

marc



gram



Next meeting - November 27, 2013

Ragchew and Fleamarket : 19h30, Club meeting : 20h00

St-Ignatius of Loyola Parish Church
4455 West Broadway, N.D.G. - Montreal

Presentation : Linux in the HamShack by
Paul, VE2OFH and Marc-André, VE2EVN

MarcOgram

The MarcOgram is published nine times per year on the second to last Wednesday of September through June, excepting December, by the Montreal Amateur Radio Club. Advertising and copy deadline is one week prior to publication.

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The marcOgram team needs you!

We're always on the lookout for interesting articles to include into your monthly newsletter. Do you have a ham radio news item you would like to contribute or just pass along to the marcOgram editors? Just send your document or links to editor@marc.ca

Club Activities - Monthly Meetings

Club meetings are held on the last Wednesday of the month at St-Ignatius of Loyola Parish Church, 4455 West Broadway, N.D.G. - Montreal. The meetings will be held in the Lounge which is the rearmost door on the South side of the building unless we have reason to hold it in the Parish Hall which is the first door on the South side of the building.

An informal flea-market and ragchew session starts at 19:30 with the formal meeting starting at 20:00. STM buses 51, 162, and 105 stops at or near the door!

Meetings of the Board of Directors

Meetings of the Board of Directors are open to any member to attend. Board meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month (Sept. to June) at 7:30 PM at the same venue as the monthly meetings (see above). Should you wish to attend one of the meetings you are welcome. Just speak to one of the directors beforehand to make certain that the meeting has neither been cancelled, nor the location changed.

Club Directors

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MARC Fundraiser WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

In order for MARC to reach some of its goals, we have decided to re-introduce advertising in the marcOgram newsletter. The rates are as follows:

- Business card \$ 5.00 per issue
- Quarter page \$ 7.00 per issue
- Half page \$12.00 per issue
- Full page \$20.00 per issue

The "Marcogram" publishes from September to June, which is nine issues. We also publish a summer edition during the months of August/September, which becomes a free month. So we actually publish ten issues. We have a list distribution of about 200 persons. A business card placed for 9 issues would only be \$ 40.00. We are asking for all members with family or friends who have a business to place an ad. You could also advertise a special function.



A Word from the President

Hello all,

Well now it was the day after Halloween and all the Christmas decorations were already out on the boulevards that I frequent around town. This is how I know it's time to organize the MARC Christmas dinner. Is this our first or last event of the season? I'm not sure anymore, it all rolls into one continuing stream of events and outings which seem to fly by during the course of the year.

This year's dinner will be held on December 7 at the L'Unik restaurant at 805 Decarie Blvd. in Ville St-Laurent. We've worked hard to find the club a good deal and at 20\$ a head for a sit down full course meal, I think we've succeeded for this year. There will be two choices on the menu and with advance notice, the restaurant will be able to accommodate those of us who might come if there was a vegetarian option as well. The meal includes a main course along with salad, dessert and coffee or tea. The club will pay the tip and all you'll have to worry about is the price of your meal and any drinks you might order.

Man I had so many projects this year, I didn't get half of them

Annual Fees are:

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| General Members | \$25.00 |
| Associate Members | \$25.00 |
| White cane members | \$15.00 |
| Family members (per family) | \$30.00 |

The membership year runs from September 1 to August 31. Membership received on or after June 1 commences immediately and extends through the subsequent membership year - covering a period of up to fifteen months.

finished. I guess this means I have lots to look forward to in the coming year. I started out working on antenna projects in the back yard (you should see the magnetic loop antenna I built for 80 meters) and now I'm planning a QRO mobile station for which I recently acquired a very nice 500W mobile HF PA. No rest for the wicked as they say...

Believe it or not, we still have good reason to hope that the scheduled maintenance on the VE2BG repeater antenna system may happen this year before the snow falls. As I write these words, we are still waiting to hear back from the rigger for an ETA but stay tuned to these pages for the latest info on the saga of VE2BG on the Pointe-Claire water tower. Have I mentioned before how riggers dislike working on water towers? We've sure had a heck of a time tracking one down that is able and willing to do the work without breaking the bank so to speak.

On the subject of repeaters, the club has a new challenge to face this year as Marten, VE2WU has asked the club to find a new home for VE2RED. For the past several years Marten has very kindly hosted VE2RED at it's "temporary" location, on Covey Hill at Marten's home QTH. Marten tells me that the repeater is interfering with some weak signal work he's been doing of late. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Marten on behalf of the club for his generous contributions in keeping VE2RED on the air and in service to the amateur radio community. Marten, your efforts have not gone unnoticed and we at the MARC are very grateful for all you've done for the club over the years.

This month's meeting will be an interesting one. Marc-Andre and myself will be giving a talk on using Linux in the ham shack. Why not come out and join us on the 27th. You may be surprised at the state of ham radio in the open source world of the GNU/Linux environment. Until then, take care and good DX.

73 de Paul, VE2OFH

Club Call Sign: VE2ARC

Club Website: <http://www.marc.qc.ca>

Club Email: ve2arc@rac.ca

Repeaters

VE2BG 147.06 MHz (+)

Owned and operated by Montreal Amateur Radio Club. Located on the Pointe Claire water tower.

VE2RED 147.27 MHz (+)

Owned and operated by Montreal Amateur Radio Club.

DX de VE2NGH, coming in 2014

Starting with the January 2014 edition of the MarcOgram, with the New Year fresh and upon us I will be writing a new column entitled "DX AND CONTEST NEWS". This new column will be focused on giving you all the information you need to work the latest hot new DX and DXpeditions which will be in operation for the upcoming month. Hopefully this will give all of you budding DX'ers out there some incentive to get off the local 2-meter repeaters and have some great fun on HF in order to improve your DXCC award scores or even to get your FIRST DXCC award in addition to the many other DX awards that exist for proficient Ham Radio operators. Not only will you have a chance to put up some new exotic "wallpaper" in your shack to brag to your friends about, but you will also learn to greatly improve your Ham Radio operating skills.

The CONTEST news section will focus on all the major contests which are to be scheduled for the upcoming month. Contests are a great way to improve your DXCC score in addition to being great fun in participating in the world of Radiosport. Every athletic sport has a competitive side, and Ham radio is no exception. Remember the fun you had at Field Day? Well the purpose of this column will be to whet your appetites to give Ham Radio contesting a try.

Cu in January

73' de George
VE2NGH



MARC Christmas Dinner

You are cordially invited to the annual MARC Christmas dinner extravaganza. Good times, with good company and good food for all. The MARC will graciously supply door prizes and cover tip and take care of the service fees for all attendees. The price is 20\$ per plate (those with vegetarian requirements will be accommodated given advanced notice). There is plenty of inexpensive parking both on the street and behind the restaurant (accessed via rue Ouimet).

Date: Saturday December 7th, 2013

Time: 18h30

Menu

Salad

Chicken Supreme stuffed with Ham and Swiss cheese
or

Filet Mignon

Served with potatoes and vegetables

Dessert

Coffee or Tea

\$20 (taxes not included)

Service will be paid by the MARC



Location:

L'Unik

805 Decarie Blvd

Ville St Laurent, 514-744-5345



On the Air: Rare, Brief 6 Meter F2 Opening Makes for Plentiful DX

Six meter operators were treated November 9 to an F2 opening from approximately 1500 until 1630 UTC. "These have been very rare in Solar Cycle 24," said QST "The World Above 50 MHz" Editor Jon Jones, NØJK. He described the opening as "mostly single-hop F2" from the East Coast, Midwest, Gulf Coast, and to the West Coast to Central America, Northern South America and Caribbean.

Jones said the geomagnetic field was active, with a K of 4, due to what Spaceweather.com called "a gusty stream of solar wind buffeting Earth's magnetic field, sparking auroras around both of our planet's poles." Jones said he was "late to the show" because he'd worked the night before. He didn't get into the fray until 1550 UTC after he saw all the 6 meter spots showing up.

"I turned on the radio, and FM5AN, P43A, PJ4NX, etc were all blasting in loud here in eastern Kansas," he said. "I worked FM5AN and P43A from home using a M2 loop in the attic. Jean, P43A said I was S-9. Nothing new or rare, but any F2 on 6 meters in solar cycle 24 is a treat."

The ARRL Letter, Nov.14, 2013

MarcOgram article deadlines

Starting with the next issue, a new deadline will be in effect. The deadline for article submissions will be 3 weeks before the next meeting. For January, this will workout to Jan. 8th. This will give the editors the ability to plan each issue according to the content that was submitted. Submissions after this date will be included in the following issue,

The 2014 deadlines are: Jan 8th, Feb 5th, Mar 5th, Apr 9th, May 7th and Aug 13th for the summer issue.

MarcOgram Editors

Marc-André, VE2EVN & Sheldon, VA2SH

Alfred Vail the man behind Morse Code

The invention of the Morse code is generally attributed to Samuel F. B. Morse. Have we been misled by historians? Have historians overlooked important documents? Or have historians just not shared all the facts with us? The following quote is taken from an article in "The Century: Illustrated Monthly Magazine", April, 1888, by Franklin Pope, titled "The American Inventors of the Telegraph, with special references to the services of Alfred Vail". The article is quite lengthily and comprehensive and is recommended reading for anyone interested in early telegraph history. "The Century" was a popular periodical of the era and should be available at larger libraries and book dealers. In case you haven't the time or inclination to get the whole article, I have quoted the most relevant part below. Before jumping in, let's set the stage and see who the players are. Franklin Pope was a telegraph inventor, entrepreneur and writer. He may be best known for his partnership with Thomas Edison in the telegraph services business in the early 1870s. Alfred Vail was one of Samuel Morse's partners and contributor in the development of the telegraph. William Baxter was Vail's laboratory assistant at the Speedwell Iron Works where early developments were made.

Quoting from Pope's article:

It is also important to remember that the code of conventional signals which had been devised by Morse, and which, in connection with his machine, he proposed to use for the transmission of intelligence, were numerical and not alphabetical. According to his scheme, a specially prepared dictionary was required in which every word in the English language was represented by an arbitrary number. A separate type represented each numeral, having a corresponding number of projections or teeth. We reproduce a specimen of telegraphic writing by this numerical code.

The numbers refer to words in the telegraphic dictionary. They are translated by counting the points at the bottom of the line, and then, by referring to the dictionary, the corresponding words are found and the communication translated.

The construction of the machines referred to by Mr. Baxter was begun early in September, 1837, immediately after the partnership between Morse and Vail had been determined upon. Meanwhile, Morse remained in New York, engaged in the preparation of his caveat. This document was subscribed by him on the third day of October, 1837, and from it we may learn precisely of what his invention then

consisted. He enumerates the essential parts of his apparatus as follows:

"First, a system of signs, by which numbers, and consequently words and sentences, are signified; second, a set of type, adapted to regulate and communicate the signs, with rules in which to set up the type; third, an apparatus called the port-rule, for regulating the movement of the type-rules, which rules, by means of the type, in their turn regulate the times and intervals of the passage of electricity; fourth, a register, which records the signs permanently; fifth, a dictionary, or vocabulary of words, numbered and adapted to this system of telegraph; sixth, modes of laying conductors to preserve them from injury."

This, then, was Morse's telegraph, as it existed in October, 1837. It was the first apparatus to record simple numerical signs at a distance by electricity. Writing as late as 1867, and giving what may be regarded as his own mature opinion of his work, Morse claims, and with justice, to be the first inventor of a recording or printing telegraph, as distinguished from a semaphore, giving only evanescent signs, either visual, as in the apparatus of Schilling and others, or acoustic, as in the apparatus of Henry.

He inquires:

"What else was necessary to be added to the catalogue of facts known in 1832 to construct a telegraph? One other fact only was wanting, and that was a system of signs adapted to the capabilities of the mechanism for printing at a distance; and this system of signs I invented in 1832, and adding to it the inventory of known facts successfully combined them to produce the telegraph."

But, as we shall hereafter see, the telegraph invented by Morse in 1832, and described in his caveat of 1837, has nothing in common with the essentials of the modern system of telegraphy which is known in the United States as Morse's; nor is the code of alphabetical signs now universally used in telegraphy throughout the world the same, either in principle, or in construction, as that of the caveat.

As soon as the caveat had been safely lodged in the Patent Office, Morse began the preparation of a dictionary. October 24, he writes to Vail:

The dictionary is at last done. You cannot conceive how much labor there has been, but it is accomplished, and we can now talk or write anything by numbers. . . .

The spark passes freely as yet three and a half miles, and magnetizes well at that distance, though evidently with diminished strength, which would seem (Continued on Page 6)

to indicate that there is a limit somewhere. We have just heard that Professor Wheatstone has tried an experiment with his method - twenty miles - with success ; we have, therefore, nothing to fear.

On the 29th, Morse went to Speedwell for a few days, partly to observe the progress of the new machinery, and partly with the intention of painting the portraits of the members of Judge Vail's household, in fulfillment of a commission which had been given him as a delicate and considerate manner of relieving his pressing pecuniary necessities. After his return to New York, he wrote to Vail, November 13:

You will be gratified and agreeably surprised when I inform you that the result now is, that, with a little addition of wire to the coil of the small magnet which I had all along used, the power was as great apparently through ten as through three miles. The result has surprised us; and yet there is no mistake, and, I conceive, settles the whole matter.

Meanwhile Alfred Vail and his young assistant, William Baxter, were engaged night and day in pushing forward the construction of the new machinery. Writing of this period, Mr. Baxter says:

Alfred was singularly modest and unassuming, while Professor Morse was very much inclined to insist on the superiority of his own plans and methods - if for no other reason; because they were his own. As we all looked upon him with the respect due to a professor, we were at first quite willing to defer submissively to his dicta. It resulted from this, that the first machine which was constructed at Speedwell was substantially a copy of the original model, although constructed of metal, in a more symmetrical and practical form.

As we became acquainted with Morse it became evident to us that his mechanical knowledge and skill were limited, and his ideas in matters relating to construction of little value. As the weak points in the apparatus were one after another developed, Alfred began to draw upon the resources of his own wonderful power of invention in substituting practical and commercially valuable mechanical combinations for the more or less impracticable designs of Morse.

We found, for example, that the pencil of the recording apparatus frequently required repointing, and that when freshly sharpened it made a different mark from that made by a worn point, which tended to render the record obscure and difficult to decipher. Alfred contrived a fountain pen that made a uniform line. This device, however, was not satisfactory to him, as it threw the ink in all directions when jerked by the sudden action of the magnet, and he spent some time in diligent study in the endeavor to devise a

remedy.

He was a mechanical draughtsman of surpassing skill, as is fully attested by some of his work still in possession of his family. He brought to me one day, after working for an hour at his drawing table, a sketch of a new marking device, in which a vertical motion was given to the lever instead of the transverse movement which had hitherto been employed. We constructed the new lever, and thus for the first time produced a register capable of making dots, dashes, and spaces.

Alfred's brain was at this time working at high pressure, and evolving new ideas every day. He saw in these new characters the elements of an alphabetical code by which language could be telegraphically transmitted in actual words and sentences, and he instantly set himself at work to construct such a code. His general plan was to employ the simplest and shortest combinations to represent the most frequently recurring letters of the English alphabet, and the remainder for the more infrequent ones. For instance, he found upon investigation that the letter e occurs much more frequently than any other letter, and accordingly he assigned to it the shortest symbol, a single dot(.). On the other hand, j, which occurs infrequently, is expressed by dash-dot-dash-dot (-.-.) After going through a computation, in order to ascertain the relative frequency of the occurrence of different letters in the English alphabet, Alfred was seized with sudden inspiration, and visited the office of the Morristown local newspaper, where he found the whole problem worked out for him in the type cases of the compositor.

In this statement I have given the true origin of the misnamed " Morse " alphabet the very foundation and corner-stone of a new system, which has, since become the universal telegraphic language of the world."

Karen Weiss, a professional researcher based in Washington D.C., found this article and sent it to me. I am much indebted to her. I think you would agree that this is a significant document. Are Pope and Baxter entirely correct? Did they have some personal agenda? We may never know. I tend to believe that "where there is smoke, there is fire." Will history be re-written? Probably not.

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Sheldon, VA2SH
MarcOgram Co-Editor



SOTA group activation of Mt. Rigaud

Sunday November 9th 2013 was the "3rd annual" SOTA group activation of Mont Rigaud by the WIARC SOTA group, of which many of our members are part of including yours truly. Mont Rigaud was the first activation made by this SOTA group back in 2011. Many went back last year for a second activation and this year was a repeat of that activation which has now become an annual event. There was a bit of debate on who exactly was behind the organizing for the edition this year, but we can credit Daniel Montpetit, VA2KEY and Malcolm Harper, VE2DDZ for their great work on getting it together.

The event was a great success. The planned activation was posted on the Hilltopping mailing list, as well as the WIARC-SOTA page on wikispaces.com to take place on Saturday the 9th, with fall back date on Sunday in case of bad weather. For a while it looked like we would have to wait for Sunday, but mother nature finally agreed with our plans. Is it just me or is it harder than ever to predict the weather more than 12 hours ahead of time? Anyhow, back to the plan.

All were to meet at the Fairview Shopping Center around 9am, and to leave for Rigaud around 9:30 Saturday morning. As with many SOTA activations, rides were offered to those in need of one to the summit. A second meeting place was organized for those living in the Rigaud area to meet at the trail-head of Sanctuaire de Lourdes parking lot in Rigaud for 10:20am. We planed to operate from the Rigaud summit (by the cross) from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm, and then to stop for lunch on the way back at Willow's Inn in Hudson.

Almost all who showed interest on the mailing list were present and it turned out to be a large group activation. Participants were : Dan VA2KEY, Malcolm VE2DDZ, Eamon VE2EGN, Sheldon VA2SH, Marc-Andre VE2EVN, Andy VE2DNN, George VE2NGH, Terry VE2WTQ, and Harrison VE2HKW, along with his Mom.

Alex-VA2FPV and family joined us on the summit as well.

Once on the summit, there was a buzz of activity. Malcolm put up his truly tested portable HF station, while Eamon, Sheldon

and George were busy assembling a 2m yagi antenna along with mobile 2m radio. Earlier in the week, Jean-François Maher, VA2VL/VE2JFM alerted that he too would be on a summit during our activation, in the Adirondacks on Loon Lake Mountains, some 98.2km due south. A perfect opportunity to attempt a summit-to-summit, or S2S contact on 2m. I wanted to test a zip-cord antenna I recently built so I readied my fiberglass pole and up it went. Not everyone brought a radio along, as most activations organized now, an effort was made to reduce the weight and to coordinate efforts. This made it possible to bring two yagis with tripods, mobile radio and AGM battery. Many had their handy-talkies as backups, as often it's all you need to make your 4 required contacts to activate the summit. The yagis were a hit, and a short queue formed in order to get an S2S contact with VA2VL on 2m FM. Malcolm offered his stations for those who wanted to get onto HF. Eamon did some CW, I followed with some operating on 17m SSB, and Harrison got on 20m SSB and made quite a few contacts.

It was a nice afternoon, but it was getting a bit cold, and many were getting hungry so we headed down the summit and headed for the Willow's Inn in Hudson. We left the summit later than planned, so late lunch turned into an early dinner. Once at the inn, we were met by Marco, VE2XXI who joined us for dinner.

Of course this event would not have been possible without the many chasers we had giving us our contacts. I don't want to risk forgetting anyone, so I'll just say thank you. You know who you are.

The next SOTA event planned is activation of Mt. St-Bruno, another popular summit, early in December. If you're interested in joining us on this next activation, please visit the WIARC-SOTA wiki page for the latest details. If hiking is not your thing, but you would like to participate as a chaser, please join the Hilltopping mailing list so you'll be alerted on planned events.

SOTA links of interest:

<http://www.sota.org.uk/>

<http://www.sotawatch.org/>

<http://wiarc-sota.wikispaces.com/>

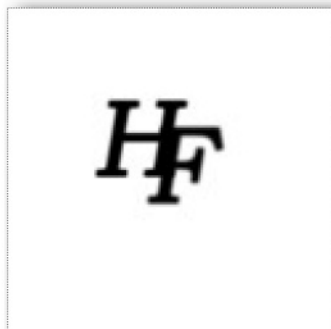
<http://www.ve2sota.org/> (french only)

The Hilltopping mailing list is hosted by the MARC. If you wish to be added to this mailing list to be kept informed of local events, or you wish to be added to the WIARC-SOTA wiki, please send a request to Dan at va2key@rac.ca

Photo by Malcolm, VE2DDZ

Marc-Andre, VE2EVN

MarcOgram Co-Editor.

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AMATEUR RADIO / RADIO-AMATEUR

ALINCO, ICOM, KENWOOD, RANGER, S.G.C., YAESU

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