



The Repeater

Winter 2007

Distributed to all Current Members

Membership Re-newal time

On behalf of the Board we extend to you our best wishes for a **Merry Christmas** and an interesting **New Year**

Important Dates:

MRS: Thursday at 9:00 pm MRS Semi-Weekly Net
Sunday at 1:00 pm - MRS Semi-Weekly Net

WARC: Summer 2008 - Wpg Hamfest / RAC AGM

ARES:

WSC: 2nd. Thursday of each month - Breakfast

Other:

Nets: Daily 19:00 Local	MB Evening Phone net 3760 KHz
Daily 01:30 UTC	Prairie traffic Net (CW) 3660 KHz
Daily 02:30 UTC	Aurora #2 net 7055 KHz
Daily 08:30 Local	MB Wx Net 3743 KHz
Weekdays 9:00	Seniors morning net 147.390 MHz +
Wed. 02:00 UTC	MB IRLP Net 147.27 MHz +
Wed. 9:00 pm	Six Meter net 50.238 MHz USB
Thursday 9:00pm	MRS Net 147.390 MHz +
Sunday 9:00pm	MRS Net 147.390 MHz +
Sunday 7:30 pm	VE4BDN net 146.940 MHz -
Monday 7:30 pm	VE4HS net 146.880 MHz -

President's Report

by Ed, VE4EAR

Welcome to the final edition of the REPEATER for 2007. I hope that you can find a few moments of spare time in this busy season to sit back and catch up on the latest developments and future plans of the Manitoba Repeater Society.

The technical committee has been very active this year. A tremendous amount of planning and repair work has taken place behind the scenes. 2008 promises to be the year where members will see the benefits and rewards of this extensive planning. Check out Gord's technical report for all the details.

During 2007, we saw the introduction of a couple digital voice repeaters into the Winnipeg area. While these are not MRS sponsored, they do indicate that technology is changing, groups are experimenting, and digital voice is definitely looming on the horizon. If you are a member of RAC and/or the ARRL, you have undoubtedly read a lot about Icom's D-STAR digital voice system over the last several months. While not inexpensive, there appears to be a lot of interest in some of the benefits and features available with this technology. Your executive is working on obtaining all the facts and costs associated with this product and will present this in a more detailed discussion in a future REPEATER and at the Annual General Meeting this coming spring. If you as a member of MRS have any concerns or feelings about the introduction of this technology into Manitoba, please do not hesitate to contact any member of the executive.

With a lot of field work looming on the horizon, the technical group is looking for volunteers to assist with maintenance and installation of equipment. You certainly do not have to be an expert to help out and be part of the team. It is an excellent opportunity to learn some new skills while contributing to the success of the MRS. If interested, please contact any member of the executive and we will be sure to let you know the next time a work party is being held.

M.R.S. Current Fee Schedule

Current & Renewal Members
\$25.00 per calendar year

New members only - Pro-rated quarterly

January to December \$25.00
April - December \$18.75
July to December \$12.50
October to December \$ 6.25

- First time members are no longer required to pay a one time only initiation fee of \$10.00 on top of the regular fee. Their membership fee is pro-rated for the first year only.

- Family membership is for each additional members residing at the same residence as the initial member. \$10.00 each

Industry Canada Amateur Centre

Voice 1-888-780-3333 (toll-free)
Fax: 1-613-991-5575
E-mail: spectrum.amateur AT ic.gc.ca
Web: <http://strategies.ic.gc.ca/spectrum>

The Repeater Advertising Rates:

All advertising is black & white and must be submitted in electronic format.
full page \$75.00
½ page \$40.00
¼ page \$20.00
bus.card \$10.00

For more information or to place an ad please contact any executive member.

Comments or if you just want to reach us :

Newscaster Editor
Manitoba Repeater Society
C/O VE4WSC
598 St. Mary's Road
Winnipeg, MB R2M 3L5
<http://www.ve4.net/mrs/>

While so many of us are making lists at this time of the year, please do not forget to add one more item to yours. It is time to renew your annual MRS membership! The monies generated by membership fees account for virtually 100% of our income and are essential if we are to maintain or improve our repeater network. If this is important to you, I hope you will consider re-renewing your membership for another year. For your convenience, there is a form included with this newsletter.

On behalf of the MRS executive and myself, I want to extend to everyone a sincere wish for peace, happiness, health and prosperity this holiday season and throughout 2008.



Technical Committee Submitted by Gord, VE4GLS

It's good to be able to spend a bit of time catching up on indoor work, especially during these long cold nights of early winter (late fall). My fieldwork is done but there is also lots of ham radio work to catch up on. My workbench has quite a bunch of to-dos already; a power supply and VHF amplifier released their valuable smoke earlier this year and are in need of replenishment. I however still haven't had time to try and put that ever evasive smoke back inside these units.

From the MRS standpoint, we have not been able to accomplish what we were hoping before the winter set in. The Starbuck and Bruxelles upgrades are still on our to-do list. I have been in touch with CBC and several tower riggers to get these jobs done but there has been no word as to when it will happen yet.

M.R.S. Current Executive

President	Ed	VE4EAR	ve4ear AT rac.ca
V/President	Al	VE4AJO	ve4ajo AT rac.ca
Secretary	Dick	VE4HK	ve4hk AT rac.ca
Treasurer	Harm	VE4HAZ	ve4haz AT rac.ca
Membership	Wayne	VE4WKL	wludman AT shaw.ca
Technical	Gord	VE4GLS	ve4gls AT rac.ca
Directors	Yori	VE4ACX	453-3786
	Walter	VE4VB	284-3054
Past Pres.	Bill	VE4ALW	williamr AT mts.net
	Phil	VE4QB	fphilb AT mts.net
	Derek	VE4HAY	ve4hay AT rac.ca

CBC has some major repairs to do on one of their feedlines and we are hoping the riggers will be able to combine our antenna replacement (VE4MAN) with that job, possibly before Christmas. We also have to inspect and repair or replace two link antennae on the CBC tower that stopped working this spring. We have replacements ready to go. We can't touch the tower ourselves; we would need certification that none of us in the executive (and membership as far as I know) have. We have to depend on someone else to do the work that is certified.

Here's a quick rundown of our repeater status as it is right now:

VE4EMB, 147.36+ MHz, Hadashville

Repeater is working well. Link to Falcon Lake is very noisy and intermittent however. We are looking into resolving this problem by adding a pre-amp to the link receiver at EMB.

VE4MIL, 145.21- #42 Milner Ridge

Working well. Links to Winnipeg and Falcon Lake working properly. Link to Selkirk is working but link seems intermittent. We will look into L3 as soon as time allows.

VE4GIM, 146.85-, #44 Gimli

Repeater is working well. Link is not working properly and we hope to have this looked at by publishing time. We suspect a problem with the link transmitter at Gimli, we already checked the WPG side, and all is well there.

VE4VJ, 443.500+, #45 Winnipeg

VE4WRS, 145.45-, Winnipeg, Autopatch, IRLP

VE4WPG, 147.39+, #45 Winnipeg

Repeaters are working well. Construction downtown and more transmitters nearby our equipment are causing some interference and/or dead spots around the city. There is very little we can do about these problems other than relocating the system; not an option right now, plus it would be most difficult to find a spot as good as it's current location.

VE4MAN, 146.61-, #46 Starbuck

Operating at reduced transmit power and receiver gain. There are problems with the antenna and filtering causing inconsistent operation. The new antenna should remedy much of this, and we are planning to upgrade the duplexer filter once the antenna issue is taken care of.

Links 1 and 3 are not operational at this time. These links connect to Winnipeg and Morris, so Starbuck is pretty much stand-alone right now (L2 to Portage works but

there are problems at PLP). We are replacing one of the link radios and need to inspect the antenna systems to find faults on the RF side.

VE4CDN, 145.27-, #47 Morris

Operating fine. Link equipment to connect to Starbuck has been installed and is ready to go once the MAN site is running.

We will also be installing a link to Winkler, possibly this winter. The Winkler (VE4TOM) repeater and Morris will be hot-linked. VE4TOM is owned and operated by Prairie Mobile Communications.

VE4PLP Link site

This site has been off the air since early November. The power supply may have failed and we hope to be out to check it soon. We are also looking to upgrade the site to include the VE4PTG VHF repeater when Hydro decommissions a couple of microwave antennae on the tower. We can utilize the feedlines to facilitate a VHF antenna and to improve our link to Starbuck, which is marginal at times.

VE4MRS, 145.31- #48 Buydens Hill (Bruxelles)

Currently a link site between Brandon and Portage. We are hoping to add the VHF portion soon but the season may close in at the site any time. We have brand new feedline ready to go and the antenna is already at the site. We need riggers to install this equipment for us, hopefully soon.

Pinetree Inter-tie (VE4FAL and east)

VE4FAL 146.64- MHz Falcon Lake

Working well, however the link to Kenora is not fully operational. The link does work when atmospheric conditions elevate RF propagation.

Brandon Link

VE4TED 146.73 MHz Brandon

Owned and operated by the Brandon Amateur Radio Club. This repeater is operational, but the link does not work at this time. We hope to have the links working between Brandon and Starbuck soon. See notes for PLP and MAN repeaters above.

Quick note on IRLP operation...

The IRLP seems to be working and getting along with the phone patch after the modifications we did to the system last spring. I hear lots of reflector net activity on the system. Please remember to yield the channel to visitors and remote connects; I have been told it is very difficult to connect to

our 1066 node in the evenings from other node operators. If someone tries to connect to the Winnipeg node when it is already connected elsewhere a voice will come on and say "incoming call from node (xxxx)". It is customary to disconnect and call that node or wait for them to try again; it could be an emergency or something important.

On another note, Reflector 9356 will be sending audio from NASA public channel #1 during shuttle operations. This is a broadcast and is only one-way, it is not possible to talk to the astronauts or mission control.

(xxxx) = Remote node number

We are in need of long runs of 7/8" Helix or LMR-400 transmission cable. If you know of roll ends or good quality used cable available please contact anyone on the board.

WARC - Help Wanted

The Winnipeg Amateur Radio Club Inc. is looking for one or more volunteers to take over administration of the IRLP system that is shared with Manitoba Repeater Society. Duties and capabilities include, but are not limited to the following

- login procedures
- audio alignment procedures
- other basic file management pertaining to IRLP
- basic computer skills are required
- must be able to run remote login software at home on a secure network/system. SecureCRT is recommended
- command line entry & GUI LINUX RedHat 9+
- ability to maintain strict security with passwords, IP addresses etc
- some experience setting audio levels, FM deviation,
- some knowledge of repeater setup and maintenance
- must be able to be allowed physical access to the VE4WPG secure site.

Contact Derek VE4HAY if you are interested in applying for this position

RAC's Financial Statements for 2006 Sobering By Dave Hayes VE3JX, Editor of The Algoma Amateur,

USED WITH PERMISSION

[from the November 2007 issue of The Algoma Amateur, newsletter of The Algoma Amateur Radio Club in Sault Ste Marie, Ontario.]

This month, we received our Nov./Dec. copy of TCA. On page 55 are RAC's financial statements for the year 2006. RAC had a deficit of over \$30K; the previous year's deficit was \$7.5K. Membership revenue was about the same for both years, while advertising revenues weakened.

Costs that increased were: office, wages & benefits, rent, RABC dues, QSL bureaus, members services, CARAB, equipment leases & charges, cost of sales & royalties, bank charges, merchant fees & interest. Expenses that decreased significantly were: annual meeting, committees, executive & directors, IARU fees, magazine production, repairs & maintenance, and YEP. The "Statement of Changes in Net Assets" shows the net assets balance as going from \$43,280 down to \$13,053. Not a pretty picture.

Membership:

Bear in mind that this is for 2006. We will have to wait until next fall to see the audited financial results for this year. However, I am sure that membership numbers have not taken a dramatic upswing; I would wish they have, but reality suggests otherwise.

If anyone is of the opinion that RAC should be financially supporting this or that, whether this or that refers to valuable services such as ARES or not, these financial statements explain why RAC cant afford to do all it would want to. It does not have the resources. Why?

It all boils down to membership numbers. The ARRL recently released their membership as being more than 151K. That translates to around 25% of U.S. licensees. I have seen dissertations bemoaning the fact that it is not higher. However, the sad truth is that, if we had 25% of



Winnipeg Amateur
Radio Club
Hamfest
August 8 - 10, 2008



licensees in Canada as members of RAC, there would be a party celebration to end all celebrations!

While we don't have up-to-the-minute figures we only have those from last December the hard facts are that we don't have even 10% penetration; the figure was 4731 or 8.7%. To put it mildly, that's abysmal!

Notwithstanding, our Ontario North/East Region has the highest percentage in the country, standing at 15.9%. While that is better than the national average, it is still not up to what it should be. Why is it that hams generally do not join RAC?

Excuses:

There are many excuses used to justify non-membership, and we've heard them all. Two recent ones are: a distrust of RAC's finances; the claim that it's an old boys club, meaning that just a few control the organization.

As far as finances go, the current statements tell the story. The executive and Board of Directors have very little money to play with. In fact, they have been cutting costs here, trimming there, such that there is no fat left at all. They have, for example, reduced the necessary costs for fulfilling their duties by 1/3. Funds needed by committees has cut by 1/2. RAC has professional people, such as lawyers and engineers who donate their time and expertise to RAC.

Much of Earle's traveling as RAC President, as an example, has been out of his own pocket. We have a lot of dedicated volunteers who are trying to make RAC work on a shoestring budget. There is no wastage here to speak of. In fact, RAC does not have the funds to do everything it wants to do. It all boils down to membership support, or lack thereof.

Old Boys:

Is RAC an old boys club? If you look at the ages of many of our officers and volunteers, you can see that there are many old boys. Earle, our retiring President, is in his mid-seventies, and he has many contemporaries in RAC. However, the term old boys club is used to signify a closed group maintaining secretive control of everything, barring outsiders from interfering. Is that the case with RAC?

No, it is not. My personal experience has been that, when you show a little interest in what's going on in RAC, perhaps offering a positive idea or so, each one of the executive goes into recruiting mode. They are old boys to be sure, and they're tired of carrying the load by themselves. I have had dealings with a number of RAC executive, past &

present, and I have not detected any trace of a clique-ish mentality. In fact, it has been quite the opposite.

Therefore, if YOU want to be President, or VP, or a Director, or any other appointed official in RAC, you have a very good chance of fulfilling your dreams. You will have all the help you need from current members in those positions, to reach out and qualify for the job that you want. Bear in mind, there's no salary, no significant prestige, nothing, but the satisfaction that you are doing something worthwhile, benefiting the whole ham community. The above description does not sound like a classic old boys club to me, nor should it to you.

In fact, there may be things that you may disagree with as regards to current RAC policy, or the way things are being run. What do you do? Participate. Have a share in what's going on. RAC is a democratic, volunteer organization, with the member being the most important part of it. If you don't like something, help change it. Volunteer. As the over-used saying goes: Be part of the solution; not part of the problem.

I have been offered several jobs within RAC, but I took on the DEC position since I perceived it to be the most pressing locally. However, I am like every other RAC appointee; I welcome anyone who is after my job.

RAC is a volunteer operation. All representations to Industry Canada and to the ITU, all the Field Organization, the QSL Bureaus, the TCA columnists and other authors; it's all done gratis. We, as members, have to be grateful that so many have such a giving spirit. Oh, they're not perfect, but neither are we.

Support:

What can we do to show our support for amateur radio in Canada and its national organization? We can volunteer our services to whatever extent that we can. But, first and foremost, be a member. It's really \$50 well-spent. To not support RAC is to wish for its demise. Then what?

Do you want to be represented by ARRL? Will the Canadian Government really listen to a U.S. organization? Can we depend on the ARRL to fight for our unique privileges as Canadian amateurs? Or, maybe you'd like to be represented by RAQI instead? They'd love the job. However, nothing against RAQI, but it is a provincial organization, and not our province at that.

No, the only course of wisdom is to support our only national organization: the Radio Amateurs of Canada. The more we do, the more RAC will be able to do for us! -jx

Late breaking news

Yori, Al, and I managed to get up to Gimli to check on the repeater up there. We found a bad link radio, the receiver was almost dead. Yori managed to resurrect it somewhat but the sensitivity is still very poor so it should be replaced as soon as possible, and it is not currently receiving link signals from Winnipeg.

We have a couple UHF MSR Motorola repeater radios kicking around so we might as well put them to use. We'll order the crystals and change some of the receiver circuitry to allow functionality on the ham band, and take it up there as soon as it can all be set up.

We are also thinking of replacing the controller with something more simple for Gimli. There is little chance we will be adding a link from that point, so putting in a relatively simple controller might make things up there a bit more dependable. The Palomar controllers are getting old and problems are occurring with contacts between boards and ICs. Newer controllers are surface mount with no sockets to cause problems. Yori also wants to upgrade the duplexers to a hybrid ring system.

As we mentioned at the last meeting, we will take an enclosed rack cabinet to install the duplexers, link radio, and controller in. There won't be enough room for the VHF radio bit it has its own cabinet. We should try to have this operation completed by the end of January if possible. This is one job we don't need climbers for and access to the site is easy even with the security measures.

Membership Report By Harm, VE4HAZ

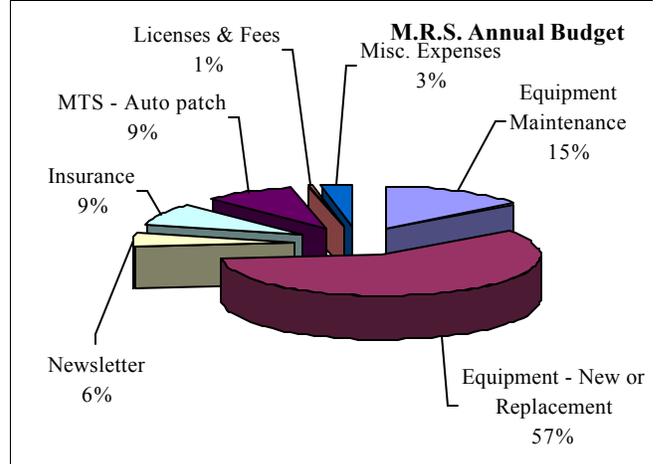
It's membership renewal time. The MRS executive, hopes that you will once again renew your membership and help support the club. You will find a membership application attached for your convenience. We would appreciate it you fill it out completely and mailed it back to us.

The current membership stands at a 132 members paid to the end of 2007, including 28 memberships that paid for 2008 and 1 membership that has renewed till 2009!

There have been additional three new members that joined at the Hamfest that were not in the membership list. The other six members that have renewed their memberships but according to membership list had not paid up in 07.

We will be sending out letter to new hams welcoming them into the hobby and offering them a free year's membership. We will also be sending e-mail and/or letters to past members who have let their membership lapse to encourage them to renew again.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to thank Al VE4AJO and his helpers, who collect memberships at the Fall Flea Market.



Looking for a few good HAM's

Are you a member of RAC yet?

If not maybe it's time you looked once again at joining. You know you looked at joining in the past, but put it off for some reason. Maybe it was the cost of membership. But have you considered the savings alone on liability insurance for your tower. That's right as a RAC member you automatically are covered for Liability insurance on your tower. Talk to your insurance agent, figure out what it costs you on your policy. And compare it to the cost of a RAC membership.

MRS - Help Wanted

The Manitoba Repeater Society Inc. is looking for technical assistance on our repeaters. Some background in radio electronics and electronic diagnosis and repair is preferred. Our Technical Committee members can train on our specific requirements, but we cannot train from scratch. Contact Dick VE4HK, Gord VE4GLS or Derek VE4HAY to volunteer.

Treasurers Report
By Harm, VE4HAZ

Manitoba Repeater Society

Year to Date as of November 30, 2007

Balance as of January 1, 2007	\$6266.38	
Self Insurance See Note # 1	<u>-\$2000.00</u>	
Subtotal		\$4266.38
Receipts:		
Memberships	\$2808.75	
Donations	\$1025.00	
Interest	\$ 0.76	
Total Receipts:		<u>\$3834.51</u>
Cash Available for Use		\$8100.89
Withdrawals:		
Equipment Maintenance	\$ 0.00	
Equipment Reserve	\$ 307.79	
Test Equipment	\$ 0.00	
Newsletter	\$ 80.74	
Insurance	\$ 150.00	
MTS (phone patch)	\$ 469.10	
Licenses and Fees	\$ 20.00	
Misc	<u>\$ 294.11</u>	
Total Withdrawals		<u>\$1321.74</u>
Ending Balance November 30, 2007		<u>\$6779.15</u>

Savings Account (Self Insurance) \$2000.00

Note #1 The money set aside for our self insurance has been placed in a separate savings account and will now be reflected as separate line at the bottom of the monthly statement.

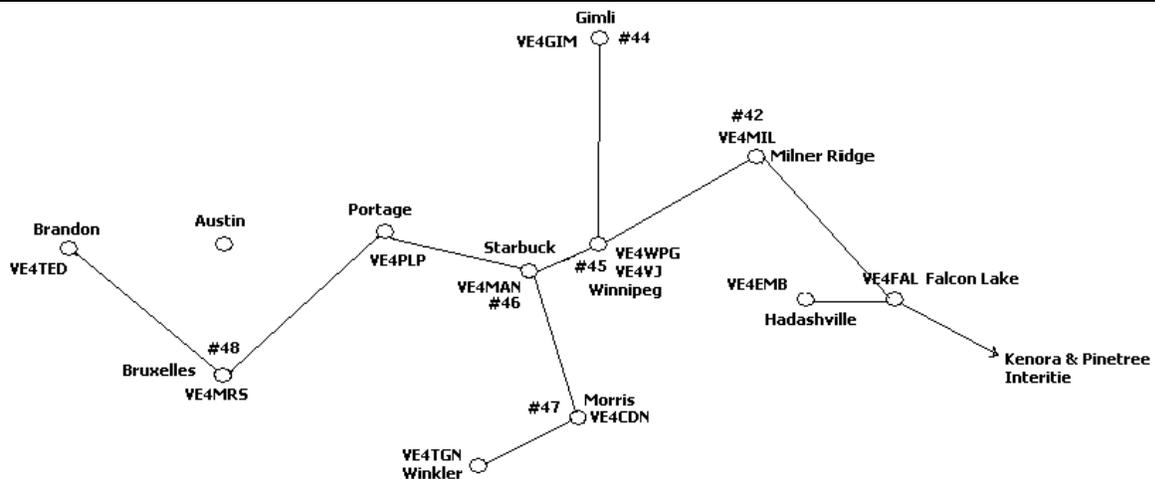
QTX~
By Derek, VE4HAY



Stefan, VE4NSA and Daniel Lamoureux (RAC) have been selected as the new Canadian Delegates to ARISS International
<http://www.rac.ca/ariss/arissinf.htm>

Membership in MRS has been declining lately, if there is some reason why you have not renewed your member we would like to know. Please contact any of the executive and you can be assured that it will be discussed at the next executive meeting.

On behalf of the entire executive of the Manitoba Repeater Society, we want to wish everyone a merry Christmas season and all the best in the New Year.



LINK MAP	
VE4TED	146.730
VE4MRS	145.310
VE4PTG	147.165
VE4MAN	146.610
VE4CDN	145.270
VE4WPG	147.390
VE4GIM	146.850
VE4MIL	145.210
VE4EMB	147.360
VE4TGN	147.330
VE4FAL	146.640
VE4VJ	443.500



Attn.: Membership
 Manitoba Repeater Society
 C/O VE4WSC
 598 St. Mary's Road
 Winnipeg MB R2M3L5

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL

(Please note: membership year is January 1st to December 31st).

<u>Call Sign</u>	<u>Surname</u>	<u>Preferred First Name</u>
<u>Mailing Address</u>		
<u>City</u>	<u>Prov.</u>	<u>Postal Code</u>
<u>Home Phone</u>		<u>Work Phone</u>
<u>E-mail Address</u>		
<p><u>Club use only:</u></p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>\$ _____</p> <p>Cheque / Cash / Money Order</p> <p>Rcpt. _____</p> <p>Card Issued: ___ Year _____</p>		

Renewal
 New
 New Ham (FREE if licensed in current membership year)

<p><i>Pro-rated-new members only</i></p> <p>Regular January to December \$25.00</p> <p>April - December \$18.75</p> <p>July to December \$12.50</p>	<p>Class of Member: (please circle one only)</p> <p>Regular \$25 / Addn'l Family Member - \$5</p> <p>How do you wish the Newsletter to be delivered:</p> <p>(please circle one only) E-mail or Snail-mail</p>
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Would you be willing to help out on work performed at the various repeater sites. Yes No

Please list your technical abilities or available equipment that would help out the Repeater Society: _____

Please indicate any other clubs you belong to:

WARC ARES WSC RAC Other: _____

Optional Information:

Current Occupation: _____

If Retired: Former Occupation: _____

Skills: _____