

Saskatchewan Provincial News
April Issue, 2016

Saskatoon Area

It has been a long time since I have reported from my little corner near Strasbourg. Tonight, the “space weather” seems to have taken away the excellent 80 metre conditions we have been enjoying this winter. I am lucky enough to operate from an area with a really low yard and line noise level, usually indicating less than S1 on the receiver. Well, this afternoon and this evening, both the normal signals and the noise are gone. The transmitter indicates that the antenna is still up there and connected, just that signals “go away” both sending and receiving

After attending a Saskatoon agricultural gathering in January, I stopped to visit Sister Rosetta VE5FK, and Sister Adelaide, whom I had not visited for many months. They are both keeping reasonably well considering health restrictions. Sister Rosetta has still not returned to the airwaves but does have plans to do so when her archival projects have been completed. They and the other Sisters in the retirement home enjoy visits, especially from radio amateurs. The Sisters living there that I have spoken with are well aware of amateur radio and its place in the world.

The repeater VE5AT at Last Mountain, had many cloudy days in November and December and the batteries finally gave out in December. So much for solar power. Now in February, when sunshine has returned, the battery failure appears to be permanent. At the first opportunity we will get the site re-equipped and back on the air.

A week ago, Summer, VE5SDH was helping me to stand up a very tall high frequency ground plane antenna. This took place near the trees behind my house here on the farm. Summer was holding the large end of the pipe near the mounting bracket while I started “walking” the pipe to the vertical position. Now, I am almost to the “old guy” stage of life but that pipe just kept getting heavier, the closer it got to the vertical position. “I must really be getting weak in my old age” called to Summer to let go and I dropped the entire assembly into the snow. A review of the lifting operation showed that it was a maple tree rather than old age that had defeated us

The antenna works just fine and allows Summer and myself to carry on our morning CW practice on 160 metres instead of 80. Signals are usually stronger on 160 in the morning. In keeping with the warnings pasted on antenna boxes these days, just because there are no electric lines anywhere near, it is still a good idea to look up when doing antenna work.

I spoke with Kees, VE5KKZ from Eston recently. He is keeping skeds on the H.F. bands and is looking forward to getting his 20 metre beam back into the air. Kees looks forward to attending the market gathering in Moose Jaw in April.

Congrats on the website Val, looks good and there is plenty there to keep me reading for quite a while.

73 Gordon, VE5UJ.

(This article did not make into the Feb. /16 Provincial News, so was published in this edition. Doris)

N.E. Area

Now that we have seen the end to winter, the tax season and Saskatchewan's election, we can lean back and begin to enjoy life once again. Hopefully, the snow is now gone for the season and we can get serious about repairing antennas and structures that may have suffered during the winter.

The North-East has a new Amateur: an import from BC in the person of Rick Robins (VA7RNS) who is serving as Melfort's Salvation Army Captain. He is on the local repeater with an HT. We are looking forward to hearing Rick with a new VE5 call sign. Melfort and area Amateurs will be helping out again with the MS Walk in May and may also be helping out with the upcoming GranFondo Melfort Bike Race in mid-June. Fortunately, Amateur Radio continues to work even when cell phones suffer from black holes. **Bj. Madsen - VE5FX North-East Director**

President's Message

Spring 2016 appears to have arrived at least here in Saskatchewan. Along with spring comes antenna repairs or the installation of new antennas. Our beam is still not where it should be as getting someone to climb the tower is a challenge. The last strong winds have helped somewhat and Eric indicates that the HF bands are coming in better. Mother Nature at work. Hi hi.

I have noticed that the 3 number of check-ins for the IRLP net have decreased as they do as soon as the weather turns warmer. There is life outside of Amateur Radio. Farmers are on the land, gardeners are out in the yard, ball

diamonds are busy and golfers are finally out on the course. At our house grandkids are also very much part of our spring. Even though we may not be as active on the air at present the membership needs to consider the following. Elections will be held at the AGM in Regina July.30/16. The following positions on the executive will need nominations: President, Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer. I will not be letting my name stand for President and Ken VE5BI has indicated that he will not be letting his name stand for President or Vice President. AS for the position of Secretary/ Treasurer, Val VE5ACJ has been in that position since 2004. The SARL constitution states that a SARL member can serve three consecutive terms on the executive unless no else lets their name stand. Val has done a great deal of work for SARL over the years and has served double the amount of time. The membership needs to give some serious thought to serving on the executive if SARL is to continue. One person cannot do this by themselves.

I am sure there are ideas out here that would improve SARL. We need to hear them. Proposed changes to the constitution will be sent out to the membership. This will be in the form of an email or if you do not have email then by ground mail. Take time to read them as they will be discussed and voted on at the AGM in July. **Till next edition. Doris VE5DJQ SARL President**

Tid bit from Regina: Summer VE5SDH attended the FOC gathering in Dallas Texas in April of 2016. Now to have a room full of CW operators, as proficient as Summer, would have but an Amateur without CW at quite a disadvantage. I understand that Summer had a great time and came home with a few more keys.

News from Yorkton: Garf VE5CAT indicated that the PARC (Parkland Amateur Radio Club) web site is being revamped. PARC also has a Facebook page and is inviting people to drop by. Yorkton has a number of new amateurs as Bob VE5EDE has been busy with exams. Work is also being done to upgrade Yorkton's IRLP. Repeaters in the area are being linked and that will include Manitoba sites.

Saskatoon City

Saskatoon is enjoying some lovely warm weather. I'm pretty sure spring is moving in. The March and April meetings of SARC were held at McClure United Church.

Planning for SARC and friends to provide communications for the 26th MS walk are well underway. Several volunteers have signed up. The MS walk is being held in Saskatoon on Sunday, May 1, 2016.

The Saskatchewan Marathon will be held in Saskatoon on Sunday, May 29, 2016. Amateur radio operators in the Saskatoon area will be invited to volunteer to provide communication for that event.

The 2 meter net meets daily at 8:00 pm on the 146.640 repeater. All amateurs are welcome to check in. If you are visiting in the area we would love to hear you.

Saturday breakfasts for amateurs continue at Haywoods (9:00 am) in Arlington Mall. The group that previously met at Smitty's in Market Mall (9:30) have been searching for a new location. Information on the location can be heard on the 8:00 pm net. All amateurs are welcome. If you are visiting Saskatoon on a Saturday morning you are welcome to come and find us.

MARS club continue with their Coffee Klatch. MARS is sponsoring a Spring Digital Radio Symposium, April 30, 2016, sponsored by MARS. It is a Day Long training event. There will be presentations on several digital modes.

The next meetings of the Saskatoon Amateur Radio Club will be held Monday, May 9, 2016 at 7:00 pm at McClure United Church 4025 Taylor Street. The Annual meeting of SARC will be held in June.

Amateur Radio Classes sponsored by Saskatoon Amateur Radio Club have been completed. The Basic Class started in January with 9 students. In April 7 students chose to write the exams. Seven passed the Basic Exam, 5 with honours. Some are still waiting for their callsigns. The club is organizing resources to do an Advanced Class in September.

Having 7 new hams among us has created some excitement and enthusiasm for amateur radio activities. There was an open house this past Sunday to allow new hams to check out Garry's VE5SG shack. We are planning a portable day in the park on May 7, 2016. Also we are planning a workshop to build 2M j-pole antennas.

I hope spring is going well for everyone!! **73, Terry VE5TLC**

*****These amendments are very important, and if possible we would like all members to vote on them. I will be setting up a form on the website so those who cannot attend can still have their vote counted, and for those who don't use computers, and due to health issues, other plans etc, I will also have a mail in vote sent to you Your votes count...this is your organization so let's get the votes even if you can't make it to Regina July 30th

Amendments to the Constitution:

Article 5: (a) (reads now) Directors shall be full members of SARL. Amended to:
"Every person who is elected or appointed to the position of Director shall be a Full member of Sarl and has been for the past two (2) consecutive years."

Article 7 (b) (ii) (reads now) every person nominated as an Officer of SARL shall be member of SARL. Amended to:
"Every person nominated as an Officer of SARL shall be a Full Member and who has be such for two (2) consecutive years."

Article 9 (f): (reads now) Treasurer; duties: to receive and deposit all monies, to keep records of these monies, to prepare financial statements, to have the books audited and to present this audited statement to the annual meeting, to carry out other duties as requested by the Board and By-Laws. Amended to:
"duties: to receive and deposit all monies, to keep records of these monies, to prepare financial statements, and to fill in and submit the financial statements as per the Non-Profit Act 1995, along with the auditor's report or the memberships' permission to waive the audit."

(Please go to the sarl website to see the complete constitution. www.sarl.ca) If you don't have computer capabilities and would like a copy of the constitution, please get hold of Val- 1-306-693-6127)

This is from our newest ham who comes by way of South Africa and whom I am proud to say, plans on staying in Canada forever:

CQ DE VE5TEN...

Thanks for letting me join SARL! In South Africa, I belong to another SARL too, by the way: the South African Radio League.

Me and my Gal (and the rest of us):

I was born in Pretoria, South Africa in 1962, and got hitched to Glouna (the G is pronounced as the CH of the Scots word LOCH – try it sometime☺). Our son, George, lives in Otjiwarongo in Namibia, where he is an accountant. We hope to rename his girlfriend, Daniela, to Daughter-In-Law later in the year. Then there is Carolene, our daughter, who works at Petrusburg, some 55 km north of Koffiefontein in South Africa (from where I hope to extract Glouna and our two little grandsons, Henrie (5) and Jodayne (4.975) early in May, if not sooner).

The Ham Ticket

I have always been interested in electronics – the earliest that I can remember was in 1973, when I was in Grade 5. Everything and anything electronic got hoarded (my poor parents!).

In November 1983, I qualified as a South African Navy "sparker." And, of course, went to write the amateur radio examination in Cape Town.

From the examination, I remember at least two questions:

1. What is the definition of Amateur Radio?

Answer: Amateur Radio is a Service of Intercommunication, Self-Education and Experimentation that is operated by an amateur.

2. Draw the schematic of a Clapp-Gouriet VFO.

Answer: ummmmm-WHAT!?! (I knew the answer at the time, though).

Immediate Results (not me!)

Those days, we had to know all formulae off by heart and programmable calculators were a rarity. And, of course, were not allowed in the ham exam.

During the examination, an "old" man sat up front, looking around. "*Shame,*" I thought, "*the poor gentleman has struck a blank. Better luck for him next time.*"

When we had finished writing, the OM came and stood around with the rest of us.

One guy took out his Very Ordinary-Looking calculator, and showed us how that, by moving a slide switch, his calculator turned into a Basic computer (of sorts). Everything that even vaguely resembled a formula involving voltage, current, resistance, inductance, impedance, reactance and frequency, was programmed in. "What's your name and surname, Sir?" asked the OM. He gave his name and surname.

"You know," the OM said, "being dishonest in an examination is bad. Being dishonest in an examination and bragging about it is even worse. But being dishonest in an examination and bragging about it within earshot of Post Master General (Radio) is downright STUPID.

Congratulations, Sir: You are the first candidate to know your results. You have attained ZERO, Sir - Good Night!"

CW

The next time I saw the OM was a week later, when my Certificate of Proficiency had arrived in the post. My CW test was successful as well (I should hope so - having qualified at 25WPM in the Navy a fortnight before), and I became ZS1ABF (the Absolute Bloody Final).

Namibia

When I swallowed the anchor (left the Navy), I moved to Windhoek to work at the South West African Broadcasting Corporation, and received the callsign ZS3EK (in the then South West Africa, before it became Namibia).

At Namibian independence it was changed to V51EK, and from 1997 to 2003, I worked at Walvis Bay Radio - formerly ZSV, now V5W.

On February 21, 2001, I had the sad privilege to send the following message on 500 kHz from Walvis Bay Radio:

CQ DE V5W =

THIS IS THE LAST CW MESSAGE FROM WALVIS BAY RADIO.

TO ALL ON THE SEAS ON THEIR LAWFUL OCCASIONS: GODSPEED AND SAFE SAILING =

This was followed by a 5-second dash, and closed, appropriately, with +

(sorry Hein and everyone, didn't have room for the rest of the story, but it will follow in the next issue. Val)

