



The QSO

Christmas Issue

Volume 2007 Issue 4



THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EXECUTIVE MEMBERS OF THE SASKATCHEWAN AMATEUR RADIO LEAGUE WANT TO TO WISH ALL A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HEALTHY PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.

Editorial, by Val, VE5AQ

Well here it is December already. One must wonder where all the times goes. Seems like just yesterday that it was a very hot July. Oh well, welcome to the Prairies.

This is my first attempt at putting out the QSO, so it won't be quite as fancy as you may be used to, but when it comes to fancy, nope not this girl

Winter seems to have arrived here in Moose Jaw at least, and I do know that the good folks up in PA and North have had it for a while.

The Saskatchewan RoughRiders won the Grey Cup, so that is over for another year. Also, don't know if any of you noticed, but CBC will not be covering any more Canadian Football on the television until 2013. This is because TSN apparently won the bid to have them. This not being fair as some folks really can't afford cable, or maybe they just don't want it, or maybe they are so far north that they cannot access the "over the horizon" satellite in Dallas. So all that been said and done, we will now revert back to the 1950's where we were only able to hear the Grey Cup on the radio. I guess that is what we call progress.

This will be the last issue of the QSO for 2007. Our hope is that the air waves finally clear up, so that we can again hear something other than white noise.

RAC's Financial Statements for 2006 Sobering

By Dave Hayes VE3JX, Editor of The Algoma Amateur, Algoma Amateur Radio Club, Sault Ste Marie, Ontario

USED WITH PERMISSION

This month, we received our Nov./Dec. copy of TCA. On page 55 are RAC's financial statements for the year 2006.

RAC had a deficit of over \$30K; the previous year's deficit was \$7.5K. Membership revenue was about the same for both years, while advertising revenues weakened.

Costs that *increased* were: office, wages & benefits, rent, RABC dues, QSL bureaus, members services, CARAB, equipment leases & charges, cost of sales & royalties, bank charges, merchant fees & interest.

Expenses that *decreased* significantly were: annual meeting, committees, executive & directors, IARU fees, magazine production, repairs & maintenance, and YEP.

The "Statement of Changes in Net Assets" shows the net assets balance as going from \$43,280 down to \$13,053. Not a pretty picture.

Membership: Bear in mind that this is for 2006. We will have to wait until next fall to see the audited financial results for this year. However, I am sure that membership numbers have not taken a dramatic upswing; I would wish they have, but reality suggests otherwise.

If anyone is of the opinion that RAC should be financially supporting this or that, whether this or that refers to valuable services such as ARES or not, these financial statements explain why RAC can't afford to do all it would want to. It does not have the resources. Why?

It all boils down to membership numbers. The ARRL recently released their membership as being more than 151K. That translates to around 25% of U.S. licensees. I have seen dissertations bemoaning the fact that it is not higher. However, the sad truth is that, if we had 25% of licensees in Canada as members of RAC, there would be a party celebration to end all celebrations!

While we don't have up-to-the-minute figures—we only have those from last December—the hard facts are that we don't have even 10% penetration; the figure was 4731 or 8.7%. To put it mildly, that's abysmal!

Notwithstanding, our Ontario North/East Region has the highest percentage in the country, standing at 15.9%. While that is better than the national average, it is still not up to what it should be. Why is it that hams generally do not join RAC?

Excuses: There are many excuses used to justify non-membership, and we've heard them all. Two recent ones are: a distrust of RAC's finances; the claim that it's an "old boys club", meaning that just a few control the organization.

As far as finances go, the current statements tell the story. The executive and Board of Directors have very little money to play with. In fact, they have been cutting costs here, trimming there, such that there is no "fat" left at all. They have, for example, reduced the necessary costs for fulfilling their duties by 1/3. Funds needed by committees has cut by 1/2. RAC has professional people, such as lawyers and engineers who donate their time and expertise to RAC.

Much of Earle's traveling as RAC President, as an example, has been out of his own pocket. We have a lot of dedicated volunteers who are trying to make RAC work on a shoestring budget. There is no wastage here to speak of. In fact, RAC does not have the funds to do everything it wants to do. It all boils down to membership support, or lack thereof.

Old Boys: Is RAC an "old boys club"? If you look at the ages of many of our officers and volunteers, you can see that there are many "old boys". Earle, our retiring President, is in his mid-seventies, and he has many contemporaries in RAC. However, the term "old boys club" is used to signify a closed group maintaining secretive control of everything, barring outsiders from "interfering". Is that the case with RAC?

No, it is not. My personal experience has been that, when you show a little interest in what's going on in RAC, perhaps offering a positive idea or so, each one of the executive goes into "recruiting mode". They are "old boys" to be sure, and they're tired of carrying the load by themselves. I have had dealings with a number of RAC executive, past & present, and I have not detected any trace of a clique-ish mentality. In fact, it has been quite the opposite.

Therefore, if YOU want to be President, or VP, or a Director, or any other appointed official in RAC, you have a very good chance of fulfilling your dreams. You will have all the help you need from current members in those positions, to reach out and qualify for the job that you want. Bear in mind, there's no salary, no significant prestige, nothing, but the satisfaction that you are doing something worthwhile, benefiting the whole ham community. The above description does not sound like a classic old boys club to me, nor should it to you.

In fact, there may be things that you may disagree with as regards to current RAC policy, or the way things are being run. What do you do? Participate. Have a share in what's going on. RAC is a democratic, volunteer organization, with the **member** being the most important part of it. If you don't like something, help change it. Volunteer. As the over-used saying goes: "Be part of the solution; not part of the problem."

I have been offered several jobs within RAC, but I took on the DEC position since I perceived it to be the most pressing locally. However, I am like every other RAC appointee; I welcome anyone who is after my job.

RAC is a volunteer operation. All representations to Industry Canada and to the ITU, all the Field

Organization, the QSL Bureaus, the TCA columnists and other authors; it's all done gratis. We, as members, have to be grateful that so many have such a giving spirit. Oh, they're not perfect, but neither are we.

Support: What can we do to show our support for amateur radio in Canada and its national organization? We can volunteer our services to whatever extent that we can. But, first and foremost, *be a member*. It's really \$50 well-spent. To not support RAC is to wish for its demise. Then what?

Do you want to be represented by ARRL? Will the Canadian Government really listen to a U.S. organization? Can we depend on the ARRL to fight for our unique privileges as Canadian amateurs? Or, maybe you'd like to be represented by RAQI instead? They'd love the job. However, nothing against RAQI, but it is a provincial organization, and not our province at that.

No, the only course of wisdom is to support our only *national* organization: the **Radio Amateurs of Canada**. The more we do, the more RAC will be able to do for us! -jx

[from the November 2007 issue of The Algoma Amateur, newsletter of The Algoma Amateur Radio Club in Sault Ste Marie, Ontario.]

Moose Jaw happenings, Val lemko, ve5aq

Well, here we are. Snow on the ground, and the wind is a howling. Our club has been quite active, as reported in the last QSO, we did the communications for the Terry Fox Run, then in late November we did our shortwave to Santa at the Western Development Museum. Approximately 80 children came and sat down beside me as I called the Jolly Old Man up on the radio. The little ones were just so happy to see Santa, that some of them had to be prompted to give him their lists of goodies. Also this year, our club decided to run radio classes and although we wanted the school, that was impossible, as they decided that they needed \$18.00 an hour, even though the caretakers are there until 11:00 at night. We decided that we would get as many young people into the hobby, and were not going to charge them anything for the class, but without a room, my dining room became a class room, and only able to accomodate 3 students plus instructors. Turns out that the club thought classes were a good idea, but only 2 members volunteered to help teach. Harv, VE5AC is doing all the hard technical stuff, and myself doing the Rules and Regs, and code. Yes folks, these three potential hams want their code. Can't tell you how happy that made us feel. Hopefully before the deadline, I will be able to tell you if they passed their exam or not.

Also, Birthday Wishes go out to Ben Cruise, VE5YJ who celebrated his 90th birthday, Dec. 7th. Ben is still a very active operator, checking into the Saskatchewan Net almost every night, and yes, still goes up on his roof to do antenna work. Congratulations Ben,



Section Manager Joan Bahnman, VE5JML

It has been a sad year for hams this year, as the following list attests to. During our upcoming Festive Season, please take a moment to remember these hams and their families. Christmas is very rough on those that are left behind, so if you know any of the spouses, please give them a call and do wish them a Merry Christmas, letting them know that they are not alone. Our thoughts and prayers are with them.

Saskatchewan Silent Keys 2006 - 2007

VA5WDB -- Warren Beaulieu-May 7, 2006
VE5ACK -- Ken Kemp-September 18, 2007
VE5ADV -- Gerald Kastning-November 23, 2006
VE5AGB -- Tom Harper-May 14, 2007
VE5APJ -- A. Porter Jenning-March 21, 2006
VE5CJW -- Clinton Woodcock-September 6, 2006
VE5DM -- Dennis McIntosh-October 1, 2006
VE5DRM -- Doug McCullough-February 20, 2007
VE5EQ -- Lloyd Carr-November 24, 2007
VE5FH-- Frank Haubrich-October 18, 2007
VE5FJ -- Jack Struthers-May 30, 2006
VE5FX* --Ernie Byggdin-March 10, 2006
VE5GLF --George Ford-August 18, 2007
VE5HL --Leo Hipfner-February 3, 2006
VE5IG--Harold Gronsdaahl-November 2, 2007
VE5JK--John Kemsley Smith-February 16, 2006
VE5JM--John Jones-July 2, 2007
VE5JR--Jacob Rosloot-June 21, 2006

VE5KG --Jim Little-September 18, 2007
VE5KI --Blair Kool-July 14, 2007
VE5LJ --Jim Loukota-November 23, 2007
VE5LN --Lorne Smith-September 24, 2006
VE5LW* --Lyle Moyer-August 15, 2007
VE5NL--Norman Grant-June 23, 2006
VE5OU --Carl Goranson-August 31, 2007
VE5SO --Stanley Dyck-April 1, 2006
VE5TRC --Thomas Clayton-February 10, 2006
VE5TZ --Fritz Nadrowski-February 7, 2007
VE5VS* --Dale Shockey-April 29, 2007
VE5WG --Wally Geddes-March 8, 2006
VE5WY --Lorne Wilson-April 30, 2006
VE5YU --Clara Scorgie-Abt. March 24, 2006

* after a callsign indicates that it has been re-issued.

If anyone knows of other amateurs VE/VA5 who have become silent keys, please inform VE5JML Joan RAC Section Mgr.



Also this season, Please remember John Lacroix, VE5GL, who has Alzheimer's Disease and now in Nursing Home and no longer able to enjoy his hobby. I spoke to his wife a couple of weeks ago, and she said that John is doing well, just that he can't remember the folks that he loved or the hobby that he enjoyed so much.

SARL Secretary/Treasurers Report:

There are still about 25 hams that still need to renew their membership dues. I hate to be the Grinch who stole Christmas, but if you don't send in your fees, I am sorry to inform you that this will be your last QSO. I had the list in the last issue, so won't put it in again. I am sure this is just an oversight, and I just know that the SARL mailbox will be filled with your cheques in the New Year. Sorry, we don't pro rate. So \$15.00 per ham unless there is a spouse or family of hams, \$20.00 for these folks. Thanks for understanding; we really don't want to lose any members because of unpaid dues. Please check your membership card, and if it still has 2007 in the valid box, you need to pay your dues.

One last note, many thanks to Yvonne, ZR6TBL, my best friend who changed the look of the QSO from drab to fancy and into pdf format so that I could get it sent to the printers. Yes folks, she lives in South Africa

where the temperature is a high 24 degrees Celsius. Yvonne is a graphic computer designer, and I rely on her help for a lot of stuff. Thanks Yvonne, and Merry Christmas.

Lakeland Amateur Radio Club, Submitted by Wayne VE5DWT

On Thursday November 29th the Lakeland Amateur Radio Association and the North Saskatchewan Amateur Club had a combined Christmas party at the Chicken Chef Family Restaurant in Prince Albert. The party was attended by a total of 33 Amateurs and family members. An enjoyable and social evening was had by all.



Hello to all from the great South East, submitted by Joe Musgrave, VE5CEM



Well winter has come to the S.E. once again. Not to worry about the cold & snow, because the Christmas season is fast approaching with all its good cheer and warm feelings to keep you warm. I would like to extend from our house to yours season's greetings to all.

The Weyburn Radio Club has had the IRLP node 1408 running for some time now. It is working well and we are all having a lot of fun with it. We also ran a station in the J O T A weekend this fall and it went well.

On the Saturday from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm we had 3 groups of 5 Scouts each attend at the station. They were interested in the equipment and how to operate it. They all enjoyed their time at the mic. VE5MJ Dale (see picture) operated at my station and I filled in when he needed a rest. The bands were not good so we only made 2 or 3 contacts per group on the air. We worked the EchoLink and the IRLP stations a few times and also showed them how the computer and the Data modes work with the HF Radio. We are looking forward to working JOTA again next time.

The Estevan Group has been busy with some repeater repairs in the last few months. Blair VE5BAM & Marv VE5OO installed a new antenna on the VE5EST repeater 147.180 +. It is working much better now. Blair is working on an EchoLink connection for this repeater. It seems that Murphy is hanging around helping out, so the project is have a few problems.

Marv and a group of hams have been working on the Moose Mountain/Arcola repeater VE5MMR 146.820-. They are working to clean up some intermod, noise and sensitivity problems. The repeater is sounding better in Weyburn now, so they must be winning the battle. Good work guys.

Jerry Dixon VE5DC from Sintaluta sent in the following comments & observations:

“Not much news from SE district of Sask. But I wanted to tell people about how ham radio frequencies are being used by non hams. A while ago I was watching a TV documentary about climbing Mt. Everest. They were communicating from the base camp to the climbers by VHF radio. In a couple of scenes there was a shot of the base camp radio showing the frequency read out of 146.000 Mhz! Very clearly well within the 2 meter ham band. Just a few days ago another documentary about two fellows flying a helicopter from the North Pole to the South Pole, quite a challenge. When they finally got to the Antarctic there was a shot of one the camps' communication equipment. One of the transceivers was showing a readout frequency of 145.450 Mhz. and the rig was an Icom 706. Again in the 2 meter amateur band.

Also showing in the same shot was a Yaesu HF transceiver. I was surprised that a group in the Antarctic would be using the amateur bands for their communication needs instead of commercial gear. Setting up a camp in Antarctica would not be a shoe string operation."

Thank you Jerry for the interesting comments and observations. Well that's about it for this time. Next time I will have some information on the SK. Incoming QSL Bureau.

Once again I will say Best Wishes for a Healthy & Happy Christmas and New Year to all.

73

Joe, VE5CEM

Industry Canada Vehicle Inspections sent to me by Norac Reflector, Bob Brynes, VE7EZI

Rumor has it that **Industry Canada** has recently been inspecting radios installed in all vehicles at the Parksville Weigh Station. Here are a few suggestions in regards to the regulations:

1. Always carry your wallet size Amateur Radio certificate with you.
2. Do **not** modify your Amateur radio to transmit out of band. It is OK if it only receives out of band because then it is considered a scanner.
3. Do **not install, operate, or modify commercial equipment** for the Amateur Service unless you have an **advanced certificate**. It is a violation of the Radiocommunications Regulations section 44: **"A person who operates radio apparatus in the amateur radio service must hold an Amateur Radio Operator Certificate with Advanced Qualification in order to" SOR/2000-78 (a) install or operate a transmitter or a radio frequency amplifier that is not commercially manufactured, for use in the amateur radio service"**

It's real simple, if you have only a basic certificate, you are regulated to use only equipment specifically manufactured for use in the amateur service. **PERIOD!!**

The **RADIOCOMMUNICATION** Regulations or the **RADIOCOMMUNICATION ACT** may be found @ [http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/epic/site/smt-gst.nsf/vwapj/rre.pdf/\\$FILE/rre.pdf](http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/epic/site/smt-gst.nsf/vwapj/rre.pdf/$FILE/rre.pdf)

I think we as "hams" should appreciate that these road checks are being conducted in our area. Amateurs have always been given a "loose collar" by Industry Canada because we operate within the regulations and are self policing. We have all heard unlicensed people (pirates) using our Ham bands. Hopefully these road checks will reduce these pirates and will be beneficial to all Amateurs. VA7RS

ICOM NEWS ALERT

Just stumbled across a link to this notice about counterfeit radios on the rigpix website and thought I should probably pass it on:

¹-<http://www.icom.co.jp/world/notice/index.html> Then just follow on with the links. Guess what I am saying folks is, that buyer beware. Make sure your buy your equipment from reputable dealers and the old antage: "You Get What You Pay For"

Parkland Amateur Radio Club submitted by Harvey, VE5HAW

Hi everyone this is Harvey (VE5HAW) from Melville with a short update on things. Well not much new at this time but I thought I would tell you all that we are still here and that we have a new HAM his name is Garfield Challoner VE5CAT of Norguay and he just got his callsign.

On Dec 9 the club held their first Christmas party with a very good turnout (more then planned and that's ok) and on behalf of all the club members of the P.A.R.C. from all of us to all of you "Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year"

73's from VE5HAW

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The Fine Print:

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<http://www.sarl.ca/>

*Merry Christmas to all and
to All a Good Night*