



Tiger Paw . . . what's your 20?

BREAKER ONE - O, this is Spartan Base. Art Daigle of Acton mans his home base unit several hours each morning dispensing information and cheering travellers. Although he has used his General Service radio for emergency situations, he finds it an absorbing hobby.

by Jennifer Barr

"Breaker 1-0, Breaker 1-0. This is Red Baron calling Tiger Paw. Do you have a copy? What's your 20?"

Canada seems to be accepting bilingualism easily, specially when the second language is the idiom of Citizens' Band radio enthusiasts, or CB'ers.

While you're trying to figure out what the Red Baron asked his friend the asked permission to speak on channel 10, called for 'Tiger Paw', asked if he was understood and requested Tiger Paw's location. Tiger Paw is apt to come back with:

"10-4 Red Baron, 10-2. This is Tiger Paw wheeling west-bound on the 4 nothing 1 heading for a coffee break at mile 200."

300,000 in Canada According to Federal Department of Communications, there are 16,000 registered CB radios in Acton and an area including Kitchener. This is an increase of 10,000 in the last 18 months. Figures for the entire country stand at close to 300,000 with an estimated additional 100,000 unlicensed (and illegal) users. The Kitchener department process 8-900 applications a month compared to less than 200 a month not so long ago.

Where's it all going? "If we only knew," says Mr. Young of the department, "we'd know what to plan in the way of staff. We never dreamed it would take off like this."

Just what is the reason for the sudden popularity of the truckers' means of communication? Why have seemingly sane people gone mad with a mike in their hand spewing unintelligible jargon over the air and calling themselves names like Boogymen and Marshmallow?

Some psychiatrists claim the two way radio allows people to fantasize and take on an alternate image. A University of Waterloo professor says he thinks CB is an ego booster for the shy or timid person.

Most CB enthusiasts are quick to tell you they only have a radio in case of emergencies (the radio is not supposed to be used for recreation, according to General Radio Service regulations). But that still doesn't account for the party-line state of present-day Citizens' Band, the airways cluttered with gossipy chatter, and cutesy terminology.

Spartan Base Assists To Art Daigle of Acton his radio is a fascinating hobby. An ex-radio announcer who played the "Saturday night Cowboy" to Barrie residents in the early 1950's, Art looks on CB as a chance to use his previous experience while being of assistance to travellers. Although he has a mobile unit in his car, Art communicates mainly from

his home base unit and is known to CB'ers far and wide as "Spartan Base". His present job as night watchman for Disston Ltd. enables him to man the radio for a few hours every morning dispensing information and cheering commuters. He's always alert for any emergency and even helped save a man's life the second day he had his radio.

Mary Daigle tells the story, remembering she wasn't very happy when her husband installed his CB and gave himself the handle "Fluffy" (a family nickname). All the way up to Muskoka Beach

the radio, shouting, swearing, or monopolizing channels—all against regulations and subject to fines.

Towards this purpose the Daigles have been instrumental in inaugurating the Acton Hillbilly CB Club, a fledgling organization designed to aid police and the community.

Actually G.R.S. To other Actonites, the General Radio Service (its correct name in Canada) is an emergency aid rather than a pleasure.

Frank and Raymond Toth of Toth Motors use their three mobiles and base in three trucks and snow plow for emergency communications. They can save time when out on a call by proceeding to another trouble spot without having to come back to the

garage. They found CB was cheaper and had a wider range than the FM business radio they previously used. But as far as using the radio for pleasure, Ray says, "It would drive you crazy." He deprecates the number of people filling the airways "shooting the breeze" and says you "might as well have a phone".

However, Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, as they call themselves over the radio, seem to enjoy CBing and are happy with his help in the business.

Easy Rider calls Another CB'er who depends on his radio for emergencies is Easy Rider, better known to his customers as Lorne Duertheim of L & L Ford. An expensive mobile in his truck, a base unit, and a walkie-talkie unit in his snowmobile and all-terrain vehicle help Lorne keep in contact with his house. He says, when he's in the bush with his snowmobile and has engine trouble he can call for assistance without having to struggle several miles through deep snow. He did it once, he said, and that was enough.

Even though the radio was purchased for emergencies Lorne says it's been valuable in business enabling his staff to contact him on urgent matters no matter where he is.

He'd also like to use the walkie-talkie and PA system connected with the CB unit to co-ordinate the activities of Track Three skiing, an organization for the handicapped with which Lorne is connected.

A commuter from Kitchener, Alex Chitley who works at Dills Printing and Publishing, installed CB in his car and home because he has so far to travel daily and appreciates the traffic information he receives from other CB'ers. Many of his miles are travelled at night and he frequently motors to Quebec, so feels the radio will be useful this winter in the event of snow emergencies.

He says, "Some people get a CB to talk, but I listen." He hasn't joined any clubs yet but is interested in checking out REACT, the Radio Emergency Associated Citizens Teams of Kitchener.

"Tremendous invention" Mike Kinal of Home Hardware who has two bases in home and store and one mobile radio in his truck feels the time to buy a CB radio is now.

With the advent of 40

channel radio coming in use January 1, 1977 the soon-to-be-obsolete 23 channel sets are being sold off at tremendous reductions.

It's now possible to get a mobile unit for as low as \$79 although Mike doesn't stock what he considers inferior radios. His higher quality units are not moving as fast as the cheaper units such as those on sale currently at Zellers and K-Mart stores.

The hardware store proprietor says the CB is a "fabulous invention" and he will soon put one in his station wagon for use when he travels to the cottage. He feels people are most cooperative on CB although "there are too many gabbers in town."

Even the farmer is getting into the act. President of Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Gordon Hill, commenting on John Bradshaw's CFRB radio show "This Business of Farming," said many farmers are finding CB's useful for field-home communication when installed in tractors.

It really pays off, he stated, when a long trip back to the farm can be avoided.

"Farmers have to adjust to new conditions and new technology, so we don't fall behind," he reported.

Fines for offenses Citizens Band radios are hardly new having been around since the early 60's. One of Acton's earliest users is Paul Braida who purchased his set in 1968. However Paul, a popular musician with "Three Sheets to the Wind," is pretty disgusted with CB and is now into Ham radio and radio control models.

He feels there are too many people playing "cops and robbers" these days and giving CB a bad name. He was the instigator of a lot of local people getting into CB and he used to help install radios, but he says he's sorry now. "It's got out of hand."

Too many people are breaking the regulations without realizing the penalties, he says. He's read about two recent cases of \$1000 fines for such offenses as "working skip" (broadcasting to the States), swearing and bad-mouthing, or using illegal power boosters for a wider range. He remembers one user pulled a year's jail sentence for trying to set up an illegal mobile transmitting station.

When he was an ardent user, he says, CB'ers tried to



MOBILE RADIO UNITS, like this one used by Mike Silk of Ospringe are popular with commuters to alleviate the monotony of the trip. Mike, whose handle is the Coachman, is a Mississauga bus driver who travels the highway at all hours of the night.

work with the police. As a member of the Rattlesnake Radio Club, he assisted in several policing actions on Halloween night for years.

In an effort to co-ordinate CB's with police work again, the Milton detachment of the Provincial Police will shortly be installing base station in co-operation with London, Woodstock and Kitchener in order to monitor Highway 401 between those points. They feel CB users can report accidents and trouble spots direct on the emergency channel 9 and save minutes in time.

Warnings help Serious CB'ers' main concerns seem to be the amount of misuse of a useful communication system. Wyn Hartlin, of the Acton Monitoring Station admits a few people north of town, are causing problems but feels with so many users "you're bound to get a few".

The Monitoring Station takes transcripts and tries to locate the trouble spots. All reports of regulation breaches are sent to the branch of Federal Communications concerned. Local ones go to Kitchener.

Mr. Young of the Kitchener branch said they try to visit anyone having trouble and apprise them of the image they're presenting to other users. He says that's all it takes but warnings sent by registered letter are sent to persistent abusers. These are followed by more drastic measures but 99 per cent of misusers only need a warn-

ing, says young. With CB sales climbing out of sight and license offices swamped with applications, no-one foresees the saturation point. Already the 23 channel radios are obsolete, having become too crowded. Soon the new 40 channel sets won't be enough. What then?

Well, this CB'er isn't too worried, 23 channels are enough for her to monitor.

In the meantime, I hear a good buddy calling over our base set so this is Tabby Cat saying 'happy wheeling' and signing off.

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