Rambler

Newsletter of the Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club, Inc. (OVMRC)
Volume 43, Issue No. 4

Inside...

Let's Meet for Breakfast!

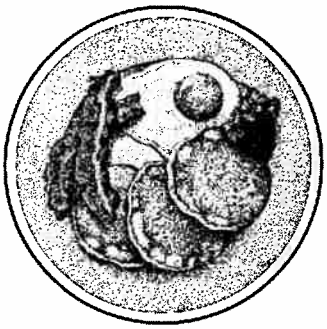
by Bob Shaw, VE3SUY

At the October meeting, there appeared to be significant interest in commencing the Sunday Morning Breakfast Meeting (SMB) on the Sunday morning following the November meeting, i.e., on November 22.

Unfortunately, I won't be able to attend due to a previous engagement. We can either proceed with the meeting without me, or delay it one week, or start again in January. We will discuss the options and make a decision at the November meeting.

The details are:

- Meet at the Bella Vista restaurant in the mall on the south-east corner of Bank St. and Alta Vista Blvd. (between Walkley Rd. and Heron Rd.) on Sunday at 9 a.m. We should be clear of the restaurant by 11:30 a.m. so they can prepare for any lunch customers (I don't think this will be a problem on Sundays!)



- Breakfast with orange juice and coffee will be $4-$5, depending on your choice.
- We will form small groups at the table to discuss different topics (or perhaps no topic!). There will be a small sign on a few tables suggesting topics so you can choose to sit at a table of interest to you. Some topics may be technical, some involving operating, regulation, etc.

At the monthly meeting, I will place a sign-up sheet so you can indicate your intention to attend.

This information will just give the restaurant some idea of numbers — it is not a commitment to attend.

If you have ideas for topics, please phone me at 737-9443 and leave your thoughts. ✣

Rambler

Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club Inc.
P.O. Box 5530, Stn. F
Ottawa, Ontario
K2C 3M1

OVMRC Executive (1998-99)

President	Doug Carswell, VE3ATY 829-7167, ve3aty@takeone.com
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Treasurer	Peter Hafichuk, VE3LBW 745-0608
Secretary	Patricia Rowan, VA3PUR 521-2014, patricia.rowan@takeone.com

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Amateur Radio Exhibit	Ernie Jury, VE3EJJ 728-3666, ve3ejj@cyberus.ca
Amateur Radio Training	Bob Shaw, VE3SUY 737-9443, lycott@fox.nstn.ca Bob Kavanagh, VE3OSZ 225-6785, ve3osz@rac.ca
Delegated Examiner	Bob Kavanagh, VE3OSZ (see above)
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Flea Market	John Barnhardt, VE3ZOV 521-8910, ve3zov@rac.ca
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Publicity & Programs	Open
Radio Operations	Evan DeCorte, VE3DEC 722-8929, pebd@cyberus.ca
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OVMRC Life Members

Ralph Cameron, VE3BBM
Doug Carswell, VE3ATY
Gerry King, VE3GK
Doreen Morgan, VE3CGO
Ed Morgan, VE3GX
Fred Noble, VE3BAJ
Bill Wilson, VE3NR

Affiliated Clubs

The OVMRC is pleased to exchange newsletters with the following Amateur Radio Clubs across Canada and the United States.

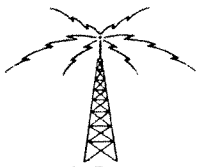
Algoma ARC	Sault Ste Marie, ON
Augusta ARA	Augusta, ME, USA
Border City ARA	Windsor, ON
Chatham-Kent ARC	Chatham, ON
Calgary ARC	Calgary, AB
Comox Valley ARC	Comox, BC
Halifax ARC	Halifax, NS
Heritage ARC	Coburg, ON
Kingston ARC	Kingston, ON
Lambton County ARC	Sarnia, ON
London ARC	London, ON
Metroplex ACA	New York, NY, USA
Ottawa ARC	Ottawa, ON
Pioneer ARC	Nepean, ON
Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC)	Ottawa, ON
Rideau Lakes ARC	Smiths Falls, ON
Scarborough ARC	Scarborough, ON
Seaway Valley ARC	Cornwall, ON
Sudbury ARC	Sudbury, ON
Surrey ARC	Surrey, BC
Saskatoon ARC	Saskatoon, SK
Thousand Island ARC	Brockville, ON
Truro ARC	Truro, NS
West Island ARC	Dorval, QC
Winnipeg ARC	Winnipeg, MB

Sponsors

The OVMRC acknowledges the following organizations for their support of our activities by providing them with courtesy copies of the *Rambler*:

Bytown Marine, Ottawa, ON
Kenwood Electronics Canada Inc., Mississauga, ON
TakeOne Info System, Ottawa, ON

OVMRC code phone:
Practise your CW!
737-0197



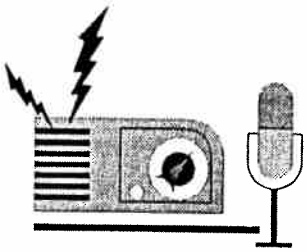
OVMRC Repeater:
147.300 MHz (+)
444.200 MHz (+)

OVMRC web page:
http://www.takeone.com/public/ovmrc.htm
Webmaster - John Rodger, VE3JR
jrodger@takeone.com

Next Meeting:
☞ Nov. 19, 1998
***Rambler* Deadline:**
☞ Nov. 27, 1998

Strays

Comments by OVMRC President, Doug Carswell, VE3ATY



It was with some trepidation that we went ahead with the Corel presentation at the October meeting, as it is not intended to turn our meetings into infomercials. However, at the beginning of the season when we were looking for subjects for presentation, our editor suggested we ought to consider topics that were "cutting edge." Dan Doctor, VE3XDD, suggested that we ought to consider Corel's new product, "Dragon Naturally Speaking." He then made the arrangements which resulted in Corel's presentation.

"Wake up" to advanced technology

Judging by the number of questions asked at the end of the presentation, many of our club members seemed to have found it an interesting meeting. Personally, I found "Dragon Naturally Speaking" a fascinating product as it was the first voice recognition technology demonstration that I had seen.

Obviously, it is only a matter of time before we find this advanced technology used in our daily lives. Before leaving this subject, I would like to thank Dan Doctor for arranging the visit. We will see if we can find more "cutting edge" ideas.

November is antenna month

At the November meeting, Bob Shaw, VE3SUY, is going to describe the construction of the 5/8 whip antenna. This subject seems particularly appropriate since many of our members operate on two metres and the 5/8 whip is one of those antennas that lends itself to use on this band. Bob will include sufficient information in the presentation to enable you to build, on a Saturday afternoon, a 5/8 whip for use on two metres.

Developing critieria

On other matters, Evan DeCorte, VE3DEC, has prepared "proposed criteria" to be used by the club to screen requests for communications services from the community. The executive will review the proposed criteria at its monthly meeting and then present same to you for your consideration. Perhaps when the exercise is finished we can amend the bylaws to incorporate the proposed criteria.

Further, Ken Barry, VE3KJB, and Larry Wilcox, VE3WEH, have prepared proposed criteria for selecting candidates for the Jerry Wells Award. These criteria, too, will be presented to the membership for consideration and approval when the proposed details have been worked out.

Design competition

At this month's executive meeting, Ernie Jury, VE3EJJ, brought to our attention a contest being run by *Scientific American* magazine that may be of interest to club members. The object of the competition is to design an inexpensive instrument for monitoring the ocean close to shore. Details of the requirement are provided on pages 112-113 of the November 1998 issue of *Scientific American.*

Shawn Carlson, author of the article, gives an example of what might be provided. It is suggested that a GPS unit may be used and identifies a possible supplier (see <www.garmin.com/oem TracPaks.html>). It also suggests the use of packet radio equipment developed by Amateurs. This project looks like fun!

Web access to *Rambler*

On another matter, we are currently considering placing the *Rambler* on the club's web page, which would allow those members that have access to the web to retrieve the *Rambler* from the club's web site.

A financial benefit would result from this availability as provision is made in the bylaws to offer members a reduced membership fee if a member takes delivery of the *Rambler* by means other than via snail mail. This potential change is currently under review and we will let you know the result as soon as the mechanics have been worked out. ✣

Minutes

October 15, 1998 general meeting
taken by Patricia Rowan, VA3PUR

The meeting opened with club President, Doug Carswell, VE3ATY, welcoming visitors to the meeting. Visitors were Doug Kapounek, VA3DFK, and Larry Kearns, VE3WSB.

A call was made for anyone with technical problems and there were none.

Bob Shaw, VE3SUY, spoke about the proposed breakfast meeting. He had investigated the Bella Vista restaurant and indicated that a meal could be had for $4 or $5. Bob will have a sign-up sheet for the November meeting for all those interested.

A motion was made to approve the minutes for the September meeting by Colin Finlayson, VE3UZU, seconded by Steve Middleton, VE3RUU. Motion carried.

Doug again mentioned that the club needs someone to look after the post-meeting refreshments on an ongoing basis.

Ernie Jury, VE3EJJ, explained the anomaly in the Financial Report and will write up a report for the November *Rambler*.

Should we give our students a break?!

Sometimes we throw a misteak or two into the *Rambler* to see if anyone is paying attention! For instance, in last month's minutes, (page ④ of the October *Rambler*, Vol. 43, Issue 3), we asked for volunteers who could send code at ***35-40 w.p.m.*** for the benefit of the students taking the Amateur Radio course!

On second thought, maybe that is a bit too fast for beginners. The minutes should have read: "Volunteers would send CW for [Bob Shaw's] students to copy at **5-10** words per minute from 7:00 - 7:30 p.m., and again from 9:00 - 9:30 p.m." ✣

Bob Kavanagh, VE3OSZ, commented about the OVMRC radio course. He said that there were 15 students, including a father and two sons (one of whom was only 13), and three women. Our web site has encouraged prospective students and RAC has also been very helpful in directing folks to our club's course.

It was announced that a membership phone list will be available in November.

A motion to fund the Christmas party organized by Ken Barry, VE3KJB, was made by Dan Doctor, VE3XDD, and seconded by Dan Reardon, VE3GUU, and was passed by a show of hands.

There is an EMRG exercise on November 7 and anyone interested was to contact Mike Kelly, VE3FFK.

Guest speakers for the evening were two representatives from Corel Corporation. Sally Reijerse introduced WordPerfect 8 with Dragon Naturally Speaking, and Iwona Osmolska introduced Print Office. The members enjoyed the demonstration and asked many questions. Special order forms for these programs will be sent to those who attended the meeting and offered their names.

The door prize (a copy of WordPerfect 8 with Dragon Naturally Speaking) was won by David Yerxa, VE3UES; Don Raymond, VE3DRO, won the 50/50 draw prize $36.50. ✣

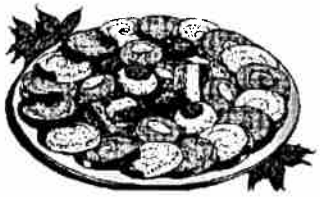
Next Club Meeting

November is antenna month

Date: Thursday, November 19, 1998
Time: 7:30 p.m. sharp!
Place: Museum of Science &Technology
Featured Topic: 5/8 whip antenna

Variety Show

The Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club (OVMRC) will, once again, host an entertaining and talent-laden Christmas Variety Show at 2000 hrs. on Thursday, December 17, 1998 in the auditorium of the National Museum of Science and Technology, 1867 St. Laurent Blvd., in Ottawa.



All Amateurs, their friends, spouses and family are welcome to attend this free gala evening of music, song and merriment. The evening will feature the internationally famous, prize-winning Barbershop Quartet, the Capital City Chordettes, as well as several other local talented artists.

You are cordially invited to enjoy the entertainment in the comfort of the 260 upholstered-seat theatre. And to add to the festive evening, Christmas refreshments will be served outside the auditorium immediately following the show.

Bring your family and friends and enjoy a very special evening. There is lots of room for everyone. For further information, or if you would like to participate, please contact Ken Barry by e-mail at: <kennan@storm.ca>, or at 613-746-4823. ✣

Financial Statements Clarified

by Ernie Jury, VE3EJJ, former OVMRC Treasurer

At the September regular club meeting, a question was raised about the club's accounts as they pertain to the radio course and their treatment of a GIC purchased a few years ago. The old year-end statements have been resurrected to find the explanation. So that the explanation can be fully appreciated, a few words about the club's bookkeeping system is warranted.

The club members who conduct the course ask that their income and expenses be broken out separately so that they can be aware of how their operation is doing financially. You see the result of this approach in the year-end statements that show separate entries for the course portion of the bank account and income and expense accounts.

In 1994/95, the course income included $2,299.05 of royalties from a course instruction manual written by course instructors. This resulted in a cash balance for course activities of $3,458.95 at the end of the club's fiscal year.

In November of the next fiscal year, those running the course asked that $4,500.00 of "their" funds be invested in a 1-year GIC. This investment was made on November 30, 1995, and the transaction debited to the "miscellaneous course expense" account, which had the effect of removing the funds from the club accounts.

At the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 1996), the course portion of the bank account stood at -$1,450.13 as the course "expenses" were much greater than the course income. The effect on the total club performance for the year was an apparent loss of $447.72.

The following year when the GIC was cashed, the $4,500.00 was put into the course miscellaneous income account to be consistent with the earlier transaction and to bring the funds back into the club accounts. The effect was an artificially high income for both the course and the club for the 1996/97 year. However, the balance sheet as of 30 June, 1997, shows the correct state of the club's financial situation at that date.

During the next, and most recent, fiscal year, earnings were $994.78 from the club's activities and $528.36 from the course operations, resulting in combined earnings of $1,523.14.

If any club members have further questions about the club's financial statements for the past few years, I will gladly meet with them and endeavour to respond. I can be reached by telephone at 728-3666 or by e-mail at <ve3ejj@cyberus.ca>. ✣

NiCad and Gel Cell Care for Dummies

Part II

by Len Gelfand, VE3LGZ

Discharging NiCads

Avoid overdischarging. Follow the instructions of the manufacturer of the device being powered by NiCads about when to stop discharging them.

If you can, stop discharging when a NiCad cell's voltage under load drops to 1.0. If you have a 7.2-volt battery, it has six 1.2-volt cells inside. If all cells are equal in quality (they rarely are), stop discharging when the battery voltage under load drops to 6.0 (6 x 1.0).

Inside a NiCad battery, one or more cells are probably weaker than the others. If one cell in a 6-cell battery is a weakling it could discharge to 0.0 V while the 5 remaining strong cells kept their rated voltage at 1.2. This weakness would produce a battery with 6.0 V (5 x 1.2). You would stop discharging it, but one cell would be damaged a bit. Keep this up for several charge-discharge cycles and the weak cell is a goner; it won't accept a charge. The battery won't charge to more than 7.0 V instead of 8.4 V as it did before.

These are the approximate voltages of a fully charged 6-cell NiCad while being charged. After a rest or short usage, the voltages will be closer to 7.2 V for a battery with all 6 cells OK and 6.0 V for a battery with one cell dead.

Sometimes a weak or dead cell can be partly restored by very short pulses of very high current. This is called zapping. Don't try it until you reach the expert stage or have a zapper.
(Ed.- Look for NiCad and Gel Cell Care, Part III, in the December Rambler). ✣

Yesteryear, continued from p. ⑨

Throughout their expedition, vital radio communications were provided by Amateur Radio with scheduled contacts three times a day with base stations in the Canadian and the Soviet Arctic. Messages were relayed to Ottawa and Moscow and their location was broadcast each day by Amateur Radio satellite.

The August 1988 *Rambler* contained an interesting article, "Radio's Tomorrow," written by James G. Harbord, President, Radio Corporation of America, reprinted from *Radio News*, August 1929. He predicted "it appears to be only a question of time before the problems of television are solved and we may enjoy seeing and well as hearing the events of the world at our firesides."

He also noted, "If the present trend in facsimile transmission and reception continues its steady progress, it is likely that the time-honoured telegraph operator with his cumbersome dots and dashes will disappear by 1950.

"We may expect all radio messages to be handled in their original hand-written or typewritten form without recourse to the curt words of the present radiogram and without the delays and complications of the coding and decoding process of telegraph." ✣

Let's help children talk to Santa!

In the past, the club has conducted a "talk to Santa" in mid-December of each year. This event involves club members (elves) giving small attendees at the museum an opportunity to talk to Santa via 2-metre Amateur Radio.

This year, the event is scheduled for the afternoon of Sunday, December 13. Volunteers with 2-metre handhelds are needed to act as elves. Please contact Ernie Jury, VE3EJJ, at 728-3666, if you wish to volunteer. ✣

Building the 5/8 vertical antenna

by Bob Shaw, VE3SUY

The November meeting will feature a technical talk on vertical antennas, leading up to a discussion of the 5/8–wavelength vertical antenna. This seems to enjoy great favoritism among VHF mobile users. But is it really better than a 1/4-wave vertical or the famous J-pole? Come and find out that and a whole lot more!

There will be an opportunity to view an excellent tape on antennas from the RAC series after the formal meeting. It demonstrates the patterns of many types of antennas using a clever microwave model.

Below is a set of instructions to build a 5/8–wavelength vertical to get you started. The OVMRC will sponsor a small contest for the best 5/8 antenna constructed and brought to a future meeting. More details available at the November meeting.

Step-by-step Instructions

1. Choose a series or parallel loading design. This. will determine the required inductive reactance X_L required. Parallel loading is preferred as it is easier to tune later (resonance and matching can be done separately). XL is 165Ω for series loading, and 305Ω for parallel loading.

2. Choose design frequency f in MHz.

3. Calculate required inductance L = XL/(2πf) in μH.

4. Choose loading coil diameter D in inches. Largest D gives best Q (quality) coil.

5. Choose length of coil *l* in inches. Ideally, *l* ∪ D/2.

6. Calculate number of turns n = Square root (L (18D + 40 *l*) / D).

7. Choose wire size to accommodate the above dimensions. Ideally, use heaviest wire to reduce its resistance. Choose coil support to maximize usage of air dielectric (best), avoid PVCs (particularly black) as it is quite lossy, and use polystyrene which is very low loss where possible. To check a material's suitability, put it in a microwave oven (with a cup of water) for a few seconds. If it warms up, it is probably lossy and should be avoided. Choose a construction technique and mounting technique and build the coil. Remember to allow for tap point selection on the coil required later. You might have to iterate steps 4-7 to get a workable plan.

8. Calculate the radiating element's approximate length using length in feet = 575/f in MHz. Perhaps make it a bit longer to allow for trimming required later.

9. Design the counterpoise system. Use 3 or 4 (preferred) radials of length λ/4 or 3/4λ (preferred). These lengths can often be increased by approximately 3% to advantage. λ/4 = 234/f and λ/4 = 702/f feet approximately. If this is to be a mobile antenna, make sure the ground plane is as large as possible (preferably 3/4λ in radius, and as symmetrical about the antenna as possible, probably the middle of the roof.

10. Assemble and mount the antenna and connect it to a transmitter with 50Ω coax cable.

11. Using a grid dip oscillator (GDO) or equivalent with a small (1 or 2 turn) coupling loop close to or around the loading coil, trim (shorten) the antenna to resonance **with the transmitter off**. If excessive trimming needed, try reducing the inductance slightly. Do NOT short out turns for this! The shorted turns would absorb much power. If you don't have a GDO, tune for minimum SWR.

12. Using a 50Ω SWR meter and minimum transmitter power, choose the tap point on the loading coil that gives the lowest SWR. You might have to iterate between 10 and 11 a couple of times. **Do not touch the tap point (or any part of the antenna) while transmitting!**

You now have a tuned and matched 5/8λ vertical antenna! Bring it to the next (or future) OVMRC monthly meeting to be judged for a special prize. Will the prize be based on workmanship, originality of components, best tuned and matched antenna, mechanically stability for mobile operation or some other as yet undefined criteria? ✣

A Bunny's Eye View

October 16, 1998 Bunny Hunt Report
by Mike Kelly, VE3FFK/VE3ZY

The hunt started at 18:00 in excellent weather for mid-October. One clever hunter tried to call me at around 17:20 while I was en route to the hiding place. As it was supposed to be an easy hunt, I went back to him for a while as I was cycling to the Arboretum. Upon arrival, I discovered one of those little problems that always gives these bunny hunts a twist — signs posted everywhere saying "park closes at dusk," which would occur at about the middle of the hunt. After quickly consulting with the Wise Owl Net controller (to be co-located with the bunny), we made a slight relocation.

The second transmitter was actually the local oscillator of a scanner. With its "priority" function enabled, the scanner put a weak signal out on 146.55 MHz continuously, except for a short "blip" when it went off to check its priority frequency.

Weak signal tricky to track

This strategy would have worked out well, except that I made a last-minute decision to change from a base/mobile scanner to a smaller hand held type (being easier to carry and to hide). Unfortunately the local oscillator signal was weaker than I wanted it to be (and much weaker than the hunters wanted)! The intention was to get them out of their cars, so the hunt proceeded with the lower signal for the second transmitter.

The first transmitter was found, although with some difficulty, at Dow's Lake, by the best of the hunters. For those of you listening to the Wise Owl Net, that is why the net controller sounded a little distracted at times, as he was talking with arriving teams. No one found the second transmitter unassisted, largely because they tried to find the signal from their vehicles before setting out on foot. Maybe next time people start a hunt at dusk they will bring flashlights!

And the winner is . . .

Once all of the hunters arrived, or gave up (or both), we retreated to the local doughnut shop, swapped alibis and drew lots from among those who got to the first transmitter. Since it was not a timed event to the first transmitter, a draw only seemed fair.

Congratulations to VE3DCL and VE3IET for not only getting there first and giving the second transmitter a good try, but for winning the draw as well. I'm looking forward to finding out what tricks are in store for the next hunt! ✣

Letters

Dear Editor,

Amateur Radio is not immune to the prejudice, racism, sexism, and discrimination that we find in our society. These undesirable characteristics rear their ugly heads on the air, during our nets, and are found in our clubs.

For instance, some self-appointed gurus on our repeaters never miss a chance to condemn others, and their attacks are being condoned by participants. Blaming the "guy on the other side" (of the river that is) for all misuse and interference on our repeaters; being excluded, or cut off the air during a net because one used "another language;" and sexist remarks approved by laughter of others, are examples. We all know it happens.

What can we do about it? Let's be vigilant and not let ourselves be dragged into these webs of intolerance by refusing to participate in such discussions. At the executive level, we could refuse to allow nets which purport these undesirable characteristics on our repeaters.

Maurice-André Vigneault,
VA2MA/VE3VIG

Have some feedback for the club, the executive, or the Rambler? Send your thoughts to Susan Mogensen, VE3MOG, Rambler Editor, 1010 Bosque Crescent, Cumberland, ON, K4C 1C3, or via e-mail (preferred!) at <ve3mog@igs.net>. ✣

Yesteryear

A look at *Ramblers* past, by Larry Wilcox, VE3WEH

In the June 1988 *Rambler*, Vice-President, Ian, VE3CZ, reported he enjoyed QSOs via OSCAR 11 and that it was an unusual experience to hear your own voice come back from the satellite.

Rambler Editor, Jerry Wells, VE3CDS, was stepping down as Editor because the lustre had somewhat faded after six years in that role.

Since there was no volunteer Field Day Coordinator, the Executive decided the club would enter category 2C, using battery power and mobile. They expected at least two mobiles would turn up at the Museum grounds for Field Day.

Aging Amateurs

Membership chair, Pat Brewer, VE3KJQ, reported a total of 141 members of which 128 were regular members and 13 were family members. He also noted that a February CRRL bulletin pointed out that only 19.7 percent of the Amateur population is under forty years of age, 39.7 percent are over sixty years, and only 4.6 percent are under thirty years.

Pat then made an appeal to have the "older" members volunteer to help with the *Rambler*, Field Day, and other club activities because there aren't enough "younger people" to do it all. Well, doesn't this sound familiar? I wonder what the figures would be today? This year, we have a 13-year-old on the Amateur course along with several young couples.

New Editor takes the helm

The August 1988 *Rambler* had a new editor, Bob Baillargeon, VE3MPG, and a new appearance! For the first time in the club's history, the *Rambler* was entirely produced on a computer, an Amiga 2000 with a choice of up to 40 different scalable Adobe fonts.

Alan Boyce, VE3LNH, who served as Technical Advisor, was elected President, along with Doug Carswell, VE3ATY, as Vice-President. Alan vowed in his Ramblings to "have fun" as President and noted the Executives were "bursting with ideas and proposals" and expecting to have fun also. The September meeting theme was "An Introduction to Amateur Radio," providing information on what we do, how to get started, how much it costs, how to find out about courses, etc.

The Executive asked each member to bring along daughter, son, niece, nephew, paper boy, co-worker, neighbour or a friend who could be a potential ham and might like to learn more about Amateur Radio.

Participating in Field Day 1988

Field Day 1988 involved six participants: Bob, VE3MPG; Bob Brown; VE3JDB; Alan Boyce, VE3LNH; Leo Desjardins, VE3LVL; Dave Harris, VE3KMV; and Ed Leblanc, VE3VLF, turned in a score of 448 points during a total of six hours of mobile operation with Ed singlehandedly making over one hundred phone contacts!

Polar Bridge Expedition

The Polar Ski Trek had finally reached their destination of Ellesmere Island. Christopher Holloway from Gandalf, and his fellow polar trekkers, arrived in Ottawa on June 1, 1988 after skiing 1730 kilometres across the top of the world from Siberia, USSR to Ellesmere Island.

The trek was known as the "Polar Bridge Expedition" and was the first crossing made on foot, without benefit of dog-sleds or snowmobiles.

Each man carried a forty kilogram (100 pounds) pack of food and supplies and they were re-supplied, during six air drops, with food and rubber rafts to cross the open water they encountered along their way. The four Canadians and eleven Soviets travelled in the Arctic night darkness for a few weeks, encountered high winds, pressure ridges, open water and temperatures as low as fifty degrees below zero.

Yesteryear, continued on p. ⑥

Potpourri

Sampling of news and comments from sources across Canada and around the world, compiled by Jacques Choquette, VE3TSC

Much to people's displeasure, Japan is saturated with mobile phones in all sorts of public places, even on airliners.

To diminish this saturation, the government may soon legalize small, low-power jammers. These small units with flip-up antennas may be offered for sale under controlled conditions to business owners. The $480 battery-operated Wave Wall is sold in Europe and may soon arrive here. *(W5YI)*

"Big" Steve Coletti returned to shortwave radio on Saturday evenings (2200 UTC) with "A Different Kind Of Oldies Show" on 7415 MHz. The program deals with oldies rock as drawn from Steve's enormous collection. *(Amateur Radio Newsline)*

Jeff, KA9VNV, tells of a group of APRS digipeater operators in the Florida panhandle that have decided to move back to 145.79 MHz a few weeks before the areas around them switch to 144.39.

Technical problems and adjoining areas refusing to leave 145.79 MHz are cited as reasons for the change back. These digipeater operators could wind up as a small group of users cut off from the rest of the APRS system. *(KA9VNV)*

A Connecticut Amateur Radio tracking team called Capitol Region Malicious Interference Tracking helped nab a jammer that had been plaguing Connecticut police communications.

A (non-ham) security guard faces several charges of using a modified hand-held to transmit on police/fire frequencies used by three dozen agencies. His actions included playing music, airing sound from TV sitcoms, making moaning sounds, and recording and playing back police transmissions. *(ARRL)*

A new 6 metre DX bandplan by the Six Meter Amateur Radio Klub has brought a rebuke by hams who oppose any regimented operation on any band. Some hams are against continuing any sort of 6 metre DX bandplan.

The plan calls for expansion for DX from 50.100 to 50.150 MHz and changing the DX frequency from 50.125 to 50.200. The new plan is said to be necessary due to increased DX as band conditions improve. *(Amateur Radio Newsline)*

The first digital ATV test by Professor Uwe Kraus, DJ8DW, and his ham radio group, succeeded in transmitting moving colour pictures with sound. The September 9 transmission of a car race was made over a distance of 100 km on 434 MHz. Unlike analog television, the digital video was received clearly in spite of rainy conditions along the signal path. *(VHF Reflector)*

A newly opened section of the Radio Amateurs of Canada web site will provide an opportunity for readers to keep up-to-date on current issues affecting Amateur Radio.

This section will also permit RAC to seek input and guidance from all Canadian Amateurs. The RAC Reading Room will continue to carry the "Notice Board," and "What's New" sections for brief news items. *(RAC)*

Most U.S. ham radio operators (57%) now hold the no code or slow (5 wpm) code licence. Ten years ago, Amateurs with high speed (13/20 wpm) code proficiency accounted for 59% of all Amateurs. For the third year in a row, there are less total General/Advanced/Extra Class Amateurs than the year before.

Almost all of the growth since 1990 has come at the No-Code Technician level. A similar decrease in upgrades can be seen in the Canadian system. *(W5YI)* ✣