



# RICHMOND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

3531 Richmond Street, Richmond, BC, V7E 2W2

## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### Richmond Amateur Radio Club Makes Final Preparations for Next Week's Contact with International Space Station on March 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Richmond, B.C. (March 6, 2014)** – The excitement continues to build after nearly a year of planning as the Richmond Amateur Radio Club (RARC) makes final preparations for next week's "Amateur Radio on the International Space Station" (ARISS) event at H.J. Cambie Secondary that will give students an opportunity to communicate with astronauts on the International Space Station (ISS). These drills and exercises are to ensure that the ARISS Ground Support Team, RARC members participating in the project, becomes thoroughly familiar with procedures for contacting the ISS from the school on March 13<sup>th</sup>.

The RARC ARISS Ground Support Team has been practicing every weekend, under rain, snow or cloud, since January 2014 using specially assembled radio equipment comprising of tracking software and directional antennas to establish line of sight contact with the ISS. The process involves using orbit information and computer software to control a motor that guides the antenna to track the ISS when it is "flying" overhead. Radio beacons from other transmissions reflecting off the ISS received by the antenna verify that a successful contact could be made if the astronauts were listening and responding.

These activities performed repeatedly every weekend enable team members to make tracking and set up procedures a routine operation on event day. "Every time we perform the exercise to track the orbit pass of the ISS, we are able to fine tune the set-up of our equipment and flush out any bugs in the system," says Kishore Nair, the club's ARISS Ground Support Team leader and long time member. "We want to eliminate as many variables as possible for things to go sideways on the day of the event."

The opportunity for RARC to engage in a project for local students to talk to astronauts on the ISS was initiated by science teacher, Karen Ibbott, from H.J. Cambie Secondary School, who approached the radio club in early 2013 to provide technical support in her application to the ARISS program.

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About RARC - The Richmond Amateur Radio Club is a registered BC Society to promote the interests of Amateur Radio, assist in the provision of communication services in the event of an emergency, and provide radio communications for public service events as requested. RARC is a member of Emergency Management BC and supporter of Emergency Social Services with the City of Richmond. Club programs are partially funded by grants from the City of Richmond and the Province of British Columbia. Additional information about RARC can be found at [www.rarclub.ca](http://www.rarclub.ca).

For more information please contact:

Urey Chan, VE7URE  
Public Relations and Event Communications  
E-mail: [ve7rar@rar.ca](mailto:ve7rar@rar.ca)  
Fax: 604-274-7975  
Cell: 416-720-8017