Message from the
London Amateur Radio Club

Promoting Amateur Radio in London
and surrounding areas since 1920

November 8, 2004

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- Meeting Topic – Technical aspects of Rogers Cable

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The next Meeting is…

Reminder of the next monthly Club meeting on Thursday, Nov 11th, 2004

All meetings are located at St. Judes Anglican Church,
1537 Adelaide Street North at Fanshawe Park Road East in London, Ontario,

They are normally held on the second Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm EST
during the months of September to June (no meetings July and August).

Meeting Topic – Technical aspects of Rogers Cable

Dan Shack, VE3FLK has been a long time contributor to the London area Ham community and is one of the key technical contacts for the SORT (Southern Ontario Repeater Team) group as well as a multitude of other repeaters such as the Grand Bend machines.

However, he actually has a life outside of ham radio !?

Dan works in the technical wing for Rogers Cablevision and will be giving a talk that describes "How does Rogers get the signal from them to us?" He will be bringing in some stuff for us to see and if you have ever wondered "What are all of those boxes are up on the pole?", this is a good meeting to attend.

- Reference: http://www.rogers.ca/

Other Items of Interest

Goblin Patrol

Message from Archie, VE3PTV

Once again the London Hams were involved in the community service project commonly known as Goblin Patrol on both Devil's Night (Saturday) as well as Halloween Evening (Sunday).

Here are some facts of the goblin patrol:

- We are happy to report both nights were virtually incident free.
- We had a total of 32 vehicles on the road over the two nights that accumulated 1313km over 81 vehicle hours.
- The net control (ve3pfl) was manned by 3 operators for the first night and 2 operators for the second night. This provided an opportunity for some experience to be gained by the newer hams.
- Both nights saw a total of 62 volunteers providing156.5 man-hours to the community.
- The 62 volunteers consisted of 40 licensed ham operators and 22 none licensed helpers.
- The job was well done by all and appreciated by the community, the London police, and most of all by the parents of our little GOBLINS on the streets

Thanks, de VE3PTV

Here is the group early Saturday evening.

Mike   VE3ACW
Archie VE3PTV
Aaron   VE3ADC
Don   VA3DWB
Mark   VE3PZR

Sgt Don McKinnon behind the camera
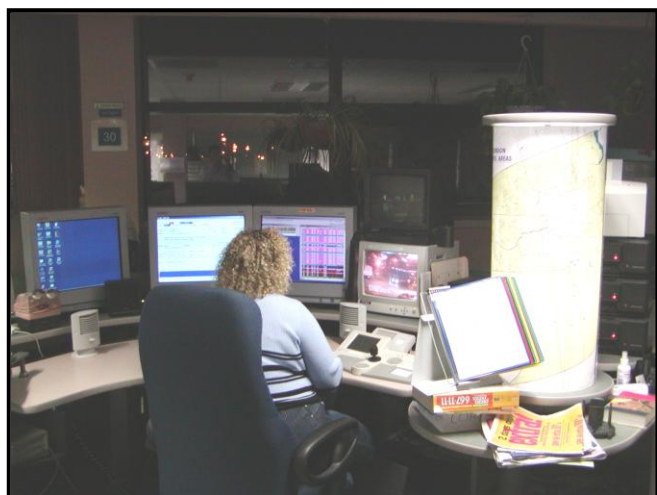
Goblin Patrol Pictures cont'd...

All calls received from the mobile ham operators are marked on the city map.

Behind us, the Communications Sergeant maintains a watchful eye over all operators.

All calls including 911 come into this centre.

All police patrols are dispatched and monitored from this area.

We all know that 'Big Brother' is watching but here is documented evidence that 'Big Sister' is also watching!

The monitor on her right is watching downtown London via one of many on-the-street cameras.

Is your Address Correct? (Industry Canada)

We have noticed that many of the addresses given on the Club Renewal Form do not mach with the address in the RAC call-sign database.

RAC receives a monthly update of all Canadian Amateurs. Even though you are no longer required to pay yearly licensing fess, you are still required to notify Industry Canada of any address changes.

The Club will be printing a directory booklet containing the names and call-signs of the 900 or so London area hams. We will be using the addresses given to Industry Canada.

Visit the RAC website to lookup your own call-sign & address information: www.rac.ca

It is that time of the year again!

Reminder: The December meeting is the annual Xmas Pot Luck dinner.

Everyone is welcomed. Simply bring along some food for everyone to enjoy.

Repeater Update

VE3MGI (145.390):

This machine has had some difficulties over the past few months. The symptoms have been loss of signal, inability in 'get into' the machine, and the whole 'mess of problems' seem to disappear after a good rainfall. It has been determined that the coax (nearing 20 years in age) plus the very old antenna are in need of an upgrade.

A new Diamond Base Station antenna was recently purchased (last week-end) and a work party will be going to the roofline of the apartment building to perform the swap.

Although the work will be performed 'soon', the exact date depends on weather conditions.

VE3STR (147.330):

It seems that the "St Thomas Repeater Group" is still having some difficulties with their 2 meter amplifier. Signals into North London have dropped below the noise levels and crackling has been noted for those still able to receive their signal. The reports have been passed on to the required people.

VE3OME (145.450):

This machine mostly works well but seems to have some odd quirks. It has been suggested that it is being 'de-sensed' by other equipment at the site. This is not a club sponsored machine but we are trying to find the proper people to pass on the info. This machine was sponsored by Environment Canada for emergency use. We recently picked up an ally in the London Emergency Planning Department. We will give the person a few weeks to get settled in and hopefully the machine difficulties will be resolved.

VA3LON (147.06):

This machine appears to be working well. The new equipment installed earlier in the year seems to be holding up ok. The range (distance) and audio sound great. This is a club sponsored machine. No changes planned at this time.

VA3SIX (53.470):

This machine appears to have died. It is not a club sponsored machine. It is located on top of the Social Science Building at UWO (I can arrange access for repair).

Anyone know who owns this machine?

Time to renew your club membership

With the September meeting, we kick-off a new season with another year of activities. The startup also means it is time for everyone to renew their membership with the club.

Why become a paid-up member? The club is a collection of individuals that share a common interest. The hobby we enjoy is called Amateur (ham) Radio. Ham radio covers a multitude of topics and because of this simple fact; we are able to organize various activities during the year in support of that interest.

Unfortunately, all of those activities cost money. We pay the church every time we use the church hall (at least once a month). We pay for insurance for several sites including the repeater sites. We pay rent for the repeater site. We pay for the repeater equipment maintenance. We pay for equipment in the red-cross. We pay for the field day event. We pay for a telephone line for the repeater (phone-patch). We pay for the rental of the hall for the flea market. There are many other bills that we pay during the year for but I think you guys are getting the idea.

The club consists of you, me and some of our friends. Together we must pay for these services or stop offering these services.

Currently there are four methods of raising funds for the support of club activities:

1. membership dues
2. flea market revenue (table rentals and door admission tickets)
3. donations
4. raffle tickets

Items #1 & #2 carry the bulk of our revenue but each one barely covers half of our bills.

Items #3 and #4 are very small but for the first time in a few years, the LARC 2003-2004 executive managed to close the books at zero dollars. We brought in the same amount of dollars that we spent and we were not required to cash in the few club investments to meet our monthly commitments.

Every membership counts. Please support the club by paying the membership dues. We would like to continue as a club and that activity requires $$CASH$$.

Harvey's Handy Hints

by Harvey Easton VE3 LSY, Oct 2004

Steps to protect your home computer from viruses and malicious programs

The following steps need to be taken to prevent your home computer from being the target of hackers and viruses.

1. Windows Update:

Periodically, Microsoft issues updated files to fix bugs and close security holes in the operating system. These "fixes" are provided free of charge but you will need to install them if they are not installed automatically. To do this, do the following:

Note: If you are attempting to do this over a dial-up modem connection, this may take considerable time.

Close any programs you may have open before attempting this.

- Click on the Start button. Look for the "Windows Update" icon.
- Click on the Windows Update icon. A browser window will open directing you to the Microsoft site. In the centre of this window, click on "Scan for updates" line of text.
- After the scan has completed, listed on the left side of this browser window will be a list of "Critical Updates and Service Packs" that need to be installed.
- Click on the "Review and Install Updates" line of text. This shows in detail what the updates are, and the reasons for the update.
- Click on the "Install Now" tab to install the updates.

When the updates are complete, you may be requested to restart the computer to complete the installation.

2. Microsoft Office Update:

Note: You may need your Microsoft Office installation disks for this operation.

Launch the Windows Update by the steps listed above.

- In this browser window at the top near the centre there is a line of text that reads "Office Update". Click on this line of text. A second browser window will open.
- Listed in the box "Office Update", click on the line that reads "Check for Updates".If your Microsoft Office products require updates, these will be listed here.
- Click on the "Install Now" tab to install the updates.

When the updates are complete, you may be requested to restart the computer to complete the installation.

3. Anti-virus Update:

You should have a good anti-virus program installed on your computer like Trend PcCillin. Periodically it is a good idea to check to be sure the program is updating with the latest virus definition files.

To update your anti-virus software, locate the program icon either in the system tray or menu on the bottom of your screen, or go to the Start button, Programs, and locate the program from the list there.

As each anti-virus program is unique, you will need to locate the Update tab or Icon to check for the latest updates.

4. Ad-Aware: (A highly recommended program)

Ad-Aware is a small, freeware program <u>for personal home use only</u> that can scan your computer for malicious programs that can cause unwanted pop-up windows when using your browser, programs that track your internet usage and gather personal information from your computer. These programs can become installed on your computer while browsing the web without your knowledge.

To obtain your free copy of Ad-Aware please visit this site and follow the installation instructions.

http://www.lavasoftusa.com/support/download/

Once you have Ad-Aware installed and ready to run, you will need to check this software for periodic updates. To check for updates and to run a scan to clean your computer, do the following:

- Double click on the Ad-Aware icon on your desktop.
- In the Ad-Aware window, click on "Check for updates now". A second smaller window will open.
- Click on the "Connect" tab. If a new reference file is available, click on the "ok" tab. Once the new file has been installed, click on the "Finish" tab. The smaller window will close.
- To run an Ad-Aware scan click on the "Start" tab. In the next window you do not need to change any of these settings, just click on the "Next" tab. A scan of your computer will now begin.
- If any malicious programs are found, these will be listed in the summary box. If you have your speakers turned on, Ad-Aware makes a funny sound when it discovers malicious programs on your computer.
- To remove malicious programs found by Ad-Aware, just make sure the box to the left of the listed program has a check mark in it. If it does not, click in the box to check it.
- Click "Next" and the program will ask you if you want to delete the object(s). Just click "Ok". Once this is done, the program will generate a quarantine list.

You can then close Ad-Aware by clicking the x on the top of the window.

If you follow the above instructions, you will reduce the chances of acquiring a computer virus and you will aid the continued trouble free operation of your home computer.

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<u>Are your friends receiving this bulletin?</u>

Last September we collected hundreds of email addresses from people interested in receiving the monthly club bulletin via email. Each month I received bounced email from accounts that are no longer active. With the availability of cheap (free) email addresses, many of us move around on the Internet leaving our old mailboxes behind. If someone you know is no longer receiving this bulletin, tell them to send a message to the club with their current email address.

<u>Have anything to say?</u>

If you have a comment or announcement that might be of interest to the club, feel free to send me a message and I'll include it in the next mail out.

Our Club Web page is: http://www.larc.on.ca

For list of upcoming events:
http://www.larc.on.ca/meet_2004_5.htm