



# REFLECTOR

PO BOX 8895  
HALIFAX NS  
B3K 5M5

March 2015, Volume 76 Number 3  
club web site is [www.halifax-arc.org](http://www.halifax-arc.org)



## Time to curl up with a nice warm radio



HARC Club Station phone number - 902-490-6421

### Executive

President - Brian Allen, VA1CC	489-4656	basailor@eastlink.ca
First V.P. - Chuck Kelly, VE1MDO	402-5502	chuck.kelly@nautel.com
2nd V.P. Paul Legault, VA1PAL	818-9073	pajolegault@g mail.com
Secretary - Jeremy Fowler, VE1JHF	240-4302	VE1JHF@Gmail.com
Treasurer - Jim Guilford, VE1JG	466-2124	jimguilford@gmail.com
Director-at-Large: - Ian Pierce VE1IGP	469-3474	igpearce@hotmail.com
Director at Large (Educational): Scott Verge, VE1SRV	412-3448	scott@ve1srv.net
Station Manager: Alex Tikhomirov, VE1RUS	444-1271	a.texer@gmail.com
Past President - Scott Wood, VE1QD	823-2761	ve1qd@rac.ca
Director Emeritus - Bill Elliott, VE1MR	865-8567	bowser.elliott@ns.sympatico.ca

### Committees/Offices/Prime Contacts

Government & Media Relations – VACANT

QSL Bureau Mgr - Tom Caithness, VE1GTC 477-7081 tom.caithness@ns.sympatico.ca

EMO Coordinator - David George, VE1AJP 466-8723 dgeorge@dal.ca

EMO Trailer coordinator – David Musgrave, VE1EDA 435-4333 ve1eda@rac.ca

Reflector editor - Lynn Bowser, VE1ENT 865-8567 bowser.elliott@ns.sympatico.ca

Reflector Dist. - Carol Wood, VE1HAZ carolwood@accesswave.ca

Membership - Howard Dickson, VE1DHD dhickson@eastlink.ca

Web page content contact – Howard Dickson, VE1DHD dhickson@eastlink.ca

Basic ham course - Scott Verge, VE1SRV 412-3448 scott@ve1srv.net

2015 Flea market Chair – Jeremy Fowler, VE1JHF 240-4302 VE1JHF@Gmail.com

Youth Coordinator - VACANT

Field Day coordinator - VACANT

Safety Officer - Terry Bigelow, VE1TRB ve1trb@eastlink.ca

NSARA Director - Barry Diggins, VE1TRI 861-3719 ve1tri@rac.ca

Honorary Legal Counsel – Paul Radford, VE1ARH

### Non Club Contacts

RAC Atlantic Director - Everett Price, VO1DK vo1dk@rac.ca

RAC Section Manager – Craig Seaboyer, VE1DSS cseaboye@stfx.ca

RAC Assistant Director for HRM Scott Wood, VE1QD, 823-2761 ve1qd@rac.ca

### Take-15 Net Controllers

This will be the rotation.

**We need more net controllers.**

**If you want to join,** contact Bill, VE1MR

March 15	Peter	VE1PJW
March 22	Win	VE1WIN
March 29	Gary	VA1GGM
April 5	Scott	VE1SRV
April 12	Doug	VE1LDL
April 19	Bruce	VE1MLW



### Darwin Awards Nominee -

*An American teenager was in the hospital recovering from serious head wounds received from an on-coming train.*

*When asked how he received the injuries, the lad told police that he was simply trying to see how close he could get his head to a moving train before he was hit.*



The **March 2015 General Meeting** of the Halifax Amateur Radio Club will be held Wednesday, March 18, in the Senior's Room on the 1st floor of the St. Andrew's Centre, 3380 Barnstead Lane, Halifax.

6:30 – 7:30pm - Social Hour with refreshments

7:30 – 8:30pm - Presentation: The Art and Science of Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness  
Presenter: David George, VE1AJP

8:30–9:30pm Regular Monthly Business Meeting

Guests are welcome

*“We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office.”* Aesop

Photos this issue thanks to Gary, VA1GGM, Pauline, VE1PAV Dick, VE1AI and David, VE1AJP

**Deadline for submissions to the April Reflector is Saturday, April 4, 2015**

### GENERAL INFORMATION



Sunday evenings:  
TAKE-15 NET at 8:30 PM

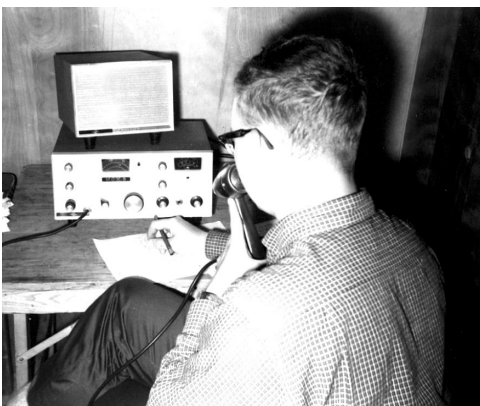
CLUB REPEATERS:  
 VE1PSR - 147.270 MHz + TX=82.5  
 VE1PSR/UHF - 444.350 MHz +  
 VE1PSR/6M - 53.550 MHz -  
                   access tone 151.4 Hz  
 VE1HNS - 146.940 MHz - TX=82.5  
 PACKET: VE1NSD 145.050 MHz  
                   LAN NODE

*Events for Your Calendar*

April 11-12 - Shearwater Hobby Show – To take part in the HARC’s display & demos contact Craig, VE1JMA, at cjmackinnon@gmail.com or by phone at 902-463-8517.  
 April 25-26 – Geequinox  
 May - The MS Walk  
 June 6 – The Down East Flea Market  
 June (the last full weekend) – The ARRL Field Day – A test of emergency preparedness  
 July MS Bike Tour  
 July - Islands On The Air Contest sponsored by the RSGB (Radio Society of Great Britain)

The **fall 2015 Basic Amateur Radio Course** is looking for donations of two “working” 2m or 2m/70 cm radio sets, complete with power supplies, mic’s and antennas. Radio sets can be new or used, but **MUST** be in good working order. These will be awarded once again to two students who demonstrate perfect attendance during the 2015 course. It proved quite an incentive for last year’s students!

-Scott Verge, VE1SRV



**Did you identify** this enthusiastic young amateur radio operator at Field Day, 1965 as Dick Grantham, VE1AI? Yes, that’s who it is!

*What was the best thing before sliced bread?*



**HARC Educational Events Winter/Spring 2015**

**. If interested in attending, please email scott@ve1srv.net at least a week before. (If Scott doesn’t hear from people planning to attend he will NOT hold the course. –ed)**

**March 14** Green Your Station – learn how to operate your station without the use of regular land power. (If interested in attending, please email scott@ve1srv.net by March 7<sup>th</sup>)

**March 28** Green Your Station – learn how to operate your station without the use of regular land power. (If interested in attending, please email scott@ve1srv.net by March 21<sup>st</sup>)

**April 11** Prepper & Ham – an invitation to the Prepper community to learn how to properly integrate Ham Radio into their preparedness.

**April 25** Prepper & Ham – an invitation to the Prepper community to learn how to properly integrate Ham Radio into their preparedness.

**May 09** Learn to Solder – learn how to solder various connectors commonly used by Ham operators. (If interested in attending, please email scott@ve1srv.net by May 2<sup>nd</sup>)

**May 23** TBA

Everyone is welcome at all classes. Please email me if you are interested, All classes start at 10:00 AM.

If any member is interested in taking part in an **ADVANCED RADIO COURSE**, please email scott@ve1srv.net to let me know. If there is enough interest, I will put an **ADVANCED** course on. I **AM ALSO LOOKING FOR ANY ADDITIONAL COURSE IDEAS** MEMBERS MAY DESIRE.

Scott Verge, VE1SRV



The “Come Build a J-pole with Scott” class, held February 21<sup>st</sup>. Here we see Scott instructing the antenna class on the fine art of soldering copper pipe. More pictures on page 5



David, VE1NN, brought in a bungee-corded, fold-up J-Pole antenna that he built for dx-pedition use

**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE: March 2015**

SPRING- only a couple of weeks away- the time changes this weekend (Saturday March 08/15 ) –the ARRL DX Contest is on this week end as well; wow, things are moving along nicely and our radio club is moving forward. Erik (VE1JEH ) has the museum project well under way for the March break period of March 14 to the 22nd. We will be operating from the “ deck “ of the Titanic. This will be an exciting time for kids and parents alike to be able to hear cw and voice transmissions from around the world. Erik is going to provide certificates for those who participate. It was noted that the girl guides had a good time at the club with Gary (VE1WAN ) and Paul-( VE1PAL ).

This weekend has the ARRL dx contest on but by the time you read this, it will be over; however the CQ WORLD WIDE contest will be on at the end of the month and a chance to pick up countries for your DXCC award or IOTA (ISLANDS ON THE AIR ) or even a new prefix. Lots of opportunity to get on the air and make new contacts.

Howard has produced a list of statistics that from the web site. It is very comprehensive and impressive and really shows what pages are visited the most on our web site. Chuck Kelly ( VE1MDO) has put our web site up on the world tuner page that he runs out of his home in Manila and no doubt this has drawn many visitors as well. Chuck’s idea of bringing a friend, co worker, neighbour or kid next door to a meeting is an excellent one... maybe even a ham who has not been around in a while. IT’S GOOD TO MEET NEW PEOPLE.

Just a reminder of up-coming events such as the Flea Market: Field Day: Boy Scouts Jamboree: The MS Bike-athon: The MS Walk –athon and Museum Ships week end: This promises to be an exciting summer for the club and it’s members with a chance to participate in an event. There will be more info as time draws closer to each event. We will require event co-coordinators for some of the above events so pick the one that interests you the most and have fun doing it. It’s great to see such an active club as we have and the number of special events that we participate in.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the meeting. Enjoy this wonderful hobby we call amateur radio- cell phones have nothing to brag about when we can make contacts all over the world from the comfort of our home with out phone numbers or long distance charges or hang ups. what a deal eh!!!!

73’, Brian Allen, VA1CC, President H.A.R.C.

*I bet you’ve never had an antenna fail for this reason –ed*

[https://www.youtube.com/embed/f1BgZlZRfT8?feature=player\\_embedded](https://www.youtube.com/embed/f1BgZlZRfT8?feature=player_embedded)

**The Maritime Amateur**

Ham Radio  
for Maritimers by Maritimers  
[www.maritimeamateur.ca](http://www.maritimeamateur.ca)

*Yes, the guys do hold the tower up. –ed*

[https://www.youtube.com/embed/f1BgZlZRfT8?feature=player\\_embedded](https://www.youtube.com/embed/f1BgZlZRfT8?feature=player_embedded)

Someone asked at the February meeting about the HARC website hits. Here are the numbers as of today (20 February 2015). The home page, for example, represents total hits since Frank set up the new site in 2007 or so. The same for most of the other pages, except for the ones under Education and Events, which I set up when I took over the website management three years ago. I think that the numbers speak for themselves; our Club website is clearly a very important vehicle by which the Club can provide information to members and way beyond. It is therefore extremely important that it be kept current and that everyone provide me with information for the website, and I will do my best to post ASAP.

~~~~~  
Home Page = 195,582 (currently we get on average ~ 5 to 6K per month)

Club

- Member List = 10,157
- Exec & Committee List = 8,536
- Newsletter = 11,591
- HARC News = 5,176

Events

- Upcoming Events = 4,258
- Event Calendar = 3,772

Education

- Brit Fader Scholarship = 6,673
- Basic Course = 9,155
- Course Materials = 4,945
- CW Courser = 7,120
- Self-Study Course = 6,751

Operating

- Repeaters = 9,086
- Nets = 6,840
- Callbook = 9,739
- 2008 Callbook Articles = 2,292

QSL Bureau = 7,948

- QSL Bureau Services = 11,928

D. Howard Dickson,

VE1DHD / VE1ZD

*“I contend that for a nation to try to tax itself into prosperity is like a man standing in a bucket and trying to lift himself up by the handle.”*

*Winston Churchill*

From the Feb., 2015 ARRL Newsletter  
**AMSAT-NA Board Approves Seed  
 Money for Technology Develop-  
 ment**

As a part of its "Design The Next AMSAT Satellite" challenge, the AMSAT Board of Directors has approved \$5000 as seed money for future satellite development. The Board will also seek additional fundraising possibilities.

"We're prepared to return to space in 2015 with a fleet of satellites that will equal, or exceed, the performance and availability to the average ham, of our previously popular AMSAT OSCAR 51," AMSAT President Barry Baines, WD4ASW, said. "Meanwhile, we are preparing for the future looking to potentially leverage new technologies, to provide the best opportunities for enhancing Amateur Radio's presence in space."

AMSAT hopes its Fox-1A CubeSat will be one of its 2015 successes. In January, the CubeSat successfully completed required pre-launch testing, including so-called "shake and bake" vibration and thermal testing. Fox-1A is scheduled to launch in late August on a NASA ELaNa flight .

AMSAT has expressed interest in supporting technology ideas that enhance the utility of the CubeSat form factor to support more robust Amateur Satellite capabilities. These could include microwave technology suitable for use in amateur spacecraft & complementary, low-cost ground systems. Another potential enhancement would be attitude determination & control systems that would point a spacecraft's antennas toward the user, while maximizing solar panel production.

For more details, contact AMSAT VP of-Engineering Jerry Buxton, N0JY. Buxton told the Board that construction & testing of 5 Fox CubeSats continues on schedule.

-- Thanks to AMST News Service

*"What this country needs are more  
 unemployed politicians."  
 Edward Langley, Artist (1928-1995)*

Maritime Amateur -  
 Anniversary Update, March, 2015  
 Greetings all members, I have some interesting news about the website.

I have had several amateurs over the years ask me why I don't include Newfoundland on the website.

When I started this site back on March 1st, 2008 I was the newly elected RAC Section Manager for the Maritimes. Newfoundland had their own RAC Section and Section Manager. They still do today.

I have since stepped down as SM for the Maritimes but continue with the popular website which now has over 180 members from the Maritimes, Newfoundland, Canada and around the world. There has been over 76 thousand visits to the site.

I have decided to start a page for Newfoundland & Ladrador to see if there is interest in amateurs from the province to send in news, informa-

tion, silent keys, new hams, nets, contests and anything else they would like to share with their fellow hams here in the Maritimes.

Coming up on the 7th anniversary of the website this Sunday, please spread the word and hopefully we will start receiving news from VO1 and VO2 land. :)

Remember, if you use Twitter, you can follow the Maritime Amateur website @maritimeamateur and receive immediate updates and changes to the website as they happen. It also delivers news and information from other amateur radio operators and clubs using twitter.

Thanks to all the members and amateurs in general who access the website and supply news and information for the site. Without you this site would not be possible.

73, Jim VE1JBL

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

From the ARRL Newsletter, Feb., 2015

**Canada Funds Amateur Radio  
 Disaster Assistance Project in  
 Saint Lucia**

The Government of Canada will provide more than \$25,000 (CDN) to the Saint Lucia Amateur Radio Club to improve Amateur Radio coverage and communication in the small Caribbean island nation in the event of a disaster. The project will install two repeater systems including solar backup power, train 90 radio operators, and increase coverage for all of Saint Lucia's 18 districts.

"Rising sea levels, coastal erosion, and an escalation in the frequency & intensity of tropical storms & hurricanes threaten homes & businesses across the Caribbean. These situations can have a significant negative impact on sustainable economic growth and result in loss of life," the Canadian Government said in announcing the grant.

According to the announcement, the Repeater System for the Saint Lucia

Amateur Radio Club will provide enhanced two-way communication during normal and disaster conditions, allowing for Amateur Radio coverage in all communities -- and especially in known high-risk areas.

"The project will ensure that, in future hazard events, reliable & accurate information can be passed from communities to response teams, leading to more timely and effective assistance to those communities," the announcement said.

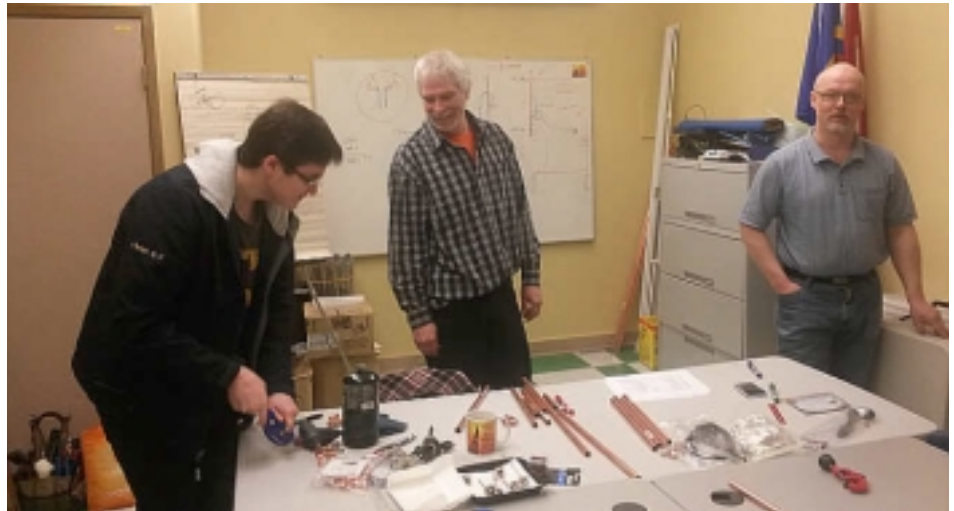
The Saint Lucia Amateur Radio Club secured support for this project through the Canada Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Fund (CCDRM), part of Canada's \$600 million Caribbean Regional Program. The fund is designed to support Caribbean-based non-governmental organizations, community groups, and governmental agencies working at the community level to reduce risks from natural hazards & climate change.

-- Thanks to the Canadian High Commission, Bridgetown

On Saturday Feb 21, 2015 Scott Verge, VE1SRV, with assistance from Tom Caithness, VE1GTC, taught a class on the theory of a **2 meter J-Pole antenna**. Various designs were discussed and the classic version was explained and why certain dimensions provided better reception and greater gain on transmit. We cut the pipe and soldered together 7 J-poles. (Scott still has a couple if anyone is looking for one.) There was a large class - approximately 15 people - all eager to learn and build an antenna. Now we have to wait for the worst storm of the year to erect it. (So for 2015 any Wednesday in the month of January, February or March is ideal.)

73's to all  
Gary Murphy VA1GGM

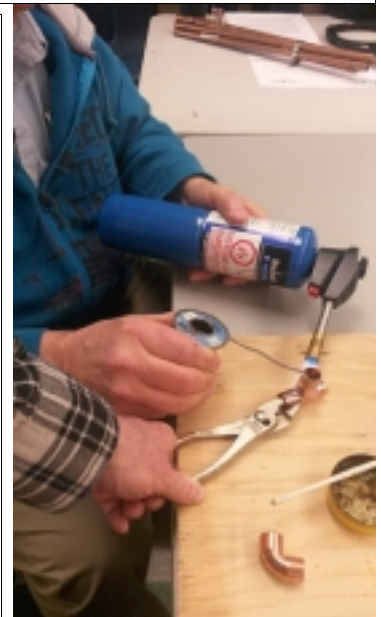
*It is widely acknowledged that the worse the weather is when an antenna is installed, the better said antenna will work; provided you can keep water out of the connectors during the installation. -ed.*



First make sure you have all the raw materials and tools you will need.



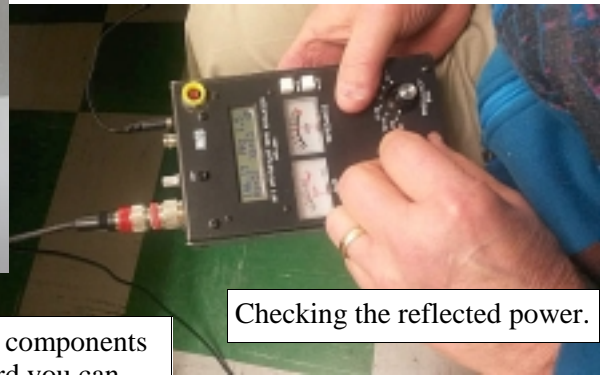
Measure twice, cut once. Clean any corrosion off the surfaces to be soldered using emery cloth or steel wool so the solder can make a solid joint. Heat the item to be soldered, not the solder. Safety glasses are in order. Et cetera



2 hands are just not enough.



Hands away from the hot areas or wear thick gloves



Checking the reflected power.

If you don't have the delicacy of touch needed for soldering electronic components like integrated circuit chips, diodes, transistors, etc. on to a circuit board you can still construct a functional J-Pole antenna. *And skills learned building an antenna using copper pipe could be applied to recalcitrant plumbing projects. Let's see, copper pipe, fittings, torch, heat resistant gloves, solder, rosin, vise, emery paper, fire extinguisher... better yet, call a qualified plumber. -ed*

More photos are at:  
<http://www.gmurphy.ca/Amateur-Radio/HARC-JPole-Class/>

**Halifax Amateur Radio Club  
General Meeting minutes  
18 February, 2015**

Meeting convened 2035

No agenda up for approval

Silent keys: Nigel Service, VE1NPS;  
Wilfred Mackay Wile, VE1BPG;  
Roland Smith, VE1ROL

Acceptance of previous month's minutes moved by Bill, VE1MR, seconded by Chuck, VE1MDO: Accepted.

Members present: VE1HEB, VE1PAV, VE1SRV, VE1HFG, VE1JEH, VE1VBT, W9RBU, VE1MDO (& Dennis), VE1JMA, VE1PYE, VE1IGP, VE1LDL, VE1AI, VE1CAW, VE1AJP, VE1BEL, VE1MR, VA1PAL, VE1BMF, VE1JHF, VE1GFA, Amanda, Jayne

Brian advised that Jeff, VE1ZAC, has donated an ICE filter Model 419, to the club and will supply whatever interface cable is required as well. Brian will send him a thank you note for his donation.

Brian mentioned the upcoming setup at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, and admonished those present that we will need much support from the club to make this work.

There was mention of the upcoming boat show, and that we will be supplying some brochures to the ICOM rep who will be there, for distribution to visitors.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer (and second) were not present, so Brian read the provided financial report. Bill VE1MR moved that the report be accepted. Erik VE1JEH seconded Report Accepted

**Executive Reports:**

Education: Scott, VE1SRV, advised that the Basic Amateur Radio Course will be held starting in September again, and he is looking for the Club to provide 2 radios to be given away for perfect attendance as an incen-

tive.

Scott also advised that there will be an Advanced Course starting on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September and there will be 6 seats available.

Bill, VE1MR, advised that there has been a change to the NSARA Contest, moving it to the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of March, and that rovers can give out multiple counties as long as they can prove they were at the county line.

2<sup>nd</sup> VP: Paul VA1PAL asked for any suggestions or comments on how he may improve things as it is his first night doing the meeting duties.

He also advised that he had been to the local Makerspace meeting recently, and advised they have relocated to a new space.

Jeremy VE1JHF advised those present of his attendance at the memorial service, and of the "final call" for Nigel that was made part of the service, and read the email from the family thanking us for our participation in Nigel's remembrance.

EMO / SAR: Dave, VE1AJP, talked about having backup emergency radio equipment, and admonished those present to check their batteries, power supplies and alternate power sources, to make sure that they are ready to go in case of an emergency. He reported on a body recovery that the SAR team had performed recently of an inebriated man who had wandered off into the woods as was found deceased from hypothermia.

Ian VE1IGP reported that if anyone is looking to rebuild battery packs, that Mighty Small Cars in Burnside had non-standard batteries that could be used.

Membership: Howard VE1DHD was not present, but it was reported that the current membership was at approximately 96 full members.

Calls for anything else from the floor:

Pauline, VE1PAV, brought up the subject of the lack of local amateurs

actually on the air to give some of the newer members someone to talk to.

Craig, VE1JMA, advised that the SWR is very high on the Yagi when connected to the Yaesu 1000, and Dick VE1AI advised that the problem could possibly be water in the traps.

Dick, VE1AI, advised that EMO would like us to expand our 900 MHz capabilities to the Fall River JEM site and that we will have to look into that in the near future.

Ian, VE1IGP, admonished everyone to be careful when walking on the ice that is very prevalent lately.

Scott, VE1SRV, advised that there will be a J-Pole building course this coming weekend.

Door Prize Draw: won by Scott VE1SRV

50/50 Draw: won by Scott VE1SRV.

Meeting moved adjourned by Bill, VE1MR.

Meeting adjourned at 2105

Respectfully submitted  
Jeremy Fowler, VE1JHF  
HARC Secretary



**Research Position**

Cambridge University in England has an opening for a PhD chemical engineer to do a research project on chocolate.

The Dept. of Chemical Engineering & Biotechnology wants someone to "investigate the factors which allow chocolate, which has a melting point close to the temperature of the human body, to remain solid and retain qualities sought by consumers when it is stored and sold in warm climates.

The BBC, reporting this, said that the project is "mainly experimental" but demands advanced mathematics.

Apply by August 29.

Source – The Montreal Gazette

**Listening to the world – WITHOUT a radio!**

If time, travel or resources make it difficult to listen to radio frequencies, you can listen to your heart's content with just a PC or a smartphone, for free. Globaltuners.com is a free service which allows you to listen to radios around the world, tuning via the website and with the sound through your computer speakers direct from the remote radio. Free registration is required but it's quick and a Premium Level membership is available that offers more radios.

At VE1MDO in Boutiliers Point, I host a Globaltuners radio – using an Icom PCR1000 connected to a large delta loop antenna with a Clifford Labs low noise preamp. A 4 element FM broadcast band yagi is diplexed into the receiver as well, and the system works pretty well from 100kHz to about 500Mhz.

The direct link for my radio is:

<http://www.globaltuners.com/receiver/1289/>

No special software is needed for a PC or Mac and for Android users there is an app called “Global Tuners” at

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.amaslyuk.gt>.

One thought that has been raised is that we might consider using my Globaltuners radio to stream the various nets HARC is involved in so people could listen even if they don't have a radio or are traveling out of the area. The system supports many people tuned into the same radio, but of course, only one can tune. So – to make this happen, all someone needs to do is log into my radio a few minutes before the net and publicise the URL for anyone who wants to tune in.

Another use is to select a radio on the other side of the world and listen to your own ham transmitter as it sounds where the receiver is located. There are several seconds of delay in the system so you can talk and then hear yourself.

It's also technically possible to use a remote radio to listen to a DX station that interference is making it hard for you to hear from your station, although this is frowned on by many.

If you happen to be interested in listening to aircraft communications over HF, I also host receivers of most HF aviation frequencies at

<http://www.liveatc.net/feedindex.php?type=hf>.

There are 20 radios all streamed to this page located in Boutiliers Point. This is also a free service.

Enjoy! 73, Chuck, VE1MDO

*One tequila, two tequila, three tequila, floor.*

**Radio Shack lost its way when it ditched its hobbyist customers**

From The Economist

ON FEBRUARY 5, the day the chain of Radio Shack electronics stores filed for bankruptcy, the mail brought your correspondent a \$35 Raspberry Pi 2-credit-card-sized Linux computer he had ordered online weeks before. The 2 events were wholly unrelated. Yet, the coincidence could not was a poignant reminder of all the developments over the decades that brought Radio Shack low.

The hobbyists who fuelled Radio Shack's rise (and made its stores the go-to place for electronic parts for home-made amplifiers, radio receivers, stereo equipment, even TV sets) had passed or gone elsewhere. Today's “maker movement” is as active as the hobbyist & do-it-yourself communities of decades ago, but its practitioners do things differently. Radio Shack never responded to the technological changes that were driving its loyal fans away.

At the peak of its popularity in the 1970s, Radio Shack had over 7,000 stores spread across 3 continents. They sold every conceivable electronic knickknack (resistors, capacitors & diodes, cables, test gear & soldering irons).

Their stores offered an array of components hinting temptingly at still other projects to build. Better yet, the sales staff could put a finger on precisely the packet sought, then knowledgeably explain why some other component might do a better job.

No discussion of amateur electronics would be complete without mention of Heathkit, famous for its kits of parts for assembling test gear, radio equipment, hi-fi systems, television sets and home computers. Heathkit was known for the quality of its manuals. They provided not only detailed step-by-step instructions, but also the theory behind the product being assembled.

Things started going pear-shaped for suppliers of electronics kits in the 1980s. A decade earlier Radio Shack—spurred on by its success with products for citizens-band radio—introduced the TRS-80 personal computer. The TRS-80 (Tandy Radio Shack computer using an eight-bit Zilog Z80 microprocessor) came factory-built—not as a kit. This at a time when early PCs, such as the Altair 8800, had been sold only in kit form. The “trash-eighty” hit the market around the same time as the first Commodore & Apple computers and, for a while, outsold both of them.

Numerous derivatives followed.

Your correspondent bought a TRS-80 Model III and promptly replaced its white-on-black television tube for a green-on-black screen. He also added a third-party board to remap the read-only memory so it could use the popular CP/M operating system rather than Radio Shack's limited TRS-DOS. But that was the limit of the tinkering possible with such a factory-built product. The Commodore & Apple machines were even more locked down.

From then on, Radio Shack became hooked on pricier, pre-assembled products. When kits & components dominated its business, the average sale in Radio Shack's busy stores was

*(Continued on page 9)*

## From the Mail Bag



I am very happy to report the Maritime Amateur website has just passed 75 thousand visits to the site. I would like to thank everyone for the visits, news articles and support for the site over the years. Without you the members and hams in general this site would not have happened. Greatly appreciated.

Remember, if you use Twitter, you can follow the Maritime Amateur website @maritimeamateur and receive updates and changes to the website as they happen. It also delivers news and information from other amateur radio clubs and sites that have twitter.

We now have 129 twitter followers.

73, Jim VE1JBL  
<http://ve1jbl.webs.com/>

Thought this might be of interest to many of the club members.

Tx Factor is a British series that was started Feb 2014 and at present has 7 episodes. Each episode covers different aspects of the hobby and usually contains about 3 different topics. The first one of the series covered Marconi, repeaters and SOTA. The episodes are about a 1/2 hour in length and very well presented with excellent video work in HD.

The actual site is  
<http://www.txfilms.co.uk>

Youtube also has a list of the episodes at  
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLG34oDNUPhkTV275iiunkSbO9Y6WYvNrT>

73, John VE1CDD

Best Ham Radio Commercial Ever!  
 Kevin, VE1KK

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=hxU1ZhINaHk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=hxU1ZhINaHk)

Check out the 2nd video on this add for the Vero Telecom Dual Band Radio to see how surface mount components are put on a board....

<http://www.verotelecom.com/~verotele/Dualband-Mobile-Radios.htm>

- Ken, VY2RU

For those interested:  
 Google Earth Pro is now FREE

<http://www.google.com/earth/download/gep/agree.html>

Credentials are your email address and "GEPFREE".

Hal, VE1LV & Kevin, VE1KK

Tower climbs courtesy of Chris, VA1CDB

[https://www.youtube.com/embed/f1BgZIRfT8?feature=player\\_embedded](https://www.youtube.com/embed/f1BgZIRfT8?feature=player_embedded)

[https://www.youtube.com/embed/f1BgZIRfT8?feature=player\\_embedded](https://www.youtube.com/embed/f1BgZIRfT8?feature=player_embedded)

I made an interesting find which others may find useful.

RadioShack is shutting down or selling off over half of its 4,000 stores in the U.S. Store stock is being liquidated. I have just found out that Princess Auto is selling RadioShack branded merchandise at great prices. I have purchased recently a 105 piece resistor kit and a 66 piece LED kit both in large reusable storage containers.

I also purchased a couple Make Shed Mintronics Survival kits containing over 60 pieces of assorted electronic components. Each kit was priced under \$10.00! The stock varies each week with limited supplies of everything. I also see lots of assorted cables, adapters and Solar Cells in stock currently.

Hurry in for best selection!

-David, VE1AJP

No One in the Shack as Station Logs 4200+ Contacts in ARRL DX CW Contest (02/24/2015)

The group of six operators operating as K3TN in the recent ARRL International DX Contest (CW) may have made Amateur Radio history by mounting the first completely remote-controlled multioperator contest effort. The scattered K3TN team worked via the Internet through the station of Jack Hammett, K4VV, on Catoctin Ridge in Northern Virginia. All of K4VV's operating positions were vacant over the February 21-22 weekend, because the operators were elsewhere, and one participant even managed to operate during the contest from two states — Maryland and Florida.

For the entire article go to  
<http://www.arrl.org/news/no-one-in-the-shack-as-station-logs-4200-contacts-in-arrl-dx-cw-contest>

Thanks to Barry Manuel, VE1JRG

*Darwin Award Nomination – The chef at a hotel in Switzerland lost a finger in a meat cutting machine and after a little shopping around, submitted a claim to his insurance company. The company expecting negligence sent out one of its men to have a look for himself. He tried the machine and he also lost a finger. The chef's claim was approved.*





25 February 2015

To all radio amateurs



Vienna International Amateur Radio Club (VIARC) informs that the callsign 4U2U, operated by Andrey Fedorov, RW3AH, on 24 October 2014 was not authorized by any of UN authorities to anyone, including VIARC. 4U2U shall be considered as an unauthorized callsign, and any of contacts with 4U2U shall not be verified.

Please do not send any QSL requests of the contacts with 4U2U to VIARC, 4U1VIC. None of them will be confirmed.

Jun Tanaka JH4RHF

The President, Vienna International Amateur Radio Club, 4U1VIC

Vienna International Centre, Wagramerstrasse 5, Box 200, Vienna, A-1400 AUSTRIA

Safety tip: This welder's survival instinct should be telling him to NOT spray grinding sparks over his welding tanks, hoses & regulator. And is he wearing goggles?



*Radio Shack (Continued from page 7)*

said to be \$30. By contrast, the first TRS-80 sold for \$600. Later systems cost \$2,000 and up. That was well beyond the reach of Radio Shack's hobbyist following. Besides, with the introduction of home computers, a generation of enthusiasts taught themselves to program, and then whiled away their spare hours writing software instead of soldering components onto circuit boards.

Radio Shack's migration from components to commodity products gathered pace after AT&T's telephone monopoly was dismantled in 1982. Subscribers became free to buy their own telephone equipment, instead of having to rent it from Ma Bell. Many retailers rushed to offer phones, answering machines, and with all the home telephone paraphernalia. In so doing, Radio Shack found itself squeezed between big-box retailers and specialist telephone suppliers.

After a failed attempt to build its own chain of big-box stores, Radio Shack subsequently sold its six most profitable outlets to Fry's Electronics. The only surprise was that Radio Shack limped on for as long as it subsequently did.

Could Radio Shack have prospered if it had stuck with its loyal hobbyists? Fry's Electronics did. Since its

founding in 1985, Fry's has managed to do all that Radio Shack ever dreamed about: sell consumer electronics, household appliances, mobile phones, computer hardware & software, and electronic components & circuit boards, while also offering in-store hobbyist advice & repair work.

Most electronic hobbyists have long since abandoned Radio Shack for shopping online or in the well-stocked aisles of electronics superstores. All too often, your correspondent has found himself going to Fry's for a \$7 cable, only to come out with a new motherboard that was on special offer, plus a further 8-gigabytes of memory—handing over \$150 or more for the pleasure in store. That's the kind of fat-margin business Radio Shack abandoned for the cut-throat world of selling mobile phones.

That modern electronic products like the Raspberry Pi come pre-assembled says much about how the hobbyist movement has evolved. True, Arduino boards—a series of open-source microcontrollers from Italy, with numerous extension cards and other circuits—can still be bought in kit form for home assembly. But today's enthusiasts get their kicks more from connecting & programming electronic parts to do useful things, rather than making a box of tricks from

scratch and having the thrill of seeing it work for the first time.

The reason for this? By the late 1980s, integrated circuits and whole systems-on-a-chip, had begun to replace discrete components. Meanwhile, "surface-mount" technology started to displace "through-hole" method of soldering individual components to printed-circuit boards. Surface-mounted components were smaller, cheaper, more robust and could be packed closer together to form compact units.

Unfortunately for hobbyists, surface-mounting did not lend itself to traditional soldering. The tiny components had minuscule feet for connectors instead of lengthy wire leads that could be easily grasped by even dumpy fingers. The electronics industry adopted an automated "reflow soldering" process for bonding the miniature components to the printed-circuit board. Such costly equipment, put an end to the era of the hand-soldered circuit board.

Where does that leave the digital tinkerers of today? To some extent, the maker movement has become the home for many a do-it-yourself enthusiast interested in robotics, drones, 3D-printing as well as electronics. Like the kit-builders before them, today's makers adhere to much

*Radio Shack (Continued from page 9)*

the same ethos of "learning through doing."



Lately, the maker movement has attracted the attention of educators, as a way of getting youngsters interested in science, technology, engineering & mathematics. The satisfaction & insights that come from making things on the bench and seeing them work in practice could inspire countless young minds to delve deeper into the nature of things. Many might then find that they had embarked upon a lifetime's adventure of learning and discovery.

**Contesting** – Love it? Like it? Never even tried? Not enough time for an entire contest? Don't like to play alone?

Arrange to "team up" with one or more other hams to go in to the club station to operate a contest or a part of a contest.

*Definition - Sarcasm:*

*The gulf between the author of sarcastic wit and the person who doesn't get it.*

**DONATIONS FOR BRIT FADER SCHOLARSHIP TRUST**

Since 1985 the Halifax Amateur Radio Club has sought to set up a scholarship fund for post-secondary technical education for ham radio license holders in honour of Brit Fader, an outstanding Nova Scotia radio amateur who died in 1990.

Brit Fader Scholarship Trust has been approved by Revenue Canada as a charitable organization. The Trust will issue official income tax receipts for all donations made to the scholarship fund.

We urge each club and each radio amateur to consider making a donation to the Trust.

Donations should be made payable to Brit Fader Scholarship Trust and be accompanied by the enclosed donation form. Send the enclosed form and your donation to:

Halifax Amateur Radio Club  
 P.O. Box 8895  
 Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 5M5  
 Attn: Brit• Fader Scholarship Trust

**DONATION FORM – BRITT FADER SCHOLARSHIP TRUST**

I direct that the enclosed gift to the Brit Fader Scholarship Trust, Registration number 0984971-25 (and any property into which it is converted) be held for a period of not less than 10 years. This permits the Trust to keep my donation as capital and use the interest for scholarships.

Amount of Gift: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Gift: \_\_\_\_\_ .

Name of Donor: \_\_\_\_\_ .

Address of Donor: \_\_\_\_\_ .  
 \_\_\_\_\_ .

Make cheques payable to BRIT FADER SCHOLARSHIP TRUST. (An Official Income Tax Receipt will be issued)

Signature of Donor \_\_\_\_\_ .