



West Island Amateur Radio Club Bulletin

March 2011 Edition

Upcoming Meeting - March 21st 2011

This month's topic

“A to Z of Electronics Homebrewing”

The design and construction of a medium complexity project including the making of a printed circuit board.

Given by Gilles Renucci VE2TZT

President's Message and Report

by Ken Fraser, VE2KLF

>>> WI ~ ARCS <<<

Around the QTH:

As I mentioned in the February 2011 news bulletin, I now have my cable modem and WiFi router up and running with my netbook and plan to add a few desktops and a laptop (to be repaired) to the local network. This is to include a printer share port for which the router provides a USB port. Next I need to relocate the printer to a convenient place. So far there do not appear to be EMC problems with the router, but further testing is required.

February 2011 MTG:

Our new agenda set up with the coffee break and the 50/50 draw at the end of all business, discussions and presentations appeared to be accepted by those present. We shall continue with this format unless there are serious objections from the membership.

For this meeting Malcolm, VE2DDZ brought us up to speed on this year's Canadian Ski Marathon (February 12 and 13) which he attended along with Jean-François, VE2TBH. They provided part of the CSM communications from a checkpoint on the trail. At the last minute the CSM ski route was changed from Lachute to Buckingham to a North – South arrangement North of Montebello due poor trail conditions. This, of course, meant that there was no traffic on the VE2RM repeater as planned. The slide show was organized and presented by Malcolm VE2DDZ to our group was superb in that it illustrated the checkpoint set up especially with our VHF communication link. Another familiar face appeared on one of the slides ... that of François, VE2AAY ... another veteran of the CSM communications operation. Hopefully other members will come on board for this two day event, which depends on a lot of volunteers and organization, in the coming years.

George, VE2NGH filled us in on the ongoing planning for our tri-club (WIARC, MARC, CUARC) Field Day in June. A meeting will be held on Mar 17 at Concordia (Loyola) to continue with the planning.

Bob, VE2AXO led a short discussion on Software Defined Radio and Ken, VE2KLF brought a few of the available pictures from a recent issue of QEX (Jan/Feb 2011). Here N2ADR built an HF SDR transceiver from scratch using an

Altera FPGA and an ADC (rx) and DACs (tx) plus a PA. The only analog part on the circuit board was a three section, low pass filter to clean up the (tx) waveform before it went to the PA.

March 2011 MTG:

Tentative agenda:

- Further on Field Day plans ... VE2NGH, George
- Hamfest survey ... VE2WTQ, Terry
- Happenings at the Solder-Spot ... VE2OFH, Paul
- a short discussion on Electrical Power Grid monitoring systems for failure avoidance ... VE2AYU, Reg
- a discussion on the production of printed circuits and other useful techniques in the "shack - lab" will be given by VE2TZT, Gilles
- Coffee/drinks/cookies, 50/50 draw and rag chew until the doors close

Notes:

Be there ...

C U on the 21th of March – 2011 ...

de .ken. VE2KLF

What Happened **Minutes of the February 2011 WIARC meeting**

by Keith Glashan, VE2MTL

Minutes of the February 2011 WIARC meeting by Keith Glashan VE2MTL

The meeting began at 19:56. Ken VE2KLF presided and welcomed the 19 attendees. There was the usual roll call with call signs. The details of the Monday February 21, 2011 meeting are as follows.

1. Visitors: Although Dan has attended before, this was his first time attending with a call sign. Congratulations to Dan VA2KEY. While we are at it, Eamon VE2EGN joined the Club tonight, making him our latest new member. As well, I should make special mention that we had a visit from Dragan VE2ZIV. Now, Dragan has been a member for as long as I can remember. He now lives a distance away. Although he cannot attend regularly, he did show up to pay his membership dues for 2011 and reconnect with his old buddies.

2. Ski Marathon: The Canadian Ski Marathon is a major annual event that attracts large numbers of

participants in several categories. Malcolm VE2DDZ attended the event this year with Jean-François VE2TBH and gave us a complete report on all its activities. They happened to meet up with François VE2AAY who was there providing mobile communications for one of the operations vehicles. Malcolm explained how last minute decisions forced the event to take a "loop" route this year. The skiers started in Montebello and followed a trail that took them back to Montebello at the end of the day. The entire procedure was repeated on day two. Malcolm and J-F were stationed at check point 5. There are 6 check points in all. He explained that the VE2CRA 146.94 repeater, normally located in the Ottawa area, was moved to Montebello for the occasion. It was used for a net that was set up to cover the entire course. Local communication was carried out using 146.52 simplex. Malcolm had prepared a slide show of pics he took and included those taken by J-F VE2TBH. There were lots of shots showing skiers and radio equipment. Others included food stations, wash rooms, first-aid stations,

ski-waxing areas, and even sleeping areas for the Gold class skiers. Thanks, Malcolm for a comprehensive report.

3. Field Day 2011: George VE2NGH updated his plans for field day. He explained that the coordinated event with MARC and the Concordia University Amateur Radio Club looks like a "go". So far, all participants are in favour. He acknowledged that the event will most probably be moved away from the Morgan location this year. He also touched on some of the rule changes for this year. Of special importance is the fact that we can add a complete VHF/UHF station and remain in the 1A class. He explained that he will be looking for equipment and will be making further requests at our next meeting.

4. Project Team: Paul VE2OFH made a pitch for his 'Project Team' ideas. He will need a place. He would like to start in April. He suggested that this effort could involve Hams from other clubs as well. So here's your chance to grab your gun and start soldering.

5. **RFI:** Eamon VE2EGN brought his HF rig and a loop antenna to the meeting. He is trying to solve some serious RFI problems situated around his QTH. He claims the source may be radiation from power lines in his area. The interference seems to be present right across several of his HF bands. Any ideas, anyone?

6. **SDR:** Bob VE2AXO talked briefly on Software Defined Radio (SDR). For those interested, Google 'SDR Kit'. Kits start about \$20 for one band. Transceivers start around \$75. He suggested that you check out several of Google's findings and especially FLEXRADIO.COM. Ken VE2KLF added comments and slides on an all-digital transceiver for HF using an FPGA and software. He suggested that you read the article in QEX magazine Jan/Feb 2011 issue. Thanks Bob.

7. **Auditor:** There was a motion by Sheldon VA2SH to have Vern

VE2QQ audit the Club books. It was seconded by Paul VE2OFH.



Lots of chatting as usual at our meeting

8. **After the Break:** Surprise! Surprise! WIARC has changed the format of its monthly meeting. At least, it was changed for tonight. Because we had so much material to cover regarding club activities, we decided there would not be enough time available for a formal talk and speaker. Consequently, we thought that we would have the 'Coffee Break' at the end of the meeting. This way, members could have as much time as they wished for the social aspect of our meetings. Personally, I find that the coffee breaks

never seem long enough. There are always some members that you didn't have time to chat with. We're not sure if this format will be followed every month. Let us know what you think. From the pic on the left, it looks like there was a whole lot o' talkin' goin' on.

This month the winner of the 50/50 draw was Dragan VE2ZIV. Congratulations, and thanks for donating your winnings to the Club.

This month, thanks to Ken and Bob, there were more great radio books and magazines available as door prizes.

Something Punny - Police were called to a day care where a three-year-old was resisting a rest.

The meeting adjourned at 21:38. It was followed by an extended coffee break and goodies. See you March 21st 2011.

73, & good DX de Keith VE2MTL

WIARC Hamfest/Auction Survey

For years the WIARC Hamfest/auction has been a key event in our club's calendar. Years ago we could expect upwards of 200 people attending this event and the quality of goods auctioned or sold were of high standard. Everyone had a great time at this event. The hamfest/auction was both a fund-raiser and a social event. Unfortunately this event no longer attracts the same crowds nor do we see the same quality and quantity of equipment up for grabs. Our hamfest/auction is in a state of decline.

This decline may be simply the sign of the times. There are multiple reasons that may explain the demise of this event. It seems that I have heard them all. Most folks say that the quality and quantity of good deals are no longer available. Hams prefer to buy or sell on eBay rather than wait for the next hamfest. Not many hams are interested in do-it-yourself projects (that may be changing). Hams are aging and just don't have the energy or initiative to host a hamfest. Some hams are down-sizing so there is less room for new found treasures.

How do we deal with this decline? Clearly that is a good question. One idea is to bring in other organizations such as an astronomy club, an emergency service unit, or other service organization. Another is to beef up commercial companies participation. Some clubs open up their tables to anyone just to enlarge the event. Some have suggested that advertising is the key.

We must remember that the final client for this event is a 'ham'. So we need to ask each of ourselves what we want from a hamfest/auction. We need to decide what we want this event to be. Is it a fund-raiser? Is it a social event? What is more important to our membership? Frankly, whichever we decide, we need to support this event if we want to preserve it.

There is a questionnaire about the hamfest/auction online at <http://wiarc.limequery.org/41642/>. If you prefer to fill out the survey on paper, copies will be available at the March meeting.

Please take the time to fill out the questionnaire. Your comments/suggestions are likely the most important part of this exercise. Thank you.

Terry Ladd VE2WTQ
Hamfest/Auction 2011
tpladd@aol.com

Free Flea Market Tables

Flea-market tables available free to members. Members are reminded that there are always tables available at the regular monthly meetings. This practice was very popular years ago. Lately, it seen to have fallen out of practice.

So, if you wish to sell something, or clean out your basement, or do your spring cleaning early, you don't have to wait for the next Hamfest. Just bring those junk boxes, antenna parts, and old rigs to the next WIARC meeting and set up your table at the back of the hall. It's free. It's fun. It's win-win.

\$\$\$ Swap Shop \$\$\$

For Sale: Yaesu FT-60R 2m/70cm Handheld radio in working condition, 999 channels, 0.5/2/5 W on transmit (2m and 70 cm). Included: Battery pack, antenna, AC adapter, belt clip and manual included. Asking 175 \$.

Contact: Bram VE2XCS email: ve2xcs@rac.ca

If you like to advertise an item you wish to part with, please send an email to ve2cwi@rac.ca before the first Monday of the month for publication in that month's edition to the editor attention.

Footnotes About Us

The West Island Amateur Radio Club was founded in 1972

Mailing Address - P.O. Box 884 Pointe-Claire, Quebec H9R 4Z6

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Executives:

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Articles and comments are always welcomed; please submit them before the first Monday of the month for publication in that month's edition to the editor's attention, VE2CWI@RAC.CA

Website: <http://www.wiarc.ca>

Repeaters: VE2RWI VHF - 146.910 MHz (-)

VE2RWI UHF - 443.050 MHz (+) (141.3 Hz CTCSS tone transmitted by both repeaters).

Monthly Meetings

Held the 3rd Monday of every month, except July & August at: Lakeside Heights Baptist Church, 275 Braebrook, Pointe-Claire (West Island part of Montreal). Visitors are always welcomed.

WIARC NETS on the 146.91 Club Repeater

Information Net each Sunday evening at 8PM running for approximately an hour.

All are welcome to participate.