good time to do so. In 1997 we were inundated with volunteer registrations from non-ARES members at the worst time 'cause Flood Operations were then underway. If you want to get involved please volunteer in the winter and not during the flood!

Jason Ludke recently informed me that as of end of DEC, Sled Dog Races will not likely be happening in FEB 2011. We will though be providing Amateur Radio support for Scouts Canada Klondike Derby 5 & 6 MAR at Camp Amisk. Former WPGARES AEC Bob Poole VE4MAQ will be coordinating that event for us. Within 3 days of the bulletin going out the roster was full (we need 12 operators each day) and Bob was taking names & call-signs of stand-by operators.

Our next General Meeting is **WED 19 JAN, 1900h** at Sir Wm Stephenson Library 765 Keewatin Street (please note change of day/date). I will be doing a presentation on Call-Outs & Equipment. We are caught in a booking glitch with the library, due to expansion of some of their internal programs we have lost our slot for FEB, MAR & APR – those meetings may move to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month temporarily.

**Manitoba Marathon****By Jeff, VE4MBQ**

The 2011 Manitoba Marathon will be **SUN 19 JUNE**. An electronic sign-up form is now posted on the WARC web-site [www.mts.net/~warc](http://www.mts.net/~warc) and soon will be posted on the Winnipeg ARES web-site [www.winnipegares.ca](http://www.winnipegares.ca).

It is greatly appreciated if the completed volunteer form is returned to me via e-mail (saves lots of re-typing). The sooner registrations are submitted the sooner we can start working on the roster. We need a completed new registration form from each Amateur Radio volunteer regardless of what Amateur organization they belong to.

Since we don't know yet what will be required for possible flood operations this spring I may well not have time in late April and early May to get after folks – if you want to be involved with Marathon Communications please sign up early and make things easier for all concerned.

**News From The Net****Vernon Erle Ikeda - VE2MBS/VE2QQ****RAC E-News/Web News Bulletin Editor****EMCOMM: Severe Weather Alert – Maritimes 2010-12-21**

Severe weather including heavy rainfall, severe winds and storm surge is threatening many towns and cities in the Maritimes. The weather system that is causing this disturbance is expected to remain in place for the next 48 hours. During this time all Amateurs are requested to +keep the National ARES Emergency frequencies clear and monitor when able in the event that assistance is required. Also, please pay particular attention to traffic on local repeaters in the event that calls for assistance are heard.

Thank you for your cooperation

<http://www.rac.ca/en/rac/public-service/ares/frequencies/>

Doug Mercer VO1DTM  
Vice President Field Services  
Radio Amateurs of Canada  
P.O. Box 1042 Goulds  
Newfoundland Labrador A1S 1H2

" We're ALL about Amateur Radio! "

" Tous ensemble pour la radioamateur! "

## Contest Calendar

Extracted From

<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/>

AGB New Year Snowball Contest 0000Z-0100Z, Jan 1  
 SARTG New Year RTTY Contest 0800Z-1100Z, Jan 1  
 AGCW Happy New Year Contest 0900Z-1200Z, Jan 1  
 AGCW VHF/UHF Contest 1400Z-1659Z, Jan 1 (144)  
 and 1700Z-1759Z, Jan 1 (432)  
 ARCI Pet Rock Celebration 1500Z-1800Z, Jan 1  
 Original QRP Contest 1500Z, Jan 1 to 1500Z, Jan 2  
 Kid's Day Contest 1800Z-2359Z, Jan 2  
 RSGB 80m Club Championship, CW 2000Z-2130Z, Jan 3  
 ARS Spartan Sprint 0200Z-0400Z, Jan 4  
 QRP Fox Hunt 0200Z-0330Z, Jan 5  
 QRP Fox Hunt 0200Z-0330Z, Jan 7  
 NCCC Sprint Ladder 0230Z-0300Z, Jan 7  
 Hunting Lions in the Air Contest 0000Z, Jan 8  
 to 2400Z, Jan 9  
 PODXS 070 Club PSKFest 0000Z-2400Z, Jan 8  
 MI QRP January CW Contest 1200Z, Jan 8  
 to 2359Z, Jan 9  
 WW PMC Contest 1200Z, Jan 8  
 to 1200Z, Jan 9  
 ARRL RTTY Roundup 1800Z, Jan 8  
 to 2400Z, Jan 9  
 North American QSO Party, CW 1800Z, Jan 8  
 to 0600Z, Jan 9  
 EUCW 160m Contest 2000Z-2300Z, Jan 8  
 and 0400Z-0700Z, Jan 9  
 SKCC Weekend Sprint 0000Z-2400Z, Jan 9  
 NRAU-Baltic Contest, CW 0630Z-0830Z, Jan 9  
 NRAU-Baltic Contest, SSB 0900Z-1100Z, Jan 9  
 DARC 10-Meter Contest 0900Z-1059Z, Jan 9  
 Midwinter Contest 1000Z-1400Z, Jan 9  
 QRP Fox Hunt 0200Z-0330Z, Jan 12  
 CWops Mini-CWT Test 1100Z-1200Z, Jan 12  
 and 1900Z-2000Z, Jan 12  
 and 0300Z-0400Z, Jan 13  
 RSGB 80m Club Championship, SSB 2000Z-2130Z, Jan 12  
 AWA Linc Cundall Memorial CW Contest 2300Z, Jan 12  
 to 2300Z, Jan 13  
 and 2300Z, Jan 15  
 to 2300Z, Jan 16  
 QRP Fox Hunt 0200Z-0330Z, Jan 14  
 NCCC Sprint Ladder 0230Z-0300Z, Jan 14  
 LZ Open Contest 0000Z-0400Z, Jan 15  
 Hungarian DX Contest 1200Z, Jan 15  
 to 1159Z, Jan 16  
 UK DX Contest, RTTY 1200Z, Jan 15  
 to 1200Z, Jan 16  
 Feld Hell Sprint 1600Z-1800Z, Jan 15  
 North American QSO Party, SSB 1800Z, Jan 15  
 to 0600Z, Jan 16

Run for the Bacon QRP Contest 0200Z-0400Z, Jan 17  
 QRP Fox Hunt 0200Z-0330Z, Jan 19  
 NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint 0130Z-0330Z, Jan 20  
 RSGB 80m Club Championship, Data 2000Z-2130Z, Jan 20  
 QRP Fox Hunt 0200Z-0330Z, Jan 21  
 NCCC Sprint Ladder 0230Z-0300Z, Jan 21  
 YL-ISSB QSO Party, SSB 0000Z, Jan 22  
 to 2359Z, Jan 23  
 BARTG RTTY Sprint 1200Z, Jan 22  
 to 1200Z, Jan 23  
 ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes 1900Z, Jan 22  
 to 0359Z, Jan 24  
 SKCC Sprint 0000Z-0200Z, Jan 26  
 QRP Fox Hunt 0200Z-0330Z, Jan 26  
 NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint 0130Z-0330Z, Jan 27  
 QRP Fox Hunt 0200Z-0330Z, Jan 28  
 NCCC Sprint Ladder 0230Z-0300Z, Jan 28  
 CQ 160-Meter Contest, CW 2200Z, Jan 28  
 to 2200Z, Jan 30  
 REF Contest, CW 0600Z, Jan 29  
 to 1800Z, Jan 30  
 UBA DX Contest, SSB 1300Z, Jan 29  
 to 1300Z, Jan 30  
 SPAR Winter Field Day 1700Z, Jan 29  
 to 1700Z, Jan 30  
 WAB 1.8 MHz Phone 1900Z-2300Z, Jan 29  
 Classic Exchange, CW 1400Z, Jan 30  
 to 0800Z, Jan 31

***Good Luck In The Contest!***

***Looking for E-Books???***  
***Submitted by Derek, VE4HAY***

Have to check this site out, lots of neat stuff free to download and read..

[http://www.pmillett.com/tubebooks/technical\\_books\\_online.htm](http://www.pmillett.com/tubebooks/technical_books_online.htm)

***Ham Radio Aboard The ISS !!***

Check out this link to a great video about Ham Radio on the ISS...

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

***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

<sup>8</sup>  
*A Word or Two About  
Winnipeg Senior Citizens Radio Club  
By Ed Henderson, VE4YU*

Did you know that Winnipeg Senior Citizens Radio Club VE4WSC Inc. was started in 1982? Affectionately (we hope) known as the 'Seniors Club', it was the creation of Al Diamond VE4AIP (VE4AX) and Gil Frederick VE4AG. In those days, as the number of 'mature' or senior hams was increasing, it was thought that a facility where senior hams could meet and enjoy their hobby would be a good idea.

Al and Gil mustered together about 25 or so like-minded hams and WSCRC was formed with meeting rooms in the old nursing residence off Osborne. WSCRC is registered as a federal charity with permission to issue tax receipts for donations. It should be noted that, from the beginning to the present, WSCRC has continued to provide facilities and services to its' members and interested others, with no mandatory dues or fees. For over 28 years we have been able to operate strictly on donations and applied for grants. Even the federal government's charities branch is impressed that we have and continue to function under this guideline.

A successful bid for a New Horizons government grant allowed the purchase of radio equipment that put VE4WSC on the air. In 1983 the club was incorporated. Through the diligence of Sam VE4KS in 1986, the club relocated to 598 St. Mary's Road, the old St. Vital Fire Hall that is a heritage building.

I believe we are the only Seniors Radio Club in Canada that can boast our own permanent club rooms that are 'manned' five days a week and evenings and weekends when needed. We also have state-of-the-art radio equipment and computer facilities available to our members. We are blessed with members who have amassed an enormous amount of technical and other knowledge over the years. We are a diverse group of individuals who come from all walks of life with radio as the common ground.

Over the years, our members have trained many, many interested individuals, who wanted to join the fascinating hobby of Amateur Radio. Trained by the best, these new hams have carried on in our quest to preserve the hobby and provide a special pastime for seniors.

Our members range in age from 55 to 90+. We have lost many valued members over the years and the core group is smaller and older now. But as new, younger radio amateurs join as members, we continue to carry on, and we are a long way from disappearing. It has been observed, and questioned by some, that we have

too many official Board members. WSCRC is an elected Board oriented club. The Board keeps everything going smoothly. But hey! we are still able to maintain an elected Board of 14! A lot of organizations have trouble getting six or eight people to serve on their Executive Board. Sometimes we have heated discussions on how things should be done but that is what Board meetings are all about.

We have a strong nucleus of volunteers at WSCRC. We have excellent club facilities with state-of-the-art equipment. We have a wealth of experience and knowledge within our members. We are friendly, opening our doors to all who share an interest in Amateur Radio, and we welcome all qualified seniors to join our club.

Don't judge a book by its' cover – but by its' contents and achievements. Long Live Amateur Radio!

for Winnipeg Senior Citizens Radio Club VE4WSC Inc. - Ed Henderson VE4YU (licensed in 1954)

*A New Ham's Guide To..  
Working the Oscars (on a budget)  
By, Andy Fenstad (VE4RDO)*

As a child of the 60's, Space travel was a big part of my life. Apollo was in full swing, the Apollo 11 moon landing happened when I was 8, so space has always held a fascination for me.

I received my callsign last May. Of course, every amateur operator wants to try all kinds of modes, but all that gear can be really expensive. So, like most new amateurs, I started with 2 meter. A dual-band HT and a ¼ wave, dual-band mag mount antenna and I was on the air.

While I enjoy local ragchews and nets, long distance communications is where its at for me. IRLP and Echolink are lots of fun, but (for me) VOIP is not quite the same as my antenna to theirs for long distance comms.

Back to that space thing. Of course, I had heard of the Oscar satellites, but knew virtually nothing about them. The internet comes to the rescue! I started reading, sites like Amsat (see 'Resources' at the end of the article) answered a lot of questions, but, I found later, not all of them.

I discovered that there are basically four satellites that are FM voice (the only mode I have, remember?).



9  
There are, of course, lots of other modes, but these were the only ones I could use.

So, I dutifully programmed my radio with the uplink and downlink frequencies for each. VHF uplink and UHF downlink in all of these cases. I also included them in my channel scan.

One day, I was driving down Regent Avenue, and suddenly, my radio was squawking with some guy with a callsign that started with an 'N'! Holy smokes! That's a guy on a satellite! Reacting quickly, I answered his call, and he responded! I was so excited, I have no idea to this day what his callsign was.

He also added a cryptic "Foxtrot November Three Four" after his callsign. "What the heck is he talking about", I thought. I responded that I was in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, and my first satellite QSO was over.

What just happened?

Well, of course, the 'FN34' was his grid square (see resources) and Glen (VE4GWN) was kind enough to explain that to me. It appeared that the satellite (HO-68 in this case) was almost directly overhead, and the signal was strong enough for me to use it.

Over the next while, I heard the satellites on occasion (my work sometimes has me driving around a lot), but wasn't able to make any contacts. After seeing some of the antennas and equipment some of the 'big boys' have, I figured I'd have to start buying stuff to make this happen.

At an Ares meeting, I was chatting with Kent (VE4KEH) and mentioned that I was having trouble and would have to shell out for some equipment. He asked how many frequencies I had programmed for each satellite. My answer was one (duh!). He said that because of Doppler shift, you really need FIVE sets of frequencies for each satellite. He also mentioned that Doppler seems to affect UHF more than VHF and that he started at 10Khz high on the receive frequency, 5Khz low on the transmit. He said that a small digital 'memo recorder' was a great idea when you are trying to adjust frequencies, key the radio, and hold that Arrow antenna all at the same time. That way, you could record the QSO and play it back later to get that callsign.

This caused the proverbial light to go on over my head. Everyone knows that satellites are moving very fast. When the satellite is coming towards you, transmitting away, all that forward speed has the effect of raising the frequency of its signal. The same thing happens to your signal on the way up, so you have to transmit at a lower frequency so your signal arrives at the 'bird' on

the frequency it is listening to.

Conversely, when the bird is going away from you, the reverse happens, its transmitted signal arrives at your antenna at a lower frequency, and you have to transmit at a higher frequency, so your signal arrives on frequency. Of course, when its overhead, you use the 'actual' frequencies of the satellite.

The following is the list of frequencies I use for AO-51, which, strangely enough seems to be the satellite that my setup likes the best. 95% of my contacts are on AO-51 – your results may vary. AO-51 is listed as having a downlink frequency (down to Earth) of 435.300MHz and an uplink frequency (Earth to the bird) of 145.920MHz.

Here is my five channels for AO-51:

Acquisition 1 (first look, just above the horizon) - Tx	
145.915MHz Rx 435.310MHz	
Acquisition 2 (higher, but still coming at us) - Tx	
145.915MHz Rx 435.305MHz	
Overhead - Tx	
145.920MHz Rx 435.300MHz	
Loss of Signal 1 (high, but going away) - Tx	
145.925MHz Rx 435.295 MHz	
Loss of Signal 2 (low, just about gone) - Tx	
145.925MHz Rx 435.290 MHz	

You'll notice that the VHF doesn't change as much as the UHF (remember what Kent said?). For other satellites, use similar frequency variations.

Now I have 20 channels for the four satellites, only three for the International Space Station (ISS) since both of its up and downlinks are VHF. The ISS is another story, you want to hear a pileup?

Just listen on the ISS frequencies. Better yet, try to get a contact when you are pushing five watts and you are fighting guys with 200! But I'll get in there some day!

Since I have programmed the 20 channels (back in early September), my results have gotten WAY better. As I write this (December 13<sup>th</sup>), I have 26 QSO's, 23 grids, 3 provinces, and 16 states.

As I'm driving around, I will hear operators on a satellite. I pull over in an area that has a good look at the sky in all directions, turn the squelch down to zero, pull the recorder out of the glove compartment and start working. If I hear calls when I am on the first or second frequency, and they are nice and clear, I know it will probably be a good pass.

If they are very weak or very staticky, or already on one of the last two frequencies, I may or may not get in.

<sup>10</sup>  
Of course, it's a crap shoot anyway – fighting the 'big boys' with five watts can be difficult.

As you listen, you will be able to tell when its time to switch to the next frequency. The signal will start to fade and garble, you click over to the next one, and everything is good again. After you listen a while, you will get the hang of it.

By the way, with a quarter wave like I have, don't expect 59 signals. There WILL be static and signals can be weak. Even though the reports I get usually list my signal as 59, the best I've ever reported was a 37!

When you visit the Amsat site, there is a satellite prediction page (click on 'Passes'). Pick a satellite, input your grid (Winnipeg is EN19), and tell it to predict the next 10 or 20 passes. Look for passes that show a 'Maximum Elevation' as high as possible. I have found that if it is less than 30 degrees above the horizon, its not worth trying. The radiation pattern of the ¼ wave is too high for that – again, your results may vary. Find a nice high pass, an open area, and give it a try!

Oh yeah, in my case, nighttime is not my friend. Not only do I not have any CONTACTS at night, I can't even HEAR the things after dark! Maybe you will have better luck. The times I have found work best are just before dawn all the way to the late afternoon and into early evening (in summer). Dawn and daylight seem to work best.

So, if you've been able to follow my ramblings, you now know how to 'work the birds' on a budget. Let's face it, a dual band HT, a \$35 ¼ wave mag mount antenna, and a \$35 digital voice recorder is not a big outlay of cash in this hobby. Especially when you probably already have the first two!

Catch you on the birds!

73

Andy

## DIAMOND IMAGE



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### VHF Nets .....

**MRS Nets - 147.390 Mhz +**

**Sundays & Thursdays at 9:00 pm**

This net covers Winnipeg and the MRS linked repeater system, and includes various announcements on amateur radio activities, plus Dick's "Swap and Shop"

**Seniors Morning Net 147.390+ Mhz**

**Weekdays at 9:00 am**

This net covers Winnipeg and hams of all ages are welcome to join in this net which is always a lot of fun!

**IRLP (Internet Radio Linking Project)**

**Net - 145.450 Mhz - Node # 1066**

**Wednesdays at 8:00 pm**

This net connects you with the world using your VHF rig and using the internet as the backbone!

**Six Meter Net - 50.238 Mhz**

**Wednesdays at 9:00 pm**

### HF Nets .....

**MB Evening Phone Net - 3760 Khz**

**Daily at 7:00 PM CT**

**Prairie Traffic Net (CW) 3660 Khz**

**Daily at 01:30 UTC**

**Aurora # 2 Net 7055 Khz**

**Daily at 02:30 UTC**

**MB Wx Net 3743 Khz**

**Daily at 8:30 AMC**

**ARES Manitoba Monthly Readiness Net**

**4TH Sunday of each month**

**4:00 PM to 4:20 PM -7,075 Khz**

**4:00 PM to 4:15 PM -3,675 Khz LSB**

Also.. VE4WRS IRLP, VE4ARC/TEU, Interlake, VE4FFR Flin Flon, IRLP Reflector 9003 to Flin Flon/Swan River/Pinawa, VE4SIX/DARC repeater, VE4TPN/VHF Thompson.

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