

# HOT BANANAS

Oakville Amateur Radio Club

September 2003

## VE3HB



**Meetings:** The Oakville Amateur Radio Club meets on the second Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m. from Sept. to June at the Red Cross, 167 Navy Street.

**Breakfast:** We also meet for breakfast at 7am most Saturdays at *Angel's Diner*, at 369 Speers Road.

**Coffee:** Finally, we meet at Friday 10:30 a.m. for coffee at Tim Horton's on Cross Road.

Please join us at all these meetings: All current and future radio amateurs are welcome!

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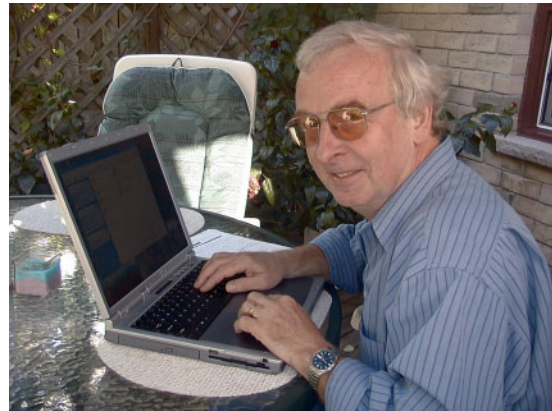
VE3OAK - 147.015 +.600 (131.8Hz CTCSS)  
VE3OAK - 444.325 +5 MHz

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**NET:** Mondays at 7:30 pm (except meeting nights and holidays) on 145.015 VHF.

[www.oakvilleamateurs.net](http://www.oakvilleamateurs.net)

## President's Message



As the new president of the Oakville Amateur Radio Club, I would like to thank everybody for giving me the opportunity and trust to direct the club into the upcoming fiscal year 2003/2004.

I would also like to thank all those members of last year's executive team for the time and effort they gave to our club in order to make it an organization that every member enjoys.

In the past year we have accomplished a lot in many fields of club activities. Peter, VE3HG, edited an excellent Hot Bananas bulletin. At our regular meetings we had a number of interesting and knowledgeable speakers, thanks to effort of Russ, VE3JUZ, and yours truly VE3OKD. I should not forget about the grand finale of the year - Field Day. Greg, VA3GGF, Harry, VA3EC, and Peter, VE3HG, should get some Brownie Points for organizing and running the event.

Cheers to every one of you who raised their behind from their lazy chair and enthusiasti-

*Continued on page 4....*

# CQ CQ CQ

## Executives & Coordinators

### CLUB EXECUTIVE 2003-2004:

President	Denny Zidek	VE3OKD
Vice President	Brian Kremer	VE3DNF
Secretary	Greg Foster	VA3GGF
Treasurer	Carvell Pelkey	VE3CPQ
Membership	Russ Schwandt	VE3JUZ

### CLUB COORDINATORS:

Program	Denny Zidek	VE3OKD
	Brian Kremer	VE3DNF
	Doug Smith	VE3RG
	Ian Amos	VE3ESH

Emergency Coordinator	Rick Harrison	VE3YRH
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Regional Emergency Liaison	Russ Schwandt	VE3JUZ
	Jack Livingstone	VE3ITM

Help Committee	Harry Kosterman	VA3EC
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VHF Net Activities	Denny Zidek	VE3OKD
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Repeater Programming/Maint.	Greg Foster	VA3GGF
	Gary Hetherington	VE3TGH
	Harry Kosterman	VA3EC

Website	Michael Willems	VA3MVW
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Club Bulletin	Michael Willems	VA3MVW
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Training-Basic & Advanced	Jack Livingstone	VE3ITM
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Examiner	Jack Livingstone	VE3ITM
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Equipment/Shacks	Mike Brown	VA3GRL
	Jack Livingstone	VE3ITM

# Hot Bananas

## Editor's Note

Many thanks to Peter VE3-HG for editing our newsletter for the past year, and for setting up this excellent layout. Now that he has handed the baton to me, Michael VA3MVW, I can only hope this issue will approach his stellar standards!



Amateur Radio is enjoying renewed interest after the 2003 Power Cut. Some of the articles in this and future issues will concentrate on this: Amateur radio's role in today's society.

Meanwhile, please leave your handies charged and be ready to use emergency power to handle communications in emergencies. Hopefully you will never need to actually use it.

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**Hot Bananas** is published 10 times per year from September to June and is distributed to all members of the OARC. Articles may be reproduced without additional permission provided credit is given to **Hot Bananas** and the Oakville Amateur Radio Club.

Submit story ideas, feedback, comments, articles or artwork to [va3mvw@oakvilleamateurs.net](mailto:va3mvw@oakvilleamateurs.net) or mail to:

### **Hot Bananas**

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### **Publisher:**

Oakville Amateur Radio Club  
President Denny Zidek, VE3OKD

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## Get your own @oakvilleamateurs.net email address!

**Big news for Oakville Amateurs who would like an easy-to-remember email address.**

From now on, no-one needs to wonder whether your email address is at RAC, Cogeco, Sympatico, at work, or elsewhere. All paid up members of the Oakville Amateur Radio Club can now get an additional address in the form [callsign@oakvilleamateurs.net](mailto:callsign@oakvilleamateurs.net).

To get your own oakvilleamateurs email address, make sure you are an official member, and then email [va3mvw@oakvilleamateurs.net](mailto:va3mvw@oakvilleamateurs.net).

In your email mention your callsign, and the address you want your mail to be forwarded to. Your own brand-new "@oakvilleamateurs.net" address will be quickly created for you - usually within a day.

## Ham radio came to the rescue during blackout

*From The Globe and Mail, 22 August*

Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. — When technology failed on a massive scale last week, some old-fashioned broadcasting stepped into the breach as ham radio operators took to the airwaves to reach emergency workers.

For millions of people in the Northeast and Midwest, the Aug. 14 outage took access to e-mail and the Internet with it. Landline and cellular telephones were jammed by a crush of calls.

But the ham radio, which came into being in the World War I era, connected firefighters and police departments, Red Cross workers and other emergency personnel during the most extensive blackout in the Northeast since 1977.

Ham operators are not dependent on a server or cell tower, and with battery backups can operate when grids can't.

"When everything else fails, the ham radio is still there," said Allen Pitts, a ham operator in New Britain. "You can't knock out that system."

The radios are operated by a network of volunteers organized by the Newington-based American Radio Relay League.

Ham radio's importance won renewed recognition after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. ARRL won a federal Homeland Security grant of nearly \$182,000 (U.S.) to train amateur radio operators in emergency operations to help during terrorist attacks.

"It's incredible the differences you're seeing,

*Continued on page 4....*

## President's report (continued from p.1)

cally worked for the club. Again and again it was proven, that we, as a club can accomplish a great deal if we all pull the rope hard and in the same direction.

Another year of club activities is ahead of us and I believe it will be a successful one. Yes, I expect many challenges, but that will make life more interesting.

As you all probably know, the Red Cross building will be sold and we will literally lose the roof over our heads. But not everything is lost yet. This is one of the major challenges the club executives must resolve. For now we still have that familiar room on Navy Street available for our meetings and you will be informed about further developments.

During the summer, the directors had a number of meetings, discussing the future of our club. Many different proposals were reviewed, but we came to the conclusion, that first, we should listen to the voice of the people. Therefore the questions of the survey were formed and the whole action started. So far we have received about 60% of replies to the questionnaire. To be honest, I expected more, but it is a good foundation to build on. Of course this is not the end of the story. The suggestion box is still open and every one of you can come forward with ideas about improvements or new club activities. You can approach me either during the regular meeting or privately via e-mail. My address is VE3OKD@oakvilleamateurs.net. I promise to discuss every idea at the director's meetings and if the idea has merit to our membership, I will enforce the implementation.

*Continued on page 5...*

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## Ham radio to the rescue (continued from p.3)

the large cadre of people who know what they're doing," Mr. Pitts said. "It's making a major difference."

Tom Carrubba, a co-ordinator for ARRL in New York City's five boroughs and two counties on Long Island, said volunteers went to work immediately after power went down Thursday afternoon.

"In five minutes guys were on the air with the Red Cross and Office of Emergency Management," he said.

During other disasters, such as severe weather, ARRL volunteers and co-ordinators activate telephone trees, Mr. Carrubba said. On Thursday, they instead hit their assigned frequency or staffed an emergency operations centre.

In the New York-Long Island region, with a population of nearly 10 million, about 100 ham radio operators handled the situation, Mr. Carrubba said. Some volunteers headed to a Red Cross headquarters or shelter, fire department, or hospital, he said. One hospital was temporarily out of power and ARRL volunteers provided communications to ambulances until electricity was restored.

Mr. Carrubba estimated that operators handled 800 to 1,000 communications from Thursday afternoon until early Friday.



*Tom Carrubba sits next to his ham radio equipment at his home in Long Island, N.Y. (AP Photo/Louis Lanzano)*

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*The above American article appeared in the Globe and Mail Technology Section on 21 August. The situation in Canada and Oakville in particular is very similar, and on the night of the blackout, ARES successfully spent the evening standing by, powered by batteries and ready to deploy.*

*President's Report, Continued from p.4*

Some of the ideas which popped up will be implemented immediately. Most of you prefer the social aspect of the meetings. So we will keep the business section short and sweet. Another idea that came up was promoting special interest groups – SIG. Even now, the club has several groups of people, where specialized activities are flourishing quite well. Look at DX-ing, contesting, QRP, PSK31, just to name a few. I will encourage the members of those groups to stand up at the meetings and to tell others about their success and failures. It is obvious we all will learn from that experience.

Like last year, we are preparing a program for our monthly meetings. We might not be able to have a speaker for every month, but we are teaming with neighboring clubs of Burlington and Mississauga to share and reciprocate the meetings. This arrangement will expose us to a wider variety of discussed subjects.

Each club has a bulletin where news and ideas are presented. Last year the editor of Hot Bananas – Peter, VE3HG, set the standards of publishing quite high. I believe that Michael, VA3MVW, who is at the helm as edito this year, will follow this course to a bright horizon. But... he will need your input. So if you cannot sleep at night and suddenly remember a story, please scribble it on a piece of paper and forward it as soon as you can to Michael, (va3mvw@oakvilleamateurs.net). I am sure every reader of HB will enjoy the story when it is published.

Last, but not least! A club is defined as an association of individualists. If we want to succeed as a club, each of you individually should volunteer a bit of your time for a common goal.

Most of the club members checked in the Net during the recent Blackout and offered their help. The town of Oakville has well organized ARES group and we should be proud of it.

Well, I think I have put down more than 200 words. My glass of wine standing here for inspiration is empty, so it's time to close this page, but keep the computer on and wait for some e-mail from you.

I wish you all a very good year on both a personal and professional level. We have a great hobby and I believe we will enjoy it in full.

73, Denny VE3OKD

## Foreign News

### From: *China Daily*

#### Radio hams urged to register

( 2003-08-21 09:27) (China Daily)

If you happen to be a radio ham and like to hook up with other enthusiasts over the airwaves, you had better report to a local radio authority before December to ensure you have all of the necessary paperwork.

Otherwise, the Beijing Municipal Radio Management Bureau can close you down by confiscating your equipment.

Having just launched an all-out campaign to assess what sort of equipment is in use, the bureau expects to finish its comprehensive review by 2004 to stop ham radios interfering with civil aviation communication, Zhao Da, an official with the bureau, said yesterday.

"Although recent interference with civil aviation radio communications at the Beijing Capital International Airport has turned out to be harmless, it can be fatal and should definitely be stopped," said Zhao.

The guideline paper being used in the review focuses on powerful wireless phones, radio and television stations and pager stations.

Powerful wireless phones are not allowed in Beijing but are used by some people in lieu of a more common mobile phone.

Another group of people posing similar dangers are radio hams, who switch out of their designated frequency ranges.

"The latest several cases occurring at the airport in this regard have been blamed on radio hams," said Zhao.

Statistics with the Beijing Association of Radio Transmission and Reception indicate the Chinese capital has around 4,000 registered radio hams.

"Radio transmission and reception is an interesting hobby and is attracting ever more people in Beijing. Although there are some defying the rules, most of us are fine with the frequency range assigned to us," said Bai Xuehan, an official with the association.

## Introducing the 2003 OARC Executive (Like they needed an introduction!)



**Russ**



**Brian**



**Greg**



**Denny**



**Carvel**

## *Why is the summer vacation ever so short!?*

*by Denny VE3OKD*

This year I persuaded my family to forget about the usual tourist traps for a destination of our vacation and instead enjoy some quality family time somewhere up north, accompanied only by trees, black flies and mosquitoes. My hidden agenda was – of course – slightly different. I wanted to pack my Icom 706 and go some place without QRM and QRN. A place, where the only noise I could hear would be the call of the loon on the lake. Yes, a place like this still exists! It is a cottage deep in the woods, just south of North Bay. The days of preparation culminated with hectic activities of packing.

When my wife discovered that half of the car trunk was full of my radio equipment, she said that if I wanted to take it all with me, she will have to leave some food and libation at home. It was quite clear, that it would be my portion. Well, I was willing to suffer malnutrition, but the radio stayed in the car.

At the cottage, my family went to enjoy the natural beauty of Ontario North and I started to unpack my equipment. Just before our trip, Brian VE3DNF, lent me his set of vertical antennas for 20 and 40-meter bands. I mounted them on the roof of the cottage, but what a disappointment. I had a signal with noise level S7 and not too many stations to be heard. The conditions were really bad. So I packed it up for the night and started to think about all those goodies, which I had to forego in order to make space for my radio.

The next morning I thought of a new strategy. I brought with me about 200 feet of hook up wire. Just perfect for a long wire antenna. In theory, the antenna wire should be about half the wavelength above the ground. That is the theory! To put the wire that high, is another matter. I made an improvised bow and arrow and started to practice the ancient hunting skills. Needless to say, the Indian chief would not take me in his hunt-



## RAC Membership / The Canadian Amateur Subscription Application

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City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

One-year single at \$39.95 (GST incl.) \* \$41.43 in NB, NS, NF (HST incl.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Additional family membership at \$20 (one magazine per family membership \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name/call sign of family member - must reside at same address) \_\_\_\_\_

Blind membership (no magazine) at \$20 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(CNIB registration # required)

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I am making a donation to the RAC Foundation in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to order video # \$ \_\_\_\_\_

VISA/Mastercard No. \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

*Have your credit card ready and call toll free 1-877-273-8304 or send form to: Radio Amateurs of Canada Inc. 720  
Belfast Road, Suite 217, Ottawa, Ont. K1G 0Z5 Fax: 613-244-4369 Tel: 613-244-4367 E-mail: rachg@rac.ca*

ing party. But as a family, we had a lot of fun and eventually we managed to hang the wire in the trees. Most of the wire length was placed on the trees located on the slope of south facing hill. You could imagine my anxiety to try this masterpiece antenna!

I powered up my IC706 and pushed the tuner button. Surprise, surprise, the SWR reading was 1.5:1. I tuned the frequency to 14.07015 MHz and suddenly on the screen of the computer's PSK31 program, I had a clean "waterfall" with a number of stations. At my age, I do not expect many satisfactions from life, but this was a real one! I called CQ and the first station which replied, was from Buenos Aires. The next one from Santiago de Chile, then a couple of Texans and again South American stations.

My blood pressure rose and my family looked at me with "knowing" smiles. The next day the situation has repeated and I was in heaven.

Well, the evenings of QSO's were a success and I made my decision! This year I will be working hard as the president of Oakville Radio Club, but next year, I will move up North and enjoy the life of a radio amateur.

73, Denny VE3OKD

### Did you know?

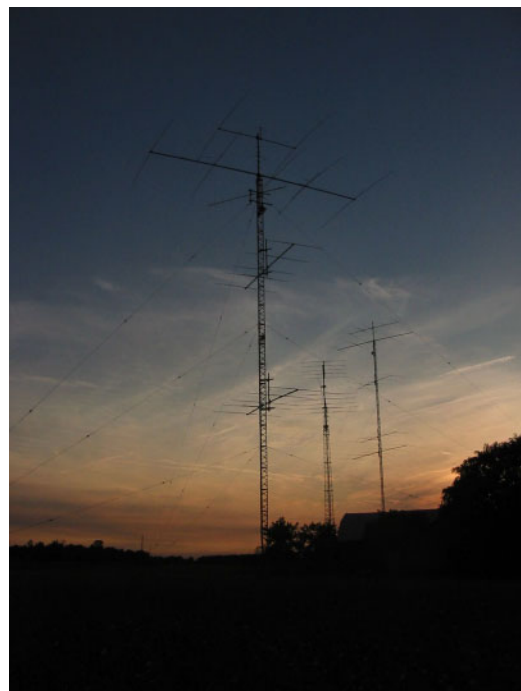
...That the **Hong Kong Amateur Radio Transmitting Society** web site is hosted on our server, right here in Oakville?  
Check out [www.harts.org.hk](http://www.harts.org.hk)

# QRT by VE3HG

Over 40 of Ontario's top contesters came from as far away as North Bay and Ottawa to attend the second annual meeting of the Contest Club Ontario on Saturday, August 23. Four members of the Oakville Amateur Radio Club, VE3RZ, VA3GGF, VA3EC and VE3HG attended.

The gathering took place at John, VE3EJ's QTH located south of Hamilton on top of the Niagara Escarpment. One of North America's most competitive contesters, EJ's location boasts four towers in excess of 100 each with multiple rotatable and fixed beams. There's a four-square (four verticals connected by a phasing coaxial harness and fed into a huge radial ground system) for 80 meters. Most of the antennas are fed with hardline which terminates in a switching closet in the shack.

Contest Club Ontario is a province-wide club formed to allow Ontario contesters to join with other like-minded competitors in



this province. The contest club category is becoming increasingly popular allowing operators the chance to win in their individual categories while still applying their scores to an overall score.

The club will be sponsoring trophies and plaques in future contests in an effort to promote the sport of radio contesting in Ontario and elsewhere. As there is at least one contest every weekend, there's lots of activity to for everyone.

*Peter VE3HG*