



BARC
Newsletter



Issue # 2009-3
April 2009

Club call: VE3GCB

Club repeater: VE3RAG
147.000+ (156.7 Hz tone)

Barrie Amateur Radio Club Newsletter

Editorial

We have several newly licensed hams from the most recent Basic Amateur Radio course offered by the club, I hope to hear the following new hams on the air:

Brent Service VA3SCB
Niss Feiner VA3UBC

Rick Trzebinski VE3VDC
Wyndmill Hoskin VA3WVH

Allan Desrocher VA3AXD

Alex VE3PKA recently had the opportunity to give a talk about Ham Radio to the Orillia VON and some of their clients.

The CANWARN (Canadian Weather Amateur Radio Network) training for our area will be taking place on 26 April starting at 9am (until about noon) at the Orillia OPP Headquarters Auditorium (777 Memorial Avenue). The auditorium is at the left end of the building, park in the open parking area to the left of the building (at the traffic light). This training is very interesting and informative and helps the Ham Radio operator identify weather conditions that should be reported to the severe weather office in Toronto.

It's time to pay your 2009 BARC membership dues, \$20 per year is all it takes.

Don't miss out on Bob Morton VE3BFM's highly informative presentation on antennas at the 14 April meeting. Bob does his own engineering, development and production of many of the antenna related products which he sells through [Maple Leaf Communications](#) and [Paladin RF](#).

Enjoy your hobby – become involved.

Editor – Al Duncan VE3RRD
FP #2030, NAQCC #2669, FISTS #13952, QRP ARCI #13501,
30MDG #1116, DMC #1583, EPC #6502, FH #1887
ARES, CANWARN, RAC, ARRL

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If you have any inquiries, you can contact the club via the following email address:

HamRadio@barriearc.com

Be sure to visit the Barrie Amateur Radio Club webpage at:

<http://www.barriearc.com/>

Next Club Meeting

The next general BARC meeting will be on Tuesday, 14 April 2009. Start time is 7 pm and the location is upstairs in the Zehrs Store community room at the corner of Big Bay Point Rd and Yonge Street.

You do not need to be a club member or a Ham to attend the BARC meetings. Everyone is welcome.

Minutes of all meetings back to November 2004 can be found by clicking on the BARC Minutes of Monthly Meetings link found on the club webpage.

Back issues of this newsletter for 2007, 2008 & 2009 can also be downloaded from the BARC website.

If you would like to do a presentation or a “show and tell” at one of the BARC meetings, please contact someone on the executive or email the club. Come and show off your latest ham project.

Other Events

Don't forget the regular Monday evening ARES net at 7:30pm on the VE3LSR (146.850-) repeater (you must transmit a 156.7Hz tone). The latest RAC bulletins are also read over the air. ARES members take turns as Net Control.

There is a “Rag-chewers” net each Wednesday evening at 7:30pm on the VE3LSR 146.850 repeater.

Morning Breakfast Groups

Currently there are two “Ham” breakfast gatherings in Barrie – everyone is welcome (talk-in is on VE3LSR 146.850-).

- Every Saturday morning at 8am at “Debb’s Place” restaurant located at 352 Huronia Road just north of the intersection with Big Bay Point road.
- Wednesday morning at 9am at the Paradise Café restaurant in the Atrium building located at the corner of Cundles Rd. and St. Vincent Street.

Ontario QSO Party Contest – 18, 19 April 2009

Walk for Dog Guides – 30 May 2009 (Barrie waterfront)

Field Day – 27, 28 June 2009 (Oro Fairgrounds)

Ride for Literacy – 18 July 2009 (motorcycle ride around Lake Simcoe)

Basic Ham Radio Course – starts 10 September 2009 (Barrie Public Library)

Barrie-Orillia Hamfest – 12 September 2009 (Oro Fairgrounds)

If you can help out with any of the above events, please contact the club executive.

ARES News

A new MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) has been signed between RAC (ARES) and The Canadian Red Cross. You can read it at: <http://www.rac.ca/downloads/rac-crc-en-200903.pdf>

The City of Barrie and South Simcoe ARES Group (CBSS ARES) is looking for new members. Join ARES and learn how to set up email-over-ham radio- WinLink2000, “go kits” incorporating both voice and data communications. You also get to practice setting up HF/VHF stations in the field for use during practice (or actual) emergency events. See the CBSS ARES webpage at: <http://www.barriearc.com/Links/barcares.htm> for more information.

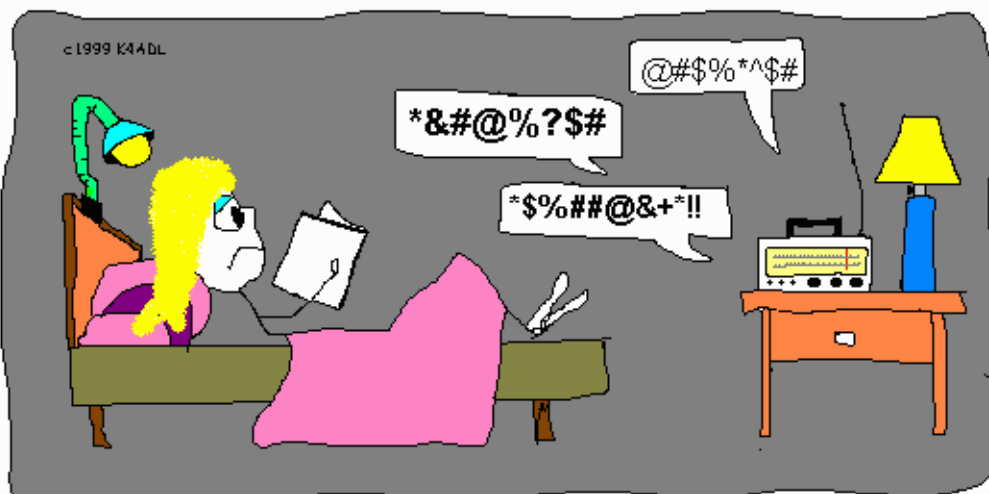
At the last ARES meeting, Ted VA3TWP gave a presentation on PSK-31. Also on display were QRP PSK-31 transceivers (the PSK-80 Warbler kit from [Small Wonder Labs](#)) built by Jack VE3RDQ and Al VE3RRD. These very compact radios operate on 80M (3580 KHz) with around 3 to 4W output and only cost about \$70 Canadian (delivered to the house).

You can receive email notifications about ARES involvement in disasters etc. by signing up for the ARES-Alert Yahoo Group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ARES-Alert/>



<http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/canwarn/home-e.html>

<http://racaresontario.ca/public/index.php>



DURING A LATE-NITE STUDY SESSION FOR HER AMATEUR LICENSE, BUFFY LISTENS ON 75 METERS TO PICK UP SOME HAM LINGO.

The following presentation was given by Vince d'Eon VE3LKV to the Standing Committee accepting public comment on Bill 118 – *Editor*.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Monday 23 March 2009

Consideration of Bill 118, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to prohibit the use of devices with display screens and hand-held communication and entertainment devices and to amend the Public Vehicles Act with respect to car pool vehicles

VINCE D'EON

The Chair (Mr. David Orazietti): Our next presenter is Vince d'Eon, a licensed radio amateur. Good afternoon, Mr. d'Eon. You have 10 minutes for your presentation and five minutes for questions, should there be questions. Please just state your name when you begin your presentation for our recording Hansard. You can begin as soon as you're ready.

Mr. Vince d'Eon: My name is Vince d'Eon. I'm a licensed radio amateur. I'd like to thank you for your time today. I've recently moved back to my birthplace of Hamilton, Ontario, having been in Alberta for 11 years. I've been a licensed radio amateur for seven years. It's a hobby that's more often called ham radio. I am here to introduce you to that today.

There are more than 20,000 of us in Ontario and over 50,000 of us in Canada. I am a member of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service-ARES, for short-and I provide emergency communications services upon request in the absence of, or in supplement to, conventional emergency response services.

My presentation will demonstrate support for the essence of Bill 118. However, it requests that the ambiguous wording in Bill 118 with respect to hand-held electronic devices be clarified, and it seeks exemption for ham radio operators. This presentation will also explain what a ham is, what a ham does, and justify the request.

What's a ham? We come from all walks of life. We're lawyers, truck drivers, sign makers, computer programmers, doctors and mechanics. We are of either gender. We range in age from our young teens to our sunset years. We're communications enthusiasts and we're driven by as many different facets of our hobby as there is diversity amongst our ranks. We are the volunteers and sometimes the "volun-told."

A ham is somebody who knows how to get a message from point A to point B under the most challenging of conditions. When solar flares disrupt our cellphones and power grids, we have a solution. When ice storms bring down our telephone lines, we can get a message through. When a tornado passes through, five or 5,000 kilometres away, and causes a swath of destruction, we help out.

Since the inception of Canadian licensing for hams in the early part of the 20th century, we've been granted the right to operate mobile radios under the federal Radiocommunication Act and associated regulations. In 1976, the Right Honourable James Snow, the then Minister of Transportation, issued the first radio amateur licence plate in recognition of the contribution that radio amateurs make to mobile-based emergency communications for the province. These special call-sign licence plates are issued so that the OPP, the RCMP etc. can recognize us and use us as needed.

I have earned my privileges of ham radio as granted to me by our federal government by proving my competency in a variety of areas via standardized exams. As part of that, I'm responsible for ensuring that my equipment is installed and operated with safety in mind, wherever that shall be.

As I see it, the problem with Bill 118 today with respect to ham radio is that the wording is ambiguous in our area of interest. Please refer to exhibit 1 on the cover of the handout. It reads: "No person shall drive a motor vehicle on a highway while holding or using a hand-held wireless communication device or other prescribed device that is capable of receiving or transmitting telephone communications, electronic data, mail or text messages."

The first radio is a conventional mobile or base radio. If I want to use it, I push the button to talk, I say my message, and I release the button. Only one person can talk at a time in this fashion. If two people should happen to press the button and talk at the same time-hams are polite; we apologize. If we don't do that, when we send communications messages in times of duress, everything's going to become all gobbledygook; the message won't get through. So we practise this every day.

Exhibit 3 is a hand-held radio. Its function is similar but arguably much more agile; I can put it in my shirt pocket and move to the next vehicle when I need to, to provide these services.

Arguably, I'm holding a hand-held device, for exhibit 3, but for exhibit 2, most of it is over there. What part of it is hand-held? There's some ambiguity in the wording that we feel needs to be cleaned up.

There's a large difference between the technology used in cellphones and that used in two-way radios. Cellphones use what is called a full duplex technology; both people can be talking at the same time. This also means that the conversation can escalate very rapidly.

As I mentioned earlier, the operator of a two-way radio has to push the button to talk and release to listen. It's much more difficult to have a very fast-paced conversation in this sort of environment.

Why hands-free won't work for us: While widely used in cellphones, Bluetooth technology is not widely used at all in ham radio equipment. I can count on the fingers of one hand the number of ham radios that offer Bluetooth today, out of the hundreds of models that are available.

Trying to retrofit a true hands-free set-up to ham radio equipment is impractical from many technological standpoints. Although a combination single earpiece and boom microphone is available at a relatively moderate cost, the application of even this limited, pseudo-hands-free capability to a variety of brands of radios is not always simple nor practical.

How we help out: Through the Radio Amateurs of Canada and affiliated clubs, hams who are members of ARES are spread throughout the country. We obtain standardized identification and insignia at our own expense. These help to identify us to authorities at checkpoints so that we can be allowed into the restricted zone to set up a radio station in order to send and receive messages. Frequently, other hams, while not members of ARES, will also help out in times of need.

We are recognized by EMO-E mergency Measures Ontario-and the Ontario Provincial Police, just to name a couple of agencies. We are integrated into their response plans. We follow the same communications protocol-incident command system, or ICS-so that we fit into their overall structure.

How I've helped out: In May 2002, at 1 a.m., my phone rang. The water was rising fast in High River, Alberta, an hour south of where I lived; I was needed. My job was to handle communications from the field and relay them back through the communications centre. I was on duty for a 24-hour period during that particular call-out: 16 hours, first, at that EMC, and then off to another, nearby town that didn't have protocols established for such emergency communications, and I established the EMC for them and got it off.

A month later I worked with the Salvation Army in downtown Calgary. I was providing food to the emergency responders and handling radio messages as required.

I've performed these duties for a variety of agencies: Red Cross, Salvation Army, provincial emergency operations teams, and local police and fire departments, and I perform these duties with or without the presence of the commercial power grid.

While I can't quote first-person examples to you, I know that Ontario hams were active during the 1998 ice storms, 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina.

I also help out on a non-emergency basis, providing safety communications to a variety of events such as marathons, cycle tours, car rallies, Halloween evening patrols and parades. Rather than renting radios and issuing them to event staff who may or may not know how to use one, or, more importantly, don't have the training to pass emergency messages while under duress, they rely on hams to pass along their messages. Many of these events have thousands of participants, and we handle messages that vary from lost children to event logistics to paramedics required.

Earlier this month I was in Burlington for the Chilly Half Marathon-at minus 15 degrees, I might add-where I was one of 25 hams helping to effectively communicate. Three Aprils ago I was outside of Calgary with a car rally, where drivers were injured severely enough that we needed radio to contact an air ambulance for a fly-in, as we were outside of the cellular coverage area. Each autumn I participate in a multi-day cycle tour for the MS Society. I'd work at more than a dozen events per year if I could fit them all in.

I give this work of my own free will. I am not compensated. I will do it again, and I was honoured to have been asked to help out. I'm only one of thousands across this province who do this kind of work, and Bill 118, as it's currently written, has the ability to impair it.

In conclusion, in order for amateur radio operators to assist the authorities to meet the needs of a community during times of emergency, we need to access our hand-held devices while in motion. Limiting the use of amateur radios to passenger use or to driver operation only when parked severely restricts the ability of the amateur radio operator to be of service to the community when the need is greatest.

Provinces such as Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Quebec have already enacted similar legislation to Bill 118 and have granted exemption for ham radio operators. Clearly, they've seen the benefits of this continued relationship between hams and emergency responders, and I trust you will as well.

The overwhelming majority of Ontario's 20,000 federally licensed radio amateurs are responsible people. It is that sense of responsibility that moves so many of us to volunteer our equipment and time in support of our communities and relief agencies.

When the safety-inspired improvements to our equipment are practical, we can be counted upon to make the changes, and entirely at our own expense. However, if Ontario's police forces start ticketing equipment operation that is similar to their own use of mobile and portable radios, many of the radio amateurs will be unable to comply with those regulations and would be forced to withdraw their voluntary services. The result is that the citizens of Ontario will be the net losers. I therefore respectfully request that Bill 118 have such wording as to allow for the continued operation of federally licensed radio amateur equipment within our vehicles, and without restriction.

I thank you for your time and the opportunity to present and I'll take your questions now.

The Chair (Mr. David Oraziotti): Thank you very much, Mr. d'Eon, for your presentation. We have about two minutes for each caucus. Mr. Bisson.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Do you have any particular suggestions, as far as language, that you would propose on an amendment?

Mr. Vince d'Eon: Sir, I'm not a lawmaker.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Okay. I'm just wondering if your association had looked at it.

Mr. Vince d'Eon: No, sir.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Have you been told, in discussions with the Ministry of Transportation, that your interpretation of how that section would prohibit the use of ham radios is correct?

Mr. Vince d'Eon: Sir, I have not. I'm acting on my own as a licensed radio amateur. I talk to many people on the air every day, and many of us are very concerned about the wording of this bill.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: So it's your sense that just the way the language is worded, it could encompass ham radios?

Mr. Vince d'Eon: Yes, sir.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I guess I'll be looking, when the parliamentary assistant has a chance to give us a bit of an update, at the ministry's view of that.

The Chair (Mr. David Oraziotti): No further questions? Government side.

Mrs. Linda Jeffrey: Thank you, Mr. d'Eon, for coming today. I appreciate what you do. I have many ham radio operators in my riding and they have been very helpful in emergency preparedness, so I know what you're able to do and how your services are truly valued. I think most people have no idea of how useful the amateur radio community is during a crisis, so thank you for all you do around Ontario, obviously, based on what you've told us.

I guess I'm trying to do some clarification from my own knowledge. When I talk to some of my amateur radio operators, I don't have the sense that they're in motion when they're using the radio to provide information about a crisis or what they're doing. I have the sense that they stick in one location and they provide communication to other health service providers or emergency service responders. Can you explain to me why you need that mobility piece of it?

Mr Vince d'Eon: Certainly. Much like a police or an EMS responder is dealing with getting the first-hand knowledge of what's happening while in motion; by and large, 80% of what's done is while we are stationary, much like they are. We still need to receive that information while we're in motion so that we can respond.

Mrs. Linda Jeffrey: So would using a mobile or a stationary amateur radio, which is the exhibit that you brought here today, impede your ability to respond in case of an emergency?

Mr. Vince d'Eon: I wouldn't be able to respond if I couldn't talk while I was driving, if that's what you're asking.

Mrs. Linda Jeffrey: Right now, for example, on a CB radio, if it's connected and there's a wire that connects to the radio receiver in the vehicle, that's not what this legislation is speaking to, so that wouldn't be something that would be a problem. It's the hand-held, not connected to a wire, that we're talking about as a distraction.

Mr. Vince d'Eon: Fair enough. What I'm concerned about is that from an enforcement standpoint, somebody will see this as an electronic device and choose to enforce it. I'm asking that that be clarified. Certainly this is a hand-held electronic device. I'm asking that this be exempted.

Mrs. Linda Jeffrey: I guess I'm trying to understand the difference. If you're in an emergency situation, you don't want to be part of the emergency, so you need to be pulled to the side to be able to make those emergency calls.

Mr. Vince d'Eon: Certainly.

Mrs. Linda Jeffrey: That's what we're hoping people will do, and this legislation would not be trying to prevent people from making those emergency calls and getting services, whether it's fire, ambulance or paramedic. Why does the amateur radio community need anything beyond that? If they have a fixed machine in their dash that allows them to call for an emergency and/or pull to the side and make that emergency call, how will that hamper their ability to be effective?

Mr. Vince d'Eon: Frequently, when I go out and do my volunteer work, I cover off many roles. I'm a communicator. I'm a first-aid provider. With cycle tours, there have been a number of times where I've been closest to respond to begin providing first aid. If I have to pull to the side of the road to get information on why somebody has injured themselves, I lose time responding to them. It could be a much more serious type of response than a skinned elbow, if you will.

The Chair (Mr. David Oraziotti): Thank you, Mr. d'E on. That's all the time we have for questions.

Mr. Vince d'Eon: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. David Oraziotti): Mr. Klees.

Mr. Frank Klees: Thank you again for the work that you and your colleagues across the province do for us. As you say, you're part of the emergency response system.

Let me ask you this: Of the 20,000 members that you have in Ontario who are ham operators, how many of them would have the licence plate identification?

Mr. Vince d'Eon: I don't know that. It's voluntary participation when we get our licence plates. Some people don't want to put one on their car for fear that it becomes a target, basically advertising electronics inside. I don't know what those numbers are, sir.

Mr. Frank Klees: I'm just thinking from the standpoint that if in fact there was to be an exception, as you say, how do you know whether it's legitimately being used or not? The licence plate could certainly very quickly announce-

Mr. Vince d'Eon: Part of our regulation requires us to carry our licence around with us at all times.

Mr. Frank Klees: While the minister is here-he's heard your presentation-I'd like to give the minister an opportunity to just respond as to how he feels about your request. That way we don't have to waste a lot of time around the committee. Minister?

Hon. James J. Bradley: Is that legal?

Mr. Frank Klees: It is, yes.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Is that what happens when you hang around?

The Chair (Mr. David Oraziotti): It's up to you, Minister, if you want to respond to that.

Hon. James J. Bradley: We will give all representations made to the committee full consideration before making any final decisions. We appreciate all the representations that are made, and this is one of many that will be made, and we'll give it full consideration. All members of the committee will have heard what you have to say and will make their recommendations as well.

Sometimes I'm at odds with members of the committee and members of the Legislature, as I have been on a couple of issues related to legislation, and they do represent all the ridings in Ontario, so we will give it consideration.

Mr. Frank Klees: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. David Oraziotti): Thank you very much, Mr. d'Eon, for your presentation.

Mr. Vince d'Eon: Thank you for your time.

