



Radio Amateurs of Canada

Youth Education Program

NEWSLETTER #8

January 30, 2005

The Radioactive Dolphins Radio Club

Drinkwater Elementary School Duncan, British Columbia

This is the first year of our club's operation. We started with an enthusiastic 35 students but are now down to about ten regulars. We have a ham shack that doubles as a small office in our Learning Assistance room.

We have a very long cable for the antenna connections so we can move the radios in and out of the small office into the larger classroom.

We have a VHF rig with 16 preprogrammed channels, only a few of which are duplex channels. Six of them run off local repeaters and serve an area of about 200 square kilometers.

We have been designated as an Emergency Communications Centre. The VHF rig runs through a trapped vertical antenna on the school's flat roof.

So far, (knock on wood) nobody has sought to vandalize the antenna.

We also have a Kenwood HF rig that is a little on in years, feeding an antenna which has been set up in an attic space. It is not a dipole as it does not run in a straight line, and has severe limitations. However, we have raised people in the Western part of North America on both CW and phone. Unfortunately, the propagation is never good when we operate, usually in the middle of the day, during school hours.

We hope to experiment with a 20m dipole that we will put up and take down so it is not deployed after school and in the evenings. (Again, the vandalism issue)

At the present time, our students have been able to communicate with several hams and are looking forward to talking with some students at schools that have access to HF transmission. We would have to work out the kinks due to time zone variations, but we'd be willing to give it a go.

Bob Bartlett, VE7CPO and old Navy hand and Mike McMenamin, VE7EIC are the resident hams helping with the students.

If any school would be willing to give this a try, please let us know.

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The students at Drinkwater Elementary School are looking forward to an opportunity to exercise their skills on the High Frequency bands via SSB. Are any of you in a position to establish a scheduled contact with Mike, to arrange for your students to chat with his students? If you can do it, please contact Mike through the E-mail or telephone number given above.

YEP Committee member and RAC Treasurer, Ken Pulfer (VE3PU), was recently recognized by AMSAT for his "outstanding support to Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) program. As one of the ARISS International Delegates, you provide invaluable support to AMSAT, the ARISS US team and our ARISS International Partners. As a result of your active participation in the ARISS program, thousands of students have been inspired to pursue careers in science, math and engineering. Congratulations on a job well done."

Best congratulations to Ken on behalf of the YEP Committee and all the students and teachers who have benefitted from his efforts. Perhaps, as a result of their experience, there is a new Canadian astronaut in the making out there in our school system.

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