



QSO



From the Editor's Chair.

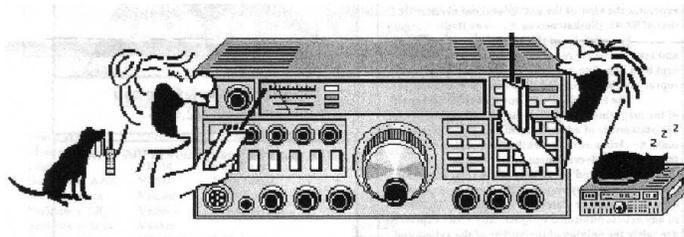
Well here we are well into February already. Sure don't know where the time goes. There have been quite a few changes in the New Year, both in radio and in general. Number 1 of course is the ban on Cell phone use while driving. Please make sure you read the articles by the Provincial government, from Devon, VE5DWR and from Gordon, VE5UJ. All of us Radio Operators would never use a cell phone while driving, that I know for sure. We must also be very careful when using our radio equipment, as it too can be a distraction while driving. I say this, because when faced with emergency conditions, our minds are not always focused on what we are doing at the moment, so please remember that your safety is just as important as the emergency to which you are attending.

Bands on the radio are either up or down, I know that there have been some nights where we cannot even hear net controllers for the Sask. Evening Net, or other nights, controllers have counted well over 40 check-ins. Myself, well, a couple of Fridays, I managed to check in 2 or 3, and that is counting both myself and Harv, and other nights have checked in as many as 26. Oh well, what can one say, they are either up or down, and one of these days, yes the bands will definitely improve, at least we hope so, and like all of our wonderful Saskatchewan farmers say, "This is Next

Year Country". So we will wait and see what it brings.

I hope everyone fared well during our wonderful Saskatchewan blizzard. Here in Moose Jaw, we had quite the storm, and lots and lots of stuck vehicles. Even our son, whom we had thought we taught well, phoned us up on the Sunday night or should I say early morning, (1:00am) and asked us to come and help him get unstuck in the back alley, because he "Just had to go play hockey at the Crushed Can" and as good parents we did just that, spending an hour just to get him into his garage. Needless to say we did sleep in on Sunday. On the serious side, listening to the news, this storm was quite wide-spread, so our hope is that everyone was safe, and that our farmers got enough snow on their land to help with the moisture situation.

Well, that's it for my little bit for this time, one last item: We still do not have any takers for the yearly hamfest. If your club would like to raise money for your activities, please consider taking this project on. You will receive some start up money from SARL, and all gate receipts belong to your club. It is not too late to get started on this, and it is a great way to catch up with those folks that we only hear on the radio. If you are willing to do the hamfest, SARL just asks for a place and time to hold their Annual General Meeting. Please get hold of me either by phone or via email, and let me know. My email address is ve5aq@sasktel.net



Saskatchewan Bans Cell Phones while Driving...

Paul Obetkoff wrote:

What is happening with 2 way mobile radios like VHF, HF and GPS can we still use the systems on mobile?

Paul, VE5PWO

Subject: Re: cell phones

Paul,

I assume you are referring to the new cell phone ban in Saskatchewan that comes into effect on January 1, 2010.

There is information on this on the SGI web site at http://www.sgi.sk.ca/pdf/SGI_SKCellphoneLegislationChart.pdf

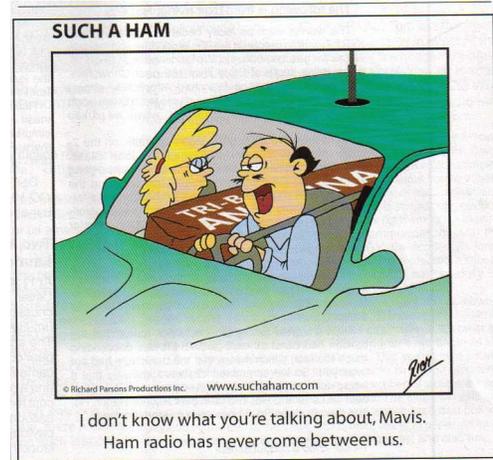
According to this chart, mobile radios and GPS are not included in the ban.

Under the Traffic Safety Act as recently amended, the Saskatchewan Government does have the authority to make regulations that would include such devices. However, they have not made regulations to do this, and based on the information at the SGI web site they do not currently plan to do so (see the last question and answer at http://www.sgi.sk.ca/feature_articles/Archive/cellphone_ban_faq.html).

So in Saskatchewan, mobile radios and GPS may still be used by the driver of a vehicle.

73,

Richard Ferch VE3KI
Vice President, Regulatory Affairs



I hope that we need not be reminded that if there is indication of some one not paying strict attention to their driving, that person runs the risk of being charged by the authorities for "driving without due care and attention," whether he or she is tuning in the local 2 metre repeater, changing a disc in the player, watching the map on the "road companion" or answering a phone call. It is unlikely that the nature of the item responsible for the inattention will make any difference to the outcome of the traffic enforcement action.

Gordon.VE5UJ

THOUGHTS ON TRADITIONS AND OTHER THINGS:

Amateur Radio is nothing if not traditional. Morse code is perhaps our greatest tradition. Although it is no longer a requirement for licensing, CW still enjoys great popularity as a mode of communication, and rightly so. Many of our cherished Amateur Radio traditions originate from CW operation and now have become rather nonsensical if taken outside of the CW frame of reference. The most obvious is "73"! Some old timers are downright insulted if you don't "wish them 73s" at the end of a chat. Where did this tradition come from? Because it sounded really cool when sent in CW: --... ..-- I kid you not! Thank goodness that the "shave and a haircut - two bits" hasn't made it to voice communications.

Also there are the Q-signals that we persist in using with voice communications, some of which have deteriorated into nonsense. Of course, they all had their origin as CW shorthand. For example, you hear guys on HF saying, "calling QRZ 20 metres" which actually means "calling by whom am I being called?" (nobody - try calling CQ and see what happens) Or, the checkers-in to the various nets responding with "we are QRU" which actually means "we are I have nothing for you". And, what's with the "we"? Does he have a mouse in his pocket?

Before Christmas, many of our local Amateurs traditionally gather at the home of Florence (VE5FEL) and Jean (VE5DZ) in Melfort. This has been going on for some years. Everyone brings a dessert and throughout the evening, many of the world's problems are solved and too much of the dessert gets eaten and a good time is had by all. It's an excellent way to ensure that everyone has started to build up some Christmas spirit and Florence and Jean's hospitality is much appreciated.

Of course, our Saturday breakfasts have become a sacrosanct tradition. We've been doing it for several years: as reliable as taxes. A small hardcore group gets together at the Tisdale A&W at 8:30 and we are often joined by other hams when they have the opportunity and the inclination. In Melfort, they do the same thing at 10:00, so it is possible to hit both sessions on occasion. It's a great tradition and the week really doesn't feel right without it. Sometimes, we even discuss Amateur Radio issues.

The Melfort-Nipawin-Tisdale repeater link has, for the past while, been missing the Tisdale component due to a dead UHF receiver on the linking radio. With the assistance of Andrew (VE5VAC) of Prince Albert and the local EMO, we will soon be replacing it with a new linking transceiver and will be able to rejoin the other two towns. It's been kind of quiet up here without

them - particularly when the fiber-optic line gets cut and we are left without telephone service. (This happens occasionally)

With that, the sixty or so Amateurs of the North-East corner wish everyone the best for 2010 and urge you to continue to support the SARL. Let's make that another of our cherished traditions.

Bj. Madsen - VE5FX

SASKATCHEWAN FREQUENCY CO-ORDINATION

As the Frequency Coordinator for Saskatchewan it is my job to assist anyone who is planning on using VHF or UHF frequencies to set up a repeater or fixed frequency link by suggesting optimum frequencies that will not infringe on the coverage of existing stations. The frequencies are not assigned, only recommended, as the coordinator has no legal authority but Industry Canada generally backs coordinators when disputes arise.

I will do my best to ensure that there is frequency and distance separation between stations and assignments conform to the bandplans. In some cases this requires consultation with coordinators in neighboring provinces and states.

We do not think of frequency congestion as being a Saskatchewan problem, but it is becoming difficult to find suitable frequencies on some bands. For instance, in most areas of the province it is impossible to find an available repeater frequency pair in the 146-148 MHz portion of the 2 Meter band. You may be surprised to know that there are presently over 300 coordinated repeater and link frequencies in the Saskatchewan database

If you are planning on setting up a repeater or link, please contact me first giving details such as location, callsign, station sponsor and preferred frequencies. Any person with an

Advanced Amateur license may set up a repeater. I do not coordinate frequencies for simplex repeaters, or frequency agile cross band repeaters.

I would like to clear out the deadwood in my database because I know there are listings which are no longer in use. This would free up some frequencies for new repeaters. If you have ever asked for a frequency assignment and are no longer using the frequency please let me know. If you know of any repeater that is listed on the Repeater page of the SARL website and is no longer operating please let me know. If you are a repeater sponsor and have decommissioned your repeater, moved location, frequency or made major changes, please let me know. If your email address has changed, let me know. If the sponsor of a club repeater changes, let me know. It is impossible to maintain an accurate database without being informed of changes.

Stan Ewert VE5SC

Sask. Frequency Coordinator
Contact information is available on the SARL website. Click on Frequency Co-ordinator.

MOOSE JAW AND AREA

Received the following pictures from Garry, GZ in Ogema. Guess the winter storm did a real good number on his antennas. Sure hope he is able to get the antennas fixed, we miss hearing him on the radio.



Also, the Moose Jaw Pioneers Amateur Radio Club will be doing security for the Moose Jaw Thunder Creek Model Train Show, March 27th and 28th, at the WDM 9-5. If you are interested in seeing these amazing models, make sure you mark your calendar.

That's all for this time around folks, catch you later.

73 Harv, VE5AC

HAMFEST 2010

If you are interested in doing the 2010 Hamfest, please get hold of me ASAP: ve5aq@sasktel.net or 1-306-693-6127

WEBSITE NEWS by VE5ACJ & VE5 ND

Bruce, VE5ND and I, VE5ACJ have been rather busy lately. I am in the process of scanning back issues of the QSO, sending them on to Bruce and he is busy putting them on the website. It is a slow process, but we are trying to get as many older issues put on the website. This serves 3 purposes, one, it frees up much needed space in the files of SARL, much to the relief of the Sec/Treas, two, with all the new hams we are acquiring, they get to see what has happened in the organization in past years, and three, with the computer it is far easier to save and record information, which can be lost due to any number of things. Please check out the website, and pursue at your leisure some of the past events and information. Eventually, all issues or at least what we have in files will be put on, as will future issues of the QSO.

HELLO FROM SASKATOON.

The months of Dec. /09 and Jan. /10 saw the Hams in Saskatoon busy. VE5NED, VE5LOU and VE5SPI provided communications for security at the World Junior's Hockey tournament the end of Dec. /09. They put in long hours and didn't get to see much hockey.

Jan. 11/10 saw the Olympic torch come through Saskatoon. ARES Saskatoon was asked to provide communication for the event and took the opportunity to use this event as an exercise. VE5SPI, VA5RJA, VA5LF, VE5DJQ, VE5HAP, VE5JDP, VE5MJB, VE5NED, VE5NAT, VE5CUL, VE5LOU, VE5GAM, VE5QV, VE5DHE, VE5RLE, VE5RH and VE5VS. In total 17 Hams took part. Amateurs coordinated not only their own duties but also the 10 commercial radios being used by the local torch run organizers.

The Torch Run committee greatly appreciated the information provided by the Hams along the Torch run route and within the crowds watching the run. It was great to see the city of Saskatoon welcome the Torch. For myself, I watched approx. 400

grade school children cheer the Torch on as it proceeded up 33rd street before it left Saskatoon.

With spring just a few months away the Saskatoon Amateur Radio Club is already planning the next balloon launch. We look forward to that event. Till next issue

Doris VE5 DJQ

SASKATOON AREA.

A recent issue of QSO included a vintage cartoon from Jimmy Hatlo's "Our Town" strip published during the 1950s and 1960s. Each week's cartoon would consist of a single frame with many characters, each with something to say on the subject of the day. The author was not above skewering neighborhood characters who displayed commonly disdainful behaviors, such as commenting loudly through out a movie performance or blowing a car horn at the instant a traffic light turned to green. The victim of the day appeared in "Hatlo's Inferno" which quite often ran as a second frame on the same page.

The subject in the QSO reprint was one of the neighborhood children, who had recently become an Amateur Radio Operator. Just about every "unusual" happening in the community, electronic or otherwise was, in the minds of the subjects, brought about by the boy with the Ham Radio. That frame has been reprinted in every radio magazine for a couple of generations now. It makes us smile now, but to a kid who was trying to "make it" on the ham bands during the weak signal Television era of the 50s and 60s, every one of the comments in that cartoon frame is all too familiar.

I was fortunate on the farm to have to deal with only one TV set, a fairly good one technically for the day. My parents allowed me to open it up and install a filter (high pass filter) at the antenna terminals, and as long as I stayed away from certain frequencies in the 10 and 20 metre bands, I did not cause any interference. The channel 2

signal was quite strong at our farm and that was a plus. There was only one channel at that time. My nearest neighbor Ham, Bill, VE5AT was not so fortunate. Govan was another 15 miles farther from the TV station, and there were dozens of TV sets within two blocks of his antenna. Interfering with your neighbor's TV reception was pretty serious business, sort of like filling your neighbor's driveway with your surplus snow, weekly. In the early years of Canadian television, stations didn't sign on the air until late afternoon so most radio operating was done early in the day. That was fine for retirees like Bill, but other folks had short operating hours before going to work. The bleary eyed guy with the antenna on his property had likely been chasing DX during the small hours after TV station had signed off.

Single Side Band transmission, as it turned out didn't have the interference potential of carrier based AM, and the coming to town of the cable TV service, which provided stronger signals within the shielded cable, allowed many operators that had previously given up, to get on the air again.

Proliferation of electronic equipment in homes now has turned the tables on many Amateur Radio Operators as the potential for interference to the radio equipment is far greater than the other way about. Amateur Radio lobbyists had a struggle but TV manufacturers were forced to reduce their equipment susceptibility to interference from outside sources and to meet stringent regulations for shielding of interference generating circuitry. This has been mostly successful. Some of us have noticed that one device can be operating and we have no interference on the Radio Bands and yet the same type of equipment by another manufacturer is not nearly so "sanitary".

Did I mention that Television sets from the tube era contained a ten watt transmitter operating on a low radio frequency and contained within a small

painted steel enclosure. The effect was to add a rough, unstable S3 to S9 signal every 15-3/4 Khz. Across the spectrum. With a decent antenna, the effect was not so bad on the 20 metre band and higher, but there were many days the lower bands were not useable.

Where I lived, I took the rare opportunity when the rest of the family was away, and the TV was turned off, to operate on 80 or 40 metres.

In the 21st Century, we have in addition to leaky electrical lines, Plasma TV screens, older style computer monitors, modems housed within plastic enclosures and even house hold appliances which emit various noises on our high frequency Amateur Bands. The modern transceivers have some clever digital ways to separate the signals from the noise and often (not always), the signal is still recognizable after processing.

What are the chances some bright young mind will come up with a receiving system that will leave all of that extraneous stuff at the far end of the co-ax antenna feedline so we can enjoy quiet listening on the lower HF bands again?

Gordon, VE5UJ.

(Editor's note: Check out the October 2009 for the comic that Gordon is talking about)

GREETINGS FROM THE BATTLEFORDS AND NORTH WESTERN SASKATCHEWAN.

We have been enjoying the mild weather over the past few days. Time is going by fairly fast and now we are starting into February, most of us are thinking about spring, just around the corner. Today I saw a lady at the store buying seeds for her garden. Hi... Soon it will be time to check on how our antennas made it through the winter and maybe start some experimenting. The antenna is still one part of our station we can play with and try new things without needing a lot of fancy equipment and money.

The Battlefords Amateur Radio

Association held its annual meeting on February 2, 2010. I attended the meeting and enjoyed getting together with the guys, many I haven't seen for a while. The turnout was excellent, considering there are very few hams left in the Battlefords area. I had the opportunity to talk about SARL and what we are doing. Several people expressed interest in becoming members. The 146.88 repeater is still being bench tested at VE5RAE's QTH I in Ray's repeater report, he said it can be moved back to the main repeater site soon. The club is also looking into purchasing new duplexers for this 88 repeater. The local 147.24 machine is working well from its location in Battleford. We try to keep the repeater status updated on the BARA website: <http://ve5brc.amateur-radio.ca>

It's has been good to see an improvement in the 80 meter band conditions in the past week. Conditions had been so bad that often we did not have a Saskatchewan 80 meter net, or not that I could hear. Some evenings were fortunate to have a relay station from VE6 or VE7 to make the net work. On the positive side, the skip on 80 has been long, making it possible to make contacts with stations much further away than one might under more normal conditions. Things also seem to be picking up on the higher bands though there is not a lot of activity above 20 meters. A couple of nights ago I got a call from a VK6 friend in Australia. Graham was all excited about working some eastern Canadian and US stations on 10 meters. The skip appeared to be moving west and he wanted me to get on the band. He managed to work a VE3 but nothing west of that and at my QTH I heard nothing on 10 meters that night. So get on the air and shout, you might be surprised at who comes back to you.

If you live in the north western part of the province, I would appreciate any input on what is happening in your area.

73. . . . **Ken - VE5KC**
ve5kc@ham-radio.ca
<http://www.amateur-radio.ca>

SASKATCHEWAN BANS CELL PHONES WHILE DRIVING: MORE INFO

Throughout the legislative process, amateur radio operators were assured that we would be exempt from amendments to the *Traffic Safety Act* (TSA) to prohibit drivers of motor vehicles to operate handheld electronic communication devices. Although with somewhat of a vague conclusion, it appears that we are not going to have to worry about it at least for the immediate future.

The amended section of the TSA states the following: **241.1(1)** In this section and in section **287**:

- (a) 'electronic communications equipment' means a cellular phone or other prescribed equipment;
 - (b) 'make a phone call' means to make, answer or end a phone call, or to transmit or receive voice communication;
 - (c) 'new driver' means a new driver as defined in the regulations;
 - (d) 'use' means, with respect to electronic communications equipment, to use the electronic communications equipment to make a phone call, text, talk, email, or surf or access the Internet, or for any other prescribed purpose.
- (2) No driver shall use electronic communications equipment while driving a motor vehicle on a highway.
- (3) Subsection (2) does not apply to:
- (a) a driver who is not a new driver and who, while driving a motor vehicle on a highway:
 - (i) activates the electronic communications equipment to make a phone call by pressing a button once on the electronic

communications equipment, or on a device that is linked to electronic communications equipment, and does not hold the electronic communications equipment; or

(ii) utilizes his or her voice to activate electronic communications equipment to make a phone call and does not hold the electronic communications equipment;

(b) a driver if the driver is using electronic communications equipment to report an emergency to a police service, a fire department or emergency medical services or to request an ambulance;

(c) a prescribed person or prescribed class of persons; or

(d) a prescribed vehicle or prescribed class of vehicles.

SGL has a document published on their website that states that GPS units, CB radios, two-way radios, MP3 players/Ipods and satellite radios are “not impacted by cell phone legislation.”

The document can be found here:

http://www.sgi.sk.ca/pdf/SGL_SKCellphoneLegislationChart.pdf

Of course, as in the past, law enforcement officers can use the section of the TSA pertaining to “Drive without due care and attention” when the distraction falls outside of the amended portion of the Act.

SARL reminds amateurs to exercise due diligence when operating their stations mobile. We don't need to provide legislators with a reason to INCLUDE us in the prohibitions. Each of the above offences can net you a fine of \$280...” *that's almost a brand new rig!*

Drive safely!

Devon, VE5DWR

If your club needs funds for upgrading your repeater sites, please go to the SARL website, and see the rules and application for the Saskatchewan Club Project Fund (SCPF). Once you have printed off the rules and filled in the application, mail it to SARL: 263-325 4th Ave. SW Moose Jaw, Sask. S6H 5V2, and the directors will make a decision and to which club will receive funding.

This is a great opportunity to get that little bit of extra cash to help your club repair/replace your repeaters; antenna raising/removing for handicapped hams and other ham related projects.

FROM THE WRO NEWSROOM...

We are advised that the frequencies of 3720 and 7045 kHz are once again available for regular amateur use.

The following is from Ramon, XE1KK, via ARRL:

Considering that the amateur radio stations on the air from Haiti are operating in more regular patterns Dr. Cesar Pio Santos, HR2P, IARU Region 2 EMCOR has released the use of 7.045 MHz and 3.720 MHz. We thank the world radio amateur community for their support in keeping these frequencies clear during the past days.

HI FROM REGINA

It has been quiet here in Regina not to much to report this weekend is the Klondike hike with the cubs and scouts from all over even from the USA.

The Regina Amateur Radio Club has been asked to help out with the radio communications again this year. Hope everyone is doing well and is getting ready for spring. 73's for now

Bob Wilks, VE5LTD



Happy Valentines Day!