



*Wishing you a
blessed and peaceful
Christmas!*

**The QSO
Dec. 2014**



**Editor's
Ramblings.**

Well folks, it's
already December,

and we have a bit of snow on the ground. We are definitely not as bad off as our friends to the East of us. I am confused as one weather forecaster tells me that we are going to be experiencing an El-Nino weather pattern, and another one tells me we are going to be much colder than last winter with more snow. Mind you, it doesn't take much to confuse me at this time of the year. Whatever we get, it's the Prairies—so we will deal with whatever Mother nature and Old Man Winter send us. We are a hardy bunch of folks. Just hope all of you have gotten your antennas all fixed and ready.

As far as the QSO is concerned, things are really looking good, and we have a good list of hams that receive it.

Unfortunately, there were still

quite a few members who had not paid, but I'm not worried, I know that they will miss receiving the QSO and will pay up directly.

Now going to switch hats and do the Webmaster report. As many of you may have noticed, there is a new template design. Depending on your screen and size of your print, it should have green mosaic like tiles down the right and left hand sides. I do believe that a change is as good as a rest, so I am hoping that you are enjoying the site. If you are having any problems, please get hold of me and I will try to talk you through and help you get set up so that you can see it easier. Please keep me informed of silent keys, and of any new hams who have joined our fun loving community. If you have anything you would like to see on the website, whether for sale, or items wanted, or an article you would like to submit, please don't be shy. Also don't worry about spelling, I can correct it if need be.

The Secretary/Treasurer told me to let you know, that everything she was going to say, the editor already did.

So that is it for this year folks, Harv and I would hope you all have a Wonderful Christmas full of love and joy. **VE5ACJ & VE5AC**



**Thoughts from
the Pen of the
President of
SARL**

I sit here at the computer wondering what I can add to this edition of the QSO? December has brought with it snow that will last till spring. We will not be having a brown Christmas, not at least here in Saskatoon.

We can watch the neighbours children play on the large pile of snow in their front yard and what a delight it is.

As for ham radio there is more time to talk on the radio, check into the nets and contests and catch up with radio friends all over the world.

In our ham shack there have been some of the challenges of D-Star

and with the help of Amateurs more knowledgeable than myself the glitches will get worked out. Amateur radio is all about helping a fellow amateur and gratefully we have many all over the province and wherever the air waves lead us, that can lend a helping hand.

Thank you to all the various amateur groups in Saskatchewan for their dedication to the hobby. Without you there would not be the Hamfests, flea markets, club meetings, public service events, field days and the many breakfasts and coffee get-togethers that are enjoyed by many.

Congratulations to the new Hams who got their license in this past year. We hope to keep hearing you on the air on a regular basis.

A big thank you to Val VE5ACJ for giving us the QSO and for maintaining the SARL web site. Without Val's dedication this would not be possible.

Thank you to all the directors for sending in their reports to the QSO. It lets the rest of us know that Amateur Radio is alive in the province.

As we go into the Christmas season let us remember those less fortunate in our communities. Amateurs are well known for their public service and this may be just helping a neighbour.

Eric and I would like to wish everyone a very Merry and Blessed Christmas. **VE5DJQ and VE5HG**



**Hello From
Down Here in
the
South-East
Corner**

I hope everyone is doing well as we move more into winter every day. Old man winter showed up at our QTH (with no invitation from us)

with his usual ways as he always does each year. His Grey and Ghostly figure, breathing his cold and icy breath over my shoulder, challenging me once again to wear some more off of my snow shovel. I finally get the better of him as I finish my cleaning chores around our property, only to find out that he puts the snow all back where it came from during the night along with some fresh new stuff as well. I'm pretty sure everyone can understand what I mean.

Well, enough of that, We all have a lot to be grateful for. We can enjoy all of the seasons for what they are. My bird feeders are stocked up once again and I look forward to seeing the arrival of the woodpeckers, the blue jays and flickers. It is always a treat to look out and see that some species don't seem to mind the cold and snowy conditions at all. The beautiful fall weather down here allowed the farming community to wrap up another good harvest. The yields were good but the quality suffered because of rain in September.

Christmas is only about three weeks away and we are not ready for it yet; by the time this goes to print we will be I'm sure. Nevertheless winter and the Christmas season does provide the opportunity to spend some time together with family and friends.

Not a lot going on in the Ham community so this report will be a little shorter than usual. Sometimes it is a struggle to get everyone out for coffee when it's cold but we manage to get a few each time. We try to have show and tell when we get together to show off some of our skills. Two weeks ago Bill VE5XT brought some of his really nice wood turning that

he does. Ray VE5XRA brought a home-designed and built submersible pump controller. It controls the water level in a water bowl with a set of probes. It is completely solid state, he etched the circuit board himself and assembled it all in a tidy little box. This unit controls the pump and the water level out at his water bowl for his cattle.

Our two repeaters are working really well but still no IRLP. Raymond VE5YAN is thinking about taking over the IRLP at his location but hasn't decided to go ahead with it yet. I wasn't able to get an interview with Jamie VE5JES about his radio controlled model airplanes, maybe next time. Winter is also project time around here. I spent the last few evenings putting together a QRP transmitter from a kit. It has two crystals for the 40 meter CW band. It appears to be working OK so far. The challenge now, is to get it on the air and have some QRP QSOs with only 1 watt of power. Good luck with that I say.

That's it, folks, for now. Merry Christmas, Happy holidays, and a prosperous New year to all.

73 Ken Dir. SW Sask, V.P. SARL



**Hello and
Christmas
Greetings from
Saskatoon**

December 4 finds Saskatoon with a few inches of snow and roads that have had some icy challenging time over the last few weeks.

Saskatoon Amateur Radio Club meetings were held in October and November at the Cliff Wright branch of the library in Saskatoon.

Saskatoon Amateur Radio Club

members and friends participated in communication for the 24th annual Santa Clause Day Parade on November 16 in downtown Saskatoon. There were twenty one amateurs that helped out that day. The day was cloudy, temperature was around minus 10 with light breeze. Snowflakes started falling shortly after the parade was finished. The day went well. One of the organizers of the parade, also a ham, thanked us personally over the radio.

The 2 meter net still meets daily at 8:00 pm on the 146.640 repeater. All amateurs are welcome to check in.

Saturday breakfasts for SARC still continue at Smitty's in Market Mall (9:30) and Haywoods (9:00 am) in Arlington Mall. All amateurs are welcome. If you are visiting Saskatoon on a Saturday morning you are welcome to come and find us. Wednesday, December 10, SARC is gathering to share a Christmas meal.

The next meeting of the Saskatoon Amateur Radio Club will be held Thursday, January 8, 2015 at the Cliff Wright Library on McKercher Drive at 7:00 pm.

Amateur Radio Classes sponsored by Saskatoon Amateur Radio Club will be held Thursday evenings through January to April. The first class will be at 6:00 pm on Thursday, January 8, 2015 just prior to the club meeting.

This is the season to take the time to celebrate Hope, Peace, Joy and Love in our lives, in our

families and friendships on the journey to Christmas Day.

Till the New Year 73, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year Terry VE5TL



From the Great White North-East

A couple of weeks ago, my wife (VE5FL) and I hosted the pre-holiday season ham get together. While it was somewhat lightly attended, due to illnesses and such, a good time was had by all. The guys gathered around the food counter (no surprise there) and dealt with many of the problems associated with electronics and communications in particular. The ladies were kind enough to handle the rest of the issues.

And, on thinking about communications and computers, which seem to be intertwined these days, remember "Star Trek" and Captain Kirk and his team and all the neat gadgets that they used? These, of course, were from the world of science fiction at the time - some 45 years ago when the program first aired. While we still haven't achieved "beam me up, Scotty", a good many of the rest are now household items - most commonly, the I-pad and I-phone.

I have an app on my device called "Speak & Translate" into which I can speak in English and out comes a spoken translation in the

language of my choice. And it DOES work! Of course, I have a decibel meter app and if you go to the "App Store" and search for "ham radio", you will be rewarded with dozens of apps, many of them free, which relate to our hobby. There are endless apps which will teach Morse code and also will help you to get your license (in the US,) with all kinds of teaching assistance, but there are many others as well. There are very useful apps for various antenna designs and they will, of course, do the math for you. There are all kinds of satellite tracking apps and repeater reference books and callbook data bases. If you get really bored, you can listen to emergency radio from all over North America on your device and of course, you can download an app to allow you to use your I-thing as a logbook.

The other day, I was hunting for a "stud finder" (the kind of studs used in walls) and discovered that you can buy an attachment for your I-phone which turns it into a stud finder. Why not? I was also amazed to discover that there is an attachment which turns your I-phone into a breath-alyzer so, if you have been indulging, you can simply blow into your telephone to see if you are legally fit to drive. How long will it be before some enterprising individual markets a device which you can clip to your I-phone to turn it into a transmitter? All you need is the output finals - the rest can be

handled with software in the 'phone! Our resident pilot, Charles (VE5QHL) assures us that no private pilot would fly without his I-pad. It evidently offers a full digital display for much cheaper than the one built into an airplane.

One of my favourite sayings is "The future isn't what it used to be". Very appropriate.



**73 till Next Year: Bj
NE Director
From the
Gateway to the
North**

Well news from Prince Albert is going to be short as there is really not much going on. With lots of snow and ice, people are not venturing out that much.

The repeaters in this part of the province have been giving us some headaches, but the techies think they have the biggest problems done. They replaced a whole bunch of dead batteries, and that seems to have fixed the problems for now. I think we will have to make do until spring.

We held our annual Christmas party at the Star House, which is a new venue for us, and it was very good. Don't think we have had too many good Chinese meals, but the Star House did an excellent job. The winner of the Vern Oshman Trophy this year was Dale VE5DMN. Congratulations Dale. We also had a couple of visitors

who joined us for supper, they were Barry VE5HA and Del VE5TV. It was nice to see them and find out what was going on in Melfort.

That's all the news from P.A. for this year.

From our house to yours, we would like to wish everyone a Very Merry Christmas.

73 Harry VE5HAE and Linda.



**From Warm and
Sunny Moose Jaw
and Area**

I do say that with tongue in

cheek, even though most days, we really don't get as cold as say Regina, Saskatoon, and North. I know that we get a lot more warmer weather and sometimes even much less snow than those other places. We are south of the T-Can Hwy, and it really does make a difference.

There is really not a lot going on here, as everyone is busy doing their shopping, house decorating, and all that wonderful stuff- especially the baking for Christmas, and of course the rounds of Christmas get togethers. We are staying home and of course Val is going to make all those wonderful casseroles that my mom taught her, even though I tell her it really isn't necessary. Mind you I don't think she would be happy nor would our son who comes to eat with us on Christmas day. So I will let her enjoy herself.

Oh yes, I can't tell a lie, I really enjoy them too!.

Friends of ours are leaving soon for their regular sun loving tour and they will be gone until the end of January. We have assured them that we will still have lots of snow and cooler weather here for them when they return home.

That is about it for this year, I did tell the editor that if there is room there will be a technical section, but only if there is room.

From our house to yours, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and all the best in 2015

73 Harv VE5AC and Val VE5ACJ



**Greetings from the
South-East Corner-
the Other Corner**

Well, I finally found my notes for this issue, although it may be a bit sparse.

Gray VE5GC had surgery in Regina and is now home. We wish him a speedy recovery.

VE500 Marv went back up to Foam Lake to help his brother VE5OG celebrate his 85th birthday. For an Old Fart, he is doing very well. While we were visiting, we were invited to and Old Fashioned School Christmas Party, and both John and I were Forced to sit upon Santa's knee. Don't know if we will get what we asked for, but anything to help things along is a good thing. While there, we got John's station back up and running. We were

fortunately able to work several 10M stations. Many of the contacts that we made had never had or heard a VE5 station. So I think we did real good.

While I was up in Foam Lake, Joan VE5TAW went to Fort Qu'appelle to visit her mom.

VE5BAM and his XYL got home safe and sound from their trip to Scotland, and stayed home long enough to unpack the suitcases, do the washing and repack the suitcases and went to Milwaukee to go see a baseball game. Blair is building a new garage and is almost finished it.

VE5TAW, VE5BAM and VE500 went out to the Annual Antique Car Club Christmas Party and had a great time.

Well, as I said things are just a bit sparse around here, guess cause we have so much snow in our little corner of the province, that nobody is going out much. I still have not been able to catch an eyeball with our new ham. Hopefully in the new year.

That is all there is folks, catch you in 2015 and on behalf of Joan VE5TAW and myself VE500, we want to wish everyone a Very Merry Christmas. 73



Brown Bag Christmas Story

I asked our newlywed Sunday School class to share a favorite Christmas story,

Carrie Fuller said, "Our family has one we call the 'brown bag Christmas.'"

When she finished, I had to hear more. Two days later, I called a member of her family for more details.

It was the early 1930s during the Dust Bowl days of Kansas, in the heart of the Depression. The Canaday family---Mom, Dad, 7 children---were having a tough time existing, so there would be no luxuries at Christmas that year.

Mom told the children to go outside and find a Christmas tree and decorate it. After a lengthy search, they returned with a dead branch, the only thing they had been able to find. They stood it up in a bucket of sand and decorated it with pieces of paper tied with string. Little Judy, almost four, did not know how a Christmas tree was supposed to look, but somehow she knew it was not like that!

As Christmas approached, the Canaday children, like children everywhere, pestered Mom and Dad about what presents they might get under their "tree." Dad pointed out that the pantry was bare, that they did not have enough to live on, and there certainly would be no money for gifts. But Mom was a woman of faith and told her children, "Say your prayers. Ask God to send us what He wants us to have." Dad said, "Now, Mother, don't be getting the children's hopes up. You're just setting them up for a disappointment."

Mom said, "Pray, children. Tell Jesus." And pray they did.

On Christmas Eve, the children watched out the window for visitors, but no one came. "Blow out the lamp and go to bed", Dad said. "Nobody is going to come. No one even knows we're out here."

The children turned out the lamp and got in bed, but they were too excited to sleep. Was this not Christmas? Had they not asked God to send them the presents He wanted them to have? Did Mom not say God answers prayer?

Late that night, when one of the children spotted headlights coming down the dirt road, everyone jumped out of bed and ran to the window. The commotion woke up Mom and Dad. "Don't get excited, children," Dad said. "They're probably not coming here. It's just someone who got lost." The children kept hoping and the car kept coming. Then, Dad lit a lamp. They all wanted to rush to the door at the same time, but Mr. Canaday said, "Stay back. I'll go." Someone got out of the car and called, "I was wondering if someone here can help me unload these bags." The children dashed out the door to lend a hand. Mom said to her youngest, "Stay here, Judy, and help Mom open the bags and put up the gifts.

"A deacon from the church in town had gone to bed that Christmas Eve, and lay there tossing and turning, unable to get the Canaday family off his mind. Later, he said, "I didn't know what kind of shape you folks were in, but I knew you had all those kids." He had gotten up and dressed and went around town, rousing people from their sleep to ask for a contribution for the Canaday family. He filled his car with bags of groceries, canned goods, toys, and clothing. Little Judy got a rag

doll which remained her favorite for years.

With so much food, Dad wanted to have a Christmas feast, to spread it all out and eat as they had never eaten before. Mom, ever the caretaker, said, "No, we need to make this last." And it did last, for weeks.

The next Sunday, Mrs. Canaday stood in church and told what the members---and one deacon in particular---had done for her family. There was not a dry eye in the house.

Years later, the oldest sister Eva wrote up this story about her family for a school project. Eva said, "We were so thrilled by all the wonderful things in the bags, for a while; we lost sight of the most special gift. The best gift that Christmas was not in brown bags at all. It was Mom's faith, as she taught her children to bring their needs to Jesus and trust Him to meet them. And a Dad's love that wanted only to protect his children from hurt and disappointment."

When Carrie finished telling her story, she added, "Little Judy is my wonderful grandmother." Today, Judy Canaday Dryden lives in Sanger, Texas.

As she relived this event from seventy years ago over the phone, one could hear the tear in her voice and feel her pride in being the recipient of such a precious heritage from her mother and father.

At Christmas, we celebrate praying mothers and caring fathers and believing children. We give thanks for sensitive deacons and generous friends and sleepless nights. And we praise God for the hard times that teach unforgettable lessons, stories of faithfulness that get told and retold

through the years inspiring each new generation to place their faith in a loving Savior.

~ Author Unknown ~

Christmas Customs

Many Christmas customs are based on the birth of Christ. Such as giving presents because of the Wise Men, who brought presents to the baby Jesus.

But some of the ways people celebrate Christmas have nothing to do with Christ's birthday. Many bits of older holidays have crept into Christmas!

It wasn't until about 200 years after Christ's death that Christians even thought about celebrating his birth. No one knows the exact date of his birth. It is believed that December the 25th was chosen to turn people away from celebrating other holidays at this time of the year.

Saturnalia, was the Romans holiday that they celebrated in December. It was a time of feasting and parties. Also, in northern Europe there was a holiday known as Yule. They celebrated this holiday by making great fires. The then would dance around the fires, yelling for the winter to end.

In time, Christmas took the place of these holidays. But people kept some of the old customs--such as burning a Yule log and having feasts and parties. The word Yule is still used as a name for the Christmas season.

As time went on, new customs crept into Christmas. One was the Christmas tree, which was started in Germany. As the Germans settled in new lands they brought with them this tradition.

Last but not least is Saint Nick. A

long time ago, a bishop named Nicolas lived in what is now the country of Turkey. No one knows much about him. There are stories that he often helped children in need. Many years after his death, Nicholas was made a saint. In time, he became the patron saint of children.



Saskatoon Area

Greetings to all our readers at this special time of year. Time for

reflection is well worth the effort and the cold winter days (some of them at least) give one opportunity to do just that.

Thanks to Val and Harv for seeing to it that SARL continues to have this newsletter that we know of as QSO.

Thanks to all the SARL members who took the time to write and contribute their stories this past year. It is well to remember the Radio Amateurs who passed on during this year.

We will always have spaces available for the newly licenced Amateurs and we welcomed a few to the organization this year. I do hope that some of the new members will write in their observations and concerns about Amateur Radio as they see it.

There is hope for the future! Merry Christmas and we look

forward to many more QSOs in "15", **73 Gordon, VE5UJ & Peggy, VE5ACT.**

Christmas Hype —by Jean Fahlman

The deadline for this Christmas column draws near and still a month before Christmas arrives. You can't blame me if I am not yet inspired. It is the way we have taken the Christ out of Christmas that bothers me. It hampers inspiration.

This year they say every person will spend over \$800 on gifts. What do you think Christ would think about the way people celebrate His birthday? Would He be pleased?

Christ would know the world is full of hurting, seeking people; people who are out of a job; people who must choose between buying medicine or food; mentally challenged people; lonely people; people whose lives are torn apart by war.

Why then is Christmas about gifts, gifts, and more gifts? Trying to find just the right gift for someone who already has that, or doesn't want it, deflates the Christmas Spirit.

Parents naturally want to see their children happy but it seems to me it is not the Christmas gifts a child remembers as much as the aura, the happenings, of the day. We did not receive many gifts when I was growing up, but I remember peering down through

the hole around the stove pipe to watch Mom make doll baskets out of wooden grape baskets. A loving gift. I remember going out in the snow to cut down a wild willow to paint and make decorations for, popcorn strings and do-dads. We didn't have any evergreens growing for a Christmas tree. A willow worked fine.

I remember the year my grandmother Hodgen died so we moved into the big house to spend the winter with my deaf grandfather.

It was a large two-story home too lonely for one person. I don't recall gifts but I clearly recall Christmas happening in that house, and the sense of sadness at the empty chair.

Gifts in the 1930's were often handmade, but an aunt living in the States used to send a Christmas parcel which we waited for eagerly. The Christmas we spent at Grandpa's house there had a Black doll in that parcel. I had never seen a Black person so the doll was a great novelty we sisters were to share. One day my sister and I were fighting over whose turn it was to play with the doll and—you guessed it—the disputed doll, with the breakable head fell onto the hardwood floor. End of Black baby.

You see, it is the "happenings" of Christmas we remember more than any gift abundance, or lack of it. It is the Christmas concerts and waiting for Santa to arrive with his fake Ho Ho Ho's we remember.

Our village Santa had a pathetic wrinkled velvet suit and a ragged beard made of balled cotton, but there was a bag of treats for each child, whether we had been bad or good. The paper bag held one Japanese orange (a rare treat), some hard colorful candy with magical patterns and loops, and some peanuts in their shells. The hall where the school concerts were held was freezing cold but the atmosphere was warm and memorable.

This Christmas let us build family and friend memories which don't cost money. Let Christmas music and magic fill our hearts.

(Ed. Note: *I found the above in the Senior's Living paper, and I did try to get hold of Jean to get her permission to reprint this— but I am sure she would not be too offended with me sharing with our membership.*)



The Star by Pat (Priscilla) E. Lazaruk

Three wise men travelling on an important quest.

Perhaps became weary, in need of food and rest,

But, each saw in the darkened sky a special star,

They continued on and on following from afar.

Their profound faith had led them to seek the one,

Who would become their Savior,
Who would be God's only Son,

They humbly brought gifts of

gold, Frankincense and myrrh,
 To honor His presence, to honor
 His worth.

The Star led them to Bethlehem
 a city most holy,
 Where they saw baby Jesus
 laying in a manger lowly,
 Their hearts were filled with
 much happiness much love and
 mirth,
 Their search was over, the had
 attended the Christ Childs' Birth.

There had never been another
 star like it,
 As it appeared in the sky late
 that night
 Its beauty was breathtakingly so
 exquisite,
 It's twinkle being more brilliant
 more bright.

God shared the star with people
 on earth,
 In a special way it announced
 the Holy Birth.
 He gave to the world its most
 treasured gift of life
 His name is Jesus Christ who is
 our Savior
 Our Healer through happiness
 and strife.

**The Christmas Tree
 Decorators
 by Pat (Priscilla) E. Lazaruk**



The branches were laden with
 sparkling ornaments galore,
 Some were old fashioned, some
 newly purchased from the store,
 The twinkled, they shone, they
 spun around,

The were the most beautiful
 decorations ever found

They hung from the tree as if
 performing a duty,
 They stayed prettily in place
 showing their beauty,
 The are lovingly made in every
 Nation,
 Each one a special gorgeous
 Creation.

Christmas rope and silver tinsel
 were looped from limb to limb,
 The icicles were hanging shiny
 and trim,
 The lights when lit showed
 colours of red, yellow and green,
 The Christmas tree was truly the
 most beautiful ever seen.

The Decorators were pleased
 with the work they had done,
 They had trimmed a beautiful
 Christmas Tree which would be
 seen by everyone.

They thoughy they could rest
 perhaps even stop,
 However, they had forgotten
 to place something special on
 the top.

They located and Angel dressed all
 in white,
 Everyone loved her, and said she
 was just right
 They placed her on top with her
 loving arms reaching out,
 For anyone to admire and to see
 what she was all about.

The gracious green Christmas Tree
 now stood with pride and joy,
 It had been especially decorated
 for every girl and boy,
 The decorators found comfort,
 they had pleased everyone,
 It had been told to them the
 work they did had been well done.

Christmas Trees are a wonderful
 joy to behold,
 They are for hiding special gifts
 for everyone whether young or
 old,
 They recall special family stories,
 to make you laugh or cry,
 They provide many wonderful
 Memories of the years gone by.

PROVINCIAL NETS					
Name	Date	Sessions	Check-ins	Traffic	Bulletins
IRLP 9300	Nov	10	247	54	2
Avonlea ARG 147.0600-	Nov	30	150		
Sask Evening Phone/CW 3.735	Oct Nov	31 30	165 981		3 3
Sask Wx Net 3.753	Oct Nov	31 30	650 370		0 0
Ares	Oct Nov	4 4	178 220		0 0
NSARC	Oct Nov	27 24	102 120		0 0
TOTALS		191	4183	54	0

*Merry Christmas
 to All and only
 the Best Wishes
 for 2015*