

RAMBLER

DECEMBER 2023



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

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HOLIDAY DINNER POTLUCK SOCIAL MEETING:

WEDNESDAY
DECEMBER 20

IBEW LOCAL 586,
1178 RAINBOW ST., GLOUCESTER,

****STARTING 5:00pm****

**** PLEASE NOTE ****
THAT THE ELEVATOR IS NOT
AVAILABLE AND ZOOM WILL NOT
BE OFFERED FOR THIS MEETING

**** [SIGN-UP SHEET LINK](#) ****

OVMRC AFFILIATIONS





OVMRC EXECUTIVE AND OFFICERS 2023-2024

DIRECTORS

President:

Norm Rashleigh, VE3LC
ve3lc@myrac.ca

Vice-President:

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vicepresident@ovmrc.ca

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Membership Records:

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Corporate Secretary:

Alan Fricker, VE3KAE
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STANDING

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Club Projects & Bulk

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VE3NA ve3na@myrac.ca

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Accredited Examiner:

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ve3lc@myrac.ca

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Special Events: Roger

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OVMRC Groups.io

Ongoing discussion

Group at:

[https://ovmrc.groups.io](https://ovmrc.groups.io/g/main)
[/g/main](https://ovmrc.groups.io/g/main); All radio
amateur members and
non-members are
welcome

Ottawa Valley Mobile

Radio Club Inc.,

**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 Net**, Sunday night, 7:30 PM, 50.090 MHz., horizontal polarization. Join controllers Hugo (VE3KTN), Norm (VE3LC), Mike VE3FFK 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>

Volunteer Opportunity: Sign up now as a volunteer radio operator for the Canadian Ski Marathon 2024 -see <https://hambone.ca/index.php/CSM2024/HomePage>

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 1890 Innes Rd., Ottawa, K1B 3K5 | • QRP Group Dinner meeting, (on hold) , 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

What a wonderful presentation delivered by Lawrence Dobranski, VA3IQ at our November meeting; we had 32 attending in-person while another 29 tuned-in using Zoom. Lawrence's presentation focused on his IC-905 VHF-UHF and SHF (microwave) transceiver and how it will be used as part of his project to outfit his truck as a Rover vehicle for VHF contesting. We're sure his enthusiastic talk may indeed inspire some OVMRC members to pay attention to the ARRL VHF contest events that are scheduled annually in January, June and September especially the competition category for "FM only" operation. There may even be a Club certificate in the making for such a winner. Information for this contest is available at: <https://www.arrl.org/january-vhf>. Lawrence's presentation is now available on the OVMRC.ca web site for future reference.

As mentioned at the November meeting, there will be a December 20th gathering at the IBEW meeting hall. This will be a holiday "Pot-Luck" dinner affair with doors open at 5 pm. This will include bringing spouses and guests and lots of food to share. In order that we know who will be coming with what food, there will be an on-line sign-up spread sheet so you can record your favourite dish, sides and/or desserts you will be bringing. Note, there are kitchen facilities at the meeting hall, with stoves and ovens to keep things warm and a "frig" to keep things cold and ample electrical outlets for hot plates and slow cookers you may want to bring. The union hall also has a permit to serve "807" refreshments for those so inclined to indulge. The Club will be providing soft drinks, coffee, cream and sweeteners, paper plates and cutlery and the essential necessities for such a gathering. Go view and fill out the on-line sheet:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1RStRHxSppzKDCKUx8KWL_YV_S12mOf7AztDpKsffHN7A/edit#gid=0

or click here [SIGN-Up Sheet Link](#)

While I was writing this message, an email arrived reporting that Kieran Shepherd VA3KS passed away suddenly in the early morning of Nov 24th. This was sad and very shocking news to me as we were engaged in an on-air QSO together only a few days before on the Tuesday evening 2 m SSB net on 144.250 MHz. Kieran seemed in fine form then and was awaiting good crisp cold weather to do yet another "Parks-On-The-Air" activation while winter camping. Recall folks Kieran's presentation to the Club at the October 2022 meeting by Zoom that highlighted his winter "POTA" activations. I often told Kieran I considered him the POTA King and his response was always a modest chuckle. Please visit his POTA page: <https://pota.app/#/profile/VA3KS%2FSK> and marvel what Kieran



achieved; he certainly had no equal in this regard, I believe, in all of Canada. Look for his tribute page in this issue of the Rambler.

For our January meeting, we are still open for a good topic to present. Perhaps we can have some suggestions from the membership. That said, we have some in-house topics of interest to cover such as the good work being carried out by Hugo bringing to the forefront the history of the OVMRC and transcribing the many log books of the VE3JW exhibit station into ADI files compatible for uploading to the newly created Log-Book-Of-The-World Account for the station call sign.

On another topic, we are active now making changes to the Club repeater hosted at the QTH of Marc VE3BOE at his residence north of the village of Metcalfe. The repeater by itself is capable of Yaesu System Fusion operation and permits Yaesu digital voice communications as well as analogue FM. Marc often engages the repeater Wednesday evenings with his node radio to the Wires-X system to the “CQ-Canada” room for local hams with Yaesu Fusion radios to check into the Cross-Canada net conducted at 9 p.m. Eastern time. There are a few that use the repeater for this purpose but we believe the repeater would get better use if we made VE3TWO capable of “multi-mode” digital operation. This can be accomplished by the attachment of a Pi-Star control system that could provide operation on D-Star, DMR and Fusion with live network connectivity.

Depending on how the project comes together, we may provide a briefing on this at the January meeting. Also, there is work being done by our IT specialist and webmaster Adam, VA3IRD to place “in-the-cloud” our very own OVMRC “AllStarLink” hub providing access to those with their own AllStarLink nodes and also, hopefully, an OVMRC AllStarLink repeater can be linked into this hub as well. We are preparing the remains of the VE3MPC repeater hardware to do just that. The big challenge in this regard is to find a suitable location to install such equipment to provide respectable RF coverage in the Ottawa area.

So, as we say good bye to 2023 and hello to 2024, we will be reporting on something old and something new at the January meeting in the world of the Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club.

Happy Holiday Season

73 Norm Rashleigh, VE3LC



OVMRC November Minutes

Date / Time: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 7:16 PM

Location: IBEW, 1178 Rainbow Street, Ottawa, and via ZOOM for on-line attendance.

1) Call to order:

OVMRC President Norm Rashleigh VE3LC called the meeting to order at 7:16 PM. There were 32 official check-ins present at the meeting and 29 present via Zoom on-line.

2) Agenda and Meeting Content:

Norm VE3LC outlined the agenda for tonight's meeting that includes:

- Greetings and special welcoming of new hams and new members of the club and as well as guests.
- Approval of minutes of the October 18, 2023 meeting.
- Field Day 2023 results – Norm VE3LC.
- Feature presentation by Lawrence VA3IQ and his ICOM IC-905 VHF/UHF/ and SHF transceiver and VHF contest Rover operation.
- Presentation and vote on Club Budget for the 2023/24 Season by Nicole VE3GIQ.
- Review of the October Rambler by Alan VA3IAH.
- Executive Committee and Chairperson reports.
- Meeting adjournment followed by socializing in the meeting hall. Coffee and donuts available.

3) Welcome and Guest Greetings:

Norm VE3LC opened the meeting by extending a welcome to guests, visitors, and new hams who were present for the meeting. Guests tonight included several guests from Rockland - Jim VA3KV, Mario VE3WPZ, Chad VE3OUO, and Sue VE3FSS from Kingston. New member VE3RRB Bob, Metcalfe who is recently back to the hobby. Bob recently purchased the OVMRC VE3JW tower. Norm also mentioned other recent new members since August 2023 - Cal VA3ZLA, Ante VA2BBW (Ante is the awards manager for RAC), Russell VE3FSN, and three siblings-Carmen VE3HHC, Elizabeth VE3LCE, and Fernand Charlebois VA3LMA, as well as Armin VA3YB, Shaun VE3VHU, Will VA3ODW, Donald VE3ZZI and Natalie VE3IBX. A very big welcome to all.



4) Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting:

MOTION: Moved by Bill VA3HWA and seconded by Hugo VE3KTN that the minutes of the OVMRC meeting held Wednesday, October 18, 2023, be approved.

VOTE: No Objections.

CARRIED.

5) Field Day 2023 Results - Norm VE3LC:

Norm VE3LC presented the OVMRC Field Day 2023 results as posted in the December 2023 issue of QST magazine. 13 members participated in the 2023 ARRL Field Day event in several classes. The club did not do as well in total aggregate score this year - 16, 810 points as opposed to 21,087 points in 2022. Pat VE3KJQ also spoke about the club results. Pat noted the club was in 5th place for North America in terms of the number of people participating. He further noted that the top two clubs had 28 and 22 members participating. The clubs who were in 3rd and 4th place had 15 and 16 members participating respectively - so only a few more participants could have improved our score. He noted that in the aggregate score we were down and if we had four more stations making about 40 contacts each, that would have moved us up in the standings considerably. OVMRC VP Rob VE3RXH has volunteered to take over as the club Field Day chairman for 2024.

Norm VE3LC introduced this evening's speaker, Lawrence Dobranksi VA3IQ, who is an engineer by profession with a focus on cyber-security, who began his career in 1984. Lawrence's presentation focuses on the capabilities of the ICOM IC-905 and his efforts in the designing and building of a contest rover station. Lawrence began his presentation by outlining his background with radar systems. He emphasized that he is not an operator, but a builder and experimenter.

Lawrence mentioned that the West-Carleton Amateur Radio Club (WCARC) is a small club but technically oriented. They do not do Field Day. Instead, they participate in the various VHF/UHF contests and very much rely on their club members to be rovers. His current project is to build a 6 meter to 3cm contest rover.

In June 2023 he participated in a 4-band (6m, 2m, 1.25m, 70cm) contest and his set up was designed to operate from the tailboard or back seat of his truck. His rover setup at the time included an Yaesu FT-991A "shack in a box" with an ICOM IC-705 as an IF converter working with a transverter.



He mentioned that the IC-705 has a beautiful spectrum scope and it very portable. Power was supplied by a Honda 1000 watt generator and 30 amp supply. Logging was via N3FJP VHF contest log software, but he reported that there are issues with it for roving work and it does not handle transverters very well.

With respect to getting organized for a contest, Lawrence says automating as much as possible is most beneficial. Tools such as Griduino (dedicated GPS tracker) is most useful. It is extremely important to make sure the set up works, is stable, repeatable and sustainable. Operating locations need to be planned out in advance. Cooperating with other hams and using techniques such as rover circling is a very useful activity. DMR radios can also be very useful to coordinate communications via a talk group.

Lawrence then spoke about the planned rover setup for 2024 using an ICOM IC-705 and an ICOM IC-905. The IC-705 will provide coverage of the 6 meter band and coverage of 222 MHz. and 902/903 MHz. via transverters. Lawrence then demonstrated the setup using a diagram depicting how the IC-705 will be supported by antenna switching and CAT controller functions, and sequencer operation. He also elaborated on the use of band pass filters and the issues related to operating and protecting the radios in the chain. He then talked about what was tentatively planned for Rover Mk III in 2025.

Lawrence then explained how the IC-905 will be used for rover operations in June 2024. The IC-905 will provide coverage for 2m, 70cm, 23cm, and 13 cm. He also provided a technical diagram of the planned setup using antenna switching and CAT controlling functions similar to that used for the IC-705.

He showed the proposed design for hooking it up in the vehicle. He then mentioned that ICOM does not include band decode for switching - and he considers that a design deficiency in the radio. Deployment is similar to that for the IC-705, with antenna switching, CAT controller, sequencers and band pass filters. The IC-905 also provides at 5cm - 2watts output and at 10 GHz. - 1/2 watt output.

Lawrence brought a dish antenna (10 GHz. transverter and RF module) for his presentation. There was much interest in this setup and he explained how the transverter is driven in this application. He suspects he may not actually operate 5 GHz. in the June 2024 contest, but perhaps in a later one.

He mentioned that the whole approach by ICOM with the Ethernet module is very useful and pointed out the similarity of this to commercial ICOM radios. With respect to contest roving, Lawrence runs point and shoot with his contesting operation. Stop, setup, tear down and move on.



He mentioned that his power levels are good – and he is not running kilowatt levels like many other contesters. He is looking forward to 2025 and plans to run SO2R (Single Operator, Two Radios) with run and gun support. He is current looking at amplifiers for 5 GHz. and 10 GHz. coverage but they are expensive. Unfortunately many of the small vendors for this type of equipment are no longer in business. He plans to move the 5 GHz. and 10 GHz. setup to his truck and will use a YAESU FT-857D which will be the mobile run and gun platform.

Lawrence then continued describing some of the features of the IC-905 which is a 144, 430/440, 1200, 2400, 5600 MHz. and 10 GHz. all mode transceiver. He says it has a beautiful form factor and it is very similar to the IC-705. Lawrence then spoke about the extensive technical features of the IC-905 that are standard right out of the box. He noted that it is very interesting that the IC-905 has the same form factor as the IC-705. What he is seeing with ICOM is product platform engineering and he suggested that the design is likely a standard ICOM “product platform”. He suggested the following reading for those who are interested, *The Power of Product Platforms*, by Meyer and Lehnerd.

The IC-905 is identical to the IC-705 in operation but instead of having HF frequencies, it has VHF and UHF frequencies with different filters and very interesting D-Star capabilities. The spectrum scope works very well. It has nice keying and and nice speaker and microphone functions. Lawrence's version of the radio is from later production and does not have some of the idiosyncrasies that earlier units have. The radio does not have a built in battery. He noted that ICOM supplies a lot of ferrite beads which suggests there may be some wayward RF issues. The radio is very expensive. He noted that Radioworld will special order it and their current price is highly competitive.

The IC-705 and IC-905 share many things, however, the IC-905 does not have WiFi or Bluetooth. It does have a separate controller and RF module. The GPS is phenomenal and has a very stable frequency reference. He pointed out that there is an ICOM IC-905 10 GHz. transverter available. He mentioned that the IC-905 10-pin connector is not detailed by ICOM at this time, and amateurs need to be aware of this. It s a big issue that is slowing down its adoption as hooking up multiple transceivers is very important.

So what is next for the IC-905? There may be a 24 GHz. dish and transverter coming up as well as 10 GHz. and 24 GHz. band pass filters. There are also rumours of a 49 GHz. dish. Lawrence mentioned he is a very big fan of this part of the spectrum – use it or lose it. Lawrence says if anyone is interested in microwave the West-Carleton club will have a microwave activity day once a month.



He then asked if there were any questions: Hugo VE3KTN thanked Lawrence for his presentation and introduction to the radio. He asked about the setup he brought in and specifically about noise levels and signal loss from antenna to transverter. Lawrence said the loss would only be .1 dB or so. There was then further discussion about antenna types and feeding them.

There was a follow up question concerning the stability of the GPS frequency standard when operating in the microwave frequency bands and whether it was adequate. Lawrence confirmed that it was, that there may be some drift over time, but the unit is plug and play and he is satisfied with its accuracy.

Rob VE3RXH asked how he gets power and Lawrence confirmed POE is used at 48 volts. In answer to another question about modes used he confirmed that when operating rover, standard operating modes for SSB, CW and FT8 are used.

Frank VE3YY mentioned he has an ICOM IC-9700 as do many others, and he has only transmitted on 1.2 GHz. into a dummy load. He's in an apartment that faces west and he is 100 feet up. Is there anyone to contact on this frequency? Lawrence says there are some amateurs on 1.2 GHz. in the West Carleton Club, but he is not sure how active they are. On contest weekends, 1.2 GHz. is very busy. Contacts are made on 2 meter and then frequencies are stepped. The Tuesday Night Upper Frequency Net might be useful to try the radio. A loop Yagi might be a useful antenna to try out as well. Lawrence also mentioned there is a famous lawn chair loop to try for a 6 meter antenna - low cost and compact.

There was a question from the on-line participants. Nabeel asked if it is normal Ethernet traffic or non normal. It is 802.3 Ethernet but Lawrence says that it is being reverse engineered by a group to discover its technicalities. Lawrence says he will provide Norm VE3LC with a reverse engineering paper for interest.

Norm thanked Lawrence for a wonderful presentation and hopes this may encourage more amateurs to participate in the June VHF contest. Norm, VE3LC, then awarded Lawrence with an OVMRC special coffee mug as a thank-you gift.

7) Projects, Haves, Wants and Announcements:

Haves: Frank VE3YY spoke about some items he had brought to this evenings meeting. He has some digital IP phones that can be used for Hamshack Hotline. He mentioned he has two models and these sell for \$30.00 or \$50.00 depending on the model. If interested contact Frank VE3YY or Norm VE3LC.



Wants: There were no wants this evening.

8) OVMRC Budget Presentation - Nicole VE3GIQ OVMRC Treasurer, via Zoom: Norm VE3LC invited Nicole VE3GIQ to discuss and introduce the OVMRC budget for this year.

Nicole began her presentation with a slide presentation which she used to outline the background to the budget - forecasting and expenditures and how it informs the executive. She mentioned that during her presentation she will periodically stop and invite questions.

Nicole discussed various categories of the budget, including expense pressures. The following are items of note from the budget presentation:

- Bank charges are now estimated at \$72.00.
- Interest on GICs - this was an ongoing budget item for previous years, however the GIC investment has now matured and been cashed out as of October 2023. We collected \$675.00 in interest on this investment.
- Membership Dues - The club estimated \$2340.00 last year in membership dues, however, it actually collected \$3075.00. Membership increased last year to over 130 and with anticipated additional members this year, membership dues are estimated at \$3200.00.
- Facility Rent - Expenses are \$0.00 thanks to Colin VA3CSG and the use of the IBEW facility.
- RAC Liability Insurance - this is the insurance that protects members and the club. The cost for insurance has been increasing and those costs are estimated at \$900.00 this year.
- RAC Club Affiliation - this is not expected to increase this year.
- Post Box Rental - Last year the cost was \$230.52 and of this date we don't know the actual cost for the coming year, but estimate at \$235.00.
- Zoom Leasing - this has increased from \$226.00 to \$291.00.
- License Examiner Expenses - This is minimal cost - \$50.00. Although the club no longer conducts amateur radio courses, we still do candidate exams.
- Bulk purchases - this is the program where the club purchases coaxial cable, connectors and toroids at wholesale prices, and resells those items to club members at cost (less the HST and shipping). Last year the club estimated \$1487.00 in purchases but due to additional demand the club spent \$5937.00. This is an extremely popular program.

At this point there was a question from Nabeel about the Zoom cost. He asked if the Zoom price was discounted for not for profit groups. Norm VE3LC indicated he was unaware if such a discount was available, however, it was something that could be looked into. Neil VE3PUE indicated that he was pretty sure that Zoom does not offer a discount for non-profit organizations.



- Club Discretionary Expenses – this concerns expenditures for YOTA, DARF and the RAC Foundation. DARF and RAC are allocated \$200.00 each in the budget. YOTA was a one-time commitment with an investment of \$1250.00 last year.
- Special Events and Public Relations – this includes club outings/events such as Field Day, POTA and the Christmas Meeting, which means these line items are really about food/refreshment costs. The club had no outings last year so no costs are indicated. This year the club has committed \$250.00 in support of Field Day, POTA, and other outdoor events as well as club meetings.
- OVMRC Awards program – \$150.00 has been allocated this year for new amateurs.
- Year-end door prizes – \$1200 was budgeted last year and we spent \$1381.00. This year the club has budgeted \$700.00.
- Equipment – Repeaters and Networking – Norm VE3LC has a project planned that will facilitate networking of our repeaters. \$400.00 is budgeted for the project.
- Web site hosting fees, domain registration and software tools – Costs are anticipated at \$250.00, \$56.50 and \$224.80 for these line items.
- Expenses and income summary – Expenses totalled \$10, 585.00 last year but our income was only \$6345.00. Nicole is forecasting that the club may actually be \$675.00 “in the green” this year.

Nicole then spoke to the last slide that outlines the club assets, liabilities and fiscal year position. As of November 7, 2023, the club has \$23,000.00 in the bank. This includes the \$15,000.00 from the matured GIC last year, which will be reinvested in a new GIC. The club bulk item inventory is valued at \$1707.65 and the club has \$1295.60 in equipment. Concerning liabilities, there is some money owed to members from the name tag program and estimated at \$117. This amount should be reduced to \$40.00 at the end of FY23-24. The club End of FY Position stands at \$26,767.99, and as of the date of this meeting, membership stands at 120.

Nicole VE3GIQ then reminded members of changes to the email system She requested that members not send email to her personal email account or send email to the e-transfer email address account. Please send messages as indicated in her slide for membership, financial and non club related inquiries as follows:

Membership Inquiries: membership@ovmrc.ca

Financial inquiries: treasurer@ovmrc.ca

Amateur Radio not club related: ve3giq@myrac.ca

Concerning membership payments Nicole mentioned she has received follow up questions from members who want to know if she has received their money for membership renewal, especially from those who pay by



cheque. She says she plans to automate the process to ensure payment confirmation is communicated to members.

Norm VE3LC thanked Nicole for her presentation and then asked for a motion and vote on the budget, as presented.

Budget approval motion - moved by Frank VE3YY to accept
Seconded by - Colin VA3CSG
Motion Carried.

Norm VE3LC mentioned that one of the assets of the club was the tower from the museum. It was recently purchased by Bob VE3RRB. Ernie VE3EJJ asked about the status of the antenna that was previously mounted on the tower. Norm VE3LC says the antennas are stored and will eventually be sold as well.

9) OVMRC XMAS Party, December 20, 2023 - Norm VE3LC:

Norm VE3LC introduced the subject of planning for the 2023 OVMRC Christmas Party which would be held at the IBEW on December 20, 2023, and be in the form of a pot-luck event. Norm asked for a show of hands as to how many would be interested in attending such a venue. As there was certainly sufficient interest shown by the membership, additional planning will take place with more information to follow.

10) Door Prize Draw:

Norm VE3LC then proceeded with this evening's door prize draw. There were three items to give away this evening, two sets of coax jumper cables and an MFJ speech intelligibility enhancer. Mario VE3WPZ and Denny VE3OKD claimed the jumper cable prizes, and Jim VA3KV won the MFJ speech intelligibility device.

11) Current Rambler Update/Review: Alan VA3IAH and Norm VE3LC: Because of the length of this evening's meeting, the Rambler update and review did not take place.

12) Chair Reports: Because of the length of the meeting this evening, the meeting was concluded without the regular executive chair reports, with the exception of the Nets Report by Hugo VE3KTN.

13) Net Operations: Hugo Kneve VE3KTN:

Hugo VE3KTN provided a presentation about the nets as sponsored by the OVMRC. With respect to the 2 meter net on Thursday evenings, on average about 20 people are checking in. On the Sunday morning 80 meter Pothole



Net, where propagation is often an issue, the average is around 9 to 10 check-ins each week. Hugo mentioned we are well into Cycle 25 and this is not helping the 80 meter band at 1000 AM, but he expects conditions to improve as the winter moves on. Ernie VE3EJJ is the primary net controller and Hugo has noticed from his location that things are getting better from a noise perspective. And last Sunday, the band was doing a little better. Frank VE3YY he has noticed less noise when tuned just a little off the net frequency of 3760 KHz He is wondering if others have noticed. Hugo says he has noticed that as well and it may be attributable to man-made noise on the band.

Hugo VE3KTN then provided an update on the status of the old VE3JW QSL cards. The cards have all been scanned and are now on the server. Once Adam VA3IRD makes them available to the club the VE3JW QSL cards will be available as PDF's for viewing. Hugo noted there were some special and noteworthy cards in the stack from Clipperton Island and Tonga. Hugo has also undertaken to scan the old logbooks and mentioned that 1974 and 1975 are now complete.

Scanning the entire collection will take some time but he is committed to get it done. Nicole VE3GIQ mentioned she has a few more QSL cards to donate to the collection.

Hugo then elaborated on what basically may be considered as doing a forensic investigation into what is actually written in the logs. Much of it is very difficult to interpret, and Hugo showed a slide demonstrating the nature of this problem he mentioned he has been relying on various sources of information to assist him with this. Hugo hopes these logbooks will be available for viewing by the general membership soon as well.

Norm VE3LC mentioned they are also hoping to upload logbook data to the ARRL LOTW to see what might be received for confirmations. Hugo says there may be something like 10-15000 entries overall.

It was suggested that further distributing the sheets to other members might assist or otherwise speed up the process, but Hugo says he would prefer to continue as he has been doing. He will raise problem log entries to the attention of the membership for assistance if necessary.

14) Adjournment:

Norm VE3LC then asked for any other chair reports and as there were none, asked for a call to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION: Moved by Ron VE3LBG to adjourn the business meeting at 9:21 PM.

Next Meeting: The next monthly meeting/potluck supper event of the OVMRC will be held on December 20, 2023, at the IBEW facility, 1178 Rainbow Street, Ottawa, ON. The meeting will also be available on-line via Zoom. n-line meeting, on December 20, 2023.

Minutes recorded and prepared by Secretary, Alan Fricker VE3KAE.



Kieran Shepherd, VA3KS (Silent Key)



Known to many in the amateur radio community and loved dearly by his family, Kieran Shepherd died in the early hours of Friday November 24th.

Kieran was active in amateur radio since his late teens in 1979 and operated in most Canadian provinces and all three territories, with his Nunavut WSPR operation as **CF3KS** in 2017 being his personal favourite.

Norm VE3LC's "POTA-king" moniker for Kieran is particularly apt given his 560 activations in 263 unique parks having made 21,721 QSOs, which included many local operators.



Check out Kieran's September 2022 "POTA Portable Operations" presentation available from the OARC web-site at <https://oarc.net/2022-09-14-kieran-va3ks-pota-portable-operations/>

Kieran regularly checked into several local nets including the Tuesday night Almonte D-Star mini-net and Upper-Frequency Net.

Kieran's death was a particular shock to the local amateur radio community given the vigour with which he pursued his many interests and his being on the air right through his last day, making 120 QSOs in one hour on the morning of Thursday Nov 23 with his new green Slidewinder coil from the UK.



Plans are emerging for a "VA3KS Memorial POTA day" perhaps in the Spring or perhaps sooner, that I'm sure will be well attended by the local amateur radio community.

73, Alan VA3IAH



POTA Activation in memory of VA3KS/SK



VA3KS/SK Kieran Shepherd

Ottawa Ontario

Other callsigns: VA3KS, KK7HXY

All-Time Statistics

	Activator	Hunter
Activations	560 / 563	----
Parks	263 / 263	2431
QSOs	21721 / 21724	5030

VA3KS, Kieren Shepherd, became a silent key on 24 November 2023. Kieren was a local Ottawa ham and an avid POTA activator with 560 park activations from 263 unique parks, making over 5000 QSOs, the vast majority of which were made as an activator (I suspect most, if not all, of his hunter QSOs were from Park-to-Park contacts made while he was in a park).

As I was unable to attend Kieran's memorial service on Friday 8 December 2023, I thought I would activate one of his favourite POTA parks in his memory. On checking the stats for VE-4882, the Rideau Canal National Historic Site, I saw that Kieren was top of the activator list with 49 activations and over 2500 QSOs from that park alone, and so I chose to activate along the Rideau River close to my home QTH in Kemptville.

VE3RXH
 Rob Haddow
 Parks on the Air VE-4882
 Grid: FN25
 ITU Zone: 4
 CQ Zone: 4
 Yaesu FT-857 100W EFHW

Activation in memory of
 VA3KS/SK
 30 Jan 1959 – 24 Nov 2023

Park Leaders VE-4882 Rideau Canal National Historic Site

Activations	Activator QSOs
1. VA3KS/SK 49	VA3KS/SK 2562

To: AC4HI This confirms our 2-way SSB QSO
 Date: December 9, 2023 Time: 17:29 UTC
 Band: 20M UR Sigs: 56
 In memory of VA3KS/SK. Tnx for QSO and POTA on!



The weather for the activation was hovering around zero degrees and cloudy but thankfully with only a light breeze next to the river and with snow all around, including a covering on the frozen river, it was a pretty sight. My setup for the activation was a Yaesu FT-857 inside my truck, but powered from a separate SLA battery that allowed me to run 100W without concern for draining the vehicle starting battery. I matched the radio up to an end fed half wave for the 20m band in a sloper configuration with the high end attached to the top of a 20 foot telescoping mast supported by a TV antenna tripod.

I armed myself with a smart phone for spotting, a notebook for paper logging and a few stats on Kieran's POTA achievements to tell his story as I made contacts. I was not, however, prepared for the reactions from one particular contact that I made. AC4HI, Allan Davis, was my third QSO of the day and a park-to-park contact for me. When I explained my activation was in memory of VA3KS, he immediately responded by telling me that he had seen the sad notice of Kieran's passing and remembered that he had many QSO with Kieran in his log, including his most recent on US Thanksgiving Day, 23 November 2023, just the day before Kieran passed. I was thankful for the connection that ham radio had brought through Allan's memory and through Kieran's portable operations.

My activation was successful, making 33 phone contacts as far afield as Spain. I have completed only 59 POTA activations from 34 parks and made about a thousand POTA QSOs, so I have some way to reach the achievements of VA3KS, but it was enjoyable to make the activation in his memory and to connect with another ham that knew him from his POTA activations.

Rob Haddow, VE3RXH





Final Scores OVMRC Field Day 2023 Report

This is a report on the club's performance in the June 2023 ARRL Field Day as listed in the final scores posted in the December 2023 on-line version of QST Magazine. If you receive the paper version of QST you may have to look in the on-line version for your score, as not all categories are listed in the paper copy.

This year the OVMRC once again did very well in terms of our participation levels. We came in at 5th place. We had 13 members enter the contest and list their scores with the OVMRC. Last year we were in 3rd place with 22 members participating, so we are still maintaining our status as a leading club. The 3rd place and 4th place clubs this year had 15 and 16 participants respectively. As you can see, the difference in placement can be very small and everyone's contribution is significant and important. This year the top two clubs had 28 and 22 participants. Most clubs had fewer than 10 participants although 2907 stations listed their scores with clubs.

In terms of our aggregate score, we had a total of 16,810 points. This placed us in 20th position in the Club Aggregate Score category. This is down from our 7th place finish last year with 17,307 points. Another two thousand points would have moved us back to 7th place in the scoring again. That's equivalent to four more stations making about 40 contacts each, including some bonus points for things like emergency power.

Member scores of note are Marc VE3BOE with 5,820, Norm VE3LC with 3,860, and Hugo VE3KTN with 3,040. Also, Marc VE3BOE placed 5th overall in the 1E category. Of the OVMRC club members participating, two operated portable QRP using batteries, six operated home stations on emergency power, and five operated home stations on commercial power.

Again this year we have shown that we are one of the more active amateur radio clubs in North America.

73, Pat Brewer VE3KJQ

FIELD DAY 2023 FINAL OVMRC SCORES

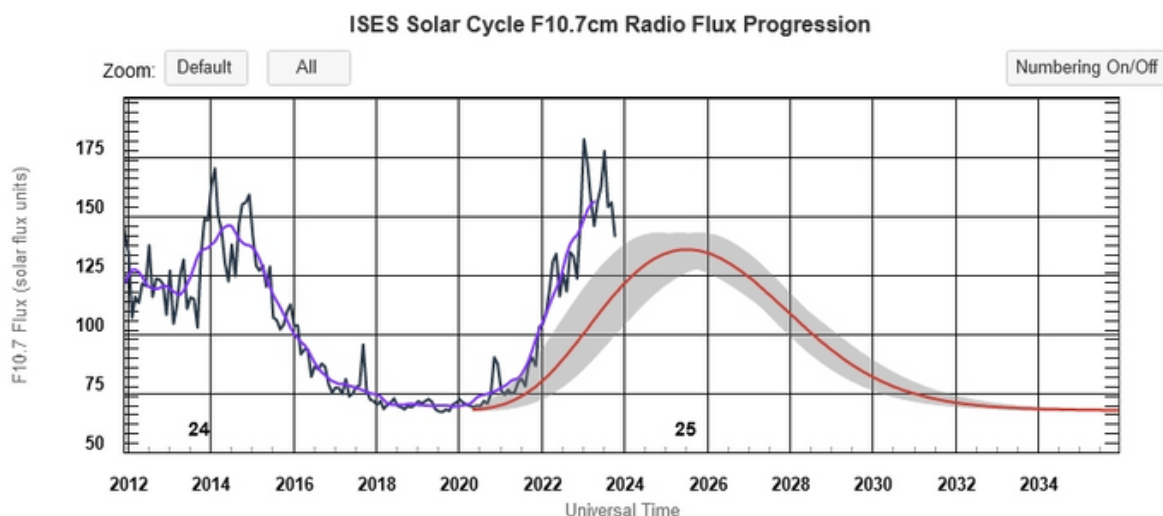
<u>CALL</u>	<u>CLASS</u>	<u>CONTACTS</u>	<u>SCORE</u>
VE3BOE	1E	547	5820
VE3LC	1E	351	3860
VE3KTN	1E	269	3040
VA3WEX	1B1B	69	930
VE3KJQ	1E	43	680
CX3RXH	1B1B	41	560
VE3YDK	1E	74	440
VE3IAH	1D	142	434
VE3LBU	1D	90	410
VE3NA	1E	2	260
VE3GIQ	1D	62	174
VE3VIG	1D	15	110
VE3SYZ	1D	21	92
TOTALS:		1726	16810



Update on Solar Cycle 25

Many avid DXers will know that propagation conditions have been rather good of late now that we are fully into Solar Cycle 25. The increased solar flux is doing its expected work of intensifying the ionosphere, providing the refracting layers that return skyward HF signals back to earth and give us the openings for all kinds of DX at 14 MHz. and higher. However, all good things must come to an end.

A recent publication by the Indian Center of Excellence in Space Sciences has announced a newly discovered correlation between the Sun's magnetic field variation and sunspot cycle. Using this new model, which complements the Waldmeier solar max prediction method, the current estimate of Solar Cycle 25 peaking is early 2024, possibly stretching out to third quarter 2024. These two predictive models are now telling us that the days of easy DX with QRP equipment are culminating and will be back on the way down by the end of 2024. Bad news for the easy DX on 17 to 10 metres, but good news for propagation on 160 to 40 metres.



(Image credit: NOAA - <https://www.swpc.noaa.gov/products/solar-cycle-progression>)

While the peak of Cycle 25 will be better than that of Cycle 24, it appears by not so much despite the promise of peak SFIs well into the 200s given the very steep rise when Cycle 25 took off. Still, there is hope that the solar flux will remain high for the next 18 months or so which ought to give those chasing various awards and certificates a chance before things go quiet again.

Good luck to all and 73,

Hugo, VE3KTN.



Building a 6m "Squalo" antenna

I have never had a very big interest in the 6m band, but since my return to the hobby in the summer of 2022, I learned that that is where the good old Pot Lid Net moved to. My 100 foot long attic doublet does work on the magic band but has multiple lobes at this frequency and is a little tricky to tune. So I decided to build an antenna dedicated to 50 MHz, with the following criteria:

- It has to be horizontally polarized. The reason for this is merely because all of the other Pot Lid Net participants use horizontally polarized antennas, so it only makes sense.
- It has to be omnidirectional. The reason for this is that the Pot Lid Net participants are all located in different areas, so I wanted to cast as wide a net as possible. And because I don't have any rotators, the antenna is going to be fixed, with no possibility to change where it's pointed towards.
- It has to be sturdy and lightweight enough to mount it onto my roof using a satellite dish antenna "j" style mount. I had recently bought one at a local hamfest and thought I would put it to good use.

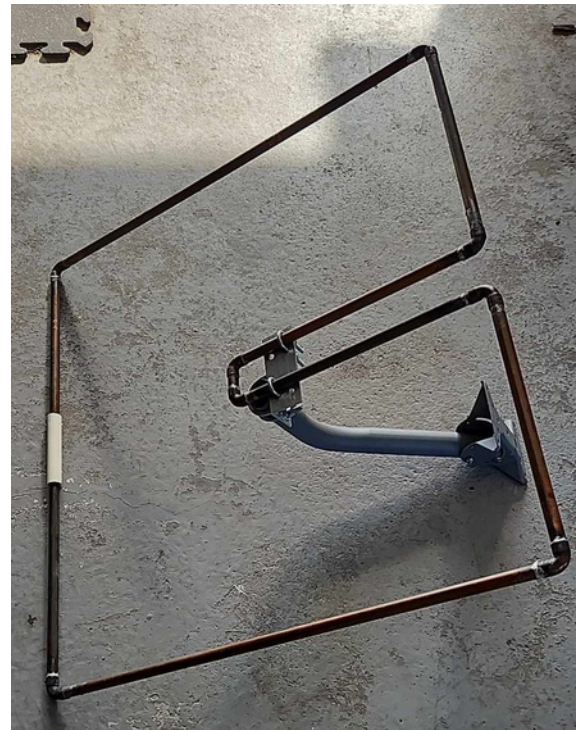
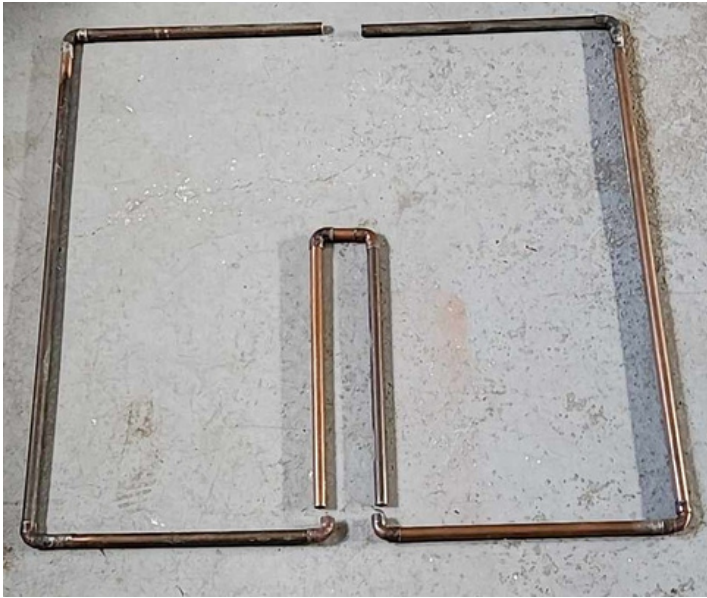
With all of this in mind, I set off into the wild jungle that we call the internet and sent Google my request. After scrolling through a few results I found something that just might work: the squalo. The actual design I settled on was from a fellow Dutchman, PA3HCM, who himself took it from another Dutch amateur. Here is the link to the article:

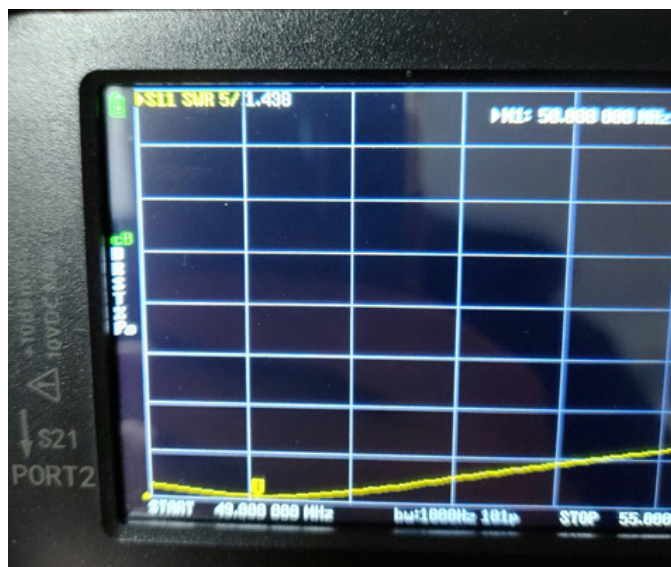
<https://www.pa3hcm.nl/?p=312>

The squalo (square halo, for those wondering about the funky name) antenna at its core is nothing more than a horizontally mounted dipole folded into a square shape. It can be directly fed with standard 50 ohm coaxial cable, and is matched using, as far as I understand it, the "hairpin" method. It looks like both elements are just shorted together, but what this does it adds inductance across the antenna input. The trick is to get the right inductance to match the antenna to the feedline. This is done by moving the shorting strap and feedpoint along the tubing until resonance at the desired frequency is obtained. I won't pretend to understand all of the intricacies behind this, but if you are interested you can find more information from this very interesting pdf:

<http://ehpes.com/n6mw/HairpinArticleFix.pdf>

The construction of the antenna itself was pretty straightforward, although had I previously done some plumbing I would have maybe had a better time. This was my first time soldering copper piping together. I'm not sure I would run water through my antenna, but since this isn't a concern, I think my solder joints will work fine. All parts are electrically connected, which is the goal. I added a bit of caulking over the solder joints to make sure they were sealed.





Tests with a NanoVNA (kindly lent to me by Mike VA3TEC) show that, after tweaking and playing around with the the strap and feedpoint, I get a pretty clear dip in SWR at 50.080 MHz, which is very close to the Pot Lid Net frequency of 50.090 MHz (let me take the opportunity to unashamedly invite you to join us every Sunday evening at 19h30 local time for some CW net fun!). I wish I could say that careful design and cutting on my part is what made this happen, but the reality is that I'm somewhat lazy when it comes to building things, and my usual approach of "good enough" and dumb luck, more than precise assembly of parts, is to thank. I mean, I was in the ballpark anyways, and I have a tuner. So... And this frequency will likely go up a little once the antenna is up high, far away from the ground.

As I write this, I wish I could tell you how well this worked, and how amazingly it outperforms my attic doublet and lets me work rare DX (in this case, Hugo VE3KTN). But the sad reality is that I haven't installed it on my roof yet. You see, height and I don't really agree, so I have to rely on my roofer brother-in-law to come and put it up for me. I don't know how he so nonchalantly walks up that ladder, vape in mouth, antenna in hand, without a care in the world. It's really a sight to behold. But with the weather, and a current bout of Covid at my home, I don't know yet when he'll find an hour to come and install it. But he promised he'll drop by soon. When he does I'll be sure to give you all an update on this square piece of copper tubing. Or, maybe you can come and hear it for yourself on the Pot Lid Net!

73, Ante VA2BBW



Random Wire Antenna Lengths – A University of Delaware resource worth bookmarking!

“When on the trail, at Field Day, or whenever a good antenna is unavailable, a random wire can save the day, but it is important to understand its properties. At multiples of half wavelengths of the transmit frequency the impedance is so high that tuners in most rigs often can't match it. The trick, therefore, is either a more capable tuner or, to cut the wire so that it is not a half-wave multiple of any frequency you want to use.”

“A so-called random wire antenna is an end fed antenna. As typically installed, it is a compromise antenna but great for portable use because it is easy to pack and easy to install. One end goes straight into the rig, often with no feedline, and the other end in the air attached to something as high as you can find. It is important to use a counterpoise. While these lengths have been shown to work well on many bands, which is helpful if you're in a hurry to get on the air, read up on the topic and experiment.”

When considering a random wire or end-fed antenna, a standard recommendation for 80M and above from the early days of amateur radio (see QST, March 1936, p. 32, "An Unorthodox Antenna") is to use an 84' long end fed and a 17' long counterpoise (6.5' for 20m).

A useful resources for considering various band combinations, noting that the fewer bands selected that are at least 1/4 wavelength long, the fewer high impedance regions to avoid can be found at <https://udel.edu/~mm/ham/randomWire/>.

I have used this resource when thinking about how long a wire I can use at my cottage with my Yaesu FC-40 wire antenna tuner. Turns out I have one more piece of hard-drawn copper 16 gauge antenna wire that is 173 feet long and may work well on a broad range of bands.

Anyway a resource I have found useful that I think is worth bookmarking.
73, Alan VA3IAH

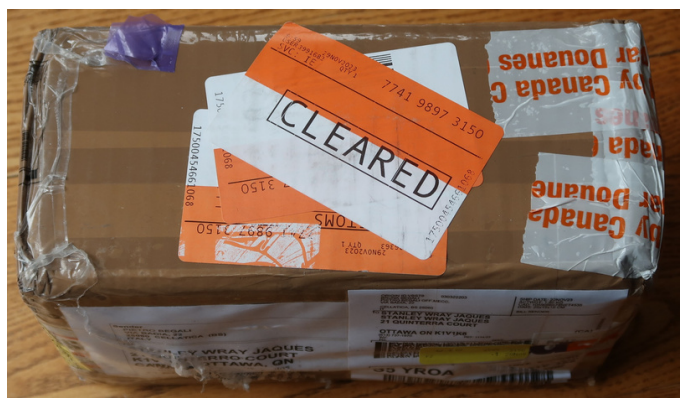


Wray VE3EO's new Begali Spark

The Begali Spark has arrived and is now in operation. Actually it took me over a year to decide because I really wanted an example of fine Italian machinery. I thought about a Ferrari, but they are too cramped, and then a Lamborghini and they are too cramped also, and then a Maserati but I don't think I would want to use one in Ottawa winters, so I decided upon the Begali Spark. I think that it was a good choice and it can be used year round.

After I ordered it and got the funds transferred to Begali and Bruna Begali was a real pleasure to work with. I was informed by Bruna that my Spark had been shipped via FedEx and she gave me a tracking number so I spent the week tracking the package. My Spark travelled to Charles de Gaulle airport, waited three days, then to Cologne, then to Indianapolis, then to Memphis then to Ottawa arriving 29 November. Because I was not here for the delivery, I picked it up at the FedEx office at Ottawa airport.

I had no idea of the size of FedEx- at the FedEx hub in Memphis on Google Maps I counted 14 FedEx freight aircraft and it appears that FedEx has over 650 aircraft.

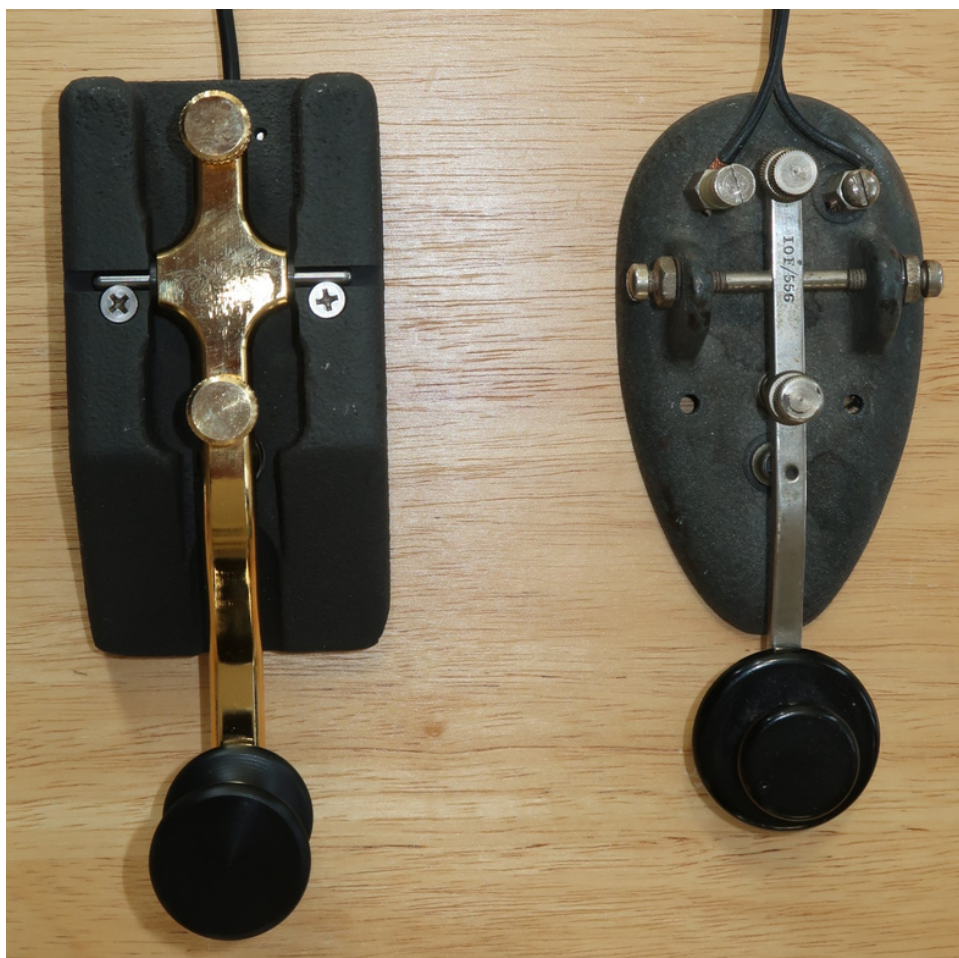




So I began to unpack the Begali Spark. First there were two plastic wraps- one by Begai and one by Canada Customs. Canada Customs had unpacked the item completely, presumably to verify that the 1.6 Kg package really was an "amateur radio telegraph key" as declared, and not some other example of fine Italian engineering. Then there was some styrofoam which protected an inner box. This box had also been opened, presumably by Canada Customs. (I noted that they put everything back in place and sealed the package well, so it was not a problem for me.) Inside the inner box, were a few items including a coaster, a season's greeting card, a pen embossed with the Begali crest and name and a wire cord with two connectors to hook up the key to the rig. I had to cut the cord and solder the wire to the ring connectors underneath the key. No problem - they gave instructions.

So I got the key on the air via my 7300 and made another SKCC contact - a Senator! The key does not help with my Morse code copying - but it is a pleasure to send with it. I hope the difference is not just the weight of the key because my Grimmer Wilson, which I have had for 65 years, weighs only 369g. Maybe I could have used it for a few more years by using some Goop to hold the key to the table (as described by VE3LC.)

73, Wray, VA3EO





OVMRC Net Activity, Check-ins for November 2023

Prepared by: Hugo Kneve VE3KTN

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

November 2	November 9	November 16	November 23	November 30
VE3KTN - NCS	VE3KTN - NCS	VE3KTN - NCS	VE3KTN - NCS	VE3KTN - NCS
New & Visitors	New & Visitors	New & Visitors	New & Visitors	New & Visitors
Shawn - VE3XIU				
General Check-ins	General Check-ins	General Check-ins	General Check-ins	General Check-ins
VE3LC VE3RXH VE3KAE VE3OKD VA3EO VE3LBU VA2BBW VE3RRB VA2EV VE3BOE VA2OJD VE3ZZU VE3NA VE3KJQ VA3LMA VE3DNU VA3ODW VE3CWM ¹ VE3YY VE3VIG	VE3RUU VE3OTW VE3LC VE3RXH VE3KAE VA3IAH VA3EO VE3CWM ¹ VA3PSI VA2BBW VA3ODW VE3DNU VE3ZZU VE3KJQ VA2OJD VE3RRB VE3VIG VE3YY VA3LMA VE3NPO VE3NA VE3XEM	VE3RUU VE3OTW VE3RDI VE3LC VE3RXH VE3KAE VA3IAH VA2XC VA3EO VE3NPO VA3PSI VA2BBW VE3NA VE3LBU VE3RRB VA3ODW VE3ZZU VE3KJQ VA3HBL VE3DNU VA2EV VE3LPH VA3ZLA VE3VIG	VE3RUU VE3ZZU VE3LAF VE3LC VE3RXH VE3KAE VA3IAH VA3EO VA3PSI VE3NA VE3LBU VE3NPO VE3OKD VA2BBW VE3SYZ VA2EV VE3RRB VE3VIG VA2OJD VA3HJR	VE3RUU VE3DNU VE3OTW VA3ODW VA3EO VE3NPO VE3LC VE3RXH VE3KAE VA3IAH VE3YY VE3ZZU VA2OJD VA2BBW VE3NA VE3KJQ VA2EV VE3CWM ¹ VA3LMA VE3RVV VE3OKD VE3LPH VE3VIG

Notes:

1 - Cold War Museum. Norman, VE3NPP at the mic.



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

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

*November 5 SFI:155 A:14	November 12 SFI:142 A:5	November 19 SFI:127 A:3	November 26 SFI:176 A:38
VE3EJ - NCS	VE3EJ - NCS	VE3XRA - NCS	VE3EJ - NCS
New & Visitors	New & Visitors	New & Visitors	New & Visitors
General Check-ins	General Check-ins	General Check-ins	General Check-ins
VA3IAH VE3KTN VA3PSI VE3CWM ¹ VE3LC	VE3LC VE3YY VE3XRA VE3KTN VA3EO VE3BAE VE3GFY VA3IAH	VE3LC VE3EJ VA3IAH VA3PSI VA3EO VA3BGO VE3KTN VA2EV VE3CWM ¹ VA2OJD VE3EKN	VA3EO VA3BGO VE3XRA VE3KAE VA2OJD VE3LC VE3KTN VA3PSI VE3CWM ¹

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>. Values are taken within 30 minutes prior to net start time.

* Band in particularly bad shape this day. CME ongoing, K index = 6. Net start one hour later due to Daylight-Standard Time clock change.

Notes:

- 1 - Cold War Museum. Fred, VE3LAF at the mic.



General Links of Interest:

- **Sign up now for a volunteer radio operator for the Canadian Ski Marathon 2024 -see <https://hambone.ca/index.php/CSM2024/HomePage>**

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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