



# **OAKVILLE A.R.E.S. GROUP**

## **Newsletter**

Communication between two parties only happens when the message is Sent, Received, Understood and Acknowledged. Everything else is just noise.



**MAY, 2009**

## **PUBLIC SERVICE REPORT**

Two events took place in April where A.R.E.S. Members were involved:

### **\*\*\* MERCEDES-BENZ 10K\*\*\***

The Mercedes-Benz 10K was held on **Sunday, April 26, 2009** at Appleby College, (west-side of campus), in Oakville.

The events included a 10k run and a 10k power walk. Runners started at 8:30 am, and power walkers started at 8:35 am.

Weather was cool with light drizzle, excellent running conditions.

The following A.R.E.S. members provided support on race day:

Headquarters at Appleby/central command: VA3NV, VE3JUZ  
Info table: VA3JDA

Medical tent: VE3KRA (Burlington)

Logistics Shadow: VA3RWY

On-course aid station director: VE3QSK

Start line (with race director): VE3OGP

Finish line (with race director): VE3OGP

Spotter (4<sup>th</sup> & Lakeshore):VA3PRE (Milton)

Aid station 1: VA3SBB

Aid Station 2: VA3IPC

Aid Station 3: VA3DDA

Motorcycle Mobile: VE3DDL

APRS: VE3OGP

Observation Point 1: VA3PRS

Observation Point 2: VE3CPQ

Spare: VE3RHF

Main radio operations took place on **146.580 SIMPLEX**. UHF was assigned to the shadow group.

## **\*\*\*OAKVILLE M.S. WALK\*\*\***

Oakville A.R.E.S. assisted the Oakville REACT group with radio operations at the MS walk-a-thon on April 19, 2009. Most of the radio traffic was on the REACT VHF channels with some backup on the OAK VHF repeater.

## **NET REMINDERS**

A.R.E.S members are encouraged to check into the two weekly nets run in the Halton Region.

The Oakville A.R.E.S. net takes place each Monday night at 7:30 pm, local time, on the VHF repeater, VE3OAK, 147.015 MHz.

On Tuesday evenings the HRECT net runs at 7:30 pm on VE3ADT, 444.125 MHz.

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

With the Ontario Government intending to implement some kind of Incident Command System the following seems as relevant now as it was 2 years ago.

\*\*\*

From the ARRL ARES E- Letter:

The following is a summary and perspective of two vital ARES issues--training and recruitment--provided in the landmark report of the ARRL National Emergency Response Planning Committee of two years ago, which continues to resonate today. Principal author is Kay Craigie, N3KN, chairman of the committee and currently the ARRL's First VP. --

K1CE

For many years, Amateur Radio has longed to be taken seriously by governmental authorities as a professional-quality resource in disaster response. Although there are areas of the country where achieving and maintaining emergency management agencies' respect is still a struggle, Amateur Radio's service during 9/11 and the major hurricane disasters of the 21st century has brought us a new level of respect and new opportunities at the national level.

Being taken seriously as a resource comes with a price, however. It is a price that must be paid by individual volunteers, not in dollars but in precious personal time. When the federal government instituted the National Incident Management System (NIMS), it imposed a set of requirements on state and local emergency management agencies and their personnel. Affected personnel include not only paid employees of emergency management and related agencies but also volunteers such as those in volunteer fire companies, ARES, and RACES.

**If the emergency management agencies are to continue receiving federal funds, personnel must complete a number of FEMA training courses having to do with the Incident Command System (ICS) and NIMS. Individuals who do not complete the training will not be allowed to participate, even as volunteers.**

**These FEMA courses are free of charge, available on line or sometimes in person at emergency management offices, and not particularly difficult. The courses are useful in familiarizing volunteers with the specialized vocabulary and principles of the Incident Command System and showing where communications fits into the ICS structure. This is valuable knowledge, because if Amateurs - particularly those in leadership positions - cannot "talk the talk" then authorities may well assume that we cannot "walk the walk."**

**However, the required courses have little or nothing to do with the specific duties performed by Amateur Radio emergency communicators and may be time-consuming for the volunteer to complete. Just as many volunteer firefighters who have been on the job for decades resent being forced to take courses that they perceive as unrelated to their competency in fighting fires, many experienced ARES communicators have objected to being required to pass a set of government courses that they consider irrelevant and a waste of time.**

**The obligation to pass a list of FEMA courses in order to be allowed to participate with an ARES group that serves emergency management is making it harder for ARES groups to recruit and retain volunteers. For amateurs whose participation in emergency communications is the main thing or the only thing in their Amateur Radio lives, taking these courses is not perceived as an imposition.**

**But what about Amateurs with a less-fierce personal devotion to emergency communications?**

**Most ARES volunteers and prospective ARES volunteers also have various other interests in Amateur Radio. Their desire to take part in emergency communications, no matter how sincere, exists in some kind of balance with their other interests.**

**Being told they must spend part of the limited personal time they have to devote to their Amateur Radio avocation in taking jargon-laden courses could be the last words they hear on their way out the door.**

**Like it or not, these formal requirements are here to stay and more may follow. At the national level, Amateur Radio has earned the respect we always wanted, bringing us closer to the emergency management establishment. The challenge now is persuading both casual ARES volunteers and experienced volunteers to meet the requirements that follow from being part of the system. This will not be easy. The national-level ARRL must be aware of that and develop ways to help local and Section ARES officials bring their volunteers, both old-timers and newcomers, into the new era.**

**Another challenge following from being more a part of the establishment is ensuring that Amateur Radio does not lose that famous ability to improvise and innovate which permits us to accomplish supposedly-impossible tasks. Bureaucracies are by nature inflexible, and disaster plans run to thousands of pages of dense language in small print. A major asset that**

**Amateur Radio brings to any disaster is our ability to decide on the fly when to go by the book and when to close the book and just go. If Amateurs give up the "McGyver" component of our character in order to fit into the establishment whose respect we desire, then we will have been absorbed into the "all else" that typically fails. As a national organization, the ARRL needs the wisdom to help ARES organizations achieve the best balance between being "cowboys" and being "suits."**

**Given the challenges of recruiting and retaining ARES volunteers in the present emergency management environment, the ARRL should improve resources available for outreach to amateurs who are not now involved in and knowledgeable about emergency communications.**

**Amateur Radio's value as an emergency resource is the first item listed in Part 97's statement of the basis and purpose of the Amateur Radio Service. Everyone with a United States Amateur Radio license should feel some duty to be prepared to provide communications in an emergency. Our common experience, however, is that the majority of licensees may give lip service to emergency communications - especially when they want to persuade neighbors to accept their antenna installations - but are not active in ARES, RACES, SKYWARN, SATERN, or similar organizations even in the immediate aftermath of the disasters we have observed over the past five years.**

**The reality is that too few will prepare, even in the highest-threat areas.**

**How do we reach more Amateurs nationwide with the message about emergency communications? If we cannot get uninvolved Amateurs to come to an ARES meeting, then we must go to where those Amateurs congregate. Amateurs with expertise in both teaching and emergency communications are able and willing to develop lively in-person introductory presentations that catch people's interest through hands-on experience with radio equipment, messaging, and so on. These presentations could be distributed by the ARRL and would be suitable for club meetings and conventions. This is not intended to replace or undercut the ARRL's on-line emergency courses but rather to stimulate interest in emergency communications among Amateurs who have never heard of the on-line courses or never considered taking them.**

**An ARRL video showing what ARES communicators actually do both in preparing for and serving in disasters, with examples from many parts of the USA, would also be useful in catching the interest of the uninvolved. The League should pursue the cost effective development of such a video.**

**It is possible that these presentations, whether videos or in-person seminars, may not yield a huge number of new ARES volunteers. However, if we always do what we always did, then we will always get what we always got. Today, "what we always got" is not sufficient to live up to our self-promotion and our growing obligations to government and charitable agencies.**

**The ARRL should begin developing effective universal emergency communications training materials aimed specifically at the Amateur Radio operator who is not already active in emergency communications, to be delivered through ARRL-affiliated clubs and ARRL convention programs.**

**\*\*\***

**It should be noted that the ARRL has acted on a number of points in this report. Locally the Oakville A.R.E.S. Group has begun to attend fleamarkets in the area to promote our group and A.R.E.S. in general.**

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WEEK**

**The week of May 3rd to the 9th is EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WEEK in Canada. Sponsored by Public Safety Canada, you can get more information on this at their web site:**

**[www.GetPrepared.ca](http://www.GetPrepared.ca)**

**It's also a good time to check you GO Kits for expired food, drinks and batteries.**

## **BILL 118**

**On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009 the Ontario government passed Bill 118 without providing an exception to Amateur Radio equipment. The Transportation Minister has already indicated in public that the government is reluctant to make exceptions for various groups through the regulations. The following is an email from Vince d'Eon that has been sent to various Amateur groups and organizations:**

**\*\*\***

**Fellow Ontario Amateurs,**

**I was approached by many of you at recent HamFests in Brampton and Whitby talking to me about Bill 118. I appreciate your thanks and your commentary for my efforts thus far. As a witness to the 118 committee, I had help in the background to write up the presentation I gave, and many thanks to Peter, Andy and the others for their input and wordsmithing.**

**Ontario's Bill 118 passed it's third reading this week. This is the legislation that tells us to put down our hand-held communications devices and drive. This was an expected event and on the heels of it's sister regulation, Bill 126. According to the media and RAC, Bill 118 is expected to have royal assent and become law this autumn.**

**Yet there is not a current specific exemption for Radio Amateurs. The**

**\*ONLY\* exemption within 118 is for Emergency First Responders. There is a hint within the bill that states the Minister may make regulations "prescribing the devices" and "prescribing persons, classes of persons, devices, activities..." -- and this is where our hopeful exemption clauses will fit in. While I am not a lawyer nor a lawmaker, it makes better sense to me to have the exemptions as a small "plug-in-module" (pardon the term) that can easily be opened and closed for change rather than re-opening a much larger piece of legislation such as 118.**

**VA3QV's weblog <http://va3qv.wordpress.com/> has also been following this issue and is offering commentary.**

**For me the issue is clearly a loss of our Federally Granted Privileges, but also the lack of clarity around enforcement and definition of a "hand-held device". When I witnessed to committee I brought along a mobile VHF radio and a handi-talkie. I pointed out the potential for confusion during enforcement on what exactly constitutes hand-held electronics. As Hams we all know that a Microphone is a hand-held electronic device used for communicating despite the fact that it's connected to a larger radio. Perhaps I'm taking the point to an extreme, but what I tried to point out was that the legislation needed better definition so that enforcement wasn't an issue. VA3QV's blog also agrees that enforcement is currently a challenge given the current wording. One of the MPPs on committee asked me to propose better wording, but I told them simply I am not a lawmaker and this is best left to their experts to properly define devices and spell them out clearly. Pure speculation on my part to say, but perhaps this clarity will come with the "plug-in" module(s) of regulation the Minister of Transportation will hopefully introduce before the fall.**

**I have been communicating at length with different individuals from RAC and encouraging them to communicate more to the non-membership in Ontario. RAC has started a new blog service <http://racblog.wordpress.com> and the issue has been well captured there. Others within RAC tell me that the issue has been very top of mind with them for some time despite outward appearances to the non-membership. Further, we were told on the Procomm Net last evening by Allan Boyd VE3AJB, Ontario ARES Section Manager, that there is a committee of RAC and ARES folks due to meet with the Ministry of Transportation to continue to push the exemption request via the Minister's supplementary legislation. It is my opinion that RAC would garner many more members if non-members knew what was going on more than they do today.**

**So our current marching orders come directly from the RAC weblog:**

**"Having said all that, there are no guarantees, however, now is not the time to approach members of the Legislature or the Minister as they will not have seen the changes which are likely to be written in to the Bill in the next few months.**

**If exemptions are not forthcoming, then there may well be a need for direct communications but that time has not arrived.**

Again I'd invite interested members of Ontario's amateur radio community to keep in touch with Radio Amateurs of Canada and I'd be pleased to receive any emails directly to [ve3hg@rac.ca](mailto:ve3hg@rac.ca)"

Thank you for your continued interest and support in this matter.

73 de VE6LK / VE3LKV  
...Vince d'Eon  
Hamilton ON

\*\*\*

### \*\*\*REMINDERS\*\*\*

\*\*\*Oakville A.R.E.S. Group Meeting \*\*\*

**Sunday, MAY 10, 2009**

Oakville Red Cross  
1400 Cornwall Road  
Unit 15  
1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

**CNIB HAMFEST**

**Saturday, May 23, 2009**

**1929 Bayview Ave., Toronto**

<http://www.cnib.ca/amateurradio>

**CENTRAL ONTARIO HAMFEST & FLEAMARKET**

**SATURDAY, June 6, 2009**

**Centre Wellington Community Sportsplex,**

**550 Belsyde Ave., Fergus, Ontario**

<http://www.hamfest.on.ca>

**FIELD DAY**

**June 27 – 28, 2009**

## ONE LINERS

**YOU MAY BE AN ADDICTED HAM OPERATOR IF.....**

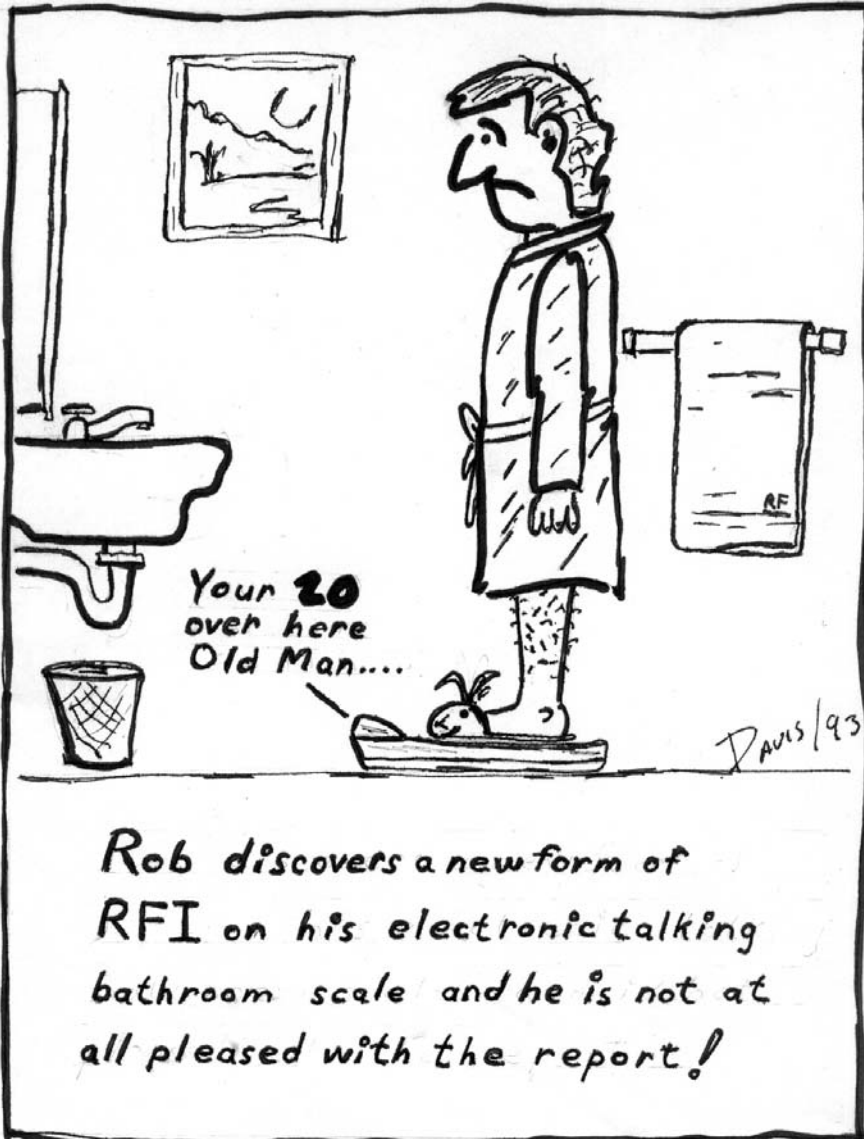
**Porcupines appear to be fascinated with your car.**

**When you look around your bedroom of wall to wall ham gear and ask: Why am I still single?**

**You think towers look pretty.**

**(Thanks To Gary, VE3TGH)**

## LAST PAGE



**SUPPORT YOU'RE  
A.R.E.S. GROUP, YOUR  
CLUB AND THE RAC.  
GET INVOLVED,  
PARTICIPATE AND  
HAVE FUN!**

**"Wisdom is knowing  
what to overlook." -  
Williams James**

"The RAC Amateur Radio  
Emergency Service & Design  
trademark is owned by Radio  
Amateurs of Canada Incorporated.  
Oakville A.R.E.S. Group is a licensed  
user of the RAC Amateur Radio  
Emergency Service & Design  
trademark."