



2022 Year-end Orca Report

December 18, 2022—Another year rolls to a close. Has it been a good year, a bad year, a neither-nor year? As with contesting, there were probably smile-inducing moments and some frustrating moments.

Silent Keys

And some sad moments... We said good-bye to three Orca members in 2022: Jim Smith VE7FO (SK), David Frost VE7VF (SK) and Richard Thompson VE7XT (SK). Our sincerest condolences to the families and friends of these avid contributors to the hobby.



I, personally, knew Jim best because I saw him at Orca meetings and other radio-related events. Always encouraging. Always supportive. Always eager to get people on the air and enjoying the fun of this hobby, particularly contesting. But my initial introduction took place through emails 12 years or so ago when Jim was able to get his contact at N1MM to include BCQP—at that point not yet under the Orca banner—in the logging software. I was already the de facto contest coordinator for BCQP, so Jim and I exchanged emails on what the logging software had to be able to do. He spent a lot of time working with the N1MM writer and tested out the program for accuracy. In the end, it was perfect and ready for BCQP 2010. What a difference it made to have logging software that supported BCQP! I am forever grateful to Jim for this effort.

John VE7TI has written a very nice article “Remembering Jim Smith VE7FO – SK”. You can find the article [here](#).

Membership Renewal



2023 dues are due in January. Some people have already paid. If you haven't paid yet, you have several options: PayPal, cheque/check payable to Orca DX and Contest Club, or Interac email money transfer for anyone in Canada who uses online banking. Go to the [renewal page](#) of the Orca website for further details.



Just \$24. The money goes toward club activities/events, including the upcoming PNW DX Convention, BCQP, DXpedition donations, communication costs and club initiatives as approved by membership or the executive board.

Wednesday Lunches

Although the old, second-Tuesday-of-the-month evening meetings haven't been held since the initial COVID lockdown in spring 2020, lunches did resume once restrictions—number of people per table and household/social bubble—were relaxed. Nevertheless, the number of people attending lunches dwindled, prompting the organizer (Gord VE7ON) to put lunches on hold, at least for the time being.

The lunch option was introduced as an alternative to the Tuesday evening meeting so that club members in the Lower Mainland, particularly those who don't like to drive at night, could gather during daylight hours and at a different location that might be closer to work or home than The RiverHouse. In those early days, lunches attracted as many as 15 people, but then the regulars started moving away, outside the Lower Mainland, leaving a very streamlined group of potential attendees. Fast forward to the more recent past, and lunches were attracting less than five people, so no lunchtime chat opportunities for the past couple of months.

That said, there is a possibility of a mid-January lunch to kick off the new year. Stay tuned for details. It would be great to see people we haven't seen for such a long time.



Orca hosting PNW DX Convention 2023

The date is set—August 11–13, 2023. The agenda is being formalized, and the venue has been reserved. We will be at the Inn at the Quay again, in New Westminster, BC—a lovely waterfront location. Further details, namely, agenda, registration and hotel reservation info will be announced in early 2023.

RAC Survey on Call Sign Policy

If you are a RAC member, you most probably received an email about the results of a recent online survey focusing on policy related to call signs. More than 2,300 Canadian Radio Amateurs participated in this survey, and Dr. Frank Howell, K4FMH, volunteered his skills in survey methods and analysis to produce a report on responses received.

You can go [here](#) to read the report. It is very long—even longer than my post-BCQP analysis!—and includes a lot of graphs. A summary of major findings can be found on pp27-30.

The RAC Executive and Board will be working together to create a series of recommendations for changes and updates to the call sign policy. Once approved, recommendations will be presented to the federal department of Innovation Science and Economic Development (ISED)—regulator for amateur radio in Canada—and then it will be up to ISED to decide which recommendations to implement and when.

Contesting Activity

Band conditions seem to be improving. On my last outing—CQWW SSB—10m was open and definitely workable for hours and hours at a time. 15m was also quite delightful.

I know many Orca members have been active in the big weekend marathons and enjoying better CONDX. My own logs attest to this. 😊

Let's hope CONDX continues to improve through BCQP 2023.

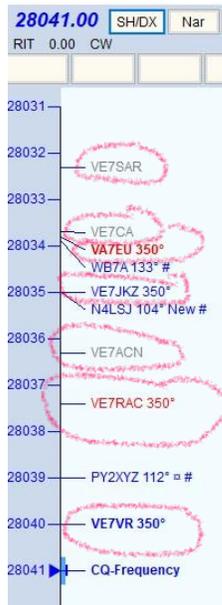


Our very own QSO party is coming up in less than two months—Feb 4–5—and activity could be quite high, spurred by sustained and considerable interest in QSO parties. You know there were two new QSO parties added to the list in 2022: Quebec QSO Party and Canadian Prairies QSO Party.

The BCQP [page](#) on the Orca website has links to all sorts of useful stuff to make the going easier and hopefully more fun—rules, multiplier lists, FAQ, in-depth event analysis from previous years, and past award photos. You'll also find an at-a-glance, same-weekend event schedule with required exchange info for key coinciding events. Not only does the schedule show which events overlap with BCQP but the exchange data will be useful in preparing exchange data specific to your station, should you be asked to trade a Q with someone in another event.

There are several coinciding events that could buoy participation or create mayhem, depending on your mode of choice and when you are on the air. Host-state operators in the other QSO

parties—MN and VT—are always keen for a trade, easier on PH than on CW, but Q activity draws attention and that fuels pileups. In addition, the State QSO Party Challenge remains extremely popular. It is separate from BCQP but includes BCQP, along with MNQP and VTQP, as the first parties of the year. QSO party enthusiasts are eager to build QSO points for the SQP Challenge, so stations calling “CQ BCQP” will most certainly get responses, depending on band conditions, of course. Info on the Challenge is [here](#).



Other events may or may not impact BC stations, particularly if Europe is closed to BC. But those events could impact stations from Manitoba eastward, in Canada, or the Midwest and Southern states in the U.S. That is, the attention of stations outside BC might be diverted south and east instead of north and west. The solution, of course, is for lots of BC stations to be on the air calling CQ and drawing attention to the Pacific Northwest. While some people may say “Oh, that never happens,” proof that it does is on the left. Just a small sampling from 10m CW during the Sunday segment in 2022.

Since Orca members are the lifeblood of BCQP, I hope to see a large number of your callsigns populating the bandmap. I’m only saying this now instead of in January when I make the final promotional push because some people may need to get equipment ready and/or participate in some HF events to test out the setup ahead of BCQP.

I have an official invitation, PDF format, if anyone wants to use it to tell friends about BCQP 2023. Contact me if you’d like the file. But just FYI, I will be sending out the invitation to clubs in BC and across Canada and the U.S. and posting to forums, etc., in January.

As you are undoubtedly aware, BCQP offers photo-based plaques as well as certificates that showcase our scenery or a special landmark. Different every year and thus COLLECTIBLE! Makes our QSO party unique. (Sales point. If you’re talking to people about it. Hint. Hint.)

There had been 10 sponsored plaque categories, but one sponsor dropped out. After an executive decision to bring that newly unsponsored category under Orca sponsorship, the **Top US category is open for a new sponsor**. If you belong to a local club that might be interested in sponsoring this category, please have someone from that club contact me. (va7bec[at]rac[dot]ca)

And that’s it for this year. Enjoy all the holiday-inspired activities that make December special. Be well. Be warm. All the best for 2023.

QRT de VA7BEC