

Message from the London Amateur Radio Club



Promoting Amateur Radio in London
And surrounding area since 1920

September 4, 2009

Next Meeting Topic

L.A.R.C. Executive

President

Doug Elliott, VA3DAE

Vice-President

Pat Ross, VE3CNX

Past President

Doug Tompkins, VE3IDT

Treasurer

Brian Bouckley, VA3ATB

Secretary

Ruth Dahl, VE3RBO

Director, Flea Market

Ann Rundle, VA3EOR

Director, Membership

John Visser, VA3MSV

Director

David Lambert, VE3KGK

Non-Voting

Director, ARES & CANWARN

Brett Gilbank, VE3ZBG

Appointments

LARC Repeater Coordinator

Brad Seward, VE3NRJ

Repeater

Operator/Programmer

David Young, VE3EAY

Field Day Coordinator

Pat Ross, VE3CNX

Webmaster

Doug Elliott, VA3DAE

Newsletter Editor

John Visser, VA3MSV

Auditor

William Clothier, VE3BCU

Our year gets off to a great start on **Thursday Sept 10** with a presentation on **Powerline Interference** by **Pat Ross, VE3CNX**. This is a fascinating detective story with a happy ending.

Silent Key



Walter Cronkite, KB2GSD, who held the title of "Most Trusted Man in America," passed away Friday, July 17 after a long illness. He was 92. The avuncular Cronkite anchored [CBS Evening News](#) for 19 years until 1981 when he retired.

Cronkite, an ARRL member, narrated the 6 minute video [Amateur Radio Today](#). Produced by the ARRL in 2003, the video tells Amateur Radio's public service story to non-hams, focusing on ham radio's part in helping various agencies respond to wildfires in the Western US during 2002, ham radio in space and the role Amateur Radio plays in emergency communications. "Dozens of radio amateurs helped the

police and fire departments and other emergency services maintain communications in New York, Pennsylvania and Washington, DC," narrator Cronkite intoned in reference to ham radio's response on September 11, 2001. "Their country asked, and they responded without reservation."

Walter Leland Cronkite was born in St Joseph, Missouri on November 4, 1916, the only child of a dentist father and homemaker mother. When he was still young, his family moved to Texas. "One day, he read an article in *Boys Life* about the adventures of reporters working around the world -- and young Cronkite was hooked," said his [obituary on the CBS Web site](#). "He began working on his high school newspaper and yearbook and in 1933, he entered the University of Texas at Austin to study political science, economics and journalism. He never graduated. He took a part time job at the *Houston Post* and left college to do what he loved: report."

Next Meeting is Where and When?

Reminder of the next monthly Club meeting on September 10, 2009 at 7:30pm

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

The meetings 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).

Next Meeting will be October 8, 2009.

Area Repeaters

LARC Repeaters

London
VA3LON 147.060 + 114.8Hz
VE3MGI 145.390 - 114.8Hz

SORT Repeaters

London
VE3TTT 147.180 + 114.8Hz
ULR Link repeater
"SORT" System
VE3SUE 444.400 + 114.8 Hz
ULR link repeater
"SORT" System, IRLP

Ipperwash
VE3TCB 146.940 - 123.0 Hz
Linked to VE3SUE

Grand Bend
VE3RGB 146.750 + 123.0 Hz
VE3SRT 442.050 + 123.0 Hz
Linked to VE3SUE

Goderich
VE3OBC 146.910 - 123.0 Hz

Whitechurch
VE3WWD 443.075 + 123.0 Hz

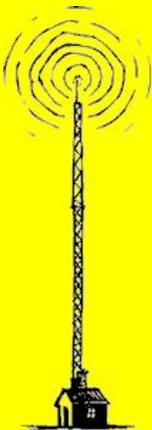
Other Area Repeaters

London
VA3SIX 53.470 - 114.8 Hz
VE3OME 145.450 - 114.8 Hz
CANWARN

Stratfordville
VE3DPL 146.655 - 131.8 Hz

St. Thomas
VE3STR 147.330 + 114.8 Hz
Echolink Node: 72886

VE3STR 443.825 + 114.8 Hz
IRLP Node: 2482



If you have a repeater that should be listed here, please forward the information to John Visser, VA3MSV at va3msv@hotmail.com and I'll add it to the list.

The President's Perspective

September brings a crescendo of activity in the Ham world as everyone returns from vacations and gets back into their routine, which hopefully includes lots of radio time. Our first meeting of the year on September 10 is going to be a dandy, with Pat Ross VE3CNX telling the story of his misadventures with Power line Interference and technical detective work. Not too long after that is our Flea Market on Sunday September 27, which is one of the highlights of the Ham year for many of us. Our participation in the Scouting "Jamboree On The Air (JOTA)" was a huge success last year, and we'll be doing it again this year on Saturday October 17, bigger and better.

The new year is not without challenges, though, and we continue to work on getting VA3LON back on the air. Rather than make yet another round of repairs, we've decided to take advantage of some surplus equipment that is available to us, and replace the old gear with a high quality commercial repeater with a full backup system. Although the outcome will be an excellent repeater, the acquisition process takes time, and we may have to go to plan B to ensure we have a repeater operating in time for Flea Market talk-in purposes. We'll keep the front page of the website up-to-date with status on this topic.

From a personal point of view, taking on the president's role is both exciting and a little intimidating. Exciting, because there is a ton of opportunities to pursue, and great people to work with. Having been on the executive for a few years as webmaster, I know how well this club is run, and I'm sure we can maintain that fine tradition. I'm certainly not the most experienced or technically competent Ham around, but I figure the president's role is not so much "head nerd", as it is "nerd herder". With such a great team leading this club, I'm not so concerned about the intimidating part, which is knowing that I have the ultimate responsibility to make sure the important stuff gets done.

I'm not going to impose my wishes on the club, but the thing I would most like to see is increased interaction and participation by our members in Ham radio activities. If you come to club meetings, read the newsletter, and rarely get on the radio, you have my condolences, because you're missing out on most of what Ham radio has to offer. Over the year, we'll come up with some activities for us to explore various areas of Ham radio, and my suggestion is to pick one or two and have some fun! More on that later.

Lastly, I would like to encourage everyone to communicate with the people on the executive about what you like and don't like about club activities, and what you'd like us to be involved in. We might technically be "directors", but you should be directing us!

73,

Doug Elliott VA3DAE

London Amateur Radio Club President & Webmaster, London ARES EC

Email and Blackberry: doug_elliott@tvworks.com

W: (519) 963-4244 C: (519) 670-3503 H: (519) 471-8832

Nets



Daily

Trans Provincial Net
7.055 MHz 7:00 am – 5:00 pm

Sunday

Swap Net
7.055 MHz LSB 12:00 pm
ARES Ontario Net
7.153 MHz 1:00 pm
7.055 MHz 3:00 pm
3.742 MHz 7:15 pm
IRLP Reflector 9005 8:00 pm

Monday

LARC 2m Net
147.060+ VA3LON 8:00 pm

Wednesday

ARES Net
145.450 + VE3OME 7:30 pm
ARES Ontario Net
IRLP Reflector 9005 8:00 pm

Thursday

PROCOMM Net
147.180 + VE3TTT 8:00 pm
444.400 + VE3SUE 8:00 pm

Friday

Tech Net
147.180 + VE3TTT 8:00 pm
444.400 + VE3SUE 8:00 pm

Saturday

VE3TTT 2m Net
147.180 + VE3TTT 7:30 pm
444.400 + VE3SUE 7:30 pm
146.940 - VE3TCB 7:30 pm
442.300 + VE3TCB 7:30 pm
447.050 - VE3SRT 7:30 pm
447.075 - VE3BHR 7:30 pm

If you have a Net that should be listed here, please forward the information to John Visser, VA3MSV at va3msv@hotmail.com and I'll add it to the list.

L.A.R.C. Executive Appreciation to L.S.A.R.C.

The executive of the London Amateur Radio Club would like to thank the members of the former London Seniors Amateur Radio Club for their kind donation. The money will be put toward the operation of the club and the promotion of the amateur radio hobby.

Membership Certificates

The Club has created membership certificates for its current members. You can see your own certificate at the following link.
<http://www.larc.ca/member-list.htm>

Simply click on your surname and it will bring up a PDF of your certificate suitable for printing.

Flaunt Your Face – Show Your Shack

In our hobby it's not always easy to put a face to all the fellow hams you talk to on the air. To help us all figure who's who, LARC invites its members to submit digital photos of yourself and/or your shack to be published on the membership page of our website. Purely voluntary of course, and if you prefer you can submit just one (depending on whether you think your face or your shack is more presentable).

How will it work? On the membership page, we'll attach your own picture where your first name appears, and the picture of your shack to your callsign. See the entry for Doug Elliott, VA3DAE for an example.

How do you submit your pictures?

Just email them to the LARC site webmaster address, which is:
webmaster@larc.ca

Upcoming Events

Sat., Sep. 12, 2009

[Ottawa Amateur Radio Club 13th Annual Hamfest](#)

Ottawa Amateur Radio Club
Carp Agricultural Fairgrounds, 3832
Carp Road, Ottawa (Carp), Ontario

[Barrie-Orillia Hamfest](#)

Barrie Amateur Radio Club & Orillia
Amateur Radio Club
Located at the Oro-Medonte
Fairgrounds. North on Hwy 400 to Hwy
11. North on Hwy 11 to 7th line of
Oro-Medonte. Go towards the Airport,
and just past the Airport (follow the
Hamfest Signs). Lat/Long - 44° 30' 12"
N 79° 33' 17" W

Sun., Sep. 27, 2009

[L.A.R.C. 32nd Annual Flea market](#)

London Amateur Radio Club
Located at the Western Fairgrounds
Special Events Building.

Sat., Oct. 17, 2009

[Hamfest 2009](#)

Hamilton Amateur Radio Club
New location is the new Ancaster
Fair Grounds at 630 Trinity Rd. at
the south / west corner of Hwy 53
& Hwy 52 (Trinity Rd.)

Sat., Oct. 24, 2009

[York Region ARC Hamfest - 33rd Edition](#)

York Region ARC
Located at the Markham Fair Grounds,
10801 McGowan Road, just north of
Elgin Mills Rd

Sat., Feb. 6, 2010

[Big Event 32 - Flea Market and Hamfest](#)

Niagara Peninsula Amateur Radio Club
Merriton Community Centre, 7 Park
Ave., St. Catharines, Ontario

Sun., Jun. 6, 2010

[Central Ontario Hamfest & Fleamarket](#)

GARC & KWARC
Waterloo Regional Police Association,
R.R. 2, 1128 Rife Rd. North Dumfries
Township. Beside Hwy 401, between
exits 268 & 275. Lat: 43° 20' 51.20" N,
Long: 80° 24' 58.89" W

If you have an upcoming event that you would like to have listed here, please forward the information to John Visser, VA3MSV at va3msv@hotmail.com and I'll add it to the list.

Next Generation Home Networking

G.hn is the common name for the "next generation" home network technology standard being developed under the [International Telecommunication Union](#) (ITU) and promoted by the [HomeGrid Forum](#) and many other organizations.[1]

Because it supports networking over power lines, phone lines and coaxial cables with data rates up to 1 Gbit/s[2], G.hn is intended to be a universal standard for home networking.

The first Recommendation for G.hn is [G.9960](#), which received consent on Dec 12th 2008. The work is being done in the [ITU-T](#) Telecommunication Standardization Sector, [Study Group 15, Question 4](#). Over 20 companies are participating regularly representing a broad cross section of the communications industry including some of the world's largest telephone companies, major communication equipment companies and some of the leading home networking technology companies.

The standard targets gigabit per second data rates[2] and operation over all three types of legacy home wires: [phone wires](#), [coaxial cables](#) and [power lines](#). As the majority of devices in which G.hn will be

embedded (such as [Televisions](#), [Set-top boxes](#), [Residential gateways](#), [Personal Computers](#) or [Network-attached storage devices](#)) will be AC-powered, configurations that have at least one power line networking interface are likely to become the most common. This will also facilitate integration with [home control](#) and [demand side management](#) applications for AC-powered appliances.

The technical details are very complicated, but G.hn includes the capability to notch specific frequency bands to avoid interference with [Amateur Radio](#) bands and other licensed radio services. It includes mechanisms to avoid interference with legacy home networking technologies^[6] and also with other wireline systems such as [VDSL2](#) or other types of [DSL](#) used to access the home. If you'd like more information, have a look at:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G.9960>

<http://blog.ds2.es/ds2blog/2009/07/linley-group-ghn-likely-victor.html>

<http://www.homegridforum.org/home>

Solar Activity – No More Sunspots?

The K7RA Solar Update (Sep 4, 2009) -- This week we saw another one of those fast-disappearing sunspots -- it lasted just two days, over the last day of August and the first of September. No other sunspots were observed during the month of August.

Two respected researchers at the National Solar Observatory in Tucson, Arizona have put forth a theory that sunspots will disappear around the year 2015. Sunspots are composed of magnetism, and Matt Penn and Bill Livingstone have done an analysis

projecting that the sun's magnet field will fall below 1500 gauss, the threshold needed for sunspots, at that time.

This work has caused a sensation in the field of solar physics, and is very controversial. The key question is the validity of their extrapolation of observations that could be a normal aspect of the solar cycle, and not a sign that sunspots are permanently vanishing.

For more details:

http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2009/03sep_sunspots.htm

The Transistor Museum

You can buy 50 million transistors for a dollar, and we take these devices for granted. It wasn't always that way, and for a thorough look at the history of the transistor, check out the museum...

http://semiconductormuseum.com/Museum_Index.htm

**L.A.R.C.
32nd
Annual Flea
Market
Sunday
September
27th 2009**

The 2009 LARC Flea Market is almost here!
An event you don't want to miss.
Commercial vendors include
Radio World
Durham Radio
Maple Leaf Communications
A-1 Counterparts
Tables still available.
See Ann, VA3EOR
on Thursday at the meeting
or give her a call at
519-238-1542
or email her at

larchamfest@gmail.com

Admission still only \$6

A Universal HAM Radio Text Messaging Initiative

A universal ham radio text messaging initiative has been proposed by the ham who gave the hobby APRS. Writing in the special emergency communications issue of QST magazine, Bob Bruninga, WB4APR, introduces a broad new initiative to find ways to seamlessly connect many of the dozens of existing amateur radio text messaging capabilities together.

Bruninga's concept is that of a universal information exchange between ham radio,

the Internet, cellphone and other broadband devices. Also included is the ability to do station tracking using APRS and message exchange to and from DTMF equipped ham radio gear.

Under the WB4APR concept all a ham radio operator would need would be his or her callsign as a text address to have emergency text messaging available. His article titled a Universal Ham Radio Text Messaging Initiative begins on page 72 of the September issue of QST.

RAC Bulletin 2009-026E - New BC/YK Section Manager Elected.

August 19, 2009

Congratulations to Drew Watson, VA7DR, who was recently elected British Columbia/Yukon Section Manager for a two-year term of office that will begin on November 1, 2009. He ran unopposed, eliminating the need for a balloted election. Incumbent Section Manager Mike Hale, VE7DXD, did not stand for nomination.

Congratulations are extended to Drew on his election, as well as thanks to him and to Mike for their volunteer service to the RAC Field Organization and to the Section.

Doug Mercer VO1DTM
Vice President Field Services
Radio Amateurs of Canada Inc.

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Doug Mercer VO1DTM
Vice President Field Services
Radio Amateurs of Canada Inc.

RAC Bulletin 2009-022E - New RAC VP of Field Services

Effective July 1, 2009, Doug Mercer, VO1DTM, has assumed the post of Radio Amateurs of Canada Vice President for Field Services (VPFS). Doug replaces Sue Cooke VE3SUH, who was appointed by the RAC Board of Directors to temporarily fill the position when former VPFS Bob Cooke, VE3BDB, resigned to accept

appointment as RAC president on February 24, 2009. Doug's appointment as VPFS will continue until December 31, 2009, which is the end of the current executive term. He may be contacted by email at vo1dtm @ hotmail.com. RAC greatly appreciates Sue's efforts and is grateful to her and to Doug for ensuring that this important RAC position remains filled.

RAC Bulletin 2009-025E – ExHAMiner ©, new release.

July 19, 2009

An Advanced question bank has been added to the complement of files available for use with ExHAMiner ©, RAC's amateur radio (free!) exam simulation software.

As with the Basic qualification, explanations have been added to the bank and partial exams on specific chapters are possible.

Concurrently, a new version of the program has been released. Major changes include control over the default font, a resizable window and an optional simplified layout for blind users relying on screen reading software.

See the ReadMe file which ships with the program for details.

A full description of the program appeared in the March/April 2007 issue of The Canadian Amateur (TCA, p. 63).

The download address has changed:

<http://www.rac.ca/en/amateur-radio/beginner-info/exhaminer/>

Also on that page, you'll find a selection of diagrams that got lost when RIC-3 replaced the previous RIC-24.

Bob Cooke VE3BDB

President, Radio Amateurs of Canada

RAC Bulletin 2009-024E - Canadian RTTY/Digital Operators.

July 5, 2009

The DX Advisory Committee (DXAC) has been asked by the Programs and Services Committee (PSC) of the ARRL to comment on how DXCC might be updated to accommodate digital modes other than RTTY.

Presently, there exists an RTTY DXCC which is endorsable for bands. This came into existence in 1976, became endorsable in 1984, and became an Honour Roll award in 1993. Modes other than RTTY, such as PSK31, presently feed into the RTTY Award.

The PSC has asked the DXAC to comment on how the newer digital awards might be accommodated within the DXCC program. (There is at this time no consideration being given to doing away with the present RTTY DXCC; RTTY is too popular for that to happen.)

Some possible questions to answer follow:

- Should there be a separated DXCC award for digital modes other than RTTY?
- Should a separate award be a general award for Digital Modes or should there be multiple awards be available?

- Should such awards to be endorsable by band?

- Should the status quo be retained, i.e. all digital modes feeding into the RTTY DXCC?

Any Canadian Amateur who wishes to comment on the above is asked to send me an email at the following address: [ve1js\[at\]ns\[dot\]sympatico\[dot\]ca](mailto:ve1js[at]ns[dot]sympatico[dot]ca) (Replace the words with the appropriate symbol to get a valid email address)

In order that the DXAC may report to PSC at its next meeting, please make your comments not later than August 31, 2009.

Please forward this message to anyone who may be interested.

Please to not use this email address for anything except comments on the DXCC RTTY issue.

John Scott, VE1JS

RAC representative – DXAC

Amateur Radio Station WX4NHC Featured in National Commercial

[WX4NHC](#), the Amateur Radio Station at the National Hurricane Center (NHC) in Miami, Florida, is featured in a [60 second radio spot](#) for Duracell batteries. The commercial, which begins airing this month, highlights the efforts of an all-volunteer army of ham radio operators for WX4NHC. Narrated by actor Jeff Bridges, it describes the important role that radio amateurs play during severe weather conditions -- enabling communications with emergency medical teams, police and fire departments -- when the power goes out. The narration underscores the importance of a reliable battery to power the portable ham radios, which are crucial to WX4NHC's work.

"This commercial is being played nationally during hurricane season and will help promote awareness of Amateur Radio and the public service we do to provide emergency communications, especially during and after hurricanes, when we have experienced complete electrical and conventional communications blackouts for periods of days and weeks," WX4NHC Assistant Coordinator Julio Ripoll, WD4R, told the ARRL.

Ripoll said that he and WX4NHC Amateur Radio Coordinator John McHugh, K4AG, worked with the ACME Marketing Firm and Duracell for several weeks to help produce the radio commercial. "It captures the essence of Amateur Radio volunteer public service and the

important role of Amateur Radio performs during emergency communications in 30 seconds," Ripoll said. "The President and Creative Director of ACME and the Duracell national representative also flew down to Miami and received a tour of NHC and of the WX4NHC station where they learned about our many modes of communications, including our portable VHF/UHF radios and other portable battery operated equipment."

"With this new spot, we are helping to showcase the important contributions made by the Miami ham radio operators," said Duracell's Bob Jacobs. "These heroic teams are working to save the lives of others. When storms strike, the radio operators are donating their time to make sure communications stay intact, facing intense pressures and dangerous conditions to those in need. We're proud that our batteries can help power these life-saving efforts."

ARRL President Presents League's Views on Distracted Driving Laws to Safety Advocacy Group



Many states currently have legislation pending regarding the use of cell phones. Most states also cover using cell phones in the case of accidents or other law-breaking activities while driving a vehicle in their respective traffic legislation. [iStockphoto/Dennis Oblander, Photo]



A 2009 [experiment](#) with *Car and Driver* magazine editor Eddie Alterman that took place at a deserted air strip showed that texting while driving had a greater impact on safety than driving drunk. While legally drunk, Alterman's stopping distance from 70 mph increased by 4 feet; by contrast, reading an e-mail added 36 feet, and sending a text added 70 feet. [Photo courtesy of [Paul Oka](#)]

To ensure that Amateur Radio is not an unintended victim of the growing public debate over what to do about distracted drivers, ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, has [written a letter](#) to the National Safety Council ([NSC](#)), highlighting issues regarding the use of Amateur Radio emergency communications devices in vehicles. Many states have outlawed the use of cell phones while driving; some states with these laws have ambiguous wording (such as "mobile communication devices" or "mobile electronic devices") concerning the use of Amateur Radio while driving.

According to their Web site, the NSC is "[on a mission](#)" to "alert the American public that different kinds of distractions have different levels of crash risk. Talking on a cell phone and sending text messages are much higher risk activities that occur for longer durations and with

more people than most other actions engaged in while driving." They also seek to "lead a change in our nation's cultural norms, so people come to view cell phone conversations and text messaging while driving as unsafe and socially unacceptable. Calling for a legislative ban on these activities is the first step in a long-term process to educate Americans to their risk and change the culture."

Harrison explained to NSC President Janet Froetscher that Amateur Radio operators provide essential emergency communications when regular communications channels are disrupted by disaster: "Through formal agreements with federal agencies, such as the National Weather Service, FEMA and private relief organizations, the Amateur Radio volunteers protect lives using their own equipment without compensation. The ability of hams to communicate and help protect the lives of those in danger would be strictly hindered if the federal, state and local governments do not ensure that Amateur Radio operators can continue the use of their mobile radios while on the road."

According to ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, it boils down to the difference between *simplex* -- when only one message can be sent in either direction at one time -- and *duplex* -- a communications mode, such as a telephone system, that provides simultaneous transmission and reception in both directions. Harrison, citing Sumner's 40-plus years of experience as an Amateur Radio operator, puts it this way: "Simplex, two-way radio operation is simply different than duplex, cell phone use. Two-way radio operation in moving vehicles has been going on for decades without highway safety being an issue. The fact that cell phones have come along does not change that."

Harrison attached a copy of the [ARRL's Policy Statement on Mobile Amateur Radio Operation](#) to the letter to the NSC. "Amateur Radio mobile operation is ubiquitous, and Amateur Radio emergency and public service communications, and other organized Amateur Radio communications activities and networks necessitate operation of equipment while some licensees are driving motor vehicles," the Policy Statement reads. "Two-way radio use is dissimilar from full-duplex cellular telephone communications because the operator spends little time actually transmitting; the time spent listening is more

similar to, and arguably less distracting than, listening to a broadcast radio, CD or MP3 player. There are no distinctions to be made between or among Amateur Radio, public safety land mobile radio, private land mobile radio or citizen's radio in terms of driver distraction. All are distinguishable from mobile cellular telephone communications in this respect. Nevertheless, ARRL encourages licensees to conduct Amateur communications from motor vehicles in a manner that does not detract from the safe and attentive operation of a motor vehicle at all times.

"The ARRL acknowledges numerous and increasing instances of state legislative proposals (and occasionally municipal ordinance proposals) to curb the use of cellular telephones while operating motor vehicles, ranging from prohibitions on hand-held telephones to prohibitions on all forms of electronic devices," the Policy Statement maintains. "These statutory proposals would supplement the more generalized motor vehicle code requirements that exist in various forms in virtually all States, which require operators of motor vehicles to pay full time and attention to the operation of the vehicle while driving. ARRL understands that driver inattention is a leading cause of automobile accidents, and it is not unreasonable to be concerned about substantial distractions to drivers of motor vehicles."

Saying that the League understands that driver inattention is a leading cause of automobile accidents, "it is not unreasonable to be concerned about substantial distractions to drivers of motor vehicles. Given the necessity of unrestricted mobile Amateur Radio communications in order for the benefits of Amateur Radio to the public to continue to be realized," the policy statement reads, "the ARRL urges state and municipal legislators considering restrictions on mobile cellular telephone operation to (I) narrowly define the class of devices included in the regulation so that the class includes only full duplex wireless telephones and related hand-held or portable equipment; or alternatively (II) specifically identify licensed Amateur Radio operation as an excluded service."

Harrison pointed out that some states, in designing legislation to combat distracted driving and prevent cell phone usage behind the wheel, have done exactly what

the Policy Statement suggests. He gave four examples in his letter to the NSC:

- [Georgia SB 218](#), which relates to the penalties for harmful acts while driving which result in accidents, exempts the proper use of radios, citizens band radio, or mobile telephone.
- [Iowa SF 190](#), which would prohibit the use of handheld cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices by motor vehicle operators, does not apply to the use of an amateur radio by a federally licensed Amateur Radio operator.
- [Oklahoma HB 1782](#), which relates to full time attention while driving, prohibits use of certain devices by operators of motor vehicles and provides exceptions for a person who is operating an amateur radio and who holds a current, valid Amateur Radio station license issued by the Federal Communication Commission.
- [Texas HB 55](#), which was signed into law in June 2009, relates to the offense of using a wireless communication device (narrowly defined as "a device which uses a commercial mobile service as defined by 47 USC Section 332") while operating a motor vehicle and exempts an operator who is licensed by the Federal Communications Commission while operating a radio frequency device other than a wireless communication device.

"The ARRL is aware of no evidence that [mobile] operation contributes to driver inattention," the Policy Statement asserts. "Quite the contrary: Radio amateurs are public service-minded individuals who utilize their radio-equipped motor vehicles to assist others, and they are focused on driving in the execution of that function."

Harrison told the NSC that the ARRL "would welcome the opportunity to review further these issues and explain the important role of Amateur Radio operators in emergency communications operations to save lives and property in disasters and severe weather."

According to the [NSC Web site](#), the group "saves lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, on the roads and in homes and communities. We engage organizations and individuals through our leadership and efforts in research, education and advocacy."

Rumours flying around Bill 118

September 4, 2009

By Peter West

There's an email being circulated that suggests the "rules of the road" have been decided in regards to Bill 118 the anti-distracted driving Bill due to come into effect soon in Ontario.

Nothing could be further from the facts.

Right now, we are still awaiting a public announcement by Ontario's Transport Minister Jim Bradley on Bill 118

and how it will be applied to those who use two-way radio equipment in their moving vehicles.

Best thing anyone concerned about Bill 118 can do right now is call or visit their local MPP and express their concern about how the Bill might negatively impact the wonderful community service offered by amateur radio operators every week in communities across Ontario.

RAC Presidents writes Ontario Minister Bradley

June 17, 2009

By Peter West

Supporting the ongoing email campaign by Ontario amateur radio operators in regards to Ontario's Bill 118, RAC President Bob Cooke has sent a strongly worded letter directly to Transport Minister Jim Bradley.

In the letter, Cooke makes reference to previous correspondence and clearly restates the contribution that amateur radio has made to the citizens and communities of Ontario.

With the passing of exemptions for the use of amateur radio in Manitoba's Bill 5, Ontario hams should continue to help educate their local members of the Ontario Legislature about the benefits of amateur radio.

Don't miss this opportunity to support your use of your amateur radio equipment.

One Response to "RAC Presidents writes Ontario Minister Bradley"

1. [Austin Wright](#) Says:

One main concern I have is that an HT radio would apparently still be banned even if we manage to get the exemption for ham equipment. I have been saying for some time that this kind of logic could pose a greater danger.

During CANWARN nets, we are often in close proximity to dangerous lightning. I have had corona discharge build up so strong prior to local strikes that I could barely hear the repeater. In these cases, using a headset or hand mic are extremely dangerous. An HT is the only safe option.

From the NOAA website:

"While inside a safe vehicle, do not use electronic devices such as radio communications during a thunderstorm. Lightning striking the vehicle, especially the antenna(s), could cause serious injury if you are talking on the radio or holding the microphone at the time of the flash. Emergency officials such as police officers, firefighters and security officers should be extremely cautious using radio equipment when lightning is in the area."

Please make sure the government uses common sense with this law so that we are not put into danger by an ill-advised rule while we are serving the public. There is no operational difference between talking on a pre-programmed HT and a hand mic, but I understand an exemption for HTs is not being considered. The Minister needs to be made aware of the risk such a paradox presents.

Ontario proceeding with cellphone ban

July 29, 2009

By Peter West

Ontario Transport Minister Jim Bradley has said to [The Canadian Press](#) and quoted in *The Hamilton Spectator* that the ban on the use of cellphones, BlackBerrys and other hand-held devices by drivers will take effect this October.

Radio Amateurs of Canada in cooperation with several interested amateur radio groups in Ontario has been in discussion with ministry officials and negotiations

continue to secure an exemption for amateur radio in moving vehicles.

One Response to "Ontario proceeding with cellphone ban"

1. [Driving while Distracted- an update « VA3QV's Weblog](#) Says:

[...] while Distracted- an update By va3qv Today from the RAC Blog we get an update on the Ontario Ministry of Transportations attempt to stem "Driving while [...]"

Driving while Distracted- an update

July 29, 2009

By va3qv

Today from the **RAC Blog** we get an update on the Ontario Ministry of Transportations attempt to stem "Driving while distracted..."

If you head over to the RAC Blog you will find a link to the Canadian Press Story on this item.

I did a Google search and ended up at the **CTV Ottawa website where I found the same article** and although I am not a lawyer or a Police Officer I will give you my comments as I look at how the new law (as

mentioned in the article) will impact the amateur radio community in Ontario.

The following article courtesy **CTV News**

=====
Cellphone ban for Ontario drivers takes effect in Oct.

Updated: Fri Jul. 24 2009 15:17:29

The Canadian Press

TORONTO — Ontario's ban on the use of cellphones, BlackBerrys and other hand-held electronic devices by drivers will take effect in October.

Transportation Minister Jim Bradley says motorists can expect an education period when the ban first comes into effect, which means police will show some leniency.

He says that's what happened in other jurisdictions when they banned cellphones for drivers, and Ontario will follow that pattern.

=====

Ontario drivers could be fined up to \$500 if they're caught using their hand-held cellphones or BlackBerrys to talk, email or send text messages while behind the wheel.

Bob sez... Nowhere does it mention anything with a microphone like an Amateur Radio/CB radio/private commercial radio. So far... so good.

=====

Bradley says hands-free devices aren't covered by the legislation, but they are not recommended for use while driving.

Ontario is the fourth province to enact such a ban, following Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec and Nova Scotia. Manitoba has introduced similar legislation.

Drivers are also banned from using portable video games and DVD players but they are allowed to use their cellphones for 911 calls.

Global positioning systems are allowed, as long as they're properly secured to the dashboard.

Bob sez... Once again no mention of anything that resembles amateur radio equipment unless you are running APRS with UI View or Winaprs on your laptop. But then WHY are you using your laptop while driving??? Once again so far so good...

=====

There are no demerit points attached to the Ontario law, unlike in other provinces.

However, Bradley says Ontario motorists using a banned cellphone could also be charged under careless driving laws and face fines, six demerit points, a driver's licence suspension and even jail time.

Bob sez... This is where it could hit us.... The careless driving issue no matter what distracts you. If there ever was a reason for properly mounting your radio equipment and making sure the control head is in a place easily accessible that is not obstructing your vision.... This is it....

The article seems to imply that they are targeting cell phones and small electronic toys but they do (and always have had) the option of laying the "Careless Driving charge".

Now we are going to have to wait and see how the law will actually effect us once they get it out to the public. It will be interesting to see how the Police Forces will enforce the law.

I am predicting that there will be a couple of test cases real early in its enforcement life.... The first person who is found to cause a serious accident who was witnessed using an electronic "toy" will most likely get the book thrown at him/her...

The second test case will most likely be someone like "Joe Average" who forgot to hang up before leaving the parking lot.

The third test case I am willing to bet will be someone like a volunteer fireman, off duty police officer, off duty first responder who will be doing something that if they were on duty would be exempt but because they were doing something on their own time will find a fellow officer who goes by the book and will lay the charge.

=====

Either way lets be careful out there. Use your radios, but remember the law and use them in a way that your 15 min of fame is not because you were the first Ontario Amateur Radio Operator charged under the new law...

Like I have said many times in the past...Use common sense and don't drive while distracted as you might be driving towards me in the future...

73bob

5 Responses to "Driving while Distracted-an update"

1. July 29, 2009 [Peter West](#) Says:

Great post Bob. I'd encourage everyone to personally contact their MPP and discuss the possible negative impact this legislation could have on the use of amateur radio equipment in moving vehicles – 73 – Peter _ VE3HG

2. August 27, 2009 [Steve](#) Says:

I saw something earlier today on an official government website indicating that there will be NO exemptions for amateur radio operators – anything with a push-to-talk mic is banned under the new law. Yet, an exemption has been made for drivers of commercial vehicles who require two-way mobile radios.

RAC doesn't seem to be doing much about this. I wonder if they're waiting for the law to take effect so they can start fighting it.

If an exemption is not made for amateur radio operators, ARES organizations throughout Ontario may not be able to provide much assistance in times of emergency because much of what they do depends on the use of mobile rigs, and it's not always possible to operate from a static position in such circumstances.

3. August 27, 2009 [va3qv](#) Says:
Steve, Could you please be a bit more specific as to what website you saw this information on... RAC so far as been VERY active on telling us (Ontario Hams) who to complain to....Other provinces and states have so far given amateurs exemptions so I hope Ontario will follow suit...

So if you could provide more info please or explain why you can't...

73bob

4. August 27, 2009 *Steve* Says:

Here's the link I found, which seemed fairly emphatic although I wonder if I was reading a bit more into it than was there:

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/mto/en/2008/10/about-the-counteracting-distracted-driving-and-promoting-green-transportation-act-2008.html>

5. August 28, 2009 [va3qv](#) Says:

Thanks for the link Steve.... It's a bit dated (October 2008) but it's promising as it did not directly reference actual Radios... Amateur, CBs or Private Commercial Radios...

73bob

Bill 118 decision soon

August 5, 2009

By Peter West

Bill, VE3XT, North/East Ontario Regional Director for Radio Amateurs of Canada has sent the following to amateurs and clubs in his region. Bill's comments should be taken to heart by all amateurs in Ontario.

Bill C118 is coming to a conclusion and we still don't have an exemption for Amateurs. We need to make the Minister of Transportation and your local MPPs aware of the public service Amateur Radio Operators perform while operating from their vehicles.

Please contact organizers of groups that your Amateur Radio Club provides communications for and ask them to send a letter to Jim Bradley, Minister of Transportation and your local MPPs. If your club provides communications for marathons, bikes races, cross country ski events or any other public services, we need their support now.

Their letter might suggest that without mobile amateur radio operators, the event may be compromised in terms of safety or they may have to rent commercial radios which could put the event into financial jeopardy. The MPPs need to know that we provide an important public service to many organizations.

They don't have to mention the Bill, but just emphasize the fact that Amateurs operating from their vehicles and provide communications for their event as a valuable community service.

If you have any agreements with local police, fire, EMO, Salvation Army or first response groups you need to contact them and ask them to send a letter as well.

If you would like to send a letter that is fine, but a note from a third party will carry much more weight. A letter from an emergency service is even better. A local politician is the best.

Any questions give me a call or email.

Here is the contact information for Mr. Bradley.

Hon. James J. Bradley

*Ministry of Transportation
3rd Floor, Ferguson Block
77 Wellesley Street West
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1Z*

Here is a link to the listing of MPP's and their mailing addresses. A letter is better than an email.

http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/members/members_current.do?locale=en

This is important if you want to continue operating from your vehicle, do it now!

2 Responses to "Bill C118 more info"

1. August 11, 2009 *Jamie VA3JME* Says:

I know I am holding off on spending my recent modest windfall on a mobile radio until after I see what bill 118 has to offer. I suppose I could just buy a headset, but would wearing a headset in the car be safer than using a simple handheld mic?

2. August 11, 2009, [va3qv](#) Says:

Jamie, although the Ontario Government has not really mentioned any exemptions I can find.... They might be out there but I have not seen any so far... I have noticed that the intent of the bill seems to be anti-handheld devices with a display screen. Handheld GPS, Cell phones, Texting style cell phones (blackberrys) seem to come to mind.

In other provinces and states they seem to be leaving the "mobile" radios such as private commercial, CBs etc alone. They so far seem not to include a microphone as a hand held device.

If our province follows the same line that others have so far we should be fine... The officer will always have the option of laying a charge of dangerous driving if he thinks we were distracted by our toys but... so far they do not seem to be speaking directly to our toys...

However APRS Text messaging with a VX8 could be "iffy" while driving...

73bob

Tornadoes devastate small Ontario town

August 21, 2009

By Peter West

Links to this blog were sent to the [Ontario Transport Minister](#) and [all Ontario MPPs](#). Please personally contact your local MPP and inform them of the vital and essential community service that is provided freely by local volunteer amateur radio operators and how this service could be curtailed due to the unforeseen effects of the passing of Ontario Bill 118.

- [One dead confirmed](#)
- [Durham sees wide-spread damage](#)
- [Vaughn declares "State of Emergency"](#)
- [Power fails for over 60,000](#)
- [Clean-up and assessment continues](#)

Those are the headlines resulting from yesterday's (Aug. 20, 2009) four small tornadoes which skipped across a large portion of southern Ontario. And with one confirmed dead and the likelihood of injuries yet to be reported, these storms were deadly but their power was nothing compared to what could have taken place.



With global warning thought to be causing increasingly unstable weather around the world what could happen in Ontario if a big tornado struck is becoming increasingly possible.

Like Quebec's ice storm of 1998, the Barrie Tornado of 1985 or the 2003 power blackout that hit Ontario and seven U.S. states, wide-spread disasters can and do happen in this region.

What happens in communities affected by a natural or man-made disaster? Typically, local infrastructure fails almost immediately. Local emergency responders are overwhelmed. Communication failure cripples municipal government and even hospitals, police and fire officials find they cannot communicate within or outside their jurisdictions.

And who, in those early hours, shows up to help? It's the local amateur radio operators who are volunteers working within the [Amateur Radio Emergency Service](#). And they show up in great numbers with training and equipment that exceeds the capacity and reach of anything else in the community and is only equalled by equipment carried by the armed forces (who, by the way, will take several days to be mustered and readied to help out in any significant manner).

All of this free amateur radio community-based emergency response ability is being put in jeopardy in Ontario due to the unforeseen impact of a safe-driving Bill.

In Ontario, sometime this fall the Ontario Ministry of Transportation will implement Bill 118 which will make driving while using a cell phone illegal. Unfortunately, the Bill may have an unintended consequence of limiting the legal and crucial use of all two-way radio equipment in vehicles in Ontario. The limits could hit all two-way radio users such as amateur radio operators, taxis, CBers, transport and delivery companies and others.

This limitation would not only be short-sighted but, as we've seen in the case of emergency, dangerous putting the public at needless risk.

We urge all legislators in Ontario to ask the Minister of Transportation to harmonize Bill 118 with other jurisdictions in North America which have seen it fit and proper to specifically exclude the amateur radio service from their legislation.

Amateur radio was never part of the problem that Bill 118 addresses and limiting its use will not be part of the answer to making provincial roadways safer.

So what could have happened in Ontario?

The series of tornadoes that hit Ontario yesterday were likely Force Two in strength. It was a Force Five tornado which hit Oklahoma City on May 3, 1999 where winds of 318 mph winds (the highest recorded on earth) killed 44 people, injured 757 and tore up 10,000 homes.

If a series of Force Three or even a Force Four (which struck Barrie) were to strike populated areas of Ontario experience tells us that almost immediately the following scenario will take place:

Hydro power fails as towers and lines collapse from the wind load.

Cell phone towers left standing are overloaded and calls fail. The backup power on those towers fail within hours. The cell system is rendered useless.

Police, fire, ambulance and municipal service vehicles cannot communicate with their headquarters as communications towers are down. Also, their own computer-run systems are vulnerable to system failure from storm, wind and rain damage plus backup power systems will fail within hours even if the communications ability is not destroyed.

[Hospitals are especially vulnerable](#). In situation after situation and community after community hospital administrators discover that during wide-spread disasters they cannot reach medical staff to order them to report for work. Supplies run low. Wards and hallways fill with the injured and their families. [Chaos breaks out](#).

[A state of emergency is declared](#).

It's at this point that the The Canadian Red Cross Society is requested by authorities to setup emergency shelters. [The Red Cross invokes a formal agreement](#) with [Radio Amateurs of Canada](#) asking for immediate assistance to setup communications links between shelters and to Red

Cross headquarters locally, provincially and even nationally if needed.

Using the services of the volunteer amateur radio operators, the [Canadian Red Cross](#) begins to gather information about who is registered as taking refuge in their field centers. This information will be used to inform friends and relatives who is safe and who is not. It will also be used to determine what supplies and what other help is needed.

Amateurs in local communities, using portable and mobile equipment are providing communications for municipal services and officials. They are able to do so because they live within the affected community itself. Hauling batteries out of vehicles, carrying two-way radio equipment in their hands amateurs find ways to erect temporary antennas and establish local, regional and even provincial communications networks.

As requested by municipal authorities, reliable communications links are setup between police, fire and ambulance headquarters. Amateurs sent to hospitals setup communications links to the new emerging system. The first ability to regain communications and some control is returned to the hands of municipal authorities.

While not ideal, these communications links allow emergency and municipal officials to communicate with each directly for the first time since the beginning of the disaster. Individual amateurs are teamed with officials and become their only means of communicating through the amateur radio network to other officials. This scenario will go on non stop for several days until officials with provincial emergency measures establish their own field units.

Remote communities fully cut-off their neighbours find local amateur radio operators are able to set up shortwave communications equipment that links them into a province-wide emergency nets. Amateurs from unaffected areas begin arriving at the Amateur Radio Emergency Service headquarters set up in the main Red Cross building and volunteering their time and equipment.

In some remote areas, amateur radio operators with powerful shortwave radios installed in their vehicles are able to communicate with other amateurs over great distances. For the first time, provincial authorities learn of the dire need in some less populated areas. (This scenario actually happened in Grand Bend which found itself cut off from the rest of the province following the Barrie tornado. It was amateur radio that first alert authorities to the situation in that community.)

While provincial [Emergency Measures Organization](#) officials (which recognizes the value of the Amateur Radio Service and even has sit's own amateur radio station) begin to establish communications for essential services, the amateur radio service starts to scale down and focuses on working with the Red Cross and other helping agencies to help stabilize a chaotic situation which will continue to exist for another 10 to 12 days.

The Canadian Armed Forces begins to arrive in mass and is tasked with recovering bodies and securing large areas of devastation. Local communications remains in the hands of the amateur radio service until such time as emergency cell towers on trailers are setup in the community.

At the end of 10 or 20 days of endless work and 24/7 communications, the volunteers of the [amateur radio service](#) are allowed to stand down and return to their homes and families. Some return to their own homes which were damaged. But all do go home after serving their communities and their neighbours at no cost, at no obligation and without thought of recognition or reward.

In community after community and in country after country amateurs world-wide (who number in the millions with an estimated 265,000 hams in the U.S. and roughly 26,000 in Canada) since the early beginnings of radio have devoted their time, talent and equipment to this selfless service.

[Hams help during Power Blackout](#)
[Lessons Learned – Ministry of the Solicitor General](#)
[Oklahoma Storm City Storm Video](#)
[Canada's Most Destructive Tornadoes](#) (Amateur radio helps out in Barrie)

Controversy erupts over tornado warning system

August 24, 2009

By Peter West

The Background Story

Hundreds of amateur radio operators in Ontario (and across Canada) are volunteers with [Environment Canada's CanWarn](#)

system. These dedicated volunteers report severe weather conditions directly to Environment Canada.



Weather experts use this to confirm radar and satellite images of possible severe weather.

The Controversy

Today, [The Globe and Mail](#) is asking whether or not Canada's system of early warning failed the people of Durham and York Region. The article quotes Environment Canada meteorologists as saying a tornado warning was issued half an hour before an 11-year-old boy was killed in the storm and that the half-hour warning was "very, very good."

However most townspeople and municipal officials say they never received the warning.

A Secondary Issue

Now, while it is too early to tell whether or not amateur radio operators were reporting on last week's tornado, there is a situation in Ontario that could curtail any future participation by amateur radio operators with the CanWarn system.

The Ontario government is implementing Bill 118 (the anti cell-phone while driving legislation) this fall. Bill 118 could inadvertently impact the legal and historic use of amateur radio equipment in moving vehicles.

The Solution

The problem could be solved by a simple exemption for the Amateur Radio Service from Bill 118. Unfortunately, the Ontario Ministry of Transport has yet to make a decision to exempt the legal, federally licensed use of amateur radio equipment in a moving vehicle.

Other neighbouring jurisdictions in Canada (i.e. Manitoba, Quebec and Nova Scotia) plus many American states specifically either exempt or have created policy that excludes amateur radio use from their cell phone use while driving legislation. Radio Amateurs of Canada is urging Ontario Transport Minister Jim Bradley to exempt two-way radio use from being affected by Bill 118.

The use of amateur radio two-way transmission equipment was never part of the problem being addressed by Bill 118 and impacting the ability of amateur radio operators in Ontario to operate their equipment while driving won't be part of the solution.

The Action Steps

We urge everyone who is interested in creating a better severe weather warning system in Ontario to support RAC's initiative to encourage the [Minister of Transport](#) and [Minister Jim Bradley](#) to immediately exempt all amateur radio operation from Bill 118.

RAC also urges all its members and all amateurs in Canada's Amateur Radio Service to join the CanWarn system of early detection. Regardless of where you live in Canada, severe weather can and does happen.

Become part of the solution. Join CanWarn and continue the Amateur Radio Services' proud tradition of helping our communities in times of need.

[Remember: When ALL ELSE FAILS, there's always Amateur Radio.](#)

This is the danger of texting and driving

August 28, 2009

By Peter West

[Here is a link to a British video that you must watch to learn why Ontario's Bill 118 is a great idea.](#) (WARNING: This video is gruesome, bloody, unforgettable and a must watch for every driver who thinks it's okay to dial or text a cell phone while driving.)

What this also shows is that the use of two-way radio transmitters is nothing like texting or dialling a cell phone. The use of a two-way radio transmitter does not involve the operator's eyes ever leaving the roadway. There is no distraction to the driver whatsoever.

(Our two-way radio equipment works in exactly the same way that the police, fire, ambulance and helicopter life-saving radios work. And, strangely with the exception of the pilots, amateur radio operators have much more training in the safe use of radio equipment than any of the emergency service personnel.)

Amateurs, CBers and drivers of commercial vehicles equipped with two-way radio transmitters have saved countless lives (and still do especially in places where the cell phone network does not reach) on Ontario roadways.

Ontario's Bill 118 puts all this and more (CANWARN, ARES, community service work) in jeopardy if the users of two-way radios are not granted an exemption as has been done in other jurisdictions such as Manitoba.

If you are an amateur radio operator in Ontario who is concerned about this issue, call or see your local MPP and

explain the impact Bill 118 could have on the legal and historic use of amateur radio in mobile installations.

And while you're at it, [email or call the premier](#) and [Transport Minister](#) Jim Bradley.

One Response

1. August 30, 2009 *Escayondy Joe* Says:

This video more importantly shows money and effort the government spends trying to protect us, would be better spent teaching defensive driving techniques. The other driver had time to hit the horn, but failed to do any emergency collision avoidance into the empty part of his lane.

The attitude of "I'm in the right and she has to get back into her lane" is surprisingly common when I am riding with new drivers...but worrying about who has the right of way won't save your life, or prevent the often preventable.

We have enough laws on the books for police to enforce dangerous driving habits. Bill 118 will only clog the courts when zealous officers use the "cell phone distraction" summons for every poor driving habit.

Bill 118 is far too vulnerable to the officers discretion of playing "what might have happened". If the "distraction" DID affected the driving, they should be charged with the HTA act on the books that covers the action. (following too close, fail to yield, dangerous driving)

What is the Ontario gov't policy on Bill 118?

August 31, 2009

By Peter West

That's the question of the hour. But new information (at least to me) has surfaced this morning. Seems that MPP Linda Jeffrey made a reply to a question by an amateur radio delegation at her committee earlier this year where she stated:

"Right now, for example, on a CB radio, if it's connected and there's a wire that connects to the radio receiver in

the vehicle, that's not where this legislation is speaking to, so that wouldn't be something that would be a problem."

BTW the presentation to the committee was done by Vince D'Eon, VE3LKV, who should be acknowledged and thanked for all of his hard work on our behalf.

We are querying our contacts at the Ontario government about Ms Jeffrey's statement and will post any reply when we have it.

The Baby and the Bathwater

August 31, 2009

By Peter West

(This is an editorial by Peter West, VE3HG, the vice-president of public relations for Radio Amateurs of Canada. This editorial does not necessarily reflect the policy and position of Radio Amateurs of Canada and solely represents the opinion of the author.)

There's an old saying that you don't throw out the baby when you throw out the bathwater.

So is that what could happen in Ontario if Jim Bradley, the Minister of Transportation, decides that all two-way radios in use in moving vehicles must be equipped with a hands-free device?

I think I say that for the vast majority of Ontario's 5,000-plus amateur radio operators the answer would be yes.

Hams have been installing two-way radios in vehicles since the time of the invention of the two-way radio and the time of the invention of the automobile. And in the ensuing 100-plus years there's not been an outbreak of distracted driving caused by people driving and talking on two-way radios.

The use of a two-way radio in a moving vehicle is not an issue for pilots who routinely talk on their radios as they land and take off from airports big and small. It's not an issue for emergency responders who may well be pumped up with adrenaline coursing through their bodies and yet find they can drive at high speeds their emergency vehicles while talking on their radios.

It's the same for CBers, transport truck drivers, delivery people, taxis and scores of other drivers. In fact, anyone who has ever used a two-way radio with an attached microphone will tell you the same thing.

Oddly, commercial drivers who use two-way radio equipment are not subjected to any testing or need to have any technical knowledge in the operation of their radio equipment. Ham radio operators, on the other hand, do pass federally administered proficiency examinations before being granted the privilege to use their two-way radio equipment in their vehicles.

Heck, even the astronauts on the International Space Station (of whom four right now are licensed amateur radio operators) talk on their radios (including ham radio) without thought that they might be distracted from their work.

So what is the intent of Bill 118?

Why it's to save lives and every member of the Amateur Radio Service supports this legislation. It's a good thing and Minister Bradley should be congratulated on its introduction this fall.

However, the minister shouldn't throw out the baby with the bathwater. **The use of two-way radios doesn't contribute to distracted driving. It never did and it never will.** A simple demonstration shows this to be true.

If amateur radio was negatively impacted by Bill 118 our communities would end up being the big losers. Hams annually unselfishly contribute thousands of hours of community and emergency service plus the donation of their skills and equipment to their friends and neighbours. And in many cases such as the Barrie Tornado, the Quebec Ice Storm, Hurricane Katrina and right now the California wildfires, amateur radio is at the forefront of serving the needs of their communities.

Bill 118 would cause many to forgo the installation of a two-way radio in their private vehicles. This sadly is just human nature. Right now we have a vibrant and, surprisingly, growing population of active amateur radio operators and Bill 118 would do nothing to encourage them to spend anywhere from \$200 to \$2000 in mobile equipment.

Legislators in other states and provinces have seen the wisdom in specifically exempting amateur radio operation from their distracted driving legislation. Minister Jim Bradley should be encouraged to do the same.

Now is the time to contact the Minister directly and share with him your concerns and thoughts.

jbradley.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

Why did the Americans go to the moon?

July 21, 2009

With the sad announcement of the death of Walter



Cronkite, KB2GSD, on July 17th there seems to be some

added poignancy to the news that right now two Canadian astronauts Julie Payette and Robert Thirsk are making history by being onboard the International Space Station at the same time.

Cronkite was a keen advocate and space enthusiast. With his passing we see the end of an era of space exploration which culminated 40 years today ago with the landing of Eagle and the flight of [Apollo Eleven](#).

We can read the insider's account of those early days thanks to a link sent by Tom Clark, K3IO, and forwarded to us by Allen Pitts, W1AGP, the ARRL's media and PR manager. Thanks to Tom and Allen.

Ham Radio In Space: FO-29 In Recovery Mode

In ham radio space related news, JE9PEL reports that the Fuji Oscar 29 ground control stations have been working on recovering this satellite. This, after an outage reported by users during the week of August 24th.

As of August 28 the control station has succeeded in transmitting commands to the satellite and received good response. But to be on the safe side FO-29 is available only when it is over Japan so that the control station can command the satellite, retrieve telemetry data, and analyze the results.

The receiver aboard FO-29 is used for both command and transponder operations. If it were open for general world-wide use there might be far too many stations attempting to uplink to the bird that would interfere with ground controllers efforts to command the satellite.

Fuji Oscar 29 controllers say that they will advise when the satellite becomes available for general amateur radio use. Check the AMSAT website for the latest information on the satellites availability. (ANS)

Ham Radio In Space: Good News For ARISSAT-1

Some good news regarding the ARISSat-1 project. The ARISS International Team has been informed that there is still space available for shipment of the ARISSat-1 electronics on the projected cargo flight to the International Space Station in January of 2010.

As reported last week, ARISSat-1 is the new name for SuitSat-2. This, the result of the spacesuit that was to

house SuitSat-2 being cast away from the International Space Station several weeks ago.

And speaking of SuitSat-2, word is that the spacewalk to launch it is still set for April 2010. Only now it will likely be the ARISSat-1 deployment instead. (ANS)

LONDON AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

32nd ANNUAL 2009 FLEA MARKET

SUNDAY, SEPT. 27th
9.00 AM TO 1.00 PM

VENDOR SETUP: 7:30 AM

BOOK EARLY AND SAVE ON ADMISSION

ADMISSION: \$6.00, (Age 10 and up)

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Inquiries: Email
LARChamfest@gmail.com
Note: All email answered within 72 hrs
Phone: (519) 238-1542 (Ann)

Make Payments out to
"London Amateur Radio Club Inc"
(not to Ann Rundle) and mail to:

Ann Rundle VA3EOR
36797 Crediton Rd RR2
Dashwood, On N0M 1N0

ATTENTION 2009 FLEA MARKET VENDOR

Book early, tables are booked on first come first served basis. Loading door available. We do not reserve unpaid tables. No separate hydro for tables BUT there will be a test table with power for seller demonstrations. Only two vendors passes allowed per vendor prior to doors opening on the day of the flea market. Vendor passes will not be sold without table sales. Table information and site Map will be sent to you in your vendor's conformation package.

***Book early (before Aug 1st) and 1 vendor admission is reduced to \$ 4**

Name: _____ Admission(s) x \$ 6 (\$ 4) _____

Table(s): x \$ 10 _____

Callsign: _____ Total: = _____

Email address: _____

Mailing address: _____ City _____ PO code _____

Phone: _____

Talk in VA3LON, 147.060 PL 114.8

N 42.9876 W 81.2213



MEMBERSHIP INVITATION

-- Membership application and dues are currently requested.

Our term of membership runs from October 1 to September 30 of the following year. Each and every year it is increasingly more difficult to get Amateurs to commit to membership in their local club due to the alternate functions we are asked to fund.

*The **London Amateur Radio Club** has a long history of providing technical support, social support and repeater facilities. Public service efforts are currently provided by a club affiliation with Amateur Radio Emergency Services (**ARES**) and **Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC)**.*

Your Directors work tirelessly to provide meeting topics that are informative and entertaining, events that are timely (Christmas meeting, field day, bus trip) and participate in events that display and promote Amateur Radio in the community.

To be effective in its pursuits, the Club needs the support of the local Amateur fraternity through membership.

While we obtain financial support from our Annual Flea Market, we require membership support to fund such things as meeting hall rent, repeater sites rent and maintenance, web site fees, membership cards and liability insurance. For what it's worth, none of these things are getting any cheaper.

The cost of membership has not changed for a number of years and even in the face of increased cost, we would like to keep it that way.

With more than 1000 'hams' in the London area, it's inconceivable that less than 10% support a pastime about which most of us are passionate.

PLEASE, make a choice and do your part to keep the **London Amateur Radio Club** alive and well by purchasing your membership at our next meeting (or by mail – details on our web site). The cost is still only \$25.00 (single) or \$30.00 (family residing at the same address).

