

Monthly Update

May 2018

May Club Meeting

When: Tuesday, May 15, 7:00pm
Where: White Cliffe Terrace Retirement Centre, Courtice

Remote Stations – Vic Loewen VE3JAR will be demonstrating the remote station that he operates. Who says you can't work the world from your apartment.

A special **Thank You** to **Dave Rajnauth VE3OOI** for his very interesting presentation on rockets last month. If you missed this entertaining and educational meeting you can look at some of **Bob VE3IRB's** pics at this link - <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmiuBAW3>



Dave VE3OOI and Laird VE3LKS

Hamfest Update



The 42nd Annual Durham Hamfest was another success. We do not have all the figures in yet but **Glenn VE3GAR** will have the final details shortly. We plan to have our wrap-up meeting the first Sunday of June, 1200hr noon, at the Wendy's/Tim's service centre at the 401 and Brock St. in Whitby. All are invited to join us and we will gladly accept anyone who would like to volunteer to help out at next year's Hamfest.

Repeater Update

A lot of progress has been made at the repeater site. The guys have been working on getting rid of old equipment that is not needed and **Jeffrey VA3RTV** and **Jimmy VE3SOI** are making new controller cables for the All Star link. There were some issues with the existing cables and it was causing a hum on the repeater among other things. As of the typing of this update they do not have the cables completed yet but I am sure they will give us an update at the upcoming club meeting. In the mean time you will not be able to access the repeater via the internet on your phone or computer but this short-term downtime will pay dividends in the long run.

Library Display

Bob VE3IRB has been busy putting together a display on Amateur Radio at the main library in downtown Oshawa. Make sure you get in there sometime in May to see it. **Jeffrey VA3RTB** and **Bob VE3HIX** assisted with planning, proofreading and supplying some pictures and **Vic VE3JAR** provided a collection of QSL cards.

In creating the display, Bob wanted to show some of the history of the club and hobby so he included some old equipment as well as info on Camp X as ham helped get both Camp X and the North Shore club



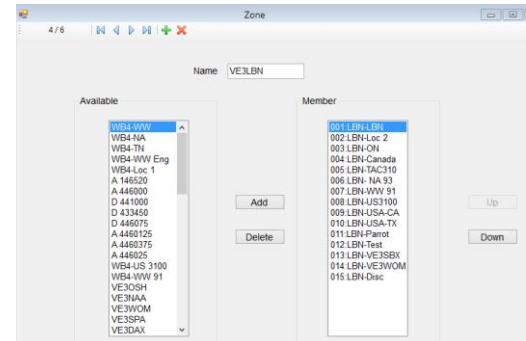
going. The display also shows some elements of the hobby today: newer radios, guides, magazines and photos showing the North Shore club is a fun place to meet great people while having fun in a great hobby. Yes, photos of food were included.

Check out some pics of the display at <https://flic.kr/s/aHskxnDWgi>

DMR Notes

We did not quite finish the options in the Channel section last month so we will tie that off before proceeding to the Zones. In the Digital section of each channel you should set Privacy to OFF. This is a carryover from commercial radios but since we are not allowed to scramble conversations we must leave this as OFF. In the RX Group List select the RX Group List that corresponds with the Talk Group that this channel is for. The Color Code is the same as a tone that we would have on a regular analog repeater. If you do not have the correct tone in your radio then you will not be able to access the repeater. Well, in digital, if you do not have the correct color code then you will not be able to activate that channel. Emergency System should be set to NONE. Again, this is a throwback to commercial radios where, for example, if a radio were to be horizontal for any length of time an emergency signal would be transmitted assuming the person was incapacitated. Contact is the Digital Contact aka Talk Group that we want this channel to use. Repeater Slot is the time slot that will be used on the repeater to carry out any QSOs. Since each DMR repeater can have two conversations going on at the same time we need to identify which time slot will be used for this channel. The local repeater group will define which time slots they want you to use for various talk groups. Once you have all the channels configured you can go back into the Scan List and populate all these channels into it. So, in this case, you would populate all the channels you created for VE3LBN into this Scan List. If a channel is not in the Scan List you will not be able to hear it.

Now that we have our Talk Groups, RX Group List, Scan List and Channels we can create a Zone. Think of a zone as being similar to a memory bank. My personal preference is to put all the channels that pertain to a particular DMR repeater into a zone of its own. Ie –



for our local DMR repeater I would create a Zone called something like VE3LBN and then put all the channels that I set up for that repeater into that zone. Some people may create a zone called Durham and put channels from the local DMR repeaters into that zone. Using this method, however, you limit yourself to the number of potential talk groups you can chat on as you are limited to the number of channels that you can have in a zone. Remember, one channel = one talk group on one repeater. In the firmware that I am using I am limited to sixteen channels per zone so that would not leave a lot of room for having options if I wanted to be able to access the same talk groups on each repeater. For instance, I would have to set up multiple CANADA channels, one for each repeater, therefore taking up three for four channel spaces in the zone. I would rather just change the Zone on my radio if I wanted to talk on Pickering's DRM instead of ours. So, by having a separate zone for each repeater I can have up to sixteen talk groups on each repeater and not just four or five.

With that, everything that you need to make your DMR radio work has been configured. You can now connect the radio to the computer and upload the configuration to the radio and you should be good to go. Don't worry if it does not work the first time as there is a lot that can potentially go wrong when doing all this configuration. I know this to be true from experience.

Going forward, you can do all sorts of things with these radios. I have set up a Zone just to handle analog and digital simplex frequencies. I created another for the Hamfest crew that has our simplex indoor, outdoor, VE3OSH and VE3SPA frequencies. A Channel does not have to be digital as our radios are both digital and analog so we can set up all the regular analog frequencies too. You can even

get a hotspot, which is a device that acts as a low power DMR repeater within your house or car that connects to your internet. People connect hotspots to their phones data and can they use their DMR radio even if there is not DMR repeater within range. I have a hotspot connected to my Wi-Fi so I can wander around the house and talk to other DMR users worldwide even though I can't make it into a local DMR repeater from my basement.

If you have one of these radios I would highly recommend that you download the software for your firmware version, copy the code plug from your radio, and start to play around with all the settings. The worst that can happen is that we have to upload the code plug to your radio again which takes but a few minutes. There are lots of videos on YouTube and some good user groups on Facebook so dive in and start to learn all about this newer technology.

Tuesday Night Rag Chew



Our Tuesday night rag chews are getting quite popular. It is not uncommon to have 10 to 15 check-ins and a lively roundtable. Some can only stick around for a few minutes while others are there from start to finish. We never know what the topic de jour will be but someone always comes up with something. So, if you are available between 1900 and 2000hr on Tuesdays pop onto OSH and join the conversation.

Wednesday Night Face-to-Face

As well as the Tuesday night rag chew on the repeaters there is quite a crew that meet at the Tim Horton's at King and Wilson at about 8pm every Wednesday. It actually gets quite crazy as we discuss all things radio, update our digital radios with the latest code plugs and generally have a good time. If you are in the area on Wednesday night, and have a few minutes to spare, we would definitely enjoy your company. This is open to anyone whether you are a member of the North Shore ARC or not. On a recent Wednesday night **Bob VE3HIX** and **Jeffrey VA3RTV** brought in an SWR meter and SMA antenna mount and we tested the various handheld antennas for performance. It was surprising that some of the antennas on the low-cost radios actually beat out some of the big brands. See what you are missing if you are not coming out!?



Bob VE3HIX and Jeffrey VA3RTV

Saturday Breakfast

If you are not tired of chatting or meeting up with club members during the week then you will be interested to know that there is a group that meets on Saturday morning for breakfast at Johnny's Original Eatery. The restaurant is located in the plaza on the northwest corner of King and Thornton. Members and families usually start to arrive at about 8:30am.



Saturday Coffee Break

The Whitby ARC hosts a coffee break every Saturday afternoon. They meet at the Blue Sea Fish and Chips located at 836 Brock St. N in Whitby from 2pm to 4pm. All Amateurs are welcome.



QRM from the Shack



Well, the 42nd Hamfest is in the books and from what I can tell it was a success. Luckily for us the ice storm hit a couple weeks earlier and the residue from the storm was nowhere to be seen. **Alison VE3GRL** and I received lots of compliments from vendors and attendees alike. Other Hamfest team members have also relayed compliments that they received. A common theme from vendors was how well organized it was. We had one attendee seek us out and wanted to tell us that he really liked our Hamfest. Other events that he has attended were being infiltrated with crafts, candles, soap and the like. He mentioned that even though there was some non-Amateur equipment that it was all radio related and he was glad he made the trip.

Every month club members pleasantly surprise me with the extent to which they will go to promote the hobby and the club as well as helping make the club better. This month **Bob VE3IRB** organized a beautiful display at the main branch of the Oshawa library. The repeater crew have been logging many hours improving the system and doing some spring cleaning. Many of you volunteered for the Hamfest and did a very professional job. Everyone is very warm and inviting to guests and your efforts are paying off as can be seen by the steady increase in visitors and membership. Keep up the great work – you are making this reluctant president thing a lot easier!

There is one position in our club that would be nice to fill. We do not have a lot of requests to take the exam to get a licence but we do have a few. It would be nice if someone, who has the Advanced ticket, would consider taking another step and becoming an accredited examiner. There are not too many in the area and this could be beneficial for the hobby and local clubs. This does not mean that you will be required to lead out in courses but simply someone who can oversee exams. Thank you for considering this request.

Here is another pic of **Dave Rajnauth VE300I** with one of his rockets.

Dave's presentation was fascinating particularly how it had a link to Amateur Radio. Quite a bit of humour, too, when he showed pics of things, like grandfather clocks, that some people try to launch in the air.

As many of you know Durham Radio has, sadly, shut its doors after many years of service to the various communications enthusiasts and businesses. I wish Keith, Alma and their dedicated staff all the best going forward and hope they all land comfortably. This does leave a huge hole in our community as it will not be very easy getting radio related parts that only Durham Radio readily carried in this area. Personally, I usually only go to Radio World once a year and that is when we go for CANWARN training in Toronto. I don't have anything against Radio World as they, too, have great knowledgeable staff. I just don't like having to drive through the nightmare that is Toronto. If I do find that I am going to be in that area I will endeavor to let everyone know so that if you need anything you can call ahead, place your order, and I will pick it up. Again, don't count on this happening too often as I just don't get over there but I will be willing to be a courier if I do. Maybe others will consider doing this too.



Dave VE300I looking down a rocket

Well, I hope to see all of you out to our meeting on Tuesday evening. This is our last in-house meeting for the summer as June will be our BBQ and September will be our Sermon on the Mount Corn Roast and BBQ at the repeater site.