

RAMBLER

JUNE 2023



VOL. 65 ISSUE 10

NEWSLETTER OF THE OTTAWA VALLEY MOBILE RADIO CLUB INCORPORATED (OVMRC.CA)

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CHECK-IN TIME 7:15 P.M. MEMBERS AND INVITED GUESTS WILL BE SENT AN EMAIL INVITATION SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE MEETING DATE WITH LOGIN AND PASSWORD. OTHERS NOT ON OUR MAILING LIST PLEASE CONTACT NORM AT: VE3LC@RAC.CA FOR INVITATION.

MEETING:

WEDNESDAY JUNE, 21
IBEW LOCAL 586, 1178 RAINBOW ST.,
GLOUCESTER, 7:00PM IN PERSON
AND 7:15 PM VIA ZOOM

AGENDA

- **OPENING 7:15 BARRY (VE3NA)**
GREETING TO GUESTS AND
NEW MEMBERS, BARRY VE3NA
- **PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AND**
ANNOUNCEMENTS
- **APPROVAL OF MAY MEETING**
MINUTES
- **ELECTIONS**
- **YEAR-END DOOR PRIZES**
- **FIELD-DAY DISCUSSION**
- **CHAIRPERSONS REPORTS**
- **MEETING ADJOURNMENT**
POSSIBLE Q&A AND RAGCHEW
(TIME PERMITTING)

OVMRC AFFILIATIONS





OVMRC EXECUTIVE AND OFFICERS 2022-2023

DIRECTORS

President:

Barry Allison, VE3NA
ve3na@myrac.ca

Vice-President:

Norm Rashleigh, VE3LC
ve3lc@myrac.ca

Treasurer &

Membership Records:

Nicole Boivin, VE3GIQ
ve3giq@myrac.ca

Corporate Secretary:

Alan Fricker, VE3KAE
alanfricker@yahoo.ca

STANDING

COMMITTEES

Club Projects & Bulk

Orders: Barry Alison,
VE3NA ve3na@myrac.ca

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Accredited Examiner:

Norm Rashleigh, VE3LC
ve3lc@myrac.ca

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va3egy@gmail.com,
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john.mcgowan1314@gmail
.com

OVMRC Groups.io

Ongoing discussion

Group at:

<https://ovmrc.groups.io/g/main>; All radio
amateur members and
non-members are
welcome

Ottawa Valley Mobile

Radio Club,

Incorporated PO Box

**41145 Ottawa, ON
K1G 5K9**

OVMRC Life Members:

Ernie Jury, VE3EJJ
Maurice-André Vigneault,
VE3VIG

Ralph Cameron, VE3BBM

Doug Carswell, VE3ATY

Doreen Morgan, VE3CGO

Bryan Rawlings, VE3QN

OVMRC Repeaters:

- **VE3RAM** Limited coverage to Orleans and East Ottawa 443.700 MHz (+) DMR CC1 & D-Star Network connected to Brandmeister
- **VE3TWO** Limited coverage to East and South Ottawa 147.300 MHz. +, PL 100.0 Hz. Analogue FM and C4FM

Special Event & Field

Day Call Sign VE3JW



LOCAL WEEKLY NETS (ALL CHECK-INS WELCOME)

- **Rubber Boot Net**, VE3OCE 146.880 MHz (-)136.5 Hz tone weekday mornings at 7:30 AM conducted by Roger, VE3NPO
- **Pot Hole SSB Net**, 3760 kHz, every Sunday morning at 10:00 AM conducted by Ernie, VE3EJJ, or Glenn, VE3XRA.
- **Pot Lid Slow Speed CW Net**, Sunday night, 7:30 PM, 50.090 MHz., horizontal polarization. Join controllers Hugo (VE3KTN), Norm (VE3LC) and Ante VA2BBW for accomplished and budding CW operators alike.
- **QCWA Chapter 70 Net**, VE3OCE 146.880 MHz (-) 136.5 Hz tone, Monday evenings at 7:30 PM conducted by John, VE3ZOV
- **Capital City FM Net**, VE2CRA 146.940 MHz -, (100 Hz tone), Monday evenings at 8:00 PM.
- **Champlain STP Net**, VE3STP 147.060 MHz -, (114.8 Hz tone), held Monday through Saturday at 7:00 PM.
- **Phoenix Net**, VE3OCE 146.880 MHz (-) 136.5 Hz tone, Tuesday evenings at 7:30 PM conducted by Pete, VE3XEM
- **Upper Frequency Net**, Simplex 144.250 MHz using USB, Tuesday evenings at 9:00 PM conducted by Glenn, VE3XRA. Following check in on 2 m you can check your radios on 6 m at 50.150 MHz and 70 cm on 432.150 MHz as well using USB. All check ins are welcome.
- **Almonte ARC's D-Star Net** Tuesday evenings at 8:40 p.m. carried on XLX197 and everything connected to it. Dale VE3XZT presides.
- **OVMRC 2-Metre Net**, Thursday Evenings, 8:00 PM, Club Net on FM will be held through VE3OCE 146.880 MHz (-)136.5 Hz tone conducted by Hugo, VE3KTN.
- **Weekend Allstar Nets**, on an ad hoc basis the EMV_E repeater will be linked temporarily to the Allstar Canada Hub for weekend nets.
 - <https://thecanadahub.ca/>
 - http://www.emrg.ca/repeater_s.htm

INFORMAL AMATEUR RADIO RESTAURANT GATHERINGS

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| • QCWA Chapter 70
Breakfast gathering every Tuesday morning at 7:30 to 10:00 AM, Summerhays Grill, 1972 Baseline Rd., Nepean - Restarted | • Orleans Coffee gathering every Friday morning at 9:00 AM, McDonald's 2170 Montreal Rd, Ottawa, K1J 1G4. | • QRP Group Dinner meeting , Second Wednesday every month, 5:00 PM, Newport Restaurant, 322 Churchill Ave N., Ottawa | • Phoenix Net monthly Breakfast gathering (on hold) , usually the second Saturday every month at 9:00 AM, Check with Pete ve3xem@myrac.ca |
|--|--|---|---|



President's Ramblings for June 2023

This will be my last Ramblings as President of the OVMRC. I'm sure this comes as no surprise to anyone as I have made this known for some time now. The past 8 years, the first four of which I served as VP and the last four years as President, has slipped by almost at the speed of light. Where did the time go? The only thing I have been recently concerned about was I hoped for at least one last in-person meeting of the OVMRC before I step down and it looks like that is going to happen. See the June AGM info at the end.

Over the last 8 years some notable things have happened. I'll mention a few as there are too many to acknowledge (and no matter how hard you try I would likely miss someone or something).

Here goes:

- There has been an almost never-ending supply of guest speakers, thanks Norm, VE3LC;
- Our finances have been advanced from the chequing/savings era to the investment/e-commerce era, thanks Nicole, VE3GIQ;
- Minute taking was streamlined and corrected to follow established guidelines, thanks Ron, VE3LBU for setting me straight and now Alan, VE3KAE for keeping me on the straight and narrow;
- The Rambler, once a newsletter, now enhanced to a virtual monthly magazine, thanks Alan, VA3IAH;
- The club web site, thanks Adam, VA3IRD for step by step improving our web site to what it should be for our club;
- The weekly OVMRC Thursday night net, thanks Hugo, VE3KTN for continuously hosting this net that is so successful and interesting that during the summer when Hugo takes a break as net controller, the meet up continues in an ad hoc manner until return of the regular net in September, and
- Most of all I want to thank the general membership of the club. Without your continued attendance and support the club would not exist. Thanks to all of you for your support over the past eight years.

It has been quite a run, but I'm really looking forward to sitting at the back of the room this coming September.

Now on with what else is up for the June meeting: Elections, year end door prizes, 8 of them! And of course, Timbits and coffee will be served. All of this to be followed by Field Day discussions and eyeball QSO's.



Reminder: to everyone who has a RAC alias: change your address to “yourcall@myrac.ca”

Rambler submissions: Alan, va3iah@myrac.ca

Zoom custodian: Norm, ve3lc@myrac.ca

That’s everything for my June ramblings.

Now for the June AGM information:

Please join us for the final OVMRC meeting of the 2022-2023 club year. It will be a combined in-person and Zoom meeting (for those of you who will be unable to attend in-person).

For those able to attend in-person, we look forward to seeing you at the **IBEW local 586 facility, located at 1178 Rainbow St., Gloucester, Wednesday June 21.** Doors will open at 7:00 PM.

Zoom credentials will be sent out a few days in advance of the meeting with the usual Zoom start time of ~7:15 PM. Anyone not receiving the check in credentials can do so by sending an email to Norm (Zoom custodian) ve3lc@myrac.ca.

73, Barry, ve3na@myrac.ca

OVMRC May 2023 Minutes

Date / Time: Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at 7:15 PM

Location: Via ZOOM on-line meeting

1) Call to order:

OVMRC President Barry Allison VE3NA called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM. There were 58 official check-ins.

2) Welcome and Guest Greetings:

Barry VE3NA welcomed guest speaker Dave Goodwin VE3KG and spoke briefly about the recent RAC call-sign survey. Barry welcomed Cal McLelland VA3ZLA who is attending this evening.

3) Agenda and Meeting Content:

Barry VE3NA outlined the agenda for the meeting that included a presentation by Dave Goodwin VE3KG. Dave is RAC’s Regulatory Affairs Officer and will be speaking this evening about proposed changes to the Canadian Amateur Radio call-sign policy.



4. Feature Presentation:

Proposed Changes to the Canadian Amateur Radio Call-Sign Policy - Dave Goodwin VE3KG, RAC Regulatory Affairs Officer

To begin, Dave VE3KG mentioned that his presentation follows the results of the RAC survey on current Canadian call-sign policy conducted several months ago. The same presentation was given at the QCWA meeting last night. Dave is RAC's Regulatory Affairs Officer and deals with ISED on an ongoing basis.

Dave provided a brief background. In April 2022 RAC informed ISED that the amateur radio call-sign policy needed an update as there had been no substantial changes to the policy in 20 years. Over 2315 individuals participated in the survey conducted in August and September 2022. In March 2023 analyses of the survey results led to the development of a series of proposals with the expectation that the proposals would be approved by the RAC Board in the near future. This will result in a formal presentation to Innovation Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) in June 2023.

With the support of a slide presentation, Dave outlined the proposals as follows:

RAC Proposal 1: Dave stated that one of the biggest problems in the current call sign policy is that it results in database full of "ghost" hams - unused call-signs. Call-signs are allocated until the holder turns 125 years, which is absurd. We need a way to deal with this. The new RAC proposal is to require renewal of call-signs every 5 years. Basically log in and log off the web site to renew. If after 5 years and there is no contact with the individual, the call sign will be suspended and then available for re-issue after 6 years. The onus will be on the amateur to manage his/her call-sign. A paper process will also be available. In addition any surrendered call-signs will be made available to any individual or club after a one year "cooling off" period.

RAC Proposal 2: Changes to the use of VE0 call-sign to authorize for use on club stations on the ISS, Canadian amateur satellites, and Canadian Astronauts on space missions and clarify text so that VE0 call-signs may only be used on ships outside Canadian waters, or in space.

RAC Proposal 3: 2 letter calls-signs. Current policy requires 5 years experience as a licensed amateur with some exceptions based on location. The new proposal is to make 2-letter call signs available to holders of the advanced certificate who have held a Canadian amateur radio certificate for 10 years and to abolish the current exception for amateurs in VE8, VE9, VO2, VY1 and VY2.



RAC Proposal 4: Silent keys. RAC proposes an exception that would maintain preferred access for family members to access the 2-letter call-sign provided the relative holds an advanced certification. The proposed “10 year” qualification rule would not apply in this case.

RAC Proposal 5: Special prefixes. Dave mentioned that the current policy allows for 4 potential special prefixes and use of those prefixes for a maximum of 60 days. RAC is proposing to move from 4 to 2 prefixes. This would mean changing the current policy so that for every regular prefixes set aside only 2 possible special prefixes. For example, for VE's, you could use VF and VG. The authorization period proposed is for 12 months, or the duration of the event, whichever is shorter.

RAC Proposal 6: New series of call-signs. Dave mentioned that RAC also wanted to plan for the future as amateur radio is growing. In the 1970's there were 20,000 amateurs and now there are over 80,000 and increasing rapidly.. RAC anticipates we will run out of VE3 and VA3 call signs in about 15 years. The proposal is to introduce anew series of call signs with a special VB prefix.

RAC Proposal 7: Special Event Call-signs. RAC is proposing to set aside 2 prefixes for special event stations. There will be no geographical significance and the call-signs will be identified with a VD or VX followed by a numeral and letters. The maximum duration will be 12 months or the duration of the special event – whichever is less. Dave related problems in recent years with regard to special events – specifically the use of the VE100VIMY call sign, and as well as the 80th anniversary of the Lancaster Bomber which did not permit a desired VE8 call sign.

RAC Proposal 8: A new entry level certificate. Dave mentioned that this proposal is a long way from being ready. RAC proposes a new entry level distinctive call sign that will be valid for three years, and would not be renewable. It would have limited power and frequency privileges. After three years, the holder will need to upgrade or leave the hobby. RAC is proposing a VA0 prefix followed by three letters that will be issued in strict alphabetical order and will have no geographic significance. On expiry, that call-sign would be available for new users. The current basic exam would be used but with a subset of the questions for the entry level exam. New hams could still go right to the basic exam if desired.

RAC Proposal 9: Acceptable modifications to call signs. RAC is requesting the publication of a permitted special suffixes list for purposes of clarity and uniformity. This list would include. /P Portable, /M Mobile, /MM maritime mobile, /AM aeronautical mobile, /Rover, /VE1 – in another region, and /### - to mark an event. Dave noted that this does not impact current call-sign practices when Canadian hams visit the USA, for



example. Those requirements are via a reciprocal treaty with the USA and also mentioned he has written about the US requirements/regulations in the November 2022 TCA.

Dave mentioned that there is a pending resolution regarding the new two-letter call-signs. There are 24 prefixes available in Canada, but we only use 4. So there are 20 others that perhaps we should and could use. RAC is proposing to use some of these for regular issue for 2 letter call signs. Proposing a new set of 2 letter call signs for individuals only – not clubs, and using either a C# or X# prefix. These will require an advanced qualification and 10 years as a Canadian amateur. One could then move and keep his/her call sign for life.

Rob VE3RXH asked if the 10 year requirement would be backdated to allow for those who are currently licensed. Dave said no – that was not in the proposal – there is no plan for a phase-in process in the proposal.

Dave mentioned another pending resolution – a new one-letter call-sign utilizing the C# and X# prefixes. These will have no geographical significance. These call-signs would require advanced plus a Morse certificate, plus 10 years as a Canadian amateur.

Dave related that ISED has indicated that the “call-sign ” regulatory provisions are a regulatory burden for them, and they maintain it only because RAC asks for them to maintain it.

Dave then asked for any follow-up questions concerning his presentation.

Ernie VE3EJJ asked about the renewal process. Could this process allow use by someone who is unqualified. Dave says he does not see this as a problem as it is expected that logging in for the 5 year renewal would require personal credentials. Based on further probing of the question by Hugo VE3KTN Dave does not see it as an opportunity to “steal” a call-sign and re-register it in another individual's name.

Jim VA3DEF asked about statistics concerning the number of Canadian amateurs holding advanced certification as it seems there would be a lot of 2 letter call-signs floating around. Dave says it is a minority.

Richard VA3VGR had questions about the new entry level licensing and what the privileges might be? What is the motivation to cut it off after 3 years? Dave said that the idea was to initially limit it to VHF only, and/or perhaps broaden that. The idea is to encourage them to upgrade. The Basic exam is a serious exam, but we also want to allow easier entry point and encourage upgrade. The idea is that this is to address the long term growth of the hobby.



Cal VA3ZLA posed this question. If you lose the entry level qualification in three years, could you re-take it for another three years? Dave says this is a limited pathway with limited privileges that allows you an opportunity to grow with amateur radio. Dave mentioned that Britain has a foundation License, which is permanent, but we are taking a different approach.

Hugo VE3KTN asked about the point of having to renew every 5 years. On the assumption it will be accepted by ISED, how will we be advised of the 5 year expiry date? Dave says it is the responsibility of the individual amateur. Dave says he does not have a complete answer for that yet and he expects more to follow on renewal procedures.

As a side discussion, it was noted by several meeting participants that it may be a good idea to put instructions in your will about how your call-sign is to be dealt with upon death.

Barry VE3NA thanked Dave VE3KG for a very interesting presentation on the RAC proposals.

5. Approval of minutes from previous meeting:

MOTION: Moved by Bill VA3HWA and seconded by Rylan VE3RVQ that the minutes of the OVMRC meeting held Wednesday, April 19, 2023, be approved.

VOTE: No Objections.

CARRIED.

6. Haves and Wants:

There were no “wants” but Richard said he will donate a subscription of QST at the next meeting.

7. Chair Reports:

OVMRC President - Barry VE3NA:

Barry mentioned this will be his last OVMRC Zoom meeting and the next meeting will be in-person at IBEW. That is good news. Also mentioned that in the June QST there is a nice picture of the astronauts – includes Jeremy Hanson, Canadian Astronaut. He mentioned that it is unfortunate that the Canadian Astronauts are certified via the US technician program in the US with the US tech call-sign. The new RAC proposals are encouraging as future astronauts will be able to use a Canadian call-sign on the ISS. Barry also mentioned an additional item of interest in QST and that is the Field Day Guide insert, which is a very nice booklet – about 10 pages. It will be good for new hams going out on Field Day.



Concerning the year-end door prizes, Barry has received only 3 suggestions for door prizes – mostly antenna analyzers. Barry informed that Nano VNAs have been ordered for door prizes. These are the 1.5 GHz. version with accessories including charger, cables, stylus, and calibration devices. It also comes with a handy guide. The VNA will also include SMA to BNC adapters as well as SO239 adapters. Sorry – no type N. Barry says he got a good price – so there are 8 door prizes this year. As is our usual practice winners from the immediately previous club season (2021-2022), are not eligible. Winners from previous years once again are eligible.

He mentioned he also needs to place an order for more connectors for the cable program. There may be some interest in connector kits – depending on price he will perhaps order - 6 kits. As several members expressed an interest he suggested he would look into an order of 8 or more to get a better price.

OVRC Vice-President - Norm VE3LC:

Norm VE3LC mentioned he is still sorting out Field Day permissions with the Aviation and Space Museum and he is still waiting for confirmation from them. Norm said he has provided them with a PowerPoint presentation with information about previous years Field Day activities held on the site. They suggested an alternate location – the parking lot. Norm says that would be unsuitable. Norm will continue to follow up with them.

Marcel VA3FNG asked if next month's in-person meeting will be on Zoom as well. Norm answered that it could be accommodated.

OVRC Treasurer - Nicole VE3GIQ:

Nicole VE3GIQ provided a brief financial update. The club currently has \$6015.00 in the bank. We have \$15k in GICs. Nicole has not received the RAC insurance bill yet and she will follow up. We have 129 members as of today in the club. 58 members are in attendance this evening.

Nicole provided an update on the MS Bike event. Nicole sent out invitations to last year's participants and she has received some response from them. She mentioned that for this year's event, hams will be in the vehicles as well as at rest stops. For anyone volunteering, Nicole will need to know if the volunteer could work mobile with suitable equipment. So let her know if you are volunteering and your assignment preference. She mentioned she still needs quite a few more volunteers –a minimum of 15-16 people.

She reminded everyone that the event is from Kars to Brockville, and that it is a two day event, on August 19-20. Wray VA3EO asked about equipment



required for the event. Nicole says she was running 20 watts last year. This year she plans to use a yagi antenna. It is possible that a roof mounted mag-mount antenna would need about 20 watts near Kars and 5 to 10 watts near Brockville. Norm VE3LC mentioned that if we are embedded in a vehicle we need to be cautious about how to power the equipment as power may be limited if using a vehicle power outlet. It is also important to ensure that the antenna does not damage the vehicle. Neil VE3PUE asked for confirmation as he had volunteered and no reply received. Nicole VE3GIQ to follow up. She will send out another email concerning event volunteers.

OVMRC Secretary - Alan VE3KAE: Nothing to report.

Rambler Update - Alan VA3IAH: Alan VA3IAH reminded that the next issue of the Rambler will be the last issue of the year. A Field Day article or something on antenna building etc. would be good to have for the publication.

Web Site Update - Adam VA3IRB: Adam VA3IRB says things are still going well. As a side project, he has received a CD of OVMRC archived material from Norm VE3LC and he plans to go through it to look for interesting historical articles.

Other Business:

Roger VA3EGY provided an update on recent activities. During the first week of May he had about 30 scouts from Stittsville participate in a fox hunt. It was cold and wet but fun. A group of about 20 army cadets came to the Diefenbunker and spent an afternoon there. With supervision, they were on the air and were quite engaged with the event. Roger was recently contacted by the North Shore Amateur Radio Club, and Rob VE3RXH and Roger VA3EGY did a presentation for their club on fox hunting. There will be a workshop on June 17th and any subsequent activity with local cadets on June 18th.

Roger says he was also contacted by the St. Lawrence Valley Amateur Radio Club and did a presentation on the YOTA camp which he says is pretty much ready to go. The YOTA camp is in good shape but the actual facility is not in good shape. He is confident it will be pulled together in time. If for some reason the facility is not ready, they plan to do a Field Day set up. Consulting and engineering is holding them back but they do have most of the gear needed. He mentioned that the semester is now over, and the radio room can now be cleaned up so that the equipment can be moved in. He would like to do a presentation in September if he can get on the meeting agenda.



Pete VE3XEM informed of a change in venue for the Friday morning coffee meet. On the coming Friday the meet will be at McDonald's at 2170 Montreal Road. Peter says he is looking forward to an increased attendance.

Neil VE3PUE provided an update on RAC email aliases. The system was shut down on May 15th, and mail will no longer be delivered. He noted that some RAC volunteers were accidentally included in the shut down - for about a week.

Rob VE3RXH said he would like to put in a "plug" for the upcoming POTA Plaque Weekend. He mentioned he will be holding a Zoom session on May 25th. Those interested can contact Rob VE3RXH.

Jim VA3BJO also wanted to put in a "plug" plug for the OARC flea market ham-fest in September. He mentioned he has about 20 volunteers so far.

Net Operations - Hugo VE3KTN: Hugo VE3KTN informed that the 2 meter net is doing fine. The Pothole Net is behaving strangely the last month or so. Last Sunday had reasonably good propagation, but the previous week experienced ionospheric activity that affected the net. Hugo says he is looking for more check-ins. The Slow Speed CW Net is still active on Sunday night but it would be good if there were more check-ins for that net as well.

8. Adjournment:

MOTION: Moved by Barry VE3NA to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 PM and seconded by Joe VA3JHT.

9. Next Meeting:

The next monthly meeting of the OVMRC will be held In-person at the IBEW facilities on Wednesday June 21, 2023.

Minutes recorded and prepared by Secretary, Alan Fricker VE3KAE



Silent Key, Gordon Grant VE3DY, Charter Member of the OVMRC

Gordon Grant VE3DY was a founding member of the OVMRC and became a Silent Key on May 18 at the grand old age of 104. He passed away peacefully at the home he designed and build in 1962. Gord became a ham at the age of 15 in 1934.



Gord VE3DY (R) accepts 75 Year Plaque from Croft VE3CT

Years later in the early days of the OVMRC, Gord was the activities organizer of the Club. It was a fun and active club back then when mobile operation was truly a focus of the Club and Gord would organize outings here and there where the club members and their families could socialize together. Also, in those days, 75m AM on 3760 KHz was the main mode and frequency of mobile activity in the Ottawa area.

Examples of social outings and camaraderie that Gord VE3DY was involved circa 1958:

- [The Rambler Vol.1 No. 6 October 1958](#)

Of Gord's many accomplishments he was most proud of his work at the NRC assisting in the radar project, the magnetron, which helped end the war in Europe during the Battle of Britain.

- <https://mailchi.mp/0d2f0b8c5409/larrimac-news-16464453?e=>

For a more fulsome reflection on Gord VE3DY's contributions, please see page 4 of the February 2016 Rambler, **Gordon (Gord) Grant, VE3DY - Charter Member of the OVMRC** By Norm VE3LC.

- <https://ovmrc.ca/Rambler/Archive/Ram2016-02.pdf>

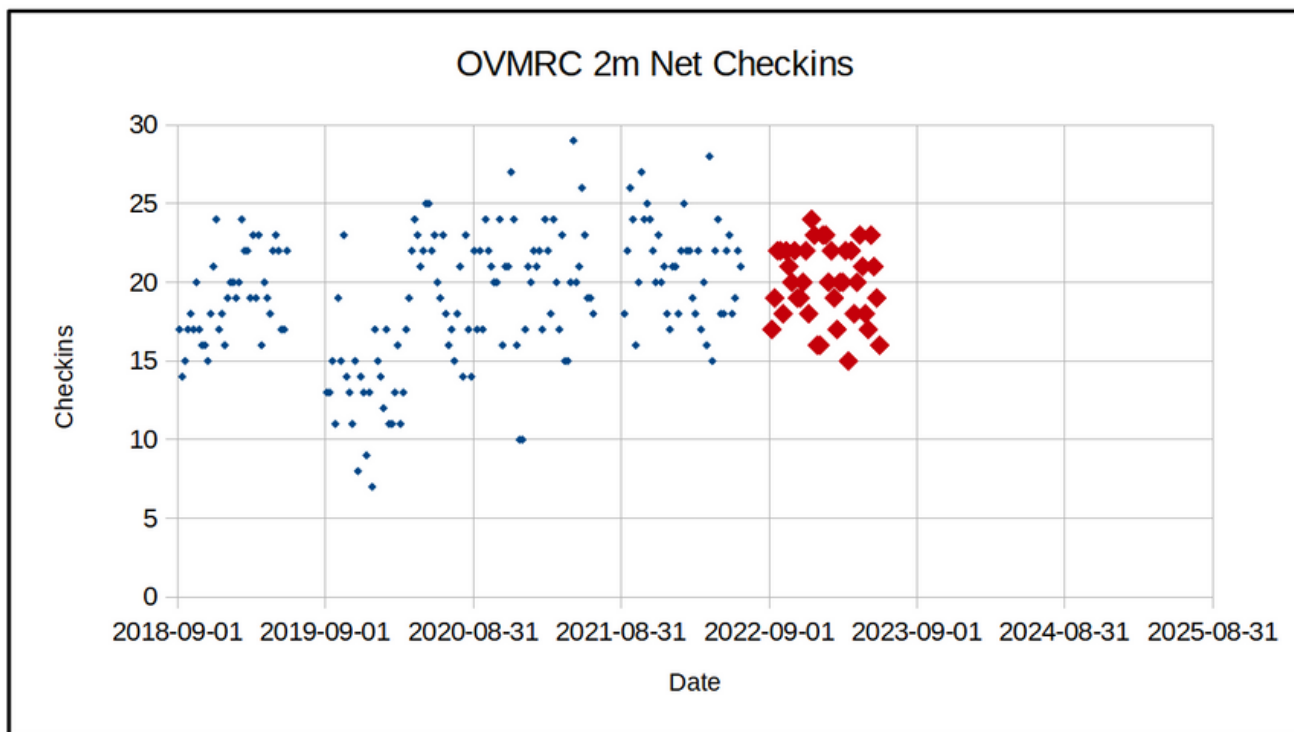




2022-23 Year End Nets Report

Greetings to all OVMRC members and participants in our weekly nets. I'm happy to say that attendance at the HF and VHF nets has continued to do well over the past season now that we're getting over the COVID hiatus.

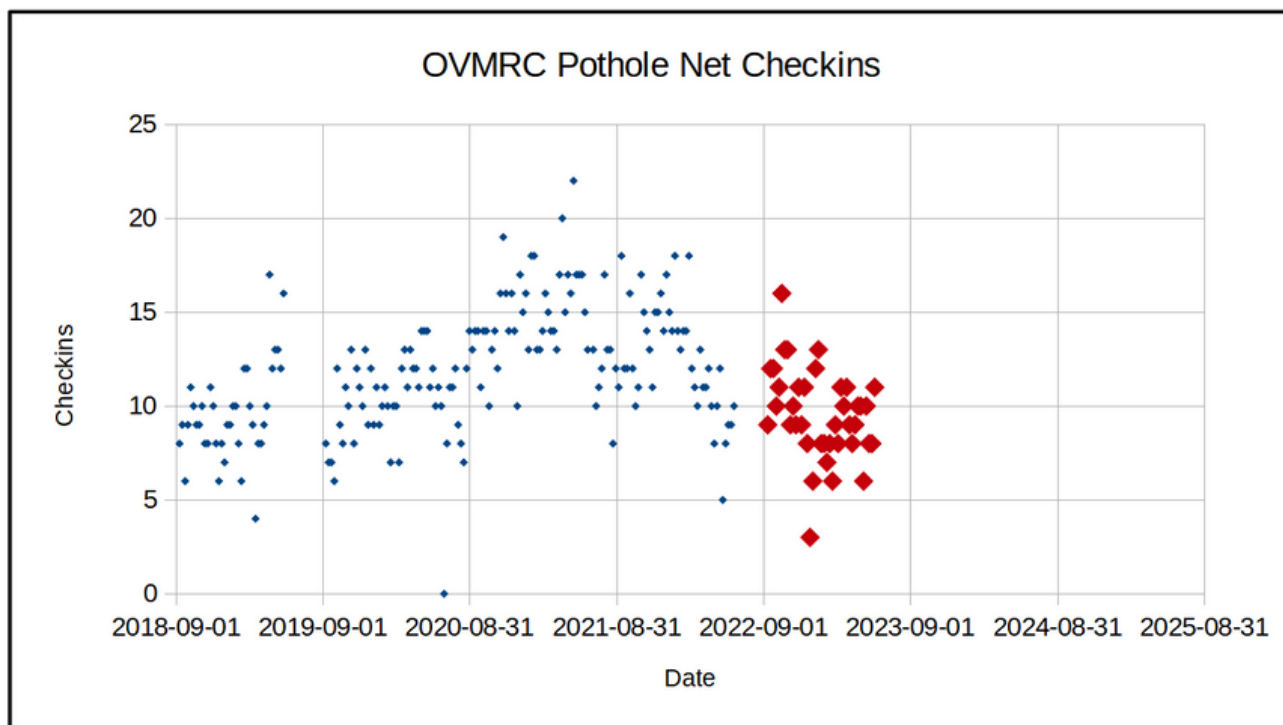
The Thursday evening 2 metre FM net has continued with good attendance and lively discussion. The weekly attendance trend chart shows an average of 20 check-ins each week which is a very healthy indicator for this net and is at the same level as it was during the 2021-22 season. The net will be taking a break for the summer, as it normally does, with the last session of the season taking place on Thursday, June 22 and resuming on Thursday, September 7.



The 80 metre Pothole Net (PHN) resumed operation after the 2022 summer break and continued at the same level of attendance, averaging 9 participants each Sunday morning. The increase in Cycle 25 solar activity has taken a toll on 80 metre propagation making it rather hard to conduct the net at its usual 10 A.M. time slot. Nevertheless, Ernie, VE3EJJ, lead net controller and Glenn, VE3XRA, have persevered through it with the help of some relays and, recently, the aid of signal monitoring available on third-party SDR sites which have better-than-average antennas and noise floor.



In consideration of the expected poor daytime conditions on 80 metres the PHN will be taking a break for the summer with the last net being held on Sunday, June 18 and returning on September 10.



Finally, the Potlid Slow Speed CW net (PLN) continues with a core attendance of 5 local hams. There have been a couple of changes as of the September 2022 season start, those being the addition of Ante, VA2BBW, as our third net controller and the net having moved from 2 metres to 6 metres, now operating on 50.090 MHz. I'm pleased to have Ante join as a net controller since it helps spread the load of running the net and provides a new location for coverage into Gatineau and, hopefully, the western parts of Ottawa; we now have rotating coverage via my own station in the extreme east of Ottawa, Norm, VE3LC, in Orleans and east Ottawa and now Ante, as described. As with the other OVMRC nets, the PLN will take a summer break with the last net being run on Sunday, June 18 and resuming on September 10.

With that, I'd like to wish all OVMRC members a good summer whether it be with ham radio or family-friends summer activity. Please remember to join in the nets again starting the 2023-24 season on the first net day after Labour Day, September 4.

73, Hugo, VE3KTN.



GPS for FT8/FT4: Off-Net Time Sync of Raspberry Pi Computer

Operating Objective: To use a Raspberry Pi-400 (or equally Raspberry Pi-4) as a computer to operate the WSJT-X application for portable operations of the FT-8 and FT-4 modes without the aid of an internet connection or AC power.

Time-keeping: A Raspberry Pi-4 or Pi-400 computer, once brought on-line with an internet connection, has accurate time-keeping as inherent to its Raspbian operating system by reference to Network Time Protocol (NTP) servers. This provides all the time synchronization accuracy and stability required for FT8 and FT4 and other JT modes of the WSJT-X application, which can be readily downloaded and installed on the Raspberry Pi OS platform, other Linux based distributions as well as MS Windows.

Possible radio configurations: I have used my IC-7300 with a single USB cable between the Pi-400 and radio; it would work equally well with the QRP portable IC-705. I've also tried it controlling by QRP Yaesu FT-817 using a Tigertronics Signal Link USB and separate USB/RS-232 adapter between the Pi and radio for "Rig-Control".

Challenges of using WSJT-X modes in the field: If you want to use the inexpensive Raspberry Pi portable to use WSJT-X modes in the field for the likes of POTA, SOTA or Field Day and want to be independent from an internet connection what options do you have available to you? Additionally, what monitor screen is deployable being small in size, easily portable and runs efficiently on battery or modest solar power?

After some reflection on this challenge and assessing what was available on the internet the following was identified to meet the operating challenge specified.

1) Interconnecting a GPS module providing a NMEA 0183 serial data stream plus a Pulse/Second (PPS) signal to the GPIO of my Pi-400:

To provide Stratum 0 time-keeping without being connected to the internet.

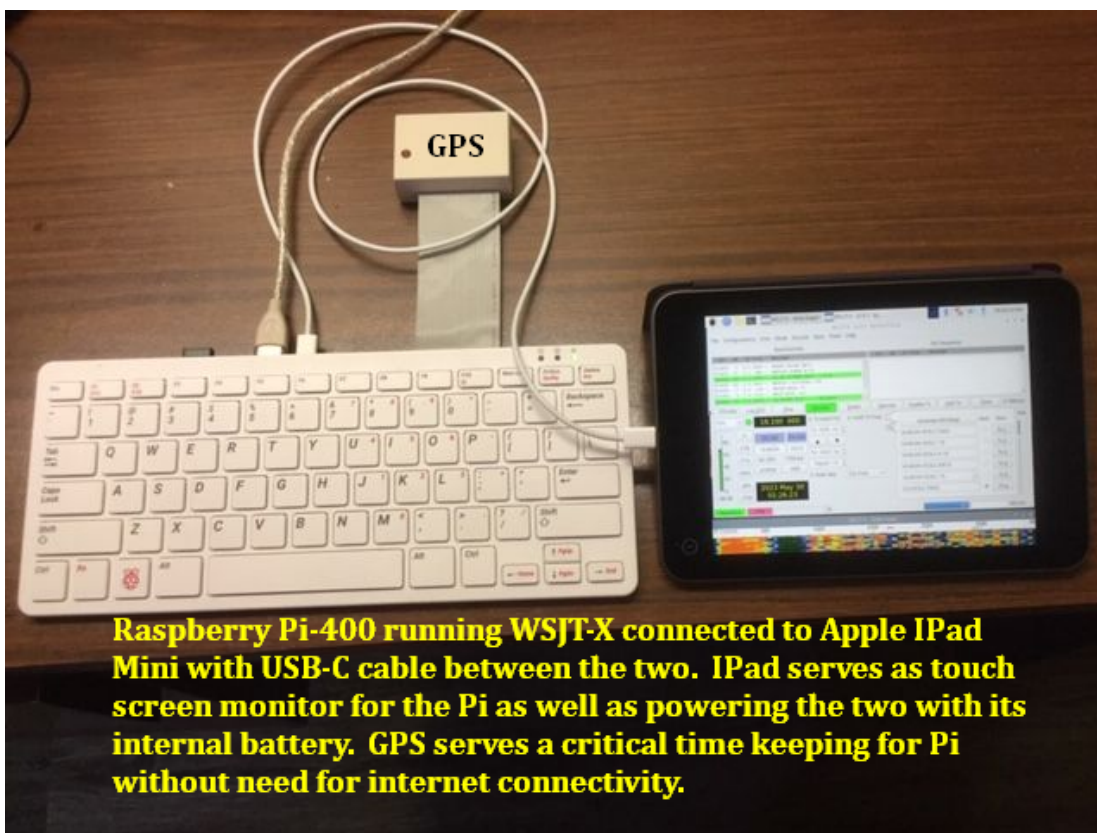
- See [Microsecond accurate NTP with a Raspberry Pi and PPS GPS](#)
- Also a [fix](#) may be required



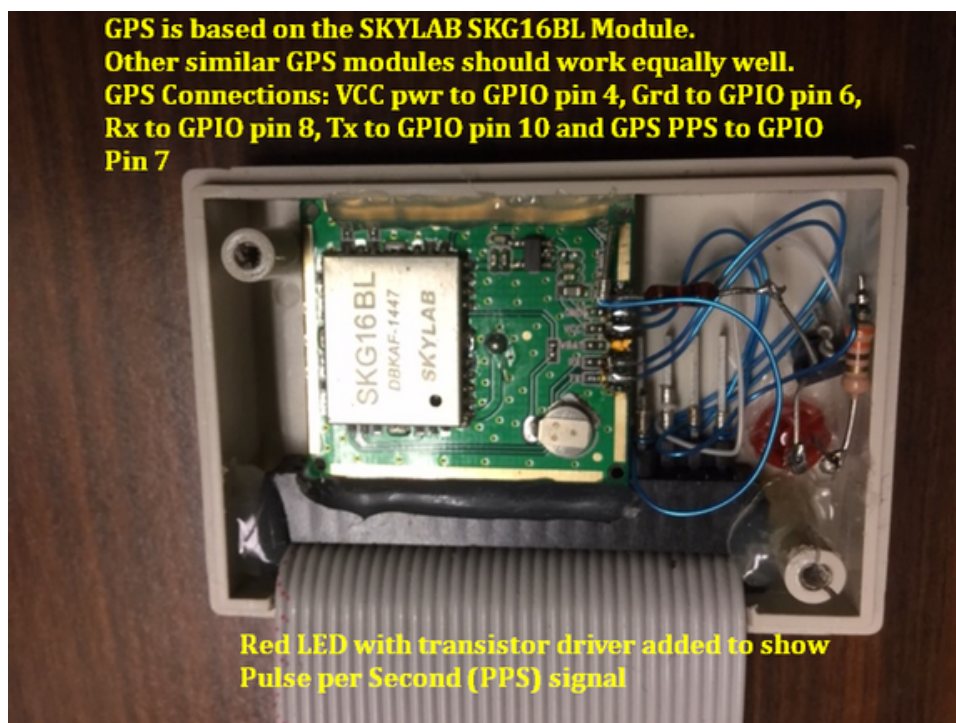
2) Using my Apple iPad mini tablet computer with a USB-type C connector to serve as a portable screen monitor for the Pi.

- **USB-C Not just for power:** the Pi-4 and Pi-400 come with a USB-C connector which is fully functional and not just for a power connection to the Pi computer. Likewise, for the USB-C connection on the iPad mini.
- **iPad Power source for Pi:** As a bonus, the battery in the iPad powers the Raspberry Pi. The power charging cable I got with my iPad mini with USB-C male connectors on both ends worked well for interconnection between the iPad and my Pi-400 that as well as providing power to the Pi-400 from the iPad internal battery provides a simulated network connection between the two with the appropriate software added to the Pi.
- For details see [Use Raspberry Pi 4 USB-C data connection to connect with iPad Pro](#)
- **USB cable serves as network connection between iPad and Pi:** After installing this software which includes assigning a fixed IP address to the Pi for this connection, the Pi presented itself as an Ethernet connected network to the iPad tablet. We used the VNC client app on the iPad to actually view the screen of the Pi complete with touch screen control. Of course, the VNC server comes installed in the Pi OS but must first be turned-on in the Pi configuration app and the Pi's VNC client app must be addressed to the fixed IP address of the Pi as well as using the established user password initially assigned to the Pi - Os.
- **Battery Life:** I found that a fully charged battery on the iPad mini would power itself and the Pi-400 (with connected GPS module) for about 2.5 hours. I will be looking for ways with appropriate USB type C "power-to-go" cable adapters to keep the iPad and Pi-400 powered for extended periods of operation with external battery power while still maintaining connection between the two, USB-C to USB-C connectivity.

Please see the following pictures of the set-up configuration and detailed descriptions.



Raspberry Pi-400 running WSJT-X connected to Apple iPad Mini with USB-C cable between the two. iPad serves as touch screen monitor for the Pi as well as powering the two with its internal battery. GPS serves a critical time keeping for Pi without need for internet connectivity.



GPS is based on the SKYLAB SKG16BL Module. Other similar GPS modules should work equally well. GPS Connections: VCC pwr to GPIO pin 4, Grd to GPIO pin 6, Rx to GPIO pin 8, Tx to GPIO pin 10 and GPS PPS to GPIO Pin 7

Red LED with transistor driver added to show Pulse per Second (PPS) signal

I am prepared to help anyone else in the Club that may want to duplicate my efforts by providing a copy of the micro SD I have working on my Pi-400.

73, Norm, VE3LC (ve3lc@myrac.ca)



Raspberry Pi, WSJT-X and No Time Standard

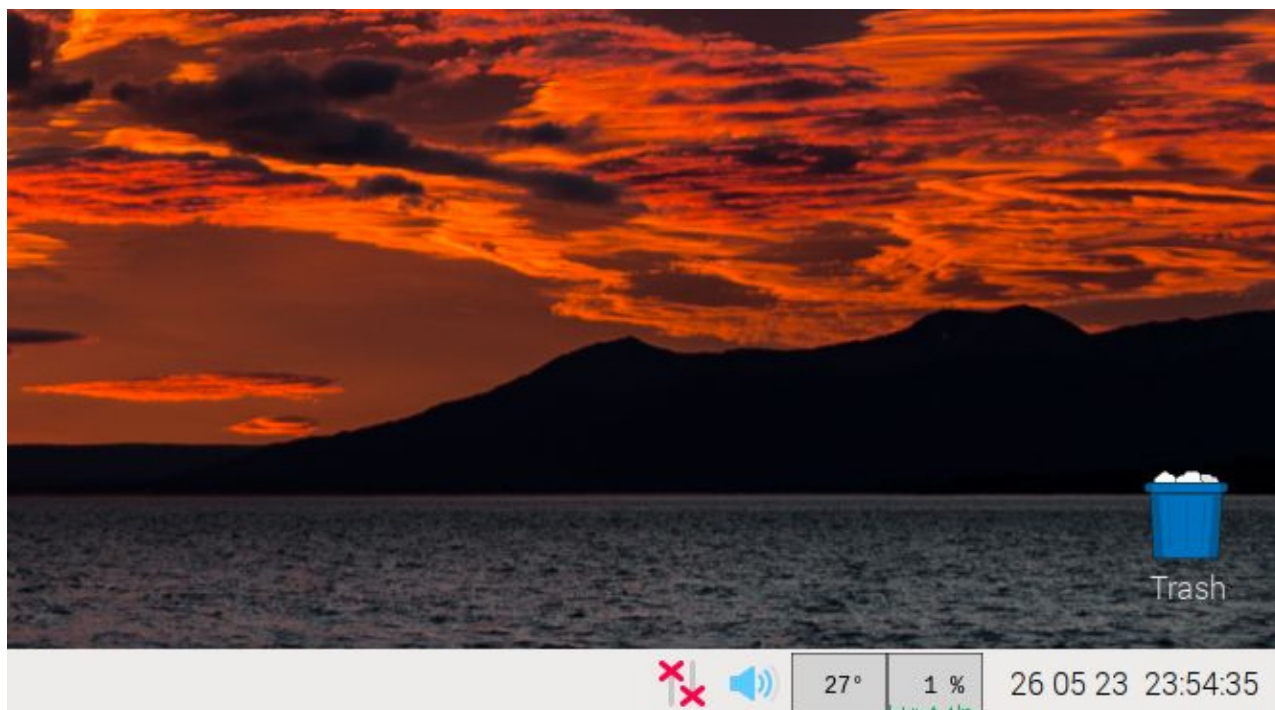
With Field Day 2023 approaching and there being talk of the OVMRC running a live QRP operation, I thought to return to a problem I've been trying to solve with running WSJT-X on a Raspberry Pi4 without an internet connection for NTP or a GPS receiver. It took some perseverance and a tip from Norm, VE3LC, to finally solve this problem in spite of many "solutions" on the internet that don't work on my Pi4/Bullseye.

First of all, I wanted to check on the stability of the Pi4's clock before going any further. It was quite a surprise to find that after a 12 hour run with the Pi's clock free running (no internet or any other connection to a time standard), the DT on WSJT-X barely changed at all. It started out with an eyeball average DT across 40 decodes of +200 mSec. and after 12 hours the DT was at +100 mSec.; an apparent clock drift of -100 mSec. It should be noted that the Pi was running in a fairly stable environment in my basement shack with the ambient temperature hovering around 18°C. The drift might be more significant with larger ambient temperature swings but at least the clock itself appears to be stable and any drifts can be managed by occasional manual tweaks of the Pi's day-time clock.

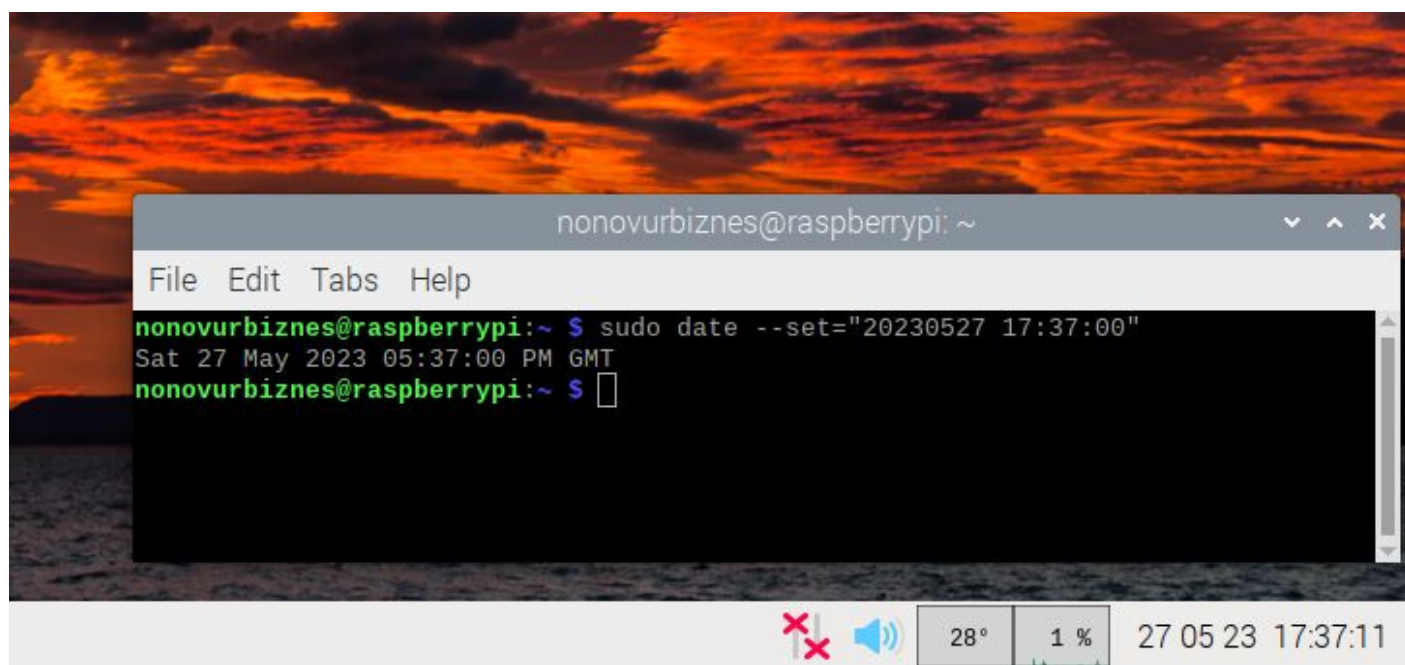
Next step is how to set the Pi's date and time from scratch. For this, one will need some kind of reasonably accurate timepiece; a wristwatch ought to be good enough so long as there is confidence that the "seconds" indication is accurate within 15 seconds, a smartphone having a clock with a "seconds" display or tune in to CHU/WWV with your rig. Synchronisation with UTC is important to have WSJT-X sync up to the correct cycle when using FT8/4, especially if you're going to rely on the logging functions provided by WSJT-X. To set the date and time, open a terminal window in the Pi and enter:

```
sudo date --set="YYYYMMDD HH:MM:SS"
```

and then hit enter in synchronism with your timepiece when the time matches what you've entered above. I.e. cue up the above "sudo date" command string with a time in the approaching future to be ready for syncing the Pi's clock at the appropriate time.



Pi Time at boot without internet



Pi synched to WWV using "date" command



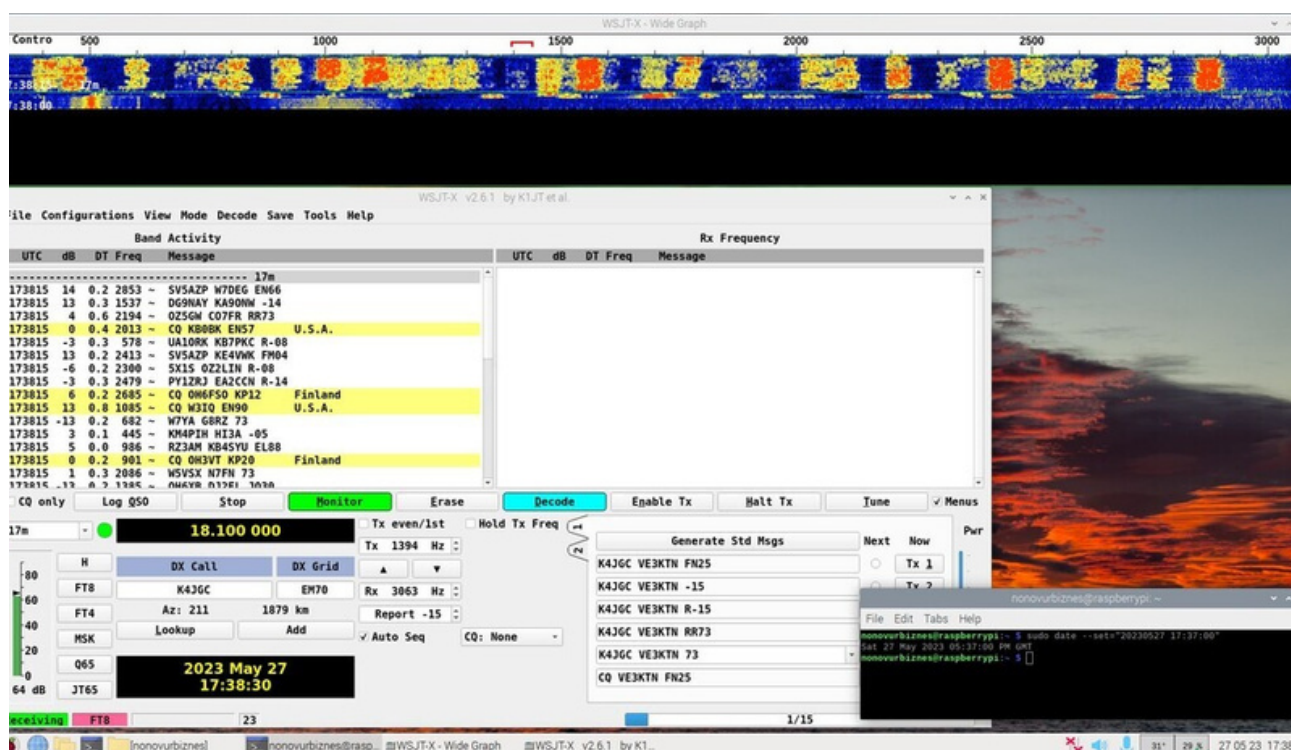
If you set the Pi's clock within 2 seconds of UTC, you should start seeing decodes on WSJT-X, but there may be large values of DT showing, e.g. in excess of 1/2 second, which brings us to the next step of fine adjusting the Pi's clock.

Norm, VE3LC, provided me with a link to a Linux command line application called "[tweaktime](#)" available from KK5JY's website.

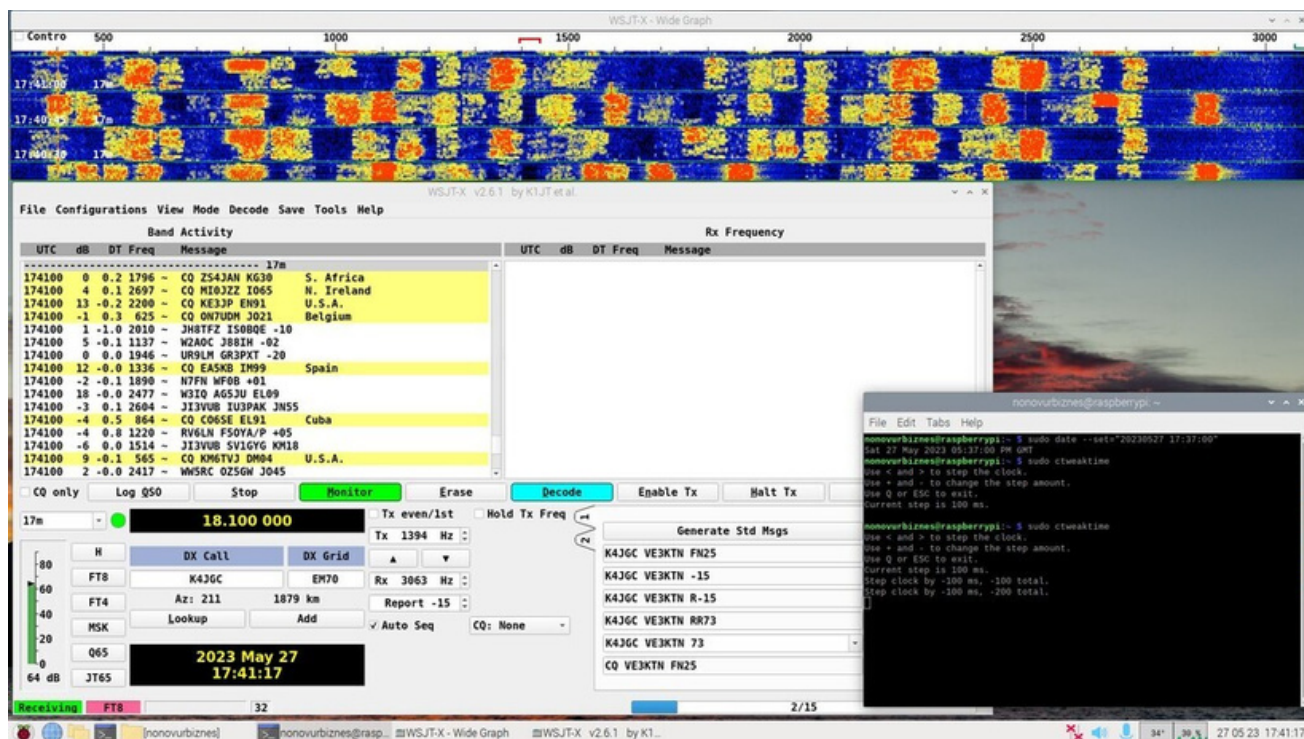
Although it's a very basic clock management tool, it is easy to install and use. Simply follow the instructions on the [kk5jy](#) web site; if it worked easily for me, a sub-novice Linux user, it should work for you. Only be sure to launch the "ctweaktime" user interface as a superuser. I made this omission after first having success and then having it stop working when I tried it again later in the day. With tweaktime installed, simply run WSJT-X and look at the DT average to figure how much you want to nudge the Pi's clock. Tweaktime will default to a clock adjust step size of 100 mSec. but it can be set to finer or coarser step values as desired. While watching the WSJT-X DT values, open a terminal window and run:

```
sudo ctweaktime
```

Adjust the clock using the keyboard "<" and ">" keys until you're as close to a zero DT average as practical.



Before "ctweaktime" time nudge



After trimming the clock by -200 mSec.

In the screen shots above, the average DT before trimming by my reckoning was around +200 mSec. which is also about the kind of offset I see when the Pi is synched with NTP, so that offset is likely due to processing delay in the Pi; can't do anything about that. Nevertheless, as shown in the post-trim picture using the "ctweakttime" tool, the DT average can be brought down as close to zero as one might care to. FT-8 and -4 is fairly tolerant to timing offset and will decode incoming signals with as much as a 2 second offset, however it's good practise to keep one's own rig as close to UTC as possible so that transmissions start at the right time and it's not your fault if others have clocks that are way off and can't receive you. Note how some decodes are nearly +1 and -1 second off from the average.

That's it. Hopefully this guide will solve any problems you may have running a Pi with WSJT-X for FT8/4 in a POTA, SOTA or other out-in-the-field operation that doesn't have wifi or gps available.

73,
Hugo, VE3KTN.



Examiner's Report - Norm VE3LC

Over the last I have tested the following successful candidates. If you hear these call signs on the air welcome them to the hobby!

73, Norm VE3LC

New Hams – All obtained a Basic with Honours qualification			
Wafon	VE2WDY	August 2022	Gatineau
Michael	VE3BX	November 2022	North Bay
John	VE3DNU	December 2022	Ottawa
Alain	VE3ZPY	April 2023	North Lancaster
Dave	VE3HTA	June 2023	Russell
Rick	VE3RVV	June 2023	Orleans



OVMRC Net Activity, Check-ins for May, 2023

Prepared by: Hugo Kneve VE3KTN

OVMRC 2 Metre Net: VE3OCE 146.880- 136.5 Hz. tone,
Thursdays 8 p.m. local.

May 4	May 11	May 18	May 25
VE3KTN - NCS	VE3KTN - NCS	VE3KTN - NCS	VE3KTN - NCS
New & Visitors	New & Visitors	New & Visitors	New & Visitors
			Daniel - VA3SDO
General Check-ins	General Check-ins	General Check-ins	General Check-ins
VE3RUU VE3ZZU VE3NA VE3LC VE3KAE VA3IAH VA2BBW VE3FSN VA3GLB VE3VHU VE3LBU VE3KJQ VE3RVQ VA3HJR VE3VIG VE3SYZ	VE3RUU VE3ZZU VE3RVQ VE3NA VE3KAE VE3LC VA3IAH VA3VGR VA3PSI VE3LBU VE3CWM ¹ CJ3CSG VA2BBW VA2OJD VE3KJQ VE3RXH VE3VIG VE3DNU VE3FSN CK3OTW VE3YY VA2WEC	VE3RUU VE3ZZU VA3WBR VE3NA VE3KAE VE3LC VE3RVQ VA3EO VA3PSI VE3NPO VA3FSB VE3YY VE3KJQ VE3SYZ VE3DNU VE3LAF CK3OTW VE3VIG VA3VGR VE3OKD	VE3RUU VA3IAH VE3OKD VA3VGR VA3EO VE3NA VE3LC VE3KAE VA3IAH VE3LBU VE3NPO CK3OTW VA2BBW VE3KJQ VE3VIG VE3YY VE3DNU



OVMRC Pothole Net: 3760 kHz. LSB Sunday mornings at 10 a.m. local.

May 7 SFI:152 A:30	May 14 SFI:144 A:13	May 21 SFI:170 A:35	May 28 SFI:157 A:4
VE3EJJ - NCS	VE3XRA - NCS	VE3EJJ - NCS	VE3XRA - NCS
New & Visitors	New & Visitors	New & Visitors	New & Visitors
General Check-ins	General Check-ins	General Check-ins	General Check-ins
VE3LC VE3SYZ VA3EO VA3BGO VE3KTN	VE3EJJ VE3LC VE3NPO VE3SYZ VA3PSI VE3KTN VA3EO VA3BGO VE3CWM ²	VE3LC VE3KTN VA3PSI VE3XRA VA3EO VE3NPO VE3CWM ²	VE3EJJ VE3LC VA3PSI VA3EO VE3CWM ² VE3KTN VE3KAE

Notes:

VE3CWM is the “Diefenbunker” Cold War Museum station operated by volunteer Ottawa radio amateurs.

- 1 - Norman, VE3NPP at the mic.
- 2 - Fred, VE3LAF at the mic

The “SFI” and “A” values are the Solar Flux Index and Geomagnetic A-Index respectively as reported on the [NONBH Space Weather web site](https://www.hamqsl.com/solar.html): <https://www.hamqsl.com/solar.html>. Values are taken within 30 minutes prior to net start time.



General Links of Interest:

- YOTA Camp on the RAC web site: <https://www.rac.ca/youth-on-the-air/>
- Volunteer opportunities - see <https://radio-1.ca>
- For various local amateur radio related information and volunteering opportunities, don't forget to bookmark <https://hambone.ca/>

ARDF Ottawa



Go t-hunting with ARDF
(Amateur Radio Direction
Finding) Ottawa

RCJ



Volunteer radio ops help
scouts on the Rideau
Challenge Journey

New Hams Ottawa



Information for new hams with
an Ottawa focus

Editor's Note:

The Rambler is the official newsletter of the Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club Incorporated and is published 10 times a year (monthly, except for July and August). Opinions expressed in the Rambler are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the OVMRC, its officers or its members. Permission is granted to republish the contents in whole or in part, providing the source is acknowledged. Commercial use of the contents is expressly prohibited. Submit articles and notices to: Alan at editor@ovmrc.ca
73, Alan VA3IAH

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