

# Message from the London Amateur Radio Club

Promoting Amateur Radio in London  
and surrounding areas since 1920



Dec 9th, 2007

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## Meeting Topic – Annual XMAS Pot-Luck Dinner



COME ONE COME ALL  
BRING A FRIEND  
TO OUR  
**CHRISTMAS POT LUCK**



**DEC. 13<sup>TH</sup> AT 7 PM**  
**At St. Judes Anglican Church**  
**1537 Adelaide St. North**

Just bring something, HOT OR COLD, if you can, but definitely **bring your appetite**. There is always lots of food and it's a wonderful time to sit and chat with everyone.

**Drinks, buns will be supplied.**

## Other Items of Interest

### 2007/2008 L.A.R.C. Executive

Past President:	Gord Baker, VE3GB	
President:	Doug Tompkins, VE3IDT	(Flea-market)
Treasurer:	Dave Steels, VE3UZ	
Secretary:	Ruth Dahl , VE3RBO	
Director:	Ann Rundle, VA3EOR	(Flea market)
Director:	Doug Elliott, VA3DAE	(ARES EC; Web-site)
Director:	Shirley McCall, VE3SMN	(Membership)
Director:	Pat Ross, VE3CNX	
Non-Voting:		
	Brett Gilbank, VE3ZBG	(ARES DEC)
	Tom Stewart	(Canwarn)
Appointments:		
	Tony Drawmer, VE3SQU	(Field-Day)
	Mark Bramwell, VE3PZR	(Newsletter Editor)
		(LARC Repeater Coordinator)
	Dave Young, VE3EAY	(Repeater Operator/Programmer)

## **Reaching Out to Scouts**

On October 25, Doug Elliott, VA3DAE gave a Ham Radio presentation and demonstration to the 99<sup>th</sup> London Scout Troop at White Oaks Public School.

10 scouts and their leaders Adam Carbone and Kelly Moffatt proved they were interested with frequent questions, and as always, the demonstrations were popular, and triggered more questions.

Reception during the demos was sufficient but not great, perhaps due to the location in a gymnasium framed with steel beams.

As the scouts lined up for thank-you handshakes, the presenter's experience in the 59<sup>th</sup> London Scout troop kicked in just in time, and he remembered that Scouts shake with their left hand.

## **Goblin Patrol**

Once again we had a good representation of Hams on patrol on Devils Night, and Halloween this year. Fortunately, there was little to report to the police, aided perhaps by wet weather on Halloween night. Not that it was boring by any stretch of the imagination – the arrival of the Dundas and Wellington sinkhole on Halloween evening made things pretty exciting at the police station, and delayed the start of our net a bit.

We averaged 10 vehicles per night, and had assistance from some pedestrian patrollers as well. Our average number of hams participating was 16 plus our net controllers: Ruth Dahl, Brian Bouckley and Archie Van de Velde. Over the 2 nights our observers logged over 1000 kilometers.

This is a valuable service to the community, and we thank all those who participated.

## News From ARES

There's a new Photo ID card program for ARES members, and it is strongly recommended that ARES volunteers acquire an ID card, which will become the standard ID recognized by the agencies we serve.

Although the ID cards are provided through RAC, you don't need to be a RAC member to receive one. However, you do need to provide some evidence that you have received emergency communications training, and the best way to do this is the Certified Emergency Co-ordinator certification (CEC). This is excellent training, and it is recommended for all ARES volunteers.

For more information on the ARES IP Card Program:

- <http://www.rac.ca/fieldorg/racares.htm>

For More information on the Certified Emergency Co-ordinator certification (CEC) program:

- <http://www.rac.ca/fieldorg/raccecp.htm>

Some other related websites that your ARES leaders help maintain:

- <http://EmergencyTeam.ca>
- <http://racaresontario.ca>
- <http://www.larc.ca/ares1.htm>

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I attach a copy of "**A CQ From Saint Nick**" that was amongst my father's ham papers.

I am guessing this is from 25+ years ago. It could go back to the 1960s or 1970s.

The reference to Ralph Westhouse, VE3CBB, was accurate for 1986; but that callsign is now held by someone else.

My dad passed away in 1996. It might be an interesting addition to a newsletter or a reading at the pot luck meeting.

Brian, VA3ATB

Cont'd on next page...

## A CQ FROM SAINT NICK

T'was the night before Christmas and all through the land  
The airwaves were silent on the two-metre band.

Antennas were strung on the rooftops with care  
In hopes a transmission soon would be there.

While the XYL was preparing for bed  
I settled down with a QST I hadn't yet read.

When down in the shack, there arose such a chatter  
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.

Away to the hamshack I flew in a dash  
I checked out my rig and saw the lights flash.

The gleam of the light from all of the scopes  
And the crackle of Morse Code gave rise to my hopes.

I listened intently and didn't miss a click  
The message was coming from good old Saint Nick.

He was stranded he said, he'd lost all his power  
Stuck way up high at the top of my tower.

I called all the hams on the local repeater  
I told them, "Bring ladders and ropes, and a heater."

We all pulled together from there on the ground  
And Saint Nick was soon down, quite safe and sound.

He said, "Thanks for your help. Could I call an elf?"  
We passed him the mike and said, "Help yourself."

The elfin repair crew brought parts for the sleigh  
And fixed him all up to be on his way.

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team yelled, "Heigh Ho!"  
As he called out their names, they started to go.

"On Victor, on Baker, on Charlie, on Delta,  
On Echo, on Foxtrot, on Tango and Alpha."

To the top of the porch, to the top of the tower  
The sleigh flew off in a burst of power.

But I heard him exclaim, in a voice of good cheer,  
"Seven Three, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!"

Adapted, with apologies to Clement C. Moore, by Lorna Adams,  
YL of Ralph Westhouse, VE3 CBB.

**FUN WITH GPS**  
**BY MARK BRAMWELL, VE3PZR**



Many of us have recently bit the bullet and purchased one of those nifty new automotive GPS units that seem to be everywhere. I wanted to share some personal experiences with some of these units so everyone can benefit.

First I would like to say that any automotive GPS makes a great xmas gift for any ham (hint hint).

**The hardest part about buying a GPS is which one?** There are many in the \$200 range and some are twice that price. What makes a good GPS versus a bad GPS?

Since these units are meant to provide navigation assistance in your car, the question really becomes one of '**How good or how current is the mapping?**'

Many units provide fairly good coverage of North America but a cheaper unit called the MIO only has Canadian detailed maps and 'major roads only' of the US. The Garmin 200 only has Canada. If you plan on staying in Canada, either one of these would make a great gift. However, if you bounce across the border to Michigan or DAYTON, perhaps the US mapping would be beneficial. I have played with the TomTom One v3 and thought it was a good unit. I decided against it for myself because I liked the Garmin's **ability to easily upload POI entries into the GPS** (more on POI later).

Mapping detail is not the only feature that costs money. Almost all units **speak the directions**. The GPS voice will guide you by giving turn-by-turn directions as you drive, example: 'TURN LEFT IN 500 METERS'. The more expensive units will also say the street names, example: "TURN LEFT IN 500 METERS AT WONDERLAND ROAD".

The higher end units can play MP3, displays photos as well as link into your cell phone. In the US you can subscribe to a service that gives road hazard warnings on your GPS as well as construction zone updates. I checked and that service is not available for Canadian roads.

## WHAT DID I CHOOSE FOR MYSELF?



The unit I picked for myself is the Garmin Nuvi 250. I have owned many GPS units over the years (car, hiking as well as aviation models) and I am very happy with the usability of the Garmin units. I like the fact that I can create and upload POI entries into my GPS for easy access while driving.

## WHAT ARE POINTS OF INTEREST (POI)?



POIs include restaurants, hotels, post offices, emergency services, entertainment, plus much more, and are represented by small icons on the maps displayed on your unit.

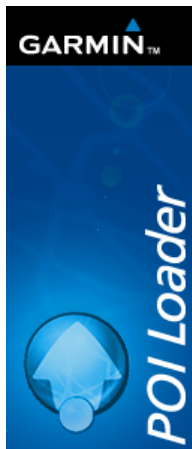
Most GPS units are factory installed with millions of POIs for Canada and the US.

Sometimes we might have specific interests and want to create our own set of POIs.

**Note:** Older units used the term *WAYPOINT* for user saved locations. A POI is much more because it can contain descriptive text and not just the location. The screen shot above is an IKEA file that I created. You can create your own POI files or download some that were made by others via the Internet.

Once you have a POI file on your computer, you can add it to your Garmin by using the POI Loader.

## WHAT IS POI LOADER?



POI Loader is free software for your computer that lets you upload customized POIs to your compatible Garmin unit.

POI Loader does not create customized POIs, nor is it software for your Garmin GPS.

It simply gives you the ability to upload POIs from your computer to your compatible Garmin — making it easy for you to navigate directly to these points of interest. I used Windows notepad to cut/paste and type info in the file which was then transferred into the GPS using POI-Loader.

## LARC POI

I have created 2 POI files that I would like to share, plus a 3<sup>rd</sup> file that I have downloaded from the Internet.

The downloaded file is called 'TimHortons'. Guess what it contains? It contains the locations of a few thousand Tim Hortons restaurants (mandatory knowledge for all Canadians). Once loaded into your GPS, you can easily ask it to navigate you to the nearest Tims!

My first homemade file is called IKEA. It contains the locations, address/contact info, phone numbers and store hours of the 4 IKEA stores in the Toronto area. The previous page had a screen shot of one of the IKEA entries.



My second file is called 'LARC Hams'.

This file contains the Callsign, Name, Address, Phone number and license level of 1,043 hams in the greater London area.

Need to visit a ham or call them while driving? This file will allow you to search by Name or Callsign (partial name/callsigns are ok) and display the matching entries with a big GO button to take you there.



## HOW DID I GET THE INFO?

Easy! I created a program to read the Canadian Callsign Database from RAC. Based on an algorithm that uses city names and postal codes, it extracted 1,043 callsigns from the Country-wide database. Another program was created to geo-encode the address info into LAT and LON (required for the GPS positional tracking). Another program was created to perform automated Canada411 lookups via the Internet to find the telephone numbers. I noticed that not everyone has their phone number listed in Canada411.ca

Once all the various bits were compiled, a final file was created in the proper format for the Garmin POI Loader Software.

Anyone can now upload that file into their Garmin to have the 'LARC Callsign Database' in their GPS.

Note: I decided only to list the London area hams. An Ontario-wide or Canada-wide file could be created but for now I was only interested in the local guys.

## WHERE TO GET THE LARC POI FILE?

I have zipped the file and placed it on my web server. Unzip the file into a folder and use the POI loader to install the files into your Garmin.

You can grab the LARC file from:

- <http://www.foxhollow.ca/gps/gps-garmin.zip>

You can grab the FREE Garmin POI Loader software from Garmin's website:

- <http://www.garmin.com/products/poiloader>

Enjoy!

de ve3pqr qrt.



**LONDON AMATEUR RADIO CLUB INC.  
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2007/8**

PLEASE PRINT

SINGLE MEMBERSHIP: \$25.00

RENEWAL

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP: \$30.00

NEW MEMBER

RAC Membership Number: \_\_\_\_\_ I am not a RAC Member

ARES Volunteer? Yes No

NOTE: It is important for volunteers to provide their phone number and e-mail address.

Name(s):	_____	_____	_____
	Last Name	First Name	Call Sign
	_____	_____	_____
	Last Name	First Name	Call Sign

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street/P.O. Box

_____	_____	_____
City/Town	Province	Postal Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Monthly reminders via e-mail only)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*All information requested should be completed - this will be used for the club's membership database only. All LARC membership information is held in strict confidence.*

Please make cheque payable to: *London Amateur Radio Club Inc.*

Mailing Address: London Amateur Radio Club  
c/o Membership Director, VE3SMN  
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