



The QSO

June/July 2005

<http://www.sarl.ca/>

Volume 2005, Issue 3

President's Message

Derek Bereza VE5SD

I hope you are able to come to the Saskatchewan Centennial Hamfest 2005! A great opportunity to be a part of amateur radio history! Be a participant in the Centennial photograph, come watch, listen, and participate in the Radio Amateurs of Canada open forum, and Annual General Meeting (first time ever in Saskatchewan!).

SARL will be having their Annual General Meeting:

Agenda & items to be dealt with at the meeting:

- Reports to the board and financial statements
- Auditors Report
- Appoint Auditor
- Membership input as to priorities for the year
- Election of the board unless already done
- Vote on resolutions
- Approval of budget

We also have to make some decisions on a number of different things like a presence on the web, what role should SARL have, what kind of initiatives should we pursue, what do we need to improve on etc.,. I envision a renewed interest in SARL if we focus on the coordinated and cooperative improvement in the Amateur Radio Emergency Services that we provide in our province. We can become a valued service to the amateur radio community in our province and do so in a manner that encourages the amateur radio spirit! We have initiated a number of different services to the community, and as we grow as an organization, we all can benefit from the fruits of our labour.

Come to the hamfest, get a limited edition Saskatchewan Centennial Communication Directory from SARL which will have some useful and valuable information in it.

This directory will fit nicely in your vehicle's window visor, for easy access and will contain information about us and our province.

(Continued, See: *President* – Page 3)

Hamming it up at Radio Meets

Mark Beard – WIRED News

CAMBRIDGE, Massachusetts -- If you think you know what a nerd is, try visiting a swap meet or convention where amateur radio operators like to hang out.

You will not see many people wearing fitted Gap shirts and fancy eye wear at the MIT Swapfest here or at the Dayton Hamvention in Ohio. Both are occasions for amateur, or ham, radio buffs to buy gear and trade tips for improving their transmissions to places that phones and computers often can't reach, particularly during emergencies.

Despite threats to ham radio bands from RF interference caused by technologies such as broadband over power lines, or BPL, the number of Federal Communications Commission amateur radio licenses last year topped more than 683,000, an all-time high. But unless you visit events like the MIT Swapfest or the Dayton Hamvention, you may never encounter these übernerds directly.

"It is this great community of people," said Marty Connor, a ham radio operator and computer consultant from Cambridge. "And it is invisible."

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The Saskatchewan Amateur Radio League

The QSO

The Fine Print

The QSO is published on a regular basis for the membership of the Saskatchewan Amateur Radio League (SARL). The purpose is to provide Saskatchewan and other amateurs, and those interested in radio communications and electronics, with information on matters related to the science of communication. Unsolicited articles, reviews, features, letters to the editor, criticisms, photographs and essays are welcome. Manuscripts should be legible and include the name and address of the contributor. A signed article expresses the view of the author and not necessarily that of SARL.

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President

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For now, I wish you all great summer vacations and we hope to see you in Saskatoon at the Saskatchewan Centennial 2005 Hamfest! Check out www.saskhamfest.com !!

Radio Meets

(Continued from Page 1)

That's because when they are not performing high-profile services -- like helping out during marathons or emergency relief efforts (such as those in the wake of the recent Asian tsunami and the 9/11 terrorist attacks) -- hams are often busy trying out new radio technologies in their tiny stations, called "shacks," at home.

Hams are the planet's prototypical nerds, said Tom Medlin, a ham radio operator from Memphis, Tennessee, who works as a telecommunications engineer for FedEx. Long before blogging and podcasting, hams were using surplus World War II radio gear and backyard antennas to contact people around the planet

"Many of us build our own equipment and are always experimenting," said Medlin, who operated webcams during the annual Dayton Hamvention last week. "We like to see what we can do."

Hams helped develop packet radio communications, for example, the technology that paved the way for today's internet and wireless network communications protocols.

Hams who belong to clubs with large transmitters, such as those at Harvard University and MIT, can communicate directly with operators on the far side of the globe, or even on the International Space Station.

They have also been bridging hundreds of repeater antennas, which boost signals within local areas, to the internet. That way, hams can talk to each other even at great distances without having to have their own giant backyard radio antennas or towers.

Hams in the United States need licenses to operate on certain frequencies, and they must comply with FCC decency standards (a sharp distinction from citizens band radio, and the internet, for that matter, the hams say).

Another ham pastime is "ragchewing," in which operators chat about everything from new gadgets to runaway brides from their shacks or their cars, with the help of rooftop antennas and local repeaters.

"When you're driving to work, hams are all around you," said Connor, who gives out "free advice" from a spot at the MIT Swapfest, which takes place monthly from April through October. "There are thousands of people talking to each other on a giant party line."

Hams speak an esoteric language, a mix of radio slang and callsigns, and they like to talk about the enduring virtues of Morse code, which many still use on the airwaves.

Sometimes shoppers at the MIT Swapfest don't talk at all.

Lynn Shackelford, who deals in vacuum-tube-based radios and equipment at the MIT Swapfest, remembers two students who once approached his table.



"They came by wearing calculators in holsters," said Shackelford, co-owner of Art's Attic in Manchester, New Hampshire, and a licensed ham operator. "They took out the calculators and started typing on them, and then handed them to each other two or three times. They walked away without saying a word."

Hams, though their ranks are growing, are an aging community. More than 40 percent of hams in the United States are retirees, according to the American Radio Relay League, the national association for amateur radio in the United States.

Tattoos at ham flea markets tend to be faded and crinkly, suggesting real military service rather than latter-day Celtic warrior fantasies. Pocket protectors and eyeglasses with thick lenses are also common. (And, yes, some eyeglass wearers appear to have taped their frames together).

Many are eager to become "Elmers," or ham mentors, to young people.

"(The MIT Swapfest) is a confluence of really brilliant people, including some Nobel Prize winners," said Harvard student Matthew Gline. Gline, who also goes by his FCC-issued ham radio callsign, KG2OT, is president

of the Harvard University Radio Club, a co-sponsor of MIT Swapfest.

MIT Matsushita Professor of Electrical Engineering Gerald Jay Sussman, known as something of a "loud and proud" nerd, is a Swapfest regular.

The Swapfest is also said to be a former stomping ground for that most notorious of nerds, Bernhard Goetz. New Yorkers dubbed Goetz the "subway vigilante" after he shot four youths he believed were about to mug him in 1984.

Goetz in an e-mail said he was unavailable for an interview. He indicated in his message that he was busy at the Dayton Hamvention

From the Editor's Desk

Devon Racicot VE5DWR

I can't believe how time flies. As per usual, I am getting this out late again. I apologize for that, but I have an excuse... no really, I do! My wife, Marcy and I are the proud new parents of a bouncing baby boy named Drew, who was born on March 27, 2005. We have since slept very few nights, cleaned up many messes, and just generally haven't had time for anything we used to do. Is it worth it? Absolutely!

Oh yeah, did I mention that I haven't got my HF antennas up yet? Maybe this summer... Speaking of Summer, are you planning on attending hamfest? Check out the article by yours truly later in this issue. I have given a rough idea of what the weekend is going to be like for those attending. If you haven't thought about it, now is the time. If you have already registered, then great - see you in July!

An interesting article forwarded to me from John VE5JJA that was printed on the WIRED news website. A pretty good plug for ham radio and the public services we do, but also exposes some of the, ahem, eccentric types. Deep down, I guess we are all a bit eccentric.

Joan Bahnman VE5JML is also looking for information on VE5 silent keys as part of a centennial project she is working on. See her article in the *Around Saskatchewan* section. Speaking of centennial projects, did you know that we are looking for information on past amateur activities in the province as part of the hamfest? Forward any/all information you have to the hamfest committee at saskhamfest2005@sarl.ca. We would sure appreciate it and if you have photos that can be scanned, we would love them too.

Dues, dues dues. Ever think that you are continuously paying dues to various organizations and subscriptions? Well, it ain't over. Your SARL dues need to be paid by the end of June, 2005. Some folks have already sent in renewals, or paid in person, but the bulk of the membership has yet to renew.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES IN JUNE!

You don't want to miss a single issue of The QSO do you? Then get on it! There is a renewal form included with this newsletter. Oh yeah, did I forget to mention, that in order to vote at the AGM, you have to be a paid up member? It's only \$15 bucks... we need your support!

Have you noticed that when you travel through some of the areas in the province that the two metre band is kind of quiet lately? One thing the SARL has promoted in the past, and we should continue to promote, is the Saturday morning reflector part on the Saskatoon Reflector. Dial up to 9300 every Saturday morning and lets get to know our nieghbours again. After all, if ARES groups are called into action, we may be relying on nieghbouring towns and cities to pass traffic for us and deliver assistance. Wouldn't it be great if we knew who we were talking to?

I'm just getting everything off the top of my head put down on paper... that's why I'm bouncing all over the place... which brings me to my next point.

I wanted to mention that this will be my last issue as Editor. I hope to remain "on staff" and supply the new editor with a few articles from time to time. I really think this newsletter is a valuable service to the members of the SARL, an idea that has kept me going and doing this thing every two months. It does take a lot of time, which is why I need to give it up for a while. I haven't been giving it the attention that it needs or deserves during the last few issues, which I am sure has shown.

I do want to thank those that have contributed, especially the regulars like Val, Wayne and Derek. Also to those that have forwarded me information from time to time as well. I hope you give the new editor the same support. That, coupled with fresh, new ideas should prove to be a great thing for *The QSO*.

I plan on becoming more active on the air later this year, when the dust settles after hamfest. I am also, believe it or not, planning on putting my tower up in the fall so maybe we'll hear each other on 80M... that is if my wife lets me string wires all over the place again. I did it at our old house and wasn't very popular!

That's it! See you in July!

Prince Albert & North

Wayne Thompson VE5DWT

The North Saskatchewan Amateur Radio Club has its north and south repeaters down for repairs. The north VE5BBI has some hiccup problems and will be back soon for the summer use. The south repeater VE5RPA will be put back as a solar station. Expected sometime this summer, a new controller is on order. The club now sells La Ronge beef jerky to raise money for our club expenses. The cost is \$5.00 per pack and if you wish contact any member for a purchase and good chewing. Members in the club are happy to welcome new ham VE5CE back on the air. The call belonged to Marcel Robert, lifetime member of the Northern Saskatchewan Amateur Radio Club. Marcel was one of the first hams in the province licensed in 1932, and his grandson passed the exam this year and was issued his grandpa's call. Craig, age 14, is active and enjoying the new hobby. Also a big welcome from the VE1 area to Ron and Laura. Ron is VE5EX and Laura passed the test this year and her new call is VE5TLS. We hope you enjoy your stay in the Prince Albert area. Ron is a six meter man and may give some of us the bug.

Our new executive is VE5HAE, Harry, Chairman, VE5BCS, Harold, is vice and recorder Blain VE5ZC, who is working hard to pass his CW. Have a good year.

Moose Jaw & Area

Val Lemko VE5ACJ

The Moose Jaw Pioneers Amateur Radio Club - Well, with the arrival of spring, things are starting to look pretty good outside. The leaves are budding, the grass is turning green, and some people even have their gardens roto-tilled and the potatoes in. Oops wait a minute....what happened to the nice, warm, sunny weather, and the plus 20 C Temperatures.....

Oh right, this is Saskatchewan and anything can happen at any time. The Pioneers are all busy with outdoor activities, volunteering at the Sukanen Museum, the Western Development Museum and most still check into the nets if conditions allow. Other than that not much to report from the club.

I was going through some magazine articles that my OM-Harv had given me, and I just could not pass this up. Just to cute. I know that the editor of the QSO will have a bit of a problem with it because of the spelling mistakes, but that is the way it is supposed to be. If you folks out there have a hard time reading it, just think how hard it was for me to type it. Being a secretary for too many years, and wanted to correct it all, but I persevered and typed it the way it was in the CQ magazine, January

1995, the anniversary edition 1945-1995. Too tell the truth, it took me a half an hour to type it....normally my typing speed is a whole lot better..somewhere around 70wpm. Just a bit of humor before we head into an election??

Feenix, Ariz

Deer Hon. Ed.

It been menny menny years since I right too you, but I here CQ is having big berthday partee and I wanting you too no I am still alyve and kicking. I try too stay activ on ham bands two. I liking too listen too repeeters on two meters, but found it much eezier if you hook up radio too the meters. I unnerstand, thow, why they called "repeeters" cauze it seem I heer the same old stuff repeeted over and over.

Now, I heer on repeeters about pocket radio, and pocket bulletin boreds. Not making much cents too me. I have trubbel putting my keys in my pocket; can't imaginn hole bulletin bored. Anyway, I tried pocket radio. It OK, but werks much betterh weh I take it out of my pocket. I don't see whut's the big deel.

Next think I heer on repeeter is all about code-free ham license. This sound real good too me, since I am always catching codes. So I go down too efceeece, and they tell me I have too goo too VE team. Can't unnerstand why I have too go too Kanada for USA ham license. Finally found hams here in Hon. Yewnited States who give license tests. I tell them I want no-code license, but they say I already have code. I say I come back wenn I'm helthee. Then they say no, I donut unnerstand-I can't get no-code license cause I already have extra license. I say no, this is the only license I have. But they insisting its extra license. So I ask man behind me in line if he want my extra license so I can get no-code license. He starting too explane that with no-code license, yew can onlee opurrate when yew donut havv a code. Butt then the test peepul start yelling if I give man behind me my extra license, they send me too efceeece. I say no need too doo that, since I allreddy went too efceeece and they sent me too Kanada.

I telling yew, ham radio getting very confoosing, suspeshully for old man like mee.

So hapee berthday and mebbe I see yoo on the hair.

*Respectively yours,
Hashafisti Scratchi*

Silent Keys in VE5-Land

Joan Bahnman VE5JML

As a Saskatchewan Centennial project I decided to do an updated listing of as many silent keys who were licensed in VE5land. I've been busy combing through old copies of TCA, QST Canada, Guywire, Feedline and all callbooks which I have at hand.

I believe that all of the fine gentleman and ladies who have contributed to our hobby in the past should be recognized. At the present I have 4 pages of callsigns, names/locations and date the person joined the ranks of the silent key. The earliest listed silent key that I have is in 1966. I'm interested in the information no matter how far back that it may be from.

I am requesting the help of any amateurs....club or individuals who may have access to any archived newsletters, club minutes, callbooks etc. that would yield any information on silent keys. I know a number of the trophies awarded at the annual hamfest are given in memory of some of these fine amateurs. Does anyone have a list of their names and date of death.

Anyone interested in seeing the list that I have begun compiling please send me an e-mail to the address listed below indicating the format (Snapview, RTF, etc.) that is most convenient for you to read. I look forward to any/all help that may be provided to help me fill in the many gaps that I have in the listings currently.

Saskatchewan Centennial Hamfest 2005

Devon Racicot VE5DWR



Well this will be the last update on the Saskatchewan Centennial Hamfest 2005 before it actually takes place... so

if this doesn't get you interested, I guess nothing will!

The committee has worked hard, meeting twice or more a month to finalize the details on the event. To date, we have 60 people registered and they keep trickling in almost daily. In the four hamfests that I have been involved in the planning stages of, this is a record high of pre-registrants. As I type this article, we have yet to make the draws for the early bird prizes, so unfortunately I can't bring the good news.

What I can tell you is that we have a great program planned starting on Friday afternoon. We have tours of the Canadian Light Source Synchrotron scheduled. We began with one tour but it has filled up and we have had to add a second tour, which is being added to constantly. If you are coming to the hamfest and interested in this tour, make sure you register and indicate your interest on the form so we can put your name on the list to be guaranteed a seat!

After the tours, we head back to the Saskatoon Travelodge Hotel where you will complete your registration and receive your program and registration package. The evening will be complete with a social gathering, come and go style, in the California Suite. Non-alcoholic refreshments and snacks will be supplied complimented by a cash bar.

Saturday gets underway bright and early for the flea market vendors. Entry into the flea market area will be strictly enforced for vendors only up until general admission at 8AM. The first hour of the day is dedicated to the flea market and does not parallel any other event so you can ensure you are first in line for all of the good junk! At nine, we get rolling with the program which continues on throughout the day. The Radio Amateurs of Canada AGM and Interactive Forum will take place as well as Tim Ellam VE6SH will speak on Tower Legal Issues. Lunch will be brought in for VIP registrants and others can take advantage of the great facilities the hotel has to offer. There are many other restaurants within walking distance of the hotel, but to ensure you make it back in time for the afternoon program, and for a great gourmet lunch, register as a VIP Delegate or Companion!

Saturday afternoon will be comprised again of many talented speakers including Ken Oelke VE6AFO, former president of RAC who will speak on the Quarter Century Wireless Association, the Saskatchewan Amateur Radio League's AGM and Gord Kosmenko VE6SV on Contesting. The program finishes off late afternoon so you have a bit of a break before the dinner. Between the program and dinner, we will be taking a commemorative photograph which will be available for order during the hamfest for a nominal fee.

The annual awards banquet gets underway with cocktails at 6. The keynote speaker we have lined up is George Sofko, a University of Saskatchewan Engineering Professor who will speak on a project he is involved in called the SuperDARN or Super Dual Auroral Radar Network. Don't know what that is? Make sure you register for the hamfest and find out.

Sunday kicks off at 8 with breakfast for those VIP registrants and we continue with informative sessions on Antennas with Per Jacobsen VE5PER, APRS with Bruce Coates VE5BNC, and the theme for the afternoon is

Emergency Preparedness with various speakers lined up and Garry McCallum VE5PNQ, our recently appointed Section Emergency Coordinator for Amateur Radio Emergency Services Saskatchewan.

Your best value for the hamfest is to register as a VIP Delegate which includes three gourmet meals, admission to all sessions and programs, a 2005 Saskatchewan Callbook limited edition with companion CD, and entry into the door prizes. You are also guaranteed a banquet ticket as we will only have a few available at the registration desk.

At this time, I would also like to thank the hams across the province and throughout Canada for your generous support and registering ahead of time for the event. It takes a great deal of effort to put on a convention of this caliber and it seems like a huge risk to book these types of meals and accommodation without knowing what type of response you are going to get. As noted before 60 registrants are definitely a high number of early registrations, which shows that Saskatchewan Amateurs are truly first class. I also need to mention the out of province people as well. We have hams coming from as far as West Vancouver, and Milton, Ontario, as well as many from Manitoba and Alberta. I hope this is an indication of the turnout we can expect for the whole weekend.

Again, if any profit is realized after the bills are paid, the money will be turned over unconditionally to ARES Saskatoon.

See you in July!!

Across Canada

It's About Time

Bob Byrne VE7EZI

For many years, military and amateur radio operators have designated Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) with the letter Z. Of course the term GMT has been supplanted in recent years by the term Coordinated Universal Time, abbreviated UTC. (The reason for the UTC abbreviation has to do with international diplomacy more than anything else. The French would say Temps Universel Coordonné resulting in an abbreviation of TUC, and the English abbreviation would have resulted in CUT, so the compromise UTC was agreed upon, with speakers of other languages apparently having no say in the matter. I wonder how long it took the diplomats to work out that one.)

So, why is UTC associated with the letter Z? A little 'googling' around on the internet revealed a couple of interesting facts. It seems to be generally accepted that Sir Sandford Fleming, a Canadian railway planner and engineer, outlined a plan for worldwide standard time in

the late 1870s. Following his initiative, in 1884 delegates from 27 nations met in Washington, D.C., for the Meridian Conference and agreed on a system basically the same as that now in use.

However, there seems to be another contender for the honour of developing the 24 time world wide time zone system. According to an article by Mr Harold F. Maybeck, the first person to propose dividing the world into 24 equal 15° time zones was an 18th century American sea captain named Nathaniel Bowditch, who the author claims, was annoyed at the prestige held by the Royal Navy in matters navigational. Bowditch wrote a mariner's manual, published in the early 1800's, entitled *The American Practical Navigator* in which, it is said, he first proposed the 15° time zones, and apparently, assigned them the alphabetic characters in use to this day. Under the Bowditch system the zero (0) meridian which passes through Greenwich England was designated Z, presumably for the numeral 0.

Notice of AGM

Saskatchewan Amateur Radio League 2005 Annual General Meeting

Galaxy Room A
Saskatoon Travelodge Hotel
106 Circle Drive West
Saskatoon

2:30PM to 4:00PM

Agenda Includes

Elections
Reports to the Board
Plans for the Year
Presence on the Internet

If you have an item that needs to be on the agenda, please forward it to the secretary:

Ron Sather VE5RMS
rmsather@sasktel.net

Quoting Maybeck: *"This leaves us with the dilemma...there are 24 hours in the day...and there are 25 time zones (since each half zone either side of the International Date Line became a designated zone). Therefore 25 letters of the English alphabet were used in Bowditch's time zone notations. What letter was left out? Since the sound for the letter "J" was frequently not found in many languages of the time, Bowditch left out the letter "J".*

Now for the trivia of the day, the "original" expression "In jig time" was a sailors expression, meaning "in no time at all", because there is no "JIG" time zone. Since the early days of English seafarers a phonetic alphabet has been in use. U.S. NAVY Signalmen have used such phonetic designations for over 200 years. The letter "J" (missing from Bowditch's time zone designations) has been spoken as "JIG" for over 200 years."

So what about the other time zone designators beside the Z or Zulu designator? Well, it really is quite logical. Because the letter 'zed' has been assigned to the zero meridian time-zone, it is simply a matter of assigning alphabetic characters for zones east and west of the zero-meridian. Bowditch chose to label each 15° zone east of zero meridian from A to L along with M for the 7.5° half-zone east of the IDL. Then the first zone west of zero, was designated N and subsequent zones were given successive alpha designators until approaching the international date line from the east, where Bowditch designated the remaining "half zone" from 172.5 West longitude to 180 longitude as time zone "Y".

So what are our alpha designators here in British Columbia? Well, here in the Okanagan, we are at approximately 120° west longitude. Therefore, 120° divided by 15° equals eight. So, we are eight time zones west of Zulu, consequently, starting with the letter N, we simply count eight letters of the alphabet thus – N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U. Vernon is in time zone U or Uniform. Folks in the East Kootenay's are in time zone T or Tango.

It can be seen from the above, that strictly speaking, using the letter L to designate local time on a message form is not quite correct. It would seem that the correct procedure would be to use the proper alphabetic designator for our part of the world for local messages. This would remove all doubt as to whether the reference is to some other time zone, although admittedly, we would all probably realize pretty quickly that the message was not originated in the Lima time zone, which would be somewhere in the Pacific Ocean!

This raises another interesting question – what about daylight savings time (DST)? It would seem that in the summer months we would need to use the T or Tango designator in order to indicate that we are now seven hours behind UTC – as I don't believe that Greenwich

also "springs forward." I think however, that one would continue to use the correct indicator for one's own zone, and it is understood that some parts of the world are on DST and some are not. (Saskatchewan for instance doesn't go on DST), so adjusting a time zone east doesn't seem to make sense. I wonder if any of our huge readership can clarify that one.

The common practice for all message traffic passed on high-frequency (HF) circuits, and/or those that are intended for recipients outside of our local time zone, is to designate the time using the Zulu or UTC zone. This gives everyone a common reference for their logs. This is particularly important for contacts into Australasia who are on the east side of the International Date Line and hence a day ahead of us. One can readily see how confusing things could become if everyone used their local time on confirming QSLs.

I hope this has answered any "how come" questions readers may have had about Zulu-time, and that now they can now rest assured that it has nothing at all to do with a particular tribe of fierce warriors in Africa.

Editor Wanted

The Saskatchewan Amateur Radio League is looking for an individual to take on the role of Editor for The QSO newsletter, as the current editor will be stepping down this Summer.

The individual must have a computer and internet connection, software such as Microsoft Word or Publisher, and an eye for detail.

As with all positions within SARL, this is on a volunteer basis. The Editor is aided by an Assistant Editor and regular contributors.

If you are interested, please contact the President, Derek Bereza at ve5sd@sasktel.net.

www.sarl.ca