



AUGUST 2017

Volume 6 Issue 8

VE3ERC-LUB

LIGHTHOUSE WEEKEND P. 8

- President:** Joyce VA3WXU
- Vice-President:** Brian VA3DXK
- Secretary:** Tom VE3DXQ
- Treasurer:** Paul VA3PDC
- Trustee:** John VE3JXX
- QSL Manager:** Judd VE3WXU
- Repeater Manager & Maintenance:** Carl VE3FEF
- Website Admin:** Ted VE3TRQ
- Lighthouse:** Bruce VE3QB
- Maple Syrup Display:** Judd VE3WXU
Joyce VA3WXU
- Newsletter:** Bob VE3IXX

ERC REPEATERS

- UHF 444.700 TONE: 131.8**
- UHF 444.700 TONE: 123.0**
- VHF 147.390 + TONE: 123.0**
- EMERGENCY SIMPLEX: 147.51**
- UHF- IRLP node 2404**
- VHF- IRLP node 2403, ECHOLINK node
VE3ERC-R**



**In an emergency, tune
Into our repeaters,
UHF 444.700 or
VHF 147.390 or
HF 3.755 LSB or
Simplex 147.510
For coordination and
assignments.**




**Radio Amateurs
of Canada**

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THE PREZ SEZ!

This club is Radio-ACTIVE

THE CLUB IS RADIO-ACTIVE

President's Update for AUGUST 2017

A New View.....

No Shut-Down Here

One thing I really like about the Elmira Radio Club is that during the summer our club does not have a summer shut-down. Instead our members stay in connection with each other via the morning weekly nets, the Wednesday night net, and the weekly coffee-call. To some others it may look like it is just chitter-chattering but for the most part it is actually information that is valuable to our club. These conversations offer us new ideas to share with each other. We also share our woes and triumphs during our summer "project-making," which never fails to always reveal the invaluable knowledge of what works and what does not work. Furthermore, members often come together to help each other to do the hard work of raising towers and antennas.

We do not just talk, we do other things as well. This summer we hosted a "Canadian BBQ" at Al's (VA3TET) house. It was special because both our Hams and their spouses were there. It was a lovely celebration that had a personal feel that this group was more like friends and not just Hams. And the food was delicious!

But, that's not all. At the end of this week, we will be raising our antennas and hopefully making contacts around the world at Point Clark Lighthouse. Our spouses will also be joining in again and we will be enjoying another BBQ lunch made by Al. You can't beat that!

We also do very important club work during the summer when needed. For example, the new Executive this year held a meeting in July at which our members reviewed the club's Constitution and Bylaws in order to ensure that everyone was on the same track. During the summer is the time we usually overhaul the maintenance of our out-door equipment. And something new this year, the last two weeks of this August we will be getting ready to plan for a brand new event for our club. We will be giving demonstrations at the "Legion, Community, & Family **BBQ Fun Day** on September 10.

Without a doubt, VE3ERC makes very good use of the Summer.

73 Cheers,

Joycee VA3WXU



 CANADA 150

Legion 

LEGION, COMMUNITY & FAMILY BBQ FUN DAY

Sunday, September 10, 2017, 10am - 4pm

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION, BR. 469 ~ 11 FIRST STREET, EAST, ELMIRA

BBQ, Live music, Petting zoo, Face painting, Balloon animals, Popcorn, Cotton Candy, Ice cream, Bouncy castles, Karate & Dance demonstrations, Nascar display.

This **FUNDRAISER** is an endeavour for our **REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE** (November 5th) with **FLYOVER** to occur during the ceremony at the Elmira cenotaph **TO CELEBRATE** Canada's 150th and Vimy Ridge's 100th.

Through this event Elmira Branch 469 hopes to bring together our community, local families and various service clubs in the celebration of our main goal **REMEMBRANCE ...**

THE WAY HE WEARS HIS SHOES

The first time I met Reg (VE3RVH) I knew right away that he was a very special man.

At our first "ERC" meeting, he went out of his way to give Judd and me a very warm welcome to the club. I remember feeling comfortable around Reg immediately and I knew that he was one of the reasons that we would choose ERC to be our "home" club.

Reg has a distinguish past in our club. He has been a member of the Elmira Radio Club for over 30+ years. During that time he has been the club's treasurer for at least nine-

teen years. I am pretty sure that it is a record that won't ever be broken by anyone else in the future.

Over those many years, Reg has done an exceptional job of being the treasurer. Fortunately for us, he had the perfect qualities and skills needed for the job. He methodically keeps clear records. He always pays our bills on time and makes it clear that he budgets for the future. Reg offers us ideas that we could use to raise more money to cover our growing expenditures. It is just one example of the unerring decisions that Reg uses to keep our club solvent.

Reg is not just a treasurer. He is far, far from being just a one-trick-pony. He

is fraught with skills. He's a gardener and the caretaker of his family. I know he plays the guitar and that he uses his hands to fix and build several things like the large wreath we use at Christmas time and the easels we used at the Maple Syrup Festival. He is also a climber and a co-antenna riser. For example, like the one that he and John raised on the firehall in the middle of an extremely wicked rain storm. The antenna they put up that day is still working and that substantiates the quality of both his will and his work.

Reg attends to all club events whenever he can. Beyond managing the club's money he helps at Field Day, runs our tables at the Ham-



fest, and participates at both the Maple Syrup Festival and at Point Clark. He supports the weekly morning nets by calling in and is the controller of the net on Wednesday.

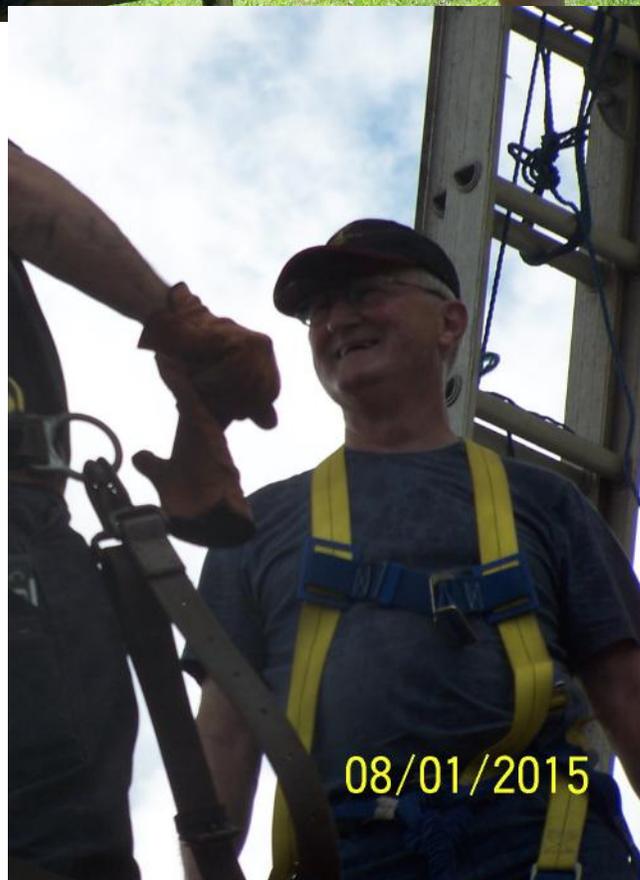
Can anyone do anymore than what he does for our club?

Simply put Reg is the backbone of our club. The reality is that he is a "one-of-a-kind" and no one can fill his shoes or wear them the way he does.

We acknowledge all the things you, Reg, do for the club and we are truly grateful to you for sharing your time and your talents that make ERC so much better for all.

Joycee (VA3WXU)

**IN GRATITUDE
AND ON BEHALF OF
ALL THE MEMBERS
OF VE3ERC**



Back-of-the-Napkin Eyeball

QSO notes and stuff

by Rich, ve3DCC

Coffee has a sobering effect, especially when shared with fellow Hams.

As you read this, the latest solar eclipse on August 21 may have already occurred. One can imagine the terror that ancients must have experienced when the Sun disappeared and all went black.

That moment and sense of awe has also happened both recently and with similar dramatic effect.

In a Toronto Star article on Sunday, August 6, 2017, Dennis Overbye observed that : "Few eclipses have had more impact on modern history than the one on May 29, 1919, more than six minutes of darkness sweeping across South America and across the Atlantic to Africa."

His headline proclaimed:

"A whole new universe: 1919 eclipse confirmed Einstein's theory of general relativity"

He goes on:

"It was during that eclipse that British astronomer Arthur Eddington ascertained that the light rays from distant stars had been wrenched off their paths by the gravitational field of the sun, affirming Einstein's theory of general relativity."

It seems appropriate to add some flesh to that description.

A few years back I attended a demonstration at the Perimeter Institute in Waterloo. A trampoline-like section of rubber mat with a grid printed on it was stretched taut. A bowling ball was then rolled across it. The distortion of the grid as the ball travelled across it was intended to show the way a moving body distorts space. It seemed odd to me to be using gravity on a two-dimensional model to demonstrate gravity.

May I extend that picture.

Imagine a Rubic's Cube that is completely transparent and very large.

Picture the edges along each cube in that Rubic's cube as grid lines in three dimensional space.

Now imagine a body (a planet? A satellite? A Moon? A basketball?) moving thru that section of "Rubic" space. Much like the water that a submerged submarine travels thru, the space distorts and "opens up" to allow the solid body to pass thru the less dense volume.

Einstein suggested that during an eclipse, stars very close to the sun, that should be obliterated from view by the moon, might just be visible as their light "bends" around the moon following the distortion in space around the moving moon. He suggested a displacement " by an angle of about 1.75 seconds of arc, about a thousandth of the width of a full moon." (D.Overbye)

In the article, Overbye indicates that the distortion and bending is by the gravitational field of the sun.

There was a bit of a discussion over the accuracy of the actual measurement in 1919 since the "winner" was chosen over other calculations that might have supported Newton's prediction of .86 for the deflection.

tion of .86 for the deflection.

In the end, the readings supporting Einstein's prediction were selected as the others were deemed to be unreliable. Since then, of course, Einstein's formula has been independently verified.

Since light particles do not really move, but rather vibrate, individually they exhibit some personal "individuality"; however, when they travel together as a mob, their behaviour as a wave is pronounced. Light likes to travel in straight lines. Since radio waves behave in much the same way, it seems natural to ask if radio propagation also exhibits the same characteristics as it passes thru time and space. Radio Ground waves can "hug" the ground. There is also a tendency for a blob of water to acquire a spherical shape. Is it the force of the universe pushing in to fill the distortion in space created by a displacement? If so, what is the "stuff" that fills the vacuum at that quantum level? Does a sphere provide the minimum surface area for a given volume that equalizes something that is in the soup that is the universe? So, was it the gravitational field of the sun or the displacement of the moon, or both that forced the deviation in the 1919 experiment?

Isn't it odd that we still do not really understand the nature of the phenomena that makes our hobby work? For now, the wonderment that we feel as we, not necessarily instantaneously, communicate with someone at a distance from us, may be satisfaction enough- but, wouldn't it be fun to know **HOW this all works?**

Einstein's notion of General relativity became one of the highest achievements of mankind. What next? Perhaps, one of our younger Hams might be at this forefront.

PS: Thank You Einstein and the Solar Eclipse for a wee insight, and more food for thought.

De Rich, ve3DCC

CONTRIBUTIONS TO VE3ERC-CLUB NEWSLETTER

Do you have an article you'd like to submit? Or photos? Do you have any comments you'd like to make?

Perhaps you'd like to share a photo of your shack, a special project you are working on or a special interest!

SEND THEM TO THE EDITOR AT:

bobve3ixx@gmail.com

POINT CLARK LIGHTHOUSE WEEKEND IN PICTURES (Story-next month)



MANY FACES OF POINT CLARK



JASON (VE3JVG) and TRACY (VA3TGY)



CAROL (VE3IYY) and DAVE

05/18/2017



ROB (VE3PCP) and his son JUSTIN. Rob brought the complimentary McDonald's coffee.

DAN (KB6NU) with his wife SYLVIA came up from Ann Arbor, Michigan. Dan's blogs appear in the newsletter. Check it out in this issue.



TOM (VE3DXQ) and BARB

**ROSS
VE3JOG**





DAN (VA3SQD) and ANIK



JOAN, AL'S (VA3TET) BETTER HALF!



AL (VA3TET)

AL (VE3AUS)

JUDD (VE3WXU)



BRIAN VA3DXK



FRANK (VA3FJM), BILL (VA3QB), BONNIE (VA3IXX), BOB (VE3IXX) and BRUCE (VE3QB)



TED (VE3TRQ)

BRIAN (VE3YBM)

JOYCEE VA3WXU



PAUL (VE3PDC) and his wife, DEB also came up.

Practice Makes Perfect

or How I Got My Advanced Ticket

by

Paul Victor Birke, BSc, MEng, PEng, VE3PVB

I had obtained my Basic (Honours) Ticket back in January 2009. I had worked hard to learn the various subject areas that are the staple of Amateur Radio. I had printed out all the information and studied carefully from paper for about four months starting in late summer 2008. Then I made use of the software that Industry Canada had placed on the internet. This allowed me to continually test myself. Moreover, I could concentrate on subject areas that I found tough, where I was continually missing the answers.

For some reason, not clear to me even today, I did not think about continuing and getting my Advanced Ticket. I was "pressed ganged" into becoming the Sunday Night controller for the Sandbox Roundtable Net. I had built a good working Mystery Antenna and used 100 watts on my TS-180S station. This seemed to be "good enough".

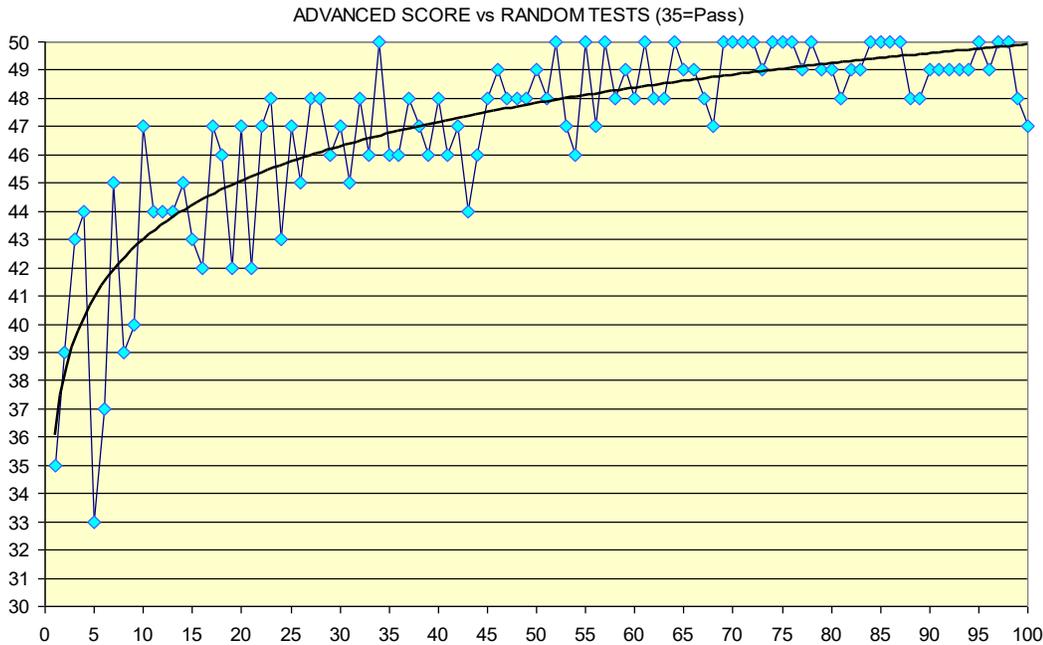
In recent years Terry VE3XTM had asked me why I did not get my Advanced Ticket and I said I really did not need it. He said I should be able to get it without too much work as my background was Electrical Engineering. This spring Mike VE3MKY mentioned that he had taken the Advanced Ticket course and had now passed. He causally mentioned maybe I should try to get it as well. I thought to my self, why indeed not take Mike up on the challenge!

So I decided to set aside the full month of May to attempt to learn what was needed to pass the test. I did not want to just pass the test where the pass mark was 70% (35 out of 50 questions). I wanted to set the bar higher. I wanted to obtain a consistent score around 47 out of 50 and then I figured I would be ready for the test. I was inspired to set the goal high because Terry had achieved a score of 49 out of 50. I knew that would be very hard to beat.

Because I had a very good result using the Industry Canada software which produced a new random test ever time it was invoked, I came up with the following idea. I would run the test for a month, here the month of May 2017. I would run the test up to three times a day (I am retired). I would find out where my knowledge was lacking. I would bone up on the areas where I was deficient in. In some cases, where the answers continued to be a bit fuzzy to me, I simply memorized them. In the rare case like the Non-Exclusive OR question, I would analyze very carefully and was able to produce the result on the test from first principles. I had entered a formula for the frequency F in MHz as a function of inductance L in μH and capacitance C in pF in my RPN (Reverse Polish) calculator). Here $F = 159.15/\sqrt{LC}$ for those who wish to use it. Other formula as needed by some questions, I committed to memory.

The concept of learning here is simple. You study the Advanced question set and answers available from the Industry Canada site. Once you have spent some time on this "paper study" you are ready to train your mind by repetitively running the random tester. You likely will start with semi-lousy results. With progressively more tests, your score increases but wobbles about a local average. This is due in part to the software introducing previously unseen questions. Also the questions can be a bit tricky at times due to the way in which the software author has

written them. (He/She has done a very good job for Industry Canada in my opinion.). Below is the history of 100 tests run in May. On the test I was able to obtain a perfect score of 50 out of 50, somewhat lucky.



Certificate of Proficiency in Amateur Radio

This is to certify that

Paul Victor Birke

has obtained the following qualifications:

**Basic with Honours
Advanced**

The certificate holder is authorized to operate amateur radio apparatus in accordance with the regulations made pursuant to the *Radiocommunication Act*, and to use the following call signs:

VE3PVB

Certificate Number: 20090000086
Issue date: 21 June 2017

Jacques Filiatrault
Issued by Jacques Filiatrault



The Story of Ted Levecque

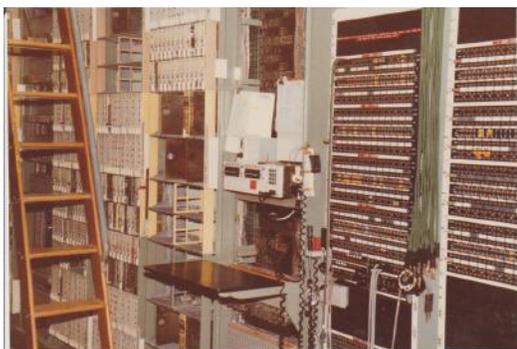
By Bob Koechl VE3IXX

I was surprised one day when talking to my neighbour Ted about ham radio and he told me that he knew a number of old hams and at one time considered getting his licence. This immediately intrigued me so I listened to his story.

He had graduated from high school in 1959 when a friend suggested he apply to Bell Telephone for a job. At that time it didn't matter if you had college training because Bell educated their own techs. Ted was hired. At nineteen years of age he was sent off to Montreal, staying at the now defunct Laurentian Hotel, for a four-month course. Along with a class of others he began a basic course for Maintaining Telephone systems.

As an aside, Ted had an uncle who came to visit, and took the young boy out to a bar. At his age, this could not have happened in Ontario, but in Quebec, they didn't even ask him his age when he requested a beer.

Once his course was completed, Ted was sent for further education to St. Jerome in Quebec and to Toronto. Once the training was over, Ted began life as a Bell technician in Bracebridge. In those days the pay was poor and they sent you wherever they wished, no questions asked. For the next two years he worked to maintain phone systems in the area. It seemed that there was never enough dial tones to go around with the system which worked on 48-volt batteries unless it dealt with the military. Military personnel were given immediate dial tones for all their systems, but civilian customers often had to wait for a dial tone to become available before they could use their phone.

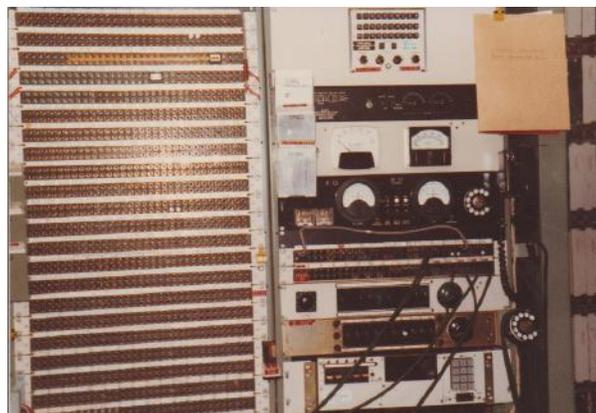


Long distance lines at Bell.

Parry Sound was the next transfer. Now Ted began working on mobile service maintenance on remote islands. This was not the cell phone systems we have today. The phone system was actually a two way mobile radio connected to a Bell mobile operator. In summer Ted would be flown in a water plane and dropped off on a dock. During the cold winters he would be flown, landing on the frozen ice using skis and again be dropped off at the dock. Ted had to drag all his equipment in often frigid weather. Fortunately, another company had the job of installing the antennas and towers.

Next came a stint at the North Bay Central Office which lasted one and half years. While here, he spent three months in Sudbury on loan.

Once again Ted got transferred to the NORAD region, working for the military defense system. At this point he began working on loan for the military as a civilian technician at their station in Trout Lake. This was a whole new world. His work environment was now in a bunker seven hundred feet underground. A bus would drive you into the bunker which was built with giant springs under the floor. In the event of the bomb being dropped the springs would keep the equipment from shaking too much with the ground. Big steel doors would lock you in and high security included eye scans.



Test equipment at Bell

While working here Ted heard that Northern Telephone Ltd. was looking for techs to run radar stations



Plaque Ted received as an NCO.

and hurried over to New Liskeard to apply. He was given a job and now left Bell. His first station with the Canadian Forces NOR-AD radar station was at Ramore, Ontario. He was housed on the base, was issued military clothing and had to follow all the military protocol even though a civilian. It was during his one year here, that he witnessed the raising of the new Canadian Flag with the Maple leaf from the former red ensign. He remembered it as a very emotional ceremony among the military personnel despite a very frigid morning.

Ted's next posting was the Pagwa River base right beside an Indian reserve. He recalled particularly, how expensive it was to purchase any articles you might want. The only way to get in and out of the base was by train. The direct communication lines were telephone lines buried alongside the train tracks to North Bay. But this also meant that if there were any problems in the line, an engine would have to be procured to travel along the

track to find the problem. The techs would work for three weeks and then get one week off. A week's holiday to anywhere meant a six hour train ride just to get to Nakina on the trans-Canada, north of Long Lac.

Ted recalled how the techs rigged a system to listen to the Grey Cup radio broadcasts using a short wave receiver. They had rigged a feedline to the station using the buried phone lines.

Then followed a stint at the Senneterre military station forty Kilometers from Val D'or. Ted recalled visiting a gold mine in Val D'or and going down a 1300 meter mine shaft. It was from the Val D'or airforce base that Ted would often

see the CF-101 (Voodoo) jets scrambled whenever a Russian plane was sighted on the radar. It was during his nine years here that he received his Non Commissioned Officer (NCO) status. It was also here where he met his wife to be in a most unusual way.

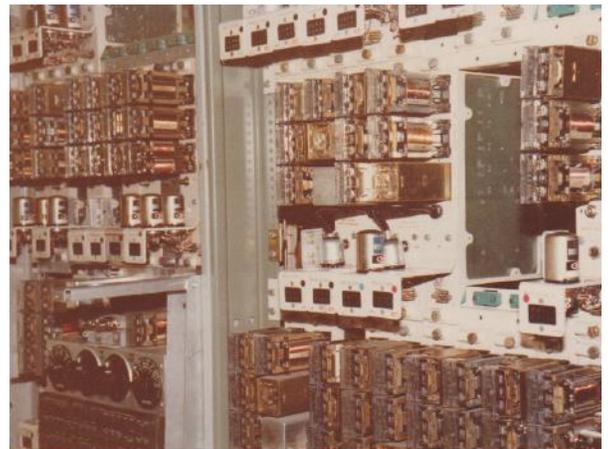
Every day Ted had to send his tech report to one secretary at the Air Defense Command in Ottawa. He soon got to know Janet's name and one day on a whim, asked her to come visit when she had some time off. To his surprise, she came and the rest is history.



A CF-101 Voodoo fighter at the Val D'or Airforce Base.



The first visit from his wife-to-be, Janet with Ted's lab, Sheila.



Bell Telephone relays.

Ted worked at the base until it closed. He was given his plaque of service (pictured). Out of work he re-applied to Bell and was rehired to work in Toronto, continuing there right up to the time he retired.

How to Copy CW in Your Head

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

The second most common question that I get about CW is, "How do I learn to copy in my head?" When I get this question, I give, what to some, is a very unsatisfying answer. One day, I just went cold turkey. I put down the pencil and paper and never copied letter-by-letter ever again.

Carlo Consoli, IK0YGJ, author of *Zen and the Art of Radiotelegraphy* (http://www.qsl.net/ik0ygj/enu/ZART_r20101008m.pdf), says that what operators need to do is to program themselves to copy in their heads. He counsels operators to practice relaxation and visualization exercises. Visualize yourself as a high-speed operator, and maybe one day you will be one.

This approach seems to have worked for Consoli. He is a member of the Very High Speed Club (VHSC), First Class Operator's Club (FOC), and has been clocked at copying over 70 wpm. I'm not sure that this is really going to work for everyone, though.

Another approach is touted by Carl, N7AGK. On his website, Carl writes, "I have created a program to assist you in learning to copy Morse code in your head. Everything you need will be contained on a single USB flashdrive that I will provide to you. In the program there are audio Morse code presentations followed by a visual display. The visual display shows the information in large print and upper case letters. The visual display verifies that you have received the Morse code correctly." Carl's program costs \$20 and is available from n7agk.com.

Zeb, HB9FXW, has created a free web application called Seiuchy (<http://www.kb6nu.com/let-walrus-help-copy-head/>) to help people learn head copying. Seiuchy, which Zeb says is Japanese for walrus, simulates on-air contacts. The trick to using this app is that instead of copying exactly what is sent, you only copy the most important bit of information. The idea is that if you train yourself to do this, then you can concentrate on what's important rather than getting bogged down in copying what's not important.

A different take on head copy was sent in by one of my blog readers, Bill, W3MSH. He wrote, "I was a CW op for many years and discovered something fascinating. I first began to hear "dots and dashes", then letters, words, sentences and at 35+ wpm, thoughts in my head."

I think Bill may have hit the nail on the head with this comment. I like the idea that copying code in your head is more akin to generating thoughts than it is to copying individual characters or words. Everybody talks about how getting faster is about moving from copying individual characters to copying words to copying entire sentences. I've never thought of it that way, although I was at a loss as to how to describe how I do it. I think the idea that when copying in your head, the code creates thoughts directly is a beautiful way to put it.

Isn't that what's happening when you talk to someone? When someone talks to me, I don't consciously parse the sentences and then analyze them to see what was just said. It's more of an unconscious process. The sounds being uttered are creating ideas in my head.

Shouldn't we approach head copy in the same way? Instead of thinking about head copy as the process of writing down the characters on an internal blackboard to be read later, it should be about translating the sound of the Morse Code directly into concepts. The sounds "dah di

dit...dah dah dah....dah dah dit," should conjure up the image of a poodle or a pitbull, not the letters "D O G."

How that translates into a program or a method for learning to copy the code in one's head is another matter. It might be worth thinking about, though.

Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, is the author of *The CW Geek's Guide to Having Fun with Morse Code* and the *No Nonsense* series of amateur radio study guides. When he's not head copying on 30m, he blogs about amateur radio at KB6NU.Com

WEDNESDAY NITE NET CONTROLLERS

JULY 26 - TRACY VA3TGY

AUGUST 2 - BRIAN VA3DXK

AUGUST 9 - BOB VE3IXX

AUGUST 16 - TED VE3TRQ

AUGUST 23 - AL VA3TET

AUGUST 30 - REG VE3RVH + DIGITAL GROUP

SEPTEMBER 6 - TOM VE3DXQ

SEPTEMBER 13 - PAUL VE3PVB

SEPTEMBER 20 - TRACY VA3TGY

SEPTEMBER 27 - MEETING

OCTOBER 4 - BRIAN VA3DXK

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR
FOR THE ERC SEPTEMBER MEETING
ON WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 27 AT 7 PM
AT THE ELMIRA FIRE HALL**