

# RAMBLER

MARCH 2025



VOL. 67 ISSUE 7

NEWSLETTER OF THE OTTAWA VALLEY MOBILE RADIO CLUB INCORPORATED ([OVMRC.CA](http://OVMRC.CA))

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## NEXT MEETING:

**WEDNESDAY MARCH 19**

**RAC HQ OFFICES, 720 BELFAST RD  
AT 7:00PM IN PERSON AND 7:15 PM  
VIA ZOOM**

**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@MYRAC.CA](mailto:VE3LC@MYRAC.CA) FOR INVITATION.**

## OVMRC AFFILIATIONS





# OVMRC EXECUTIVE AND OFFICERS 2024-2025

## DIRECTORS

### **President:**

Norm Rashleigh, VE3LC  
ve3lc@myrac.ca

### **Vice-President:**

Rob Haddow, VE3RXH  
vicepresident@ovmrc.ca

### **Treasurer &**

### **Membership Records:**

Nicole Boivin, VE3GIQ  
ve3giq@myrac.ca

### **Corporate Secretary:**

Kathleen Murphy,  
VA3WEX, murphy@ncf.ca

### **Director-at-Large:**

Patrick Brewer, VE3KJQ  
patbrewer@sympatico.ca

## STANDING

## COMMITTEES

### **Club Projects & Bulk**

**Orders:** Harrie Jones,  
VE3HYS, harriej59@gmail.com

### **Radio Course &**

### **Accredited Examiner:**

Norm Rashleigh, VE3LC  
ve3lc@myrac.ca

### **Meeting Reception:**

John McGowan, VA3JYK  
john.mcgowan1314@gmail.com

## **Nets & Radio**

**Operations:** Hugo Kneve,  
VE3KTN  
ve3ktn@myrac.ca

## **Rambler Newsletter**

### **Editor and Production:**

Alan Hotte, VA3IAH  
editor@ovmrc.ca

## **OVMRC.CA & Social**

**Media:** Adam Bird,  
VA3IRD web@ovmrc.ca

## **OVMRC Repeater**

**Keeper:** Norm Rashleigh,  
VE3LC ve3lc@myrac.ca

## **Special Events:**

John McGowan, VA3JYK  
john.mcgowan1314@gmail.com

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## **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 Inc.,**

**PO Box 41145 Ottawa, ON  
K1G 5K9**

## OVMRC Life Members

Ralph Cameron, VE3BBM  
Bill Hall, VA3WMH  
Ernie Jury, VE3EJJ  
Doreen Morgan, VE3CGO  
Bryan Rawlings, VE3QN  
Maurice-André Vigneault,  
VE3VIG

## 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**



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## LOCAL WEEKLY NETS (ALL CHECK-INS WELCOME)

- **Almonte ARC's D-Star Net:**  
Tuesday evenings at 8:40 p.m.  
carried on XLX197 and everything  
connected to it, including  
VA3AAR, HH 94152 & AllStar Node  
564012. Dale VE3XZT presides.
- **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.
- **Kemptville Amateur Radio Group  
(KARG) Net:** VE3NGR 145.250 MHz  
(-) CTCSS tone 110.9 Hz. Tuesday  
evening at 7:30 PM. Various net  
controllers, [https://ve3ngr.ca/  
net.php](https://ve3ngr.ca/net.php)
- **New Hams Ottawa Net:** VE2CRA  
146.940 MHz -, (100 Hz tone),  
Tuesday evenings at 8:00 PM.
- **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.
- **Phoenix Net:** VE3OCE 146.880  
MHz (-) 136.5 Hz tone, Tuesday  
evenings at 7:30 PM conducted by  
Pete, VE3XEM
- **Pot Hole SSB Net:** 3760 kHz,  
every Sunday morning at  
10:00 AM conducted by Ernie,  
VE3EJJ.
- **Pot Lid Net:** Sunday night,  
7:30 PM, 50.090 MHz.,  
horizontal polarization.
- **Former QCWA Chapter 70  
VHF Net:** VE3OCE 146.880  
MHz (-) 136.5 Hz tone,  
Monday evenings at 7:30 PM  
conducted by John, VE3ZOV
- **Rubber Boot Net:** VE3OCE  
146.880 MHz (-)136.5 Hz tone  
weekday mornings at 7:30 AM  
conducted by Roger, VE3NPO
- **Upper Frequency Net:**  
Simplex 144.250 MHz using  
USB, Tuesday evenings at 9:00  
PM conducted by Glenn,  
VE3XRA.

## 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

**Orleans Coffee**  
**gathering** every  
Friday morning at  
9:00 AM, McDonald's  
1890 Innes Rd.,  
Ottawa, K1B 3K5

**QRP Group** Luncheon  
and Dinner meetings  
at Newport Restaurant  
are on again. See  
"OttawaValleyQRP"  
groups.io for details.

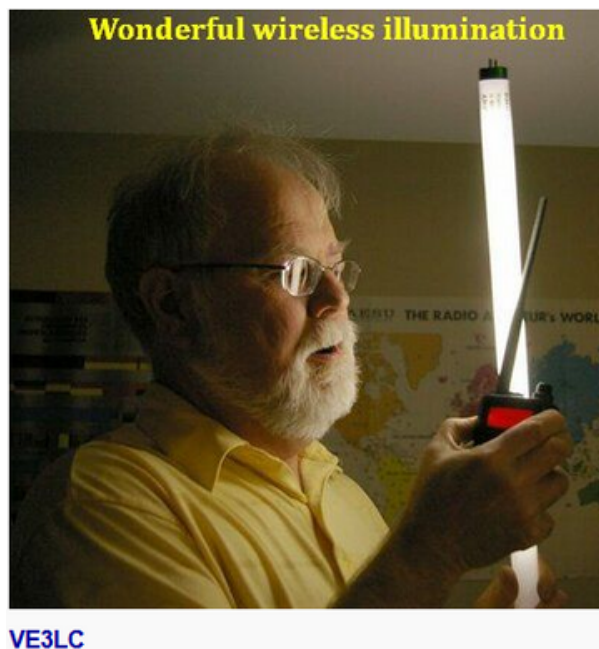
**Phoenix Net**  
**Breakfast**, 2nd  
Saturday of each  
month at Connors  
in Orleans, hosted  
by Pete VE3XEM



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## President's Ramblings

As I write this, the March 19th meeting is a week away. At our last executive meeting, we decided to invite members of the club to Show and Tell a home brew project be it hardware or software or about a new item of equipment or new and unique activity of their amateur radio operations. The invitation was posted on the Club's group.io page. Well we didn't get much response to the posting; that said, I've approached a few of the members who I know have something to show and tell so it should be an interesting meeting.



On another subject, it has also been brought to my attention that there has been heard some clear FM voice signals on our 2 m and 70 cm amateur allocations that should not be there and likely transmissions from unauthorized intrusion into our amateur radio spectrum space. In particular, on the 70 cm band, FM transmissions have been heard with communications of a commercial nature. It is not surprising that this may be happening considering the continued free flow of non certified VHF and UHF mobile and portable radio gear that is marketed on-line by the likes Amazon and AliExpress and imported into Canada and sold to individuals and perhaps to commercial enterprises and then programmed onto frequencies over the wide range that these radio products cover and likely without regard to potential interference to other users of the spectrum. Indeed, the programming of these radios into amateur allocations maybe intended and considered relatively safe from detection as the transmissions would not interfere with licenced land-mobile assignments occupied by commercial and public safety communications either side of the 70 cm ham band.

To this end, I encourage local radio amateurs to take up the sport of scanning the 2m and 70 cm amateur bands and if you hear anything that is FM or digital non amateur voice signals, record the time, date and frequency and nature of the communications as best can be determined and send me the information. Bear in mind that the radio location service has primary status in the 70 cm band for which users must hold licences for the frequencies involved; our amateur service is designated secondary status on the band. Radio location users include radar systems but also include nowadays transportable differential GPS equipment used for



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surveying operations transmitting periodic error correction data transmissions between known reference markers and locations to be determined. Also, the band 433.05 – 434.79 MHz is designated an ISM band in many European countries however lots of devices from car fobs, domestic remote weather stations and the like operate in this sub band here with short bursty data transmissions.

Last, I wish to congratulate Rod Wilson, VE3RXN for taking the initiative to apply and receive acceptance to and by the City of Ottawa for an “Official City of Ottawa Proclamation” proclaiming April 18, 2025 as “World Amateur Radio Day” in the City of Ottawa. Mayor Mark Sutcliffe is expected to sign the Proclamation on March 21st. Maybe we should host an open house at RAC HQ on April 18 if possible.

That’s a wrap for this month.  
Hope to see you all at the Club March meeting on the 19th.

73 Norm VE3LC

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**TO REPORT A SILENT KEY (SK) PLEASE CONTACT  
MIKE VE3FFK@GMAIL.COM**

## **Silent Key Submission Guidelines**

<https://www.rac.ca/silent-keys/>

..also please inform ISED

<https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/amateur-radio-operator-certificate-services/en/contact-us>



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## MARCH 19, 2025 - MEETING AGENDA

1. Greetings and Welcomes to Guests and New Members
2. Approval of the February meeting minutes as published in the March Rambler.
3. News and Happenings & Club Coming Events Schedule.
4. Special Show and Tell presentations by Club members. VE3QN, VA3CJQ, VA3WEX, VE3LHO and maybe VE3LC
5. Committee Chair reports.
6. Other business as may arise.
7. Meeting adjournment followed by social hour.

The March, 2025 meeting of the OVMRC will again be conducted at RAC HQ offices, 720 Belfast Rd at 7 pm. We should be able to accommodate at least 30 persons. To get to the RAC office, go to the south/west entrance door and take the stairs to the 2nd floor and proceed along the hallway to the 2nd door on your left, suite 217. Leave your outdoor footwear outside in the hallway. Park anywhere in the vacant parking spots around the building

***\*\*\* Please bring some indoor shoes as outside boots and shoes will need to be left at the RAC office door to help preserve the new floors! \*\*\****

***Also remember use the sign-in sheet, so the OVMRC can assess participation, with each meeting participation improving your chances at winning year-end door prizes!***



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# OVMRC Meeting Minutes - February 19, 2025

**LOCATION:** RAC Headquarters

**PRESENT:** 20 in-person, 33 on-line, total 53

**CALL TO ORDER:** 19:12

## 1. GREETINGS: GUESTS AND NEW MEMBERS

**Guests:** None

**New Members:** Matthew VE3QMB; Barry VA3TBW, and others not present (in slide show)

## 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER MEETING

**Moved:** Fred VE3LAF **Second:** Marcel VE3MNO. **Carried.**

## 3. NEWS AND HAPPENINGS (President Norm VE3LC)

a) Kemptville Hamfest will take place March 15, 2025 in the old Agricultural College (now the W. B. George Centre) at 48 Shearer Avenue. Runs 9:00 AM to Noon. Admission \$5. Talk-in on VE3NGR 145.25 (-) 110.9 Hz tone.

b) RAC Amateur of the Year for 2024 has been awarded to Mike VE3FFK. President Norm VE3LC presented Mike with an OVMRC mug on behalf of the Club.

c) Silent Keys: A minute of silence was held for:

- VA3AOD Robert Cherry (+June 1, 2024)
- VE3ATY Doug Carswell (+January 9, 2025)

## 4. MEMBERSHIP / TREASURER REPORT (Nicole VE3GIQ)

**Bank Balance:** \$5796

**GIC:** \$15,645 (re-invested for 1 year)

**Total cash assets:** \$21,441

### Questions:

**Q1. What is the plan for the assets on hand?**

A1. Possibly buying equipment, such as new repeaters.



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**Q2. Why not keep the \$15k in something like an index fund for better returns?**

A2. Executive assessed pros and cons of various options and selected a GIC due to lowest risk.

**Q3. A member asked why he has not been receiving club emails?**

A3. Your membership expired in 2023. (Member will renew)

**5. PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS (Nicole VE3GIQ)**

The following upcoming events will require volunteer operators to staff checkpoints and pass traffic through Net Control; a good practical use of radio operating skills:

- CN Cycle for CHEO May 4, 2025 (coordinated by OARC)
- Rideau Lakes Cycle Tour June 21-22, 2025 (coordinated by OARC)
- MS-Bike Tour August 16-17, 2025 (coordinated by OVMRC)

Nicole will be taking volunteers for the latter starting next month.

**6. TECHNICAL PRESENTATION (Charles VA3CGF)**

Charles is a new (1-year) ham with a background in software. He started doing POTA but found the equipment he was using to be cumbersome, and was looking at a more lightweight portable rig which would be budget friendly, power friendly, with a detailed waterfall and CAT control.

After considering all the “usual contenders” for this application, such as the Icom 705 and the Xiegu G90 and X6200 models, he selected the sBitX by Asher Farhan VU2ESE (<https://www.hfsignals.com/>) This is an 80M-10M rig that does voice but has digital modes (such as FT8, JS8, Echolisk, and the Fldigi suite amongst others) built-in, thus avoiding the need to also carry a heavy computer into the field. The radio also has a CW encoder/decoder built-in as well as a satellite tracker and a built-in time synch.

Assembled, the sBitX is CAD\$608, but Charles bought the board only (CAD\$290), and added his own 3D printed case along with a Raspberry Pi and a Pi screen as well as a microphone for a total package cost of CAD\$569.

The software for this SDR is all open source, and there is an enthusiastic user community (to which Charles belongs) who are tweaking the software at regular intervals (both Discord and GroupsIO). For example, Charles wrote his own CAT control and logging software.





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Charles presented the block diagram, explaining the inner workings of the SDR radio in general and the use of FFT (“Fast Fourier Transforms”) that allow the analog → digital → analog conversions that are at the heart of SDR radios.

Charles gave a live demonstration of the radio and several of the functions including two different ways of running FT8 (making a contact during the meeting) and showing some of the filtering possibilities for voice.

Charles likes the radio and has found it to be a whole lot of fun. The good points are that the sBitX is very reliable, the waterfall is great, the code for customizing the user interface (written in C) is well-documented, modular, and easy to customize. The board has a minimum of surface mounted devices and is therefore easy to repair by soldering.

On the other hand, the microphone with which the sBitX comes is of very poor quality (Charles upgraded) and there is a 1.5 sec time delay if you are trying to use the USB headset (a problem Charles says could be fixed with the software, but he hasn’t bothered to do it as he does not operate that way). There is also, surprisingly, no protection against a power supply’s reversed polarity (but someone on Etsy is selling modules that will do that). It also doesn’t have a PTT connection for an external amplifier (but again, someone on Etsy is providing those). The user community for this radio is enthusiastic and creative.

The PowerPoint of Charles’ presentation will be available on the OVMRC website, and it contains screenshots and links. Charles will bring the radio to the next club-POTA event so everyone can see it live.

**Questions:**

**Q1. Do you need an Advanced License to build it?** A1. No, it is essentially a kit so can be assembled by someone with Basic.

**Q2. Why is there a delay on the USB headset?** A2. No idea; probably an error in programming.

**Q3. Does it work on 60M?** A3. Yes.

5. **OTHER BUSINESS:** Hugo VE3KTN provided an update on the HamClock demo available through the OVMRC website. He has been in communication with the developer, and the propagation prediction now cycles through all the bands on a 15-second interval.

6. **MOVE TO ADJOURN Moved:** Marcel VE3MNO Adjourned: 20:55

Minutes recorded and prepared by OVMRC Secretary, Kathleen VA3WEX



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## OVMRC Schedule of Activity 2025:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
19 April	Club event: POTA activation for POTA Support Your Parks weekend at <a href="#">Chapman Mills, CA-1385</a> .	Starts 10.00 am EDT. Also <a href="#">Ontario</a> and <a href="#">Quebec</a> QSO Parties.
24 MAY	Club event: Field Day preparation - antenna setup and CQ WW WPX Contest, CW	Location TBC.
14-16 June	Individual event: <a href="#">ARRL June VHF Contest</a>	FM class available for those with only FM capability.
28-29 June	Club event: <a href="#">Field Day</a> at Cumberland Heritage Village Museum, 2940 Old Montreal Road, Cumberland, ON K4C 1G3.	Friday evening setup, Saturday all day and Sunday to mid afternoon.
1 July	Individual event: <a href="#">RAC Canada Day Contest</a>	Details published at: <a href="https://www.rac.ca/contesting/">https://www.rac.ca/contesting/</a>
19 July	Club event: POTA activation	Location TBC. BBQ and Tailgate
2 August	Club event: Mobile/portable radio clinic with APRS practical	Location TBC. Open to all. Station test in advance of MS Bike event. Bring your APRS setup too.
16-17 August	Club event: <a href="#">MS Bike Ride</a>	Operators are needed to be Amateur Radio safety checkpoints and net control. Nicole, VE3GIQ, <a href="mailto:psevents@ovmrc.ca">psevents@ovmrc.ca</a> .
30 August	Club event: POTA activation	Location TBC
TBC	Field Trip to (TBC)	Fall 2025

*(Dated 7 March 2025) If you have any suggestions for activities or would like to volunteer to organise an activity, please let me know: [ve3rxh@myrac.ca](mailto:ve3rxh@myrac.ca)*



# Kemptonville Amateur Radio Group (KARG) Hamfest 2025.







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## Quick Tip - A stable base for small Morse keys with magnets on the bottom

There is a growing number of portable Morse paddles on the market that have magnets embedded in their bottoms to secure them to something metallic.

Thomas, K4SWL ([www.QRPer.com](http://www.QRPer.com)) repurposed a steel jeweller's bench block (see attached photos) for use as a portable paddle base. My block measures about 3 inches in diameter and about 1/2 inch thick. My Begali Adventure Dual paddle with the magnetic base attachment holds firmly.

The whole paddle assembly stays put because of the rubberized layer on the bottom of the bench block and the 376 gram (13 ounce) weight. Bench blocks are available from Amazon for around \$20 CAD.

73 de VE3WMB





# OVMRC Net Activity, Check-ins for February, 2025

Prepared by: Hugo Kneve VE3KTN

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

February 6	February 13	February 20	February 27
VE3KTN - NCS	VE3KTN - NCS	VE3KTN - NCS	VE3KTN - NCS
<b>New &amp; Visitors</b>	<b>New &amp; Visitors</b>	<b>New &amp; Visitors</b>	<b>New &amp; Visitors</b>
<b>Check-ins</b>	<b>Check-ins</b>	<b>Check-ins</b>	<b>Check-ins</b>
VE3RUU VE3RXH VA3IAH VE3LC VE3GIQ VE3NPP VE3FSN VA2OJD VE3WWJ VE3NA VE3KAE VA3EGY VE3RRB VA3CJO VE3ZZU VA2TXZ VA3CGF	VE3RUU VE3OTW VE3LC VA3IAH VA3WEX VE3RXH VA2BBW VE3KAE VA3CJO VE3QO VA3CGF VE3NA VE3ZZU VE3RRB VE3KJQ VE3NPP VA3EO VA3CMG VE3PM VE3VIG VE3LPH	VE3RUU VE3ZZU VE3LC VA3WEX VE3KJQ VE3RXH VE3FSN VE3CWM <sup>1</sup> VA3VGR VA3EO VE3RRB VE3NA VE3KAE VE3NPO VE3VHU VA3CWS VE3VIG	VE3RUU VE3YCB VE3OTW VE3RXH VA3IAH VE3LC VE3KJQ VA3HBL VA2BBW VE3NPO VE3KAE VE3OKD VE3LAF VE3NA VA3GFY VE3ZZU VA3LMA VA3CJO VE3RRB VE3VHU

Notes:

VE3CWM is the “Diefenbunker” Cold War Museum station operated by volunteer radio amateurs of the National Capital Region.

1 - Norman, VE3NPP at the mic.



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

<b>February 2</b> <b>SFI:188 A:26</b>	<b>February 9</b> <b>SFI:173 A:11</b>	<b>February 16</b> <b>SFI:184 A:28</b>	<b>February 23</b> <b>SFI:199 A:6</b>
VE3XRA - NCS	VE3EJJ - NCS	VE3KTN - NCS	VE3XRA - NCS
<b>New &amp; Visitors</b>	<b>New &amp; Visitors</b>	<b>New &amp; Visitors</b>	<b>New &amp; Visitors</b>
		Mike – VE3EOM Rick – VE3RVV	
<b>Check-ins</b>	<b>Check-ins</b>	<b>Check-ins</b>	<b>Check-ins</b>
VE3LC VE3YY VA3EO VA3PSI VA3IAH VA2TXZ VE3KTN VE3EJJ VE3CWM <sup>1</sup> VE3SYZ	VA3EO VE3RXN VE3YY VA3PSI VE3KTN VE3LC VA2TXZ	VE3EJJ VE3LC VE3RXN VA2TXZ VA3ZLA VA3PSI VE3OWV	VE3EJJ VE3OWV VA3PSI VA3IAH VE3LC VE3RXN VE3KTN VE3CWM <sup>1</sup> VA2TXZ

*The “SFI” and “A” values are the Solar Flux Index and Geomagnetic A-Index respectively as reported on the N0NBH Space Weather web site: <https://www.hamqsl.com/solar.html>. Values are taken within 30 minutes prior to net start time.*

Notes:

VE3CWM is the “Diefenbunker” Cold War Museum station operated by volunteer radio amateurs of the National Capital Region.

1 - Fred, VE3LAF at the mic.



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**OVMRC Pot Lid CW Net: 50.090 MHz. Sunday evenings at 7:30 p.m. Ottawa local.**

<b>February 2</b>	<b>February 9</b>	<b>February 16</b>	<b>February 23</b>
VE3KTN - NCS	VE3LC - NCS	VE3FFK - NCS	VA2BBW - NCS
<b>New &amp; Visitors</b>	<b>New &amp; Visitors</b>	<b>New &amp; Visitors</b>	<b>New &amp; Visitors</b>
<b>Check-ins</b>	<b>Check-ins</b>	<b>Check-ins</b>	<b>Check-ins</b>
VE3LC VA2BBW VE3FFK VA2OJD	VE3KTN VE3FFK VA2OJD	VE3KTN VE3LC VE3QO VA2OJD VA2BBW	VE3KTN VE3LC VE3FFK VE3QO VA2OJD





## General Links of Interest:

### 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](mailto:editor@ovmrc.ca)  
73, Alan VA3IAH

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