

THE OVMRC RAMBLER

Volume 40, Number 7, February, 1996

SWR Kit Building Party

The VHF SWR kit building party originally scheduled for late January or early February has been delayed until March because of employment related commitments of the kit developer, Wil Warren. The completed meter will measure approximately 1 inch x 2 inches x 4 inches and will have a 10 LED display to indicate the power (1 to 10 W) with 2 other LEDs which indicate the direction being measured (forward/reflected).

A commercially made circuit card will hold 5 ICs plus other solid state components. The unit can also be used as a field strength detector which is ideal for use in "Bunny hunting". A version with audio output is also available for the sight impaired; help will be available at the party to help build these units. Qualified technicians will assist and guide participants in building the meters and, if necessary, will make final adjustments. Participants will be charged \$25 for each kit which contains everything necessary to build this meter. Kits ordered after the building party will cost \$50 plus tax.

Join in the fun now by registering as a participant - telephone Jacques, VE3TSC, at 748-6597 evenings.

Code Phone

Improve your code speed by using the OVMRC code phone 737-0197. Also code practice is available on 7.050Mhz at 2130 every night, except Tuesday.

It's A Packet Evening

What is packet ? How does it work? What is available to packet users? How much does it cost ? What equipment do you require ? These and other basic questions will be discussed at our February general meeting by our guest speaker John Rodgers, VE3KYT, when he talks about this very interesting aspect of amateur radio. John has been involved in packet radio for a number of years and is a very knowledgeable BBS operator.

Our February 15th meeting is another of those "DON'T MISS" affairs - be there and be informed !

Draws

A reminder to all that the Club is raffling a Windows '95 software. Ed, VA3CEJ, is selling tickets for this draw, 6 tickets for \$5 or \$1 each. The winning ticket will be drawn at the conclusion of our February meeting. Remember, too, that the Club has a 50 - 50 draw each month. Tickets are \$1 each and are available at the registration desk as you enter the auditorium. Whatever is sold will be shared 50 - 50 with the holder of the winning ticket which will be drawn at the conclusion of the meeting.

**IT'S COMING - MAY 18TH -
RESERVE THE DATE - IT'S THE
OVMRC FLEAMARKET**

The Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club

RAMBLER

The Rambler is published monthly by:

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Gerry King, VE3GK
Fred Noble, VE3BAJ
Jerry Wells, VE3CDS
Bill Wilson, VE3NR

Joining or Renewing RAC Membership

When joining or renewing your membership in RAC, remember to quote "OTT-101" on your application. This will reimburse the OVMRC \$3 of your RAC membership dues which will be passed back to you in the form of a credit on your next year's OVMRC dues.

OVMRC CODE PHONE - 737-0197

The OVMRC gratefully acknowledge the support of the Corel Corporation in producing the Rambler.

Mark Your Calendar !

Next general meeting:

Thursday, February 15th at 1930 hours in the main auditorium of the Museum of Science and Technology. Our guest speaker for the evening will be John Rodgers, VE3KYT. John will be speaking about "Getting Started in Packet Radio".

Deadline for next Rambler:

Friday, February 23rd 1996.

OVMRC's Repeater:

**VE3TWO , 147.300MHz (+)
444.200MHz (+)**

Affiliated Clubs

The OVMRC exchanges newsletters with the following organizations:

Algoma ARC, Sault Ste Marie, ON
Augusta Amateur Radio Assoc. Augusta, ME
Border City Radio Club, Windsor, ON
Chatham-Kent ARC Inc. Chatham, ON
Calgary Amateur Radio Assoc. Calgary AB
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Surey ARC, Surrey, B.C.
Saskatoon ARC, Saskatoon, SK
Thousand Island ARC, Brockville, ON
West Island ARC, Dorval, PQ
Winnipeg ARC, Winnipeg, MAN

Sponsors

The OVMRC provides newsletters to the following organizations for their past support of our activities:

Bytown Marine, Ottawa, ON
Kenwood Electronics Canada Inc. Mississauga, ON
Corel Corporation, Ottawa, ON

Ramblings

*Our President, Ernie Jury, VE3EJJ,
would like you to know...*



Time goes quickly when you are having fun. The winter weather has brought some DX windows and I am having fun. I want to thank the membership for so patiently enduring the supplementary budget discussion at the last meeting and agreeably accepting the changes proposed. As well, I want say that the formal motion supporting the presentation of 4 SWR meters with audio output to the CNIB was most timely and appreciated.

At the last meeting we all noticed that the gates to the north parking lot were closed. Several commented on the poorer lighting in the front lot and past instances of car break-ins in that lot. Steve, VE3RUU, our Vice-President, has discussed these points with the Museum security people who have agreed to open the north lot on our regular meeting nights on a trial basis. Our thanks to Steve for his efforts.

Although the 50/50 draw at the December meeting was a success, we were not able to follow through at the last meeting because of a foul up in ticket procurement. This will be remedied at the next meeting with a minor change; we will be using single tickets numbered at each end. You will now only receive half a ticket at the door. The other half will go into the draw box. Speaking of draw tickets, the Windows 95 update raffle tickets will be on sale before the next meeting and the draw will occur at the end of the meeting. Ed Strange, VA3CEJ, is handling the raffle ticket sales.

In a effort to better prepare ourselves to effectively handle public service and emergency events, Ed, VA3CEJ, will be conducting a series of about 3 evening sessions on voice net procedures. The

sessions are targeted for sometime in March. If you are interested in participating call Ed at 828-4804.

A proposal was put forward by Ken, VE3KJB, that we vary our meeting program to something a little more social that might be somewhat more attractive to those that do not normally attend our meetings. The executive agreed with the proposal and selected the April meeting to try it out. Ken will be arranging an amateur entertainment evening drawing on the talents of the club members. Hopefully, such an evening will be attractive to YL's, XYL's and perhaps children who see mostly the technical side of the hobby at home. Let's show them that the hobby can be fun for non-amateurs and those who are not technically inclined. If you have an entertainment talent, please call Ken and volunteer to participate in a fun evening. You can reach him at 746-4823.

Those of you using the internet will be interested to learn that the OVMRC will be having a home page in the near future, courtesy of Richard, VE3UNW, and Rick, VE3IHI, who have volunteered to set it up and get it started. Depending on how it progresses, this could be the basis for electronic distribution of the Rambler. Our thanks to Richard and Rick for their efforts on the club's behalf.

The Museum demonstration station, VE3JW, is staffed on a voluntary basis by qualified club members who have become museum volunteers. It is usually operated for some portion of each day during the week, but except for Sunday mornings when the pothole net is controlled by VE3JW, it is silent on weekends. This is rather

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Minutes

OVMRC Regular Meeting, 18 January, 1996.

President Ernie opened the meeting at 1934 hours. The membership welcomed Ernie, VA3EGR, from Spencerville and Steven, VA3SBN, from Masset, B.C.

Andrew, VE3AIU, asked for help in locating a (Borlan) computer program. Rick, VE3IHI, will assist him.

Leonard, VE3LPH, introduced the speaker for the evening. The scheduled speaker had to cancel at the last minute and Gerry, VE3GK, was asked to take his place.

Gerry spoke off the cuff on antennas and towers. He showed a series of coloured slides and a video tape of the installation and operation of his "stealth tower" which remains undetected by his neighbours. Gerry closed his presentation by asking the membership to provide him with leads on the availability of coils.

The President thanked Gerry for entertaining and educating us with his wisdom and experience.

The Treasurer presented details of a revised budget, a copy of which was published in the Rambler. Richard, VE3UNW, moved that the revised budget be approved. It was seconded by Gerry, VE3GK. Approved.

President Ernie spoke about a renewed solicitation from the CNIB ARC for donations. In view of our current bylaws, the OVMRC cannot support this request. However, Ernie suggested the Club purchase and build four of the VHF SWR meter kits being built at a workshop later this month. Richard, VE3UNW, moved that the OVMRC proceed with this option. Ed, VA3CEJ, seconded the motion. Approved.

Jerry, VE3CDS, reported that this year's Santa on the air was a great success. The next event, GOTA, will take place next month and Jerry is looking for volunteers to operate the museum station. Interested amateurs are asked to contact Jerry, VE3CDS.

The membership was reminded that code practice is still available every night, except Tuesday, on 7.050 Mhz at 2130 hours. This is an ideal opportunity for those interested in improving their code speed.

The Club is looking for a few qualified

amateurs who can be accredited as delegated examiners. Anyone interested is asked to contact Jerry, VE3CDS.

Ed, VA3CEJ, has volunteered to give a couple of training sessions on the subject of "verbal communication and net control". This would assist members with the skills and procedures required to operate a net while assisting with events or emergency situations. All interested please contact Ed at 828-4804.

Ernie advised that a surplus antenna mast, 100 foot in 6 nested sections, which must be guyed will be sold by bids through Crown Assets. There are a few reported problems with the mast. Anyone interested may contact Wayne Cochrane at 952-7963.

The Club is still looking for someone to take over the editorship of the Rambler in June. If interested contact any member of the Executive.

Hanz, VE3REL, provided an update on some RAC news including the appointment of a new Field Coordinator, a reunion of people connected with the Arctic weather station and a 100th anniversary of the Red Cross.

Ernie reminded the membership of the raffle for the new Windows 95 software. The draw will take place next month at our February General Meeting.

The VHF SWR kit building party has been delayed until March due to work related commitments by the designer.

The door prize, a set of Master Component Catalogue donated by Neil, VE3PUE, was won by Rick, VE3IHI.

Richard, VE3UNW, advised of the Advance Licence course which starts Tuesday, January 23 in room 508 at Carleton University. The course will run to Victoria Day.

The Canadian Ski Marathon Committee is looking for amateur operators to handle their communications on February 10 and 11. If interested contact Harry Jones at 738-2372, Extension 234.

The President adjourned the meeting at 2105 for the social hour. Coffee and cookies were served.

Ramblings

Continued from page 3

unfortunate as attendance at the Museum is much higher on weekends and this is when station operation would be of most benefit to the Museum. I would ask anyone interested in operating the station on weekends to contact Jerry, VE3CDS, at 225-7374 for further information. A work party under Jerry's direction has just increased the size of the wire to the rotor of the 7 element beam so that it should now work reliably in cold weather when it is be most effective in DXing.

The executive has not received any nominations for year-end awards. If you know of a local radio amateur that you feel is deserving of recognition for efforts to serve, advance or promote the hobby, please give us a short write-up of these efforts so that we can consider them as candidates. The write-ups can be directed to any member of the executive.

Although it is not a pressing matter, we are still looking for one or two suitable candidates to be recommended to Industry Canada as delegate examiners. If you have many years of experience an amateur and are interested, please contact a member of the club executive.

This is all for now. Hope to see you all at the February meeting which should be most interesting, especially for those thinking of getting into packet.

Can You Help ?

Look around your shack and see if you can help Carl ! Carl is looking for Heathkit Amateur Radio items. Heath assembly manuals and catalogues (both Canadian and U.S.A.) He is also looking for RadioShack, Lafayette and Allied Catalogues. If you can provide any of the foregoing please contact Carl Morin, VA3CGM, telephone 523-8792.

Fleamarket Time Approaches

The following is a list of fleamarkets which have been scheduled during the next several months. Details for some of the events are lacking but will be available closer to their dates.

FEBRUARY

- 17 Orange County ARC Hamfest
John Burke Catholic High School
Goshen, New York
- 24 Northern Vermont Winter Hamfest
Milton High School, Route 7,
Milton, Vermont

MARCH

- 16 Ontario DX Assoc. SWL Hamfest
Trinity Presbyterian Church Hall
2737 Bayview Avenue
North York, Ontario
- 23 Brownsburg ARC Hamfest
Grenville Community Centre
Grenville, Quebec
- 23 Peel ARC Ham-Ex
Century Gardens Rec Complex
340 Vodden Street East
Brampton, Ontario
- 30 Laval-Laurentides ARC Hamfest
Ste. Therese, Quebec

APRIL

- 13 Durham Region Fleamarket
Toronto East Trade Centre
Pickering, Ontario.
- 20 West Island ARC Auction Fleamarket
Transfiguration of Our Lord Parish
Cartierville, Quebec

MAY

- 3 to 5 Ontario DX Assoc. Convention
Kingston, Ontario
- 17-19 Dayton ARC Hamfest
Dayton, Ohio
- 18 OVMRC Fleamarket
Ottawa, Ontario
- 31 Rochester ARC Fleamarket
Rochester, New York

JUNE

- 1 Communications/ElectronicsMarket
Bayshore Arena, 3rd Avenue East
Owen Sound, Ontario

Build a Quarterwave Ground Plane Antenna

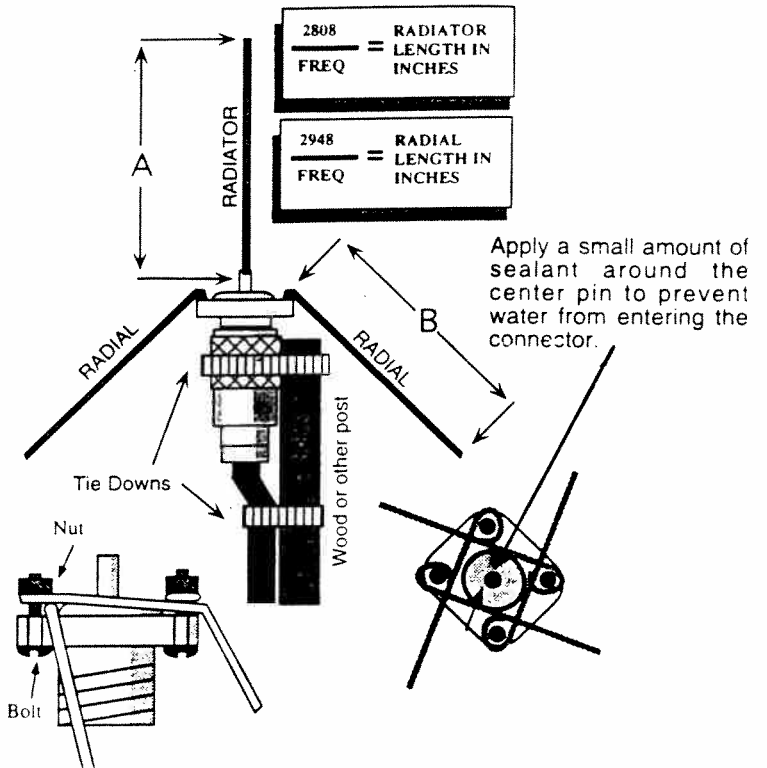
Reprint from the Chatham-Kent ARC Newsletter

One of the simplest antennas you can build is a quarterwave ground plane antenna. It is small in size and is inexpensive to build.

The only part you will need to buy is an SO239 panel mount connector. You can use an old wire hanger for the radiator and radials.

You will need to use your soldering iron or gun to attach the Radiator to the centre post of the SO-239. Be sure to file any paint or coating from the radiator wire before soldering. Cut the radiator to the proper length before soldering it. If you can find a short copper tube, it will help secure the radiator to the SO-239. Your antenna will stand up to a high wind.

The radials may be soldered or attached with screws. Screws are the easier method if you take the time to overlap them as shown in the diagram. Cutting the radials may be done after the construction is complete.



FREQUENCY CUTTING CHART

RADIATOR		
FREQ	RADIALS	
28.1	99.93	104.93
28.2	99.57	104.55
28.3	99.22	104.18
28.4	98.87	103.82
28.5	98.53	103.45
28.6	98.18	103.09
28.7	97.84	102.73
28.8	97.50	102.38
28.9	97.16	102.02
29.0	96.83	101.67
29.1	96.49	101.32
29.2	96.16	100.97
29.3	95.84	100.63
29.4	95.51	100.29
29.5	95.19	99.95
29.6	94.86	99.61
29.7	94.55	99.27
29.8	94.23	98.94
29.9	93.91	98.61
50.0	56.16	58.97
50.5	55.60	58.38
51.0	55.06	57.81
51.5	54.52	57.25
52.0	54.00	56.70
52.5	53.49	56.16
53.0	52.98	55.63
53.5	52.49	55.11
54.0	52.00	54.60

RADIATOR		
FREQ	RADIALS	
144.0	19.50	20.48
144.5	19.43	20.40
145.0	19.37	20.33
145.5	19.30	20.26
146.0	19.23	20.19
146.5	19.17	20.13
147.0	19.10	20.06
147.5	19.04	19.99
148.0	18.97	19.92
220.0	12.76	13.40
220.5	12.73	13.37
221.0	12.71	13.34
221.5	12.68	13.31
222.0	12.65	13.28
222.5	12.62	13.25
223.0	12.59	13.22
223.5	12.56	13.19
224.0	12.54	13.16

RADIATOR		
FREQ	RADIALS	
423.0	6.64	6.97
424.0	6.62	6.95
425.0	6.61	6.94
426.0	6.59	6.92
427.0	6.58	6.90
428.0	6.56	6.89
429.0	6.55	6.87
430.0	6.53	6.86
431.0	6.52	6.84
432.0	6.50	6.83
433.0	6.48	6.81
434.0	6.47	6.79
435.0	6.46	6.78
436.0	6.44	6.76
437.0	6.43	6.75
438.0	6.41	6.73
439.0	6.40	6.72
440.0	6.38	6.70
441.0	6.37	6.69
442.0	6.35	6.67
443.0	6.34	6.66
444.0	6.32	6.64
445.0	6.31	6.63
446.0	6.30	6.61
447.0	6.28	6.60
448.0	6.27	6.58
449.0	6.25	6.57
450.0	6.24	6.55

N e c e s s i t y Mothers Spools Of Invention

Reprinted from Austin, Texas "AARC-Over"

Amateur radio often spawns inventive genius. An event in the Alps mountains late in W-W II will illustrate. I went to Europe late in the war with the U.S. Army's first microwave communications equipment - top secret stuff for transmitting scrambled telephone messages.

One repeater station comprised four trailers, with four 10 kW power plants, two antenna trucks, four equipment vans, and a jeep - operated by a squad of 10 men. Each equipment van had about 275 electron tubes. To prevent excessive temperature rise, the vans had exhaust fans, but no source of heat. That was fine for North Africa, but not for high in the Alps in winter. It was like trying to heat a country outhouse with a candle.

Among our equipment was twelve spools of Signal Corps field telephone wire. Each fifteen inch diameter spool contained one mile of wire. The electrical resistance of the wire on each spool was 110 ohms.

We moved all the spools into the operating vans, and connected the wire ends across the 120-volts AC from the generator. But, alas, it didn't work. The coiled wire had so much inductance that only a few milliamps of current flowed, producing little heating.

After much thought we tried sending current through the two wires of each pair in opposite directions. Presto ! 400 watts per spool - more heat than we needed ! It was great coming in out of the bitter cold and snow and sitting on those warm spools of wire. Twelve spools ate up half the output of one of those generators - but who cared , we weren't cold anymore !

EDITOR'S NOTE:

For all of you technically minded amateurs try responding to the following question on the physical aspects of inductance - " Why did foregoing set-up work ? "

Working A DX "Split" Operation

Reprinted from Los Altos, Calif ."EMARC Relay"

It's common for a DXpedition station to work "split" - the DX transmitting on one frequency, but listening on another. It keeps the "pileup" off the DX transmit frequency, so everyone can hear the DX station better. It also allows the DX to transmit on a portion of the band that's quieter because it's not available to most of the callers.

Working split requires ingenuity on the caller's part; it can become an exciting game. In split mode on a dual-VFO transceiver, one VFO sets the receive frequency and the other the transmit frequency. You put the receive VFO on the DX transmit frequency, and the other VFO where you want to transmit. Your rig's instruction manual shows how to set up split mode.

CW splits are usually just a few kHz, so you can often work split on CW using the receive-independent-tuning (RIT) control - though it's unhandy because it moves the receive rather than the transmit frequency.

Splits on SSB are typically 5 to 10 kHz, and occasionally much more, so you must have dual VFO's or a separate receiver.

Most DX stations announce their listening frequencies often. And as the pileup grows, they tend to widen the split, to spread the callers out. A DX on 14.195 may say, "Listening 200-210" or "listening to 210" meaning he or she is scanning from 14.200 to 14.210. But the DX never says in what order - which could be upwards, downwards or at random.

Where should you transmit? One strategy is to quickly scan after the DX selects each caller. If you find that station, when the DX says "QRZ", transmit on the same frequency, or up or down by whatever increment you think the DX is tuning. If you can find several worked stations in a row, you may discover a pattern. Then you can predict where the DX will listen next and be there !
Continued on next page

D X S p l i t Operation

Continued from previous page

Friendly souls on your local DX Cluster may act as "spotters" to help you find those worked stations. This "predictive" work can be effective. Some DXers expend a major effort divining the pattern. They pride themselves on getting through on one, or at least very few calls.

But while you're trying to learn the DX's pattern, you're not transmitting your call sign. A simple, but more timid strategy is to pick a more-or-less quiet spot, perhaps near the centre of the announced scan range and stay there, throwing in your call sign every time the DX completes a QSO. The advantage of the central frequency is that the DX must cross it twice in an up and down scan pattern. And if the scan is random, you are still no worse off than anyone else. Another advantage of staying in one spot is that you may chase some of the other callers to "quieter" frequencies.

Transmitting on the DX frequency in a split operation is a major "no-no." "Policemen" may shout (or send) "Up, Up !" to let you know you goofed; a few add juicy comments on your mental limitations. Avoid embarrassment by following the amateur's golden rule ; "Listen before you talk !"

Here's a tip : Anytime you hear a DX station working "contest style", but you can't hear anyone responding on the DX frequency, you can assume it's a split operation. To work the station, first find the pileup, then join the fun. Good Luck !

Technobabble

Here are some anomalies heard recently :

- * I am mo-blin (about which I am mo-sick)
- * I am destined (would a high-fibre diet help ?)
- * Could I get a radio check? (no, your check is in the mail.)
- * And finally, those things in your back yard holding up your antennas aren't pine trees, they're "organic towers".

Entertainment, Anyone ?

Amateurs and their families are pretty talented people - they play various musical instruments, sing or belong to theatrical groups.

Our regular April meetings has been designated as Entertainment Night. Individuals, groups and/or families are invited to contact the program's Coordinator, Ken Barry at 746-4823 to participate. Participants will be judged and prizes awarded.

Who Should Be Recognized ?

If you are aware of a local amateur who has contributed to the amateur community above and beyond the normal, you may wish to nominate him/her for recognition by the OVMRC. Nominations must be in writing stating the nominee's name, call sign, with a short resume explaining what the nominee has done to earn recognition. Nominations will be considered by the Executive and appropriate awards will be made to outstanding nominees at our June meeting.

V o l u n t e e r s Required For VE3JW

Qualified volunteer amateur radio operators are required to operate VE3JW on Saturdays and Sundays. If you do not have HF privileges you may wish to buddy-up with someone who is qualified and enjoy operating the museum station. Interested amateurs are asked to contact Jerry Wells, VE3CDS for full details.

Satellite QSO'S

Thanks to Al VO1NO for all his helpful information on working satellites. I decided to try RS 12/13 and found it to be an interesting experience.

It started when Bruce VE2NHL called me on December 23 saying that RS 12/13 would be overhead in minutes at 2143Z, that he intended to give it a try and I also should attempt a contact. Well I got all set on the downlink frequency and began tuning up/down between 29.410 and 29.450 on VFO 'A' on my transceiver. Using SPLIT MODE, VFO 'B' was tuned to the uplink frequency of 21.210 MHz. For the first few minutes there was nothing but dead air. Then I picked up some CW with somebody calling CQ RS 12/13 at 29.430.

I quickly tuned there and heard VE2NHL working W9CZI. After a quick adjustment to my uplink frequency I returned to the downlink frequency and fired off my call at the end of their brief exchange. I heard W9CZI acknowledge receipt but before we could begin an exchange, the bird was over the hill and gone with me frantically spinning the dial, trying to follow the Doppler shift in frequency. I got ready for the next pass at 2327, but this time heard absolutely nothing. Quite frustrated and disappointing!

Not somebody to be discouraged so easily, I got ready for the next passes on December 25 at 1900 and 2045 UTC. Not having a rig with real satellite capabilities, I realized it was going to be tricky to acquire the signal on one VFO, switch and tune the uplink VFO (not to mention the tuner) and return to the downlink VFO to see if the station was still there before losing the signal. The frequency changes quickly due to the Doppler effect as the bird quickly zips by.

Here's the trick! For the pass at 1900Z I picked up a phone signal at 29.430. I quickly set up the uplink VFO to about 500 Hz above what it should of been and returned to the downlink. This took only a few seconds but by then the frequency was drifting. I slowly increased the downlink VFO by the same amount and was able to work N1FCC just as he was finishing with another station. By being 500 Hz high on the uplink, this gave

me enough "Doppler shift time" to switch to the downlink VFO and re-tune the station until the downlink frequency matched the 500 Hz I was off on the uplink.

i.e. - Signal was acquired on 29.430.5. Uplink was quickly tuned to 21.231.0. Returning to downlink, the Doppler was already making 29.430.5 too low for clear copy so I slowly tuned up to 29.431.0 and it was loud and clear. Contact was quickly established.

This will only work if the station exchanges are quick and short. If the exchange takes longer than 500 Hz of "Doppler shift time", you will be way off frequency by the time the station is ready to accept your call and then it will be back to quick VFO shifting and high speed dial spinning!

By this method I was able to work W1NWE on the 2045Z pass. By the way, you don't need a sophisticated antenna for this as my G5RV worked very well. Also one more thing to mention. Depending on conditions for the other station on the 'Bird' you might have to make frequency adjustments down instead of up, good luck!

The Swap Shop

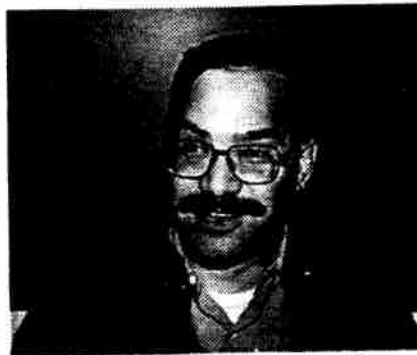
Ed Morgan, who has run the Swap Net for almost 27 years has decided to call it 'fini'. Local hams certainly appreciate Ed's many years of dedication in his trying to help others. Many thanks Ed !

Dan Reardon, VE3GUU, has agreed to take over the Swap Net. The Pot Hole Net starts each Sunday morning at 10AM and the Swap Net starts at approximately 10:15AM and runs until completed on 3760 Khz. The same is repeated on VHF Monday evenings on the Capital City Net on 146.940 (2 meters) for those who do not have access to the HF bands.

To list any items for sale or wanted, please contact Dan at (613) 836-2633 or FAX (613) 836-5635. Items will be listed for 4 weeks and then cancelled unless reinstated by the owner. If you sell your item(s) please advise Dan so your listing can be cancelled..

Potpourri

*A sampling of news and comments
from newsletters and newspapers
from across the country - written
by Jacques Choquette, VE3TSC*



Monitoring Times (Dec/95) - When Hurricane Marilyn hit the US Virgin Islands, 2 old men in an Spanish fort were the only contact with the mainland. When all else failed, the 2 used ham radios to send faint signals to keep the officials informed of the hurricane's destruction.

News of the Weird - A New York cable company is using a different method to entice customers to pay their bills. Instead of cutting off service, all channels are filled CSPAN. CSPAN has entertainment such as long boring speeches by Congressmen and live hearings on cockroach research. The cable company says the project has been successful.

73 (Dec/95) - If you own a Fluke Series II digital multimeter, Model 21, 23, kit 23, 70, 73, 75 or 77, Fluke wants to get it back for modification. It seems that for any voltage over 400 VAC or DC, it may indicate 0 volts. This could lead to erroneous troubleshooting. Calgary - Imagine having a bank that each morning credited you with \$1440 with one condition: whatever amount you failed to use would be erased and not carried over. What would you do? Each day you'd draw out every cent and use to your best advantage. Well, you do have such a bank, and its name is time. Every morning this bank credits you with 1440 minutes and writes off forever whatever portion you failed to invest to good purpose!!

Monitoring Times (Dec/95) - Kansas City has a new emergency radio system that firefighters and police officers are saying has flaws which could endanger their lives. The \$18 million 800 MHz system is renowned for handheld failures, blocked signals within buildings and alarm failures at fire stations. The repair tab could run up to \$1 million. (Hi, hi And who said the latest technology was better? - VE3TSC)

W5YI - The first issue (Jan/Feb 96) of CQ

VHF carried a variety of material on repeaters, FM, packet radio, amateur satellites, ATV and VHF/UHF weak signals. This version had a product review on the Radio Shack HTX212 calling it an excellent value.

New York - Metroplex Reference Guide: The word "BREAK" means "emergency" and we should save this word only for actual emergencies. Do not use it in normal conversation as this decreases being recognized for its true meaning. Never use the words "break", "breaker", or "breaking station" except as related to an emergency station. (What? Still some CB lingo being used on our "civilized" frequencies? -VE3TSC) FCC (USA) - This department has denied certain requests that the code requirements for the General license be lowered from 13 to 5 words per minute. The requests had also demanded that one class be abolished. The FCC said that from past policy decisions, amateurs have indicated a strong demand "to preserve communications by telegraphy".

73 (Jan/96) - The 3 class licensing system in Brazil is a lot simpler than the complex one used in the US. Class A is no code, Class B is 5 wpm code and Class A is 10 wpm. The Class B test consists of copying correctly 87 characters from 125 sent in 5 minutes. The Class A test is twice that.

Amateur Radio Newline - Canada has become the fourth country which has agreed to adhere to the International Amateur Radio Permit. Two permits have already been issued to RAC President Farrell, VE7RD, and IARU Region 2 Vice President Tom, VE3CDM.

Ottawa - For the first time on record, the OVMRC's Welcome Mat Net was interrupted by a "couch". The Net Controller had to call for the Net Manager's help to take over the net as delivery men were at his door with a new couch he had purchased.