

Member Spotlight

Pascal Villeneuve, VA2PV

VA2PV is a familiar call sign to many QST readers. It belongs to Pascal Villeneuve, a Canadian radio amateur who often reviews new technology for QST's "Product Review" column. Pascal has a penchant for innovation, both in his amateur radio activities and his professional life.

Pascal didn't become licensed until early adulthood, but his interest in radio started when he was very young. He was born and raised on a farm and he fondly remembers the ancient RCA receiver that sat in his father's barn office. Pascal often used it to listen to shortwave broadcast stations. He said, "I managed to connect a long-wire antenna and I could receive many signals, but I didn't understand most of them because the broadcasts were in languages other than English or French. No matter; I was hooked!"

Thanks to one of his uncles, Pascal discovered the Citizens Band (CB) during the 1970s. His uncle had a CB transceiver installed in his pickup truck and Pascal listened whenever he had the chance.

One day, Pascal's mother took him on a visit to a man who was tuning the family's piano. As it turned out, the piano tuner was also a ham. Pascal was astonished to see his station and began asking one question after another — so many that his mother finally intervened. That evening, Pascal begged his parents to enroll him in an amateur radio course. They declined, citing the cost of setting up a station and wondering if Pascal might be too young for such things. Amateur radio would have to wait.



Pascal graduated college in 1991 with a degree in Business Administration, but his passion for radio remained. That same year, he began studying for his Basic amateur radio license and soon passed the exam. By early 1992, he had completed all the Canadian ham exams.

Pascal married in 1994 and all was well; he was settling into his career and enjoying amateur radio. However, in the mid '90s, while he was between jobs, his wife suggested that he return to college to study electronics. Pascal agreed and soon earned a new degree with a major in computer electronics. The ink was barely dry on his diploma when he was hired by a large telecommunications company. Pascal has since become the company's senior technical support manager for the business market with expertise in IP networking with technologies such as VoIP, MPLS, PSTN, and more.

Friendship and Technical Challenges

When asked what he enjoys most about ham radio, Pascal quickly replied, "Friendship and technical challenges."

He explained, "I always find myself searching for something new to try. That's the reason I created my website (www.va2pv.com) and YouTube channel (Laboenligne.ca)." He uses both platforms to share information about his "passion for this wonderful hobby that made me who I am today."

For Pascal, his family is his top priority and his career takes second place. Even so, he still finds time to be heavily involved in amateur radio.

He usually prefers to share his latest discoveries through video. "Everything I try in ham radio I make a video about and I enjoy the technical challenge of making quality videos," he said. "For example, since 2016 I've been producing all my videos in 4K Ultra High Definition. That made the production process somewhat more complex. I even had to build a monster PC just to be able to edit the files!"

The Future of Amateur Radio

When asked if he is optimistic about the future of radio, Pascal said, "If you would have asked me this question 10 years ago, I would have been very pessimistic, but today I think differently. Exciting technologies like digital communications and software-defined radio have brought new blood into the hobby and will continue to do so."

Pascal believes the internet is not a threat to amateur radio, but is instead a valuable resource. "Just look at what YouTube videos have done to educate hams, new and old," he said. "I don't mean just my channel, but all of them. Soon we'll have ARRL's Lifelong Learning program that will also use the internet as an educational tool. In this climate, how can I not be optimistic?"