

RICHMOND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

3531 Richmond Street, Richmond, BC, V7E 2W2

INFORMATION RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Review of 2013 Richmond Amateur Radio Club Activities and Notable Events for 2014

Richmond, B.C. (February 11, 2014) - 2013 has been an eventful and hallmark year for the Richmond Amateur Radio Club (RARC) with many new activities and first time accomplishments. RARC has engaged in new outreach activities to communicate awareness of Amateur radio to local community groups, launched public relations initiatives to proactively promote club activities to the community, planned emergency communications training to work closer with community emergency programs, and participated in Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) with a local high school to enable students to communicate with astronauts on the International Space Station.

International Space Station Project Presents Exciting Opportunities for Members - Participation in ARISS provides a unique opportunity for RARC members to apply their extensive technical skills and Amateur radio experience to contact the International Space Station with a local school. The club was invited by science teacher, Karen Ibbott, from H. J. Cambie Secondary School in early 2013 to take part in ARISS to enable students to communicate with astronauts on the International Space Station. The past year was spent acquiring, assembling and testing satellite communications equipment while waiting for a confirmed contact date in March.

Speaking Engagements to Communicate Awareness - RARC has been participating in speaking engagements throughout 2013 to bring awareness of Amateur radio to local community groups. Last fall, the club was invited to co-present a session at the BC Science Teachers' Association Conference to discuss how Amateur radio can be used as a teaching tool in the classroom. Earlier in the year, a major presentation was delivered at the Richmond Safety & Secure Living Fair on the role of Amateur radio in emergency preparedness in the community. In October, an informal talk about the significance of Amateur radio in emergency communications was given to high school students participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award program.

Public Relations Program for New Outreach Initiatives - RARC has initiated a new public relations program with a three-prong approach that involves a re-branding of the club's identity, developing new marketing communications collateral, and establishing relations with the local media and community. A new club logo is being produced while ongoing liaison with local media through news releases has resulted in articles on RARC activity being published in the *Richmond Review* - the first time that photos of RARC members (from the Canada Day parade) appeared in a local media publication.

New Emergency Communication Training Program - RARC has recently initiated a training program for emergency communication so that its members can be better prepared in carrying out its commitments to support local community emergency programs. The club supports the City of Richmond's Emergency Programs where many RARC members are also volunteers with Emergency Social Services (ESS). In October, club members assisted in coordinating and conducting a test of the city's emergency communication system by activating radio equipment at Emergency Operation Centres situated in community centres and municipal facilities throughout the city.

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Ongoing Communication Support at Annual Community Events – RARC also participates in local community events every year by providing emergency communication support at the Steveston Salmon Festival and Canada Day Parade, Richmond Terry Fox Run, SOS Children’s Villages Run and Vancouver Sun Run. Through the club’s ongoing relationship with the City of Richmond, RARC also participates in the annual Public Works Open House by providing a display booth in the Emergency Preparedness area.

Notable Upcoming Events for 2014 – The New Year presents new opportunities, experiences and excitement for RARC members with two key events on the club’s calendar. Mid March has been identified by the local space agency for the ARISS event at H.J. Cambie Secondary School. The confirmed date when astronauts can be available to contact students will be confirmed as the event date approaches. The other key event on the calendar, and also on every radio Amateur’s calendar, is the annual Field Day, which is set for the last complete weekend of June every year. Field Day 2014 is on June 28-29. Field Day is the most significant on-the-air event for RARC with more than 35,000 participating radio Amateurs from across Canada and around the world setting up radio stations in unusual locations to make contact with other Amateur Radio operators and demonstrate their emergency communications capabilities. News releases with more information on these events will be distributed when we get closer to the event dates.

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 communications for public service events as requested. RARC is a member of the BC Provincial Emergency Program and supporter of Emergency Social Services with the City of Richmond. Programs for the club 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.

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