



October 2003

<http://www.hwcn.org/link/harc/>

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The Hamilton Amateur Radio Club  
 PO Box 91215, Effort Square PO  
 Hamilton, ON L8N 4G4  
 Est. 1932 Inc. 1956

# The Hamilton Amateur

The Hamilton Amateur Radio Club Newsletter - 71 Years of Amateur Radio 1932-2003

## E-town hall on tower policy

*The following note was submitted as e-mail to [ve3dc@rac.ca](mailto:ve3dc@rac.ca)*

The Townsend Committee conducting the National Antenna Tower Policy Review under contract to Industry Canada has established an E-Town Hall Website where interested parties may record their views, comment on other views and make formal submissions. The website will be available 3 September to 10 October.

Amateurs wishing to join the E-Town Hall and comment on tower issues should go to <http://www.antennareview.ca>

This address provides access to both English and French language pages. Amateurs desiring to contribute or comment are urged to ensure that their remarks are clear, concise, factual and courteous.

RAC is preparing a response to the Townsend Committee that will be submitted directly to the Committee; it is also responding as part of the submission being prepared by the Radio Advisory Board of Canada.

## HARC Christmas Party

*Fred VE3GCP – Treasurer*

It's back by popular demand....

You will recall that we held a Christmas Dinner Party last year at the Royal Hamilton Yacht Club and if you were

there, you now it was a great success. Last week I confirmed that we will be there again this year for another beautifully done Christmas turkey dinner. We expect to be able to accommodate a few more people this year. The exec will plan to have those nice door prizes and hopefully something new this year, while holding the price point.

## Next meeting's Speaker

**October 15**

**"Roger Burrough on Telescopes"**

You will recall that Mr. Roger Burrough, owner of Camtech Photographic Services, was our speaker a while ago on the subject of digital cameras. Well, he kept his promise to me and will be returning for the October meeting to speak about telescopes. There are many types of telescopes that are in two basic categories, celestial and terrestrial. There is also the subject of binoculars. If you would like to know which is best for viewing different subjects, how to use them and insider tips on how to buy the best item to suit your needs, then you should be at this meeting on October 15 at 8pm.

As an extra note, I have also confirmed our guest speaker for November will be Mr. Paul Brown, the director of Engineering at Hamilton Hydro. More on that meeting in the next bulletin.

IF you want to be sure that you and your spouse/guests have a seat and especially if you would like to have your group together at a table, please call and exec member to book now. A good idea

**Club meetings – 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday each month (except July and August) - 8pm in the St. John Ambulance Association building, 500 Upper Wellington Street (on the Mountain). Park behind the St. John's building, NOT the Police station. Complimentary refreshments!**

would be to book at the October general meeting. As was the case last year this is a shirt and tie affair. Hope to see you there, the evening of Wednesday the 10<sup>th</sup> of December.

PS, this will be in place of a December general meeting.

## Antennas in the trees

*The following note was submitted as e-mail to [ve3dc@rac.ca](mailto:ve3dc@rac.ca)*

*(I happened to find this on one of the reflectors and thought it timely, just in case anyone was contemplating some wire antenna work BEFORE the snow flies – half the fun, but some just have to! This comes via Eric K3NA, who lives in Boston...ed)*

My suggestion is to place a pair of pulleys in your tree. The first pulley A is attached by tying it around a trunk or limb. This is a permanent installation. The tree will grow over the rope, so tie it loosely to avoid girdling the tree.

The second pulley B is tied to a lifting loop. The lifting loop is a loop that runs from where it ties to B, through the sheave of pulley A, down to ground level (where you can reach it) and back up to the attachment to pulley B. By pulling on the appropriate side of the loop, you can raise and lower pulley B from the ground. The lifting loop can be secured to a cleat that is mounted on the tree trunk. Every year or two you will need to unscrew the cleat and move it to a slightly different location on the trunk. Otherwise the tree will grow around the cleat and you will have to chisel out the lifting loop.

Last, the antenna support rope from the end of your antenna now passes over the sheave of pulley B and off to a counterweight or tie-off point. If you do not have a counterweight on the antenna, I would strongly recommend one.

Use Harken pulleys, available on the web (e.g., from West Marine or Annapolis Performance Sailing) or a local boating supply store. Harken pulleys are designed to spend their life outdoors. Other pulleys that you might

## Important points

### Executive Meetings

HARC Executive committee meets each month, except July and August at Mohawk College in room E031B. All members are invited to attend and participate. The meetings are on the Tuesday following the club General Meeting each month.

### VE3NCF [146.760- & 444.075+ MHz]

HARC operates VE3NCF repeater, located atop the Niagara escarpment. It's open for use by all Amateurs. Special features are a privilege of membership. VE3NCF is part of the VE3RPT link system.

### Check-In and Swap nets

HARC "net" is held every Tuesday evening, except July and August, at 7:30pm. HARC "swap net" follows at 8pm.

### Examinations

Amateur radio licence examinations are conducted the second Wednesday each month, except July and August. Contact the voluntary examiners to make an appointment. Each test \$3.

### Membership Information

Club membership, including all privileges, is \$25 per person, per year, Sept 1 to Aug 31. Additional membership, for immediate family living in the same home, is \$1 per person. One newsletter sent to each address.

### The Hamilton Amateur

The Hamilton Amateur is published ten times each year (not in July or August). Deadline for article submission is the *last Saturday* of the month for the next month's issue. Preferred format is .txt file. Articles will be checked for spelling and grammar, but the author is responsible for the factual content. E-mail submissions to David VE3STT at [ve3stt@rac.ca](mailto:ve3stt@rac.ca)

get from the hardware store will corrode and the sheaves will stop turning.

The advantages of this system are:

1) The antenna support rope will chafe and rub as the tree moves in storms.

This is unavoidable, even with good quality pulleys. But, with a counterweight and 2-pulley system like this, the rate of wear is slow. The antenna support rope will not need to be replaced for several years (depending on the quality of rope).

2) With the lifting loop, pulley B (and the antenna support rope) can be lowered easily to the ground and inspected. The antenna support rope can be replaced when needed. If the antenna support rope fails suddenly, it can be replaced without climbing the tree.

Because the lifting loop moves through pulley A ONLY when raising and lowering pulley B, there is essentially no wear on this rope.

3) A counterweight is highly recommended for any permanent attachment to a tree. Without a counterweight, tree movement will put sudden strain on the antenna wire and support ropes. The antenna itself will flip and swing violently in a storm, causing the feedline to thrash around and adding to the fatigue at the feedline-antenna attachment. Most importantly, the tree will yank (with substantial force) on whatever is supporting the distant end of the wire antenna. If it's another tree, maybe you're not so concerned, although two trees working against each other can easily snap the wire or its support ropes. However, if the distant end is attached to a tower or building, it is a guarantee that the tree will apply forces against the structure, which run all the way up to the breaking point of the wire/support ropes. Think about it: would you want something to yank on your building or tower with a sudden force of half-ton or more?

4) The last advantage of a counterweight system comes in ice storms. The extra weight of ice (and the added wind load it presents, if there is a breeze) adds substantial loads to the anchoring structures (trees, towers, buildings). With a counterweighted system, as weight is added to the antenna and its supports, the counterweight rises, allowing the antenna to sag and greatly reducing the sideways stresses. At my old QTH on a



mountain ridge top in Maryland, my 400foot long dipole string (counterweighted, even though it was strung between two towers), and 160m dipole (one end at the top of a tower, the other supported by a tree), both survived many ice storms. The worst was 1.5" radial ice (3" diameter of ice along the entire length of the antennas) with winds above 60 mph.

Every piece of yagi aluminum was swept off the towers and many trees were destroyed, but the counterweighted antennas survived and were back at normal height when the ice melted. As another example, enormous counterweights are used to support the two VLF transmitting arrays at the US Navy's transmitted site in Cutler Maine: the last line of defence against ice.

Last tip: If one end of the antenna is anchored to a tower or building, do not simply tie the end of the rope to the structure. When you do that, all of the load (largely sideways) is applied to the structure. Structure stresses will be far lower if you place a pulley at this point. Run the support rope over the sheave of the pulley and down to the ground, not straight down, but at an angle so the anchor point is some distance PAST the structure (in the direction opposite of the wire antenna being supported). If you look at the force vectors, you'll see the structure has far less sideways loading. The structure is now largely lifting the support rope to the desired altitude, not attempting to restrain it sideways. This reduces sideways shock loads in storms, and added loads from ice. (And you can lower this end of the antenna for maintenance without climbing the structure, and tension the antenna up in the air while standing on the ground.)

## Contesting

David VE3OJ – Editor

### ARRL Contest Rule Changes

First, a look at some rule changes announced September 10<sup>th</sup> by the ARRL Contest Branch governing ARRL-sponsored operating events. The

## HARC 2003-2004 Executive

### President

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changes become effective November 1, 2003.

(1) In any contest that requires off time, any claimed off-time period must be at least 30 minutes long.

"Remember that listening time counts as operating time when calculating off time," said ARRL Contest Branch Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND.

(2) The Northwest Territories (NWT) multiplier has been renamed "Northern Territories" (NT) for contests that use the ARRL and Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC) section as part of the exchange.

"While not an official RAC section, the territories of VE8, VY1 and VY0 (Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut) are grouped together as a multiplier in the ARRL November Sweepstakes and the ARRL 160-Meter Contest," Henderson explained. "The new name and abbreviation will more accurately describe their makeup." Henderson said use of the NWT abbreviation was inconsistent to designate a multiplier that also included Yukon and Nunavut. Awards for ARRL-sponsored contests will continue to be issued to the VE8, VY1 and VY0 together as the Northern Territories section.

(3) In contests using geopolitical entities as multipliers, the ARRL RTTY Roundup, the ARRL International DX Contest and the ARRL 10-Meter Contest, the official abbreviation for Northwest Territories is NWT. "This change brings the multipliers for those events into a consistent form," Henderson said. ARRL encourages contest participants to update the necessary files for their logging software.



## Nutech Electronics

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**nutech.electronics@sympatico.ca**

**Let the games begin!**

October is generally regarded as the start of "contest season," and the CQP (California QSO Party) is widely

recognized as the big kick-off event. Chances are the contest will have taken place by the time you read this, so I do hope you warmed up the rig and made a few contacts!

The Pennsylvania QSO Party happens the second week in October and I can personally vouch for the fact it's a blast. The state is so close that the tribander is virtually useless, but it's a lot of fun to get on 40m and 80m primarily, and make a ton of contacts.

And, once you've finished exercising the contesting muscles a bit, get ready for the "granddaddy" of them all, the World-famous CQWW SSB! The SSB portion takes place over the last weekend in October and fills the bands with wall-to-wall signals, many from far away places offering great DX opportunities, let alone contesting thrills!

Isn't it appropriate HARC holds in annual Hamfest in the only unoccupied contesting weekend of October? Look for more details on that on the last page this issue of the newsletter!

### Thought

I happened across the following and thought it a fitting way to cap this column as we head into the heat of battle over the winter months.

*If there's an Olympic equivalent to contesting, it's equestrian: you, generally, remain seated for the entire performance, you have to deal with a lot of horse s\*\*\* and you not only have to be fastest, but most graceful and precise too.*

73

Unfortunately I will not be renewing my club membership for the coming year. In fact, this will be my last contribution to the newsletter (indeed editing the newsletter) as I've taken a new job in Kitchener-Waterloo and will be moving sometime before the New Year.

I will be very busy pulling down my tower and carefully packing antennas while I seek a (hopefully much larger) new tract of land on which to plant things aluminium. I have had a great time being what I felt was the contact

## Hamfests

### Hamilton Amateur Radio Club Hamfest 2003

Marritt Hall, Ancaster  
**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18<sup>th</sup>!**  
Admission: \$6  
Talk in: 146.760 MHz

Contact Hamfest Chair for table info,  
OR visit our website.

### Brantford Hamfest 2003

Brantford ARC  
Burford Fairgrounds, South of Hwy  
53 on Park Ave in Burford.  
**SATURDAY, October 4**  
Admission: \$5  
Talk in: 147.150 MHz

### York Region Hamfest

York Region ARC  
Markham Fairgrounds, McCowan  
Road at Elgin Mills Road East,  
Markham.  
**SATURDAY, November 1**  
Admission: \$5  
Talk in: 145.350 MHz

For the latest information, about  
these and other hamfests, visit the  
RAC website (linked off the HARC  
website (URL on the front page)!

person between the club and its members over the last four years editing this newsletter. I hope you've enjoyed some of the stories, information and material contained in these pages. Thanks to all that have contributed over the years, it was a great help and kept the job quite interesting!

I won't be far away, and do hope I'll have a chance to remain in contact with at least a few of you. It might be a great excuse to actually get on the rig and rag-chew now and then...between contests that is!

## Isabel

The following note was submitted as e-mail to [vc3dc@rac.ca](mailto:vc3dc@rac.ca)

Downgraded to a tropical storm by week's end, Isabel vented much of her fury on North Carolina and Virginia

## Renew your HARC Membership!

This note is directed to previous and prospective members of the Hamilton Amateur Radio Club. We are at the beginning of the club year and we look forward to a very informative and interesting program for our meetings. Please take a moment to join or renew your membership in the club. Membership dues pay for our meeting place, auto-patch telephone, repeater expenses, bulletin publication, Hamfest promotion and other operational expenses of the club. A membership renewal form is provided for your convenience. Please mail your remittance or bring it to the October club meeting.

*Emsley Mitchell VE3JAI*  
Membership chair.

Membership Renewal

Name (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Callsign (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Send your renewal to:

**Hamilton Amateur Radio Club,  
Box 91215 Effort Square Postal Outlet  
Hamilton, Ontario,  
L8N 4G4**

after coming ashore on North Carolina's Outer Banks the afternoon of September 18. The flooding it spawned in the Washington, DC area also meant a two-day holiday for federal workers in that city.

Amateur Radio volunteers had been keeping an eye on the storm for several days prior to its arrival, however, and they were ready to assist in providing communication support and weather spotting. The Hurricane Watch Net <http://www.hwn.org> secured its operation September 18 after two full days and nights of dealing with Isabel.



"Many thanks to the dozens of dedicated reporting stations in the path of the storm for their support," said HWN Manager Mike Pilgrim K5MP, "and most of all to all Amateur Radio operators who patiently stood on the sidelines while helping to maintain a clear frequency on 14.325MHz during this high-priority operation." The HWN worked with WX4NHC <http://www.wx4nhc.org> at the National Hurricane Center to provide ground-level weather information for hurricane forecasters.

In North Carolina, ARES member Mike Langley KD4MTT, spent three days at ARES station NC4EB at the North Carolina Emergency Management's Eastern Branch headquarters in Kinston, the primary emergency operation center (EOC) for Isabel.

"Ham radio has been very busy throughout the storm," Langley said. He noted that the Eastern Branch EOC operated with a staff of six, with two on duty for two days or more and the others taking turns. "It's been a pretty busy process."

## September minutes

*Fred VE3GCP – Secretary*

The meeting was called to order at 8:00pm. Two guests were introduced, one of them Steven VA3CUT just received his ticket. Congratulations to Steven.

Past President Mike, handed the gavel over to our new President Mardy VE3QEE, for the 2003-2004 term.

Mardy introduced himself to us with his story of how he became involved in Amateur Radio. His explanation of his call sign, VE3QEE, was most interesting and gave us an insight into Mardy's motivation. Q for Quality, E for Equity, and E for Efficiency. Mardy then introduced the new club executive. Appreciation was expressed to the many members that have served to make the club a success over the past years.

Fred Robinson provided us with a history of Art Ferguson, and the Art Ferguson Award. Art Ferguson was the

### HARC 2003-2004 Chairs

Awards/Volunteer Examiner  
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Field Day  
David Bruton VE3DWJ  
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Flea Market  
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Health/Welfare  
Mary Urbanski VE3OGQ  
905-388-8383

Hospitality  
Bernie Granby VA3XJ  
905-527-7175 [berngran@hwcen.org](mailto:berngran@hwcen.org)  
and  
Ilona Davidson VE3UGM

Membership  
Emsley Mitchell VE3JAI  
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Public Liaison Co-Chair  
Stanley Bolibruch VE3GFE  
905-528-4002

Public Liaison Co-Chair  
Neil Galloway VE3VNG  
905-383-6986

Repeater  
John Vandenberg VE3DVV  
905-692-3802  
[Jvandenberg@mountaincable.net](mailto:Jvandenberg@mountaincable.net)

Swap Net Control  
Frank Love VA3FWL  
905-679-4524

first elected president of the Hamilton Amateur Radio Club in 1932. He presented the award to the club to recognize members who have made a significant contribution to further the image and reputation of Amateur Radio. Fred then turned the floor over to Lorraine MacPherson who presented the Art Ferguson Award to Frank Love VE3FWL.



Frank has been very active in the creation and maintenance of the radio shack at the Canadian Warplane Museum.

**Education Report:** Mardy indicated that we have 6 new basic course students, with a potential 7<sup>th</sup> showing interest.

**Repeater Update:** John Vandenburg confirmed that our repeater continued to operate during the power grid failure in early September. The phone patch shut down but John was able to re-initialize it sometime after the power was restored. Updates have been made to the antenna system and further improvements are being studied.

**Membership:** Emsley reported that we have 36 members renewed. Keep those cheques coming in.

**ARES:** For those interested, HF hurricane watch frequencies have been allocated for the duration of Isabel at 14.325Mhz and 14.265Mhz. These frequencies are for emergency use only and should be avoided for routine QSO's.

Sympathy cards were sent to the families of VE3DQU and VE3FBK. Get well cards were sent to VE3DDQ and VE3DLK.



## Hamilton Amateur Radio Club

# Hamfest 2003

An amateur radio, computer  
and electronics flea market

\*\*\* Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2003\*\*\*

**Talk-In: VE3NCF 146.760-**

**Location:** Marritt Hall (Ancaster Fair Grounds) On Highway #53 -  
Between Southcote Road and Kittymurry Lane.

**General Admission \$6.00**

Doors open to vendors at 7am & general public at 9am.

### Vendor Information:

**ALL TABLES NOW - \$ 10.00 (plus admission)**

**Reservations: Mardy (905) 648-0187**

**e-mail: Mardy VE3QEE meedson@cogeco.ca**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55pm.

## President's message

*Mardy VE3QEE - President*

Canadian Radio Amateurs are privileged to use large sections of the radio spectrum "for the purposes of self-training, intercommunication or technical investigation... solely with a personal aim and without pecuniary interest." (RIC-3 p.1) Honouring that privilege it has been a tradition among "hams" to learn about radio, to experiment, to freely offer public service, and, most importantly, to be on the airwaves.

Do you check in to our weekly net, at 146.76+ on Tuesday nights at 7:30pm? Are you a regular on some of the other nets around the province, or beyond? Nets are a great way to establish a routine that involves using the radio. Checking into a net doesn't demand a lot of time or preparation. The benefit you get is knowledge that your equipment is working, and practice in communicating effectively. Others learn who you are, if not in person, at least by voice. Hearing you, other hams feel they are part of a larger community, and the airwaves are "alive".

There is a lot to learn about our changing hobby. Do you subscribe to a publication like The Canadian Amateur, the journal we receive as members of

RAC? Other journals like CQ magazine, and QST are available on the newsstand every month. Of course the ARRL Handbook, which is updated yearly, is the ultimate reference for all aspects of the Amateur Radio hobby. The internet too is becoming an important source for information. If you have a computer there are sites where you can get programs and information just for the mouse-clicking.

See articles about equipment posted by users at [www.eham.net](http://www.eham.net), look up a call sign [www.buck.com/cgi-bin/do\\_hamcall](http://www.buck.com/cgi-bin/do_hamcall)

What is PSK-31?

[www.kender.es/~edu/psk31.html](http://www.kender.es/~edu/psk31.html)

Building projects [www.farcircuits.net](http://www.farcircuits.net)

One of the most alarming developments impeding our access to the airwaves is the current experimentation by electric utilities that want to deliver broad-band internet service over existing power lines by modulating the 60 cycle power signal. In areas where this is being tried amateur radio equipment picks up the signal everywhere on the dial because it is being radiated by the power lines. Information produced by ARRL about this "BPL" threat can be found on the web at:

[www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc](http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc)

If you have a high speed internet connection and can download and play the movie clips you'll be astounded by what they demonstrate.

As the new executive begins another club year, we are working to bring you informative speakers, plan social events and inform you of opportunities for participation. We are proud of our many members who provide these opportunities through the contest group, the Warplane Heritage station, field day activities, the fleamarket, the Christmas Party the weekly swap and check-in nets, the education program and all of the other activities that take place during the year. We hope you will help make the year a success by joining in the activities and by being active on the air. Hope to see you at the October meeting and hear you on the check-in net.