

Monthly Update

March 2021

March Club Meeting

When: Sunday, March 28, 7:00pm
Where: your place

Once again, we will be utilizing Zoom videoconferencing to conduct our meeting this month. **Laird VE3LKS** will be hosting the meeting and you will receive an invite to the meeting in the next few days. At this time, we are still needing some presentations so please let me know if you have any fun or interesting items that you would like to share with the group. Meetings will only be interesting if **YOU** help make them that way! This month Daniel Allen will be doing a presentation on railway history in Oshawa.



Join Daniel Allen in a presentation about the railway history of Oshawa. This presentation will focus on the numerous mainlines that serviced Oshawa, the Oshawa Railway Company which plied the city's streets, and important railway infrastructure in the area. Daniel's photos of these locations in present times will be supplemented by Google Maps satellite images that show the location of these areas without having to leave your home. Come learn how the railway helped Oshawa grow into the bustling city it is today!

February Meeting

On our February meeting **Ken VE3RMK** gave a presentation on Internet and computer security and backup. It was very informative and apparently, I have a long way to go with my computers.

Repeater Committee

We had a report from our Repeater committee on our VE3NAA repeater and the problems with it. We had a discussion and then voted on upgrading our fusion repeater to the new Yaesu DR-X2. The members present voted to buy the new repeater. **Laird VE3LKS** has placed the order and we are in the queue and as of March 15 they were getting the order ready to ship. Our thanks go to all our members of the Repeater Committee and executive for all their hard work keeping our repeater system up and running.



Breaking News – **Bob VE3HIX** was up to check the weekly test of the generator and it appears that we may have an issue. The generator tried to start but would not fire. He attempted several fixes that have worked in the past but to no avail. He suspects several things but the first step will be to see if we can get a licensed gas tech on-site to check that we are getting adequate pressure from the storage tank.

Tuesday Night Rag Chew

This is not a formal net but rather 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 interesting. So, if you are available between 1900 and 2000hr on Tuesdays pop onto OSH and join the conversation. As well, since this is a rag chew, and not a net, **Laird VE3LKS** will not be hosting this every week going forward. We are looking for volunteers to step up and help. This is not a hard task and is good practice in case you are ever required to run a control situation in an emergency. So, whoever is there just needs to write down call signs and rotate through the list twice. You can email **Laird VE3LKS** the list afterwards and he will put the names in the log that we keep. So, make sure you have a pad of paper and a pen or pencil and be prepared to have some fun.



Latest Update is that in recent weeks, **Grant VA3KJL**, **Aldo VA3AG** and myself **Steve VA3TPS** have taken turns at Net Control. I have been selected to try and keep a list of volunteers and dates who are willing to take a turn at Net Control. So check your calendars for Tuesday nights and if your interested send me an email and I will pencil you in. If we have enough volunteers you only have to do it once every 6-8 weeks or so and no one person gets stuck doing it all the time...so come everyone let's help out our club and the members! My email is va3tps@outlook.com

Swap Shop

For Sale

Yaesu MLS-200-M10 Speaker, good condition. Moisture and dust protected, 10ft shielded cord. Handle up to 8watts .3.5mm 3conductor mini plug, 4 ohms (Note: speaker is wired to the tip (+) and ring (-) of 3 conductor mini plug and may not work with all radios) asking \$20 Steve VA3TPS va3tps@outlook.com

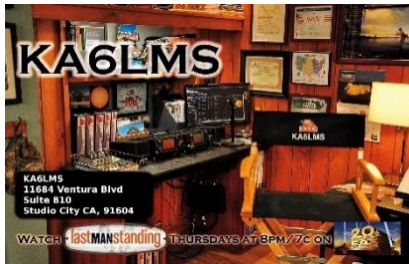
Paradan Antenna Disconnect Actuator and Radio on Sensor. Switches your antenna to ground when radio is powered off to prevent damage from lightning or static electricity. New never used. \$80.00 Steve VA3TPS at va3tps@outlook.com

Sangean ATS-803A Short Wave receiver. FM - 87.2-108MHz. AM – 150 – 29999KHz (LW 150 – 281KHz, MW 520-1620KHz, SW 11-120m). Requires 6 – D and two 2 – AA batteries. Can also run with an external power adapter that you can source online. Have two of these radios. \$75.00 each. Laird VE3LKS at VE3LKS@yahoo.ca



Realistic TRC-419 40 channel AM CB. \$30.00. Laird VE3LKS at VE3LKS@yahoo.ca

Upcoming Operating Events

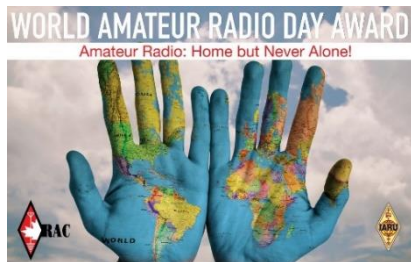


The next month has a few interesting on-air operating events coming up. Starting March 24 at 0000z hrs the **Last Man Standing** special event will start and continue to March 30 at 2359z hrs. They will have 13 KA6LMS/? (including a VE3 and VE7) Stations and 6 Bonus stations on the air, operating all different modes. Their QSL Card (above picture) will be available and Certificates and clean sweep certificates. Check out the link at www.gsbarc.org/lms/ for all the information.

On March 27-28, 2021 the CQ WPX contest is on the air and it is a busy contest with a lot of stations on the air. Further information at the link www.cqwpw.com.

April brings a couple more with the **Ontario QSO Party** on April 17 and 18th. A lot of people on the air looking for Ontario stations. Further information at www.va3cco.com/oqp/.

Also the same weekend RAC "Get on the Air on World Amateur Radio Day" Special event: "Amateur Radio: Home but Never Alone!" On Sunday, April 18, 2021, Radio Amateurs of Canada is organizing a special on-air event to celebrate World Amateur Radio Day. You just have to work one of the VE/VA?RAC stations to be able to download a nice certificate. Further info at www.rac.ca/ward2021/.



So for all you guys and gals with those new radios and antenna's these events will give you a good chance to give them a workout. Good luck and hope to see you on the air!

Wednesday Night Virtual Parking Lot



Our Wednesday night face to face is now a Virtual Parking Lot meeting over zoom so make sure **Laird VE3LKS** has your email and he will be sending out the zoom invites every Wednesday morning or afternoon.

As well as the Tuesday night rag chew on the repeater there is quite a crew that used to meet at the Tim Horton's at King and Wilson at about 7:30pm every Wednesday. However, that pesky COVID thing has messed that up with not being able to get us all inside so we have adapted. This is what Amateurs do – we adapt. So, for the last while we have been meeting at the north side of the East Mall, just a bit east of Tim's, at about 6:00pm where we break out the lawn chairs and sit around keeping 144MHz apart and enjoying some great conversation and show n tells. **TAKE THAT COVID!**

Saturday Breakfast

Our Saturday morning meet ups at **White Feather Country Store** has morphed a bit thanks to this COVID annoyance. They had to close their dining area but you can still get take out from the counter. So, if you need your fix of a steamy hot beverage, as well as a hot fritter, pop up to **White Feather Country Store**, which opens at 8:30am, and then join the gang in the south east corner of the parking lot. Make sure to bring a lawn chair. Just give a shout on the repeater between 8:00 and 8:20 to see if anyone is heading up that way and come and join us if we are. **White Feather Country Store** is located at the corner of Simcoe St and Raglan Rd in Raglan.



White Feather Farm 5 Year Anniversary

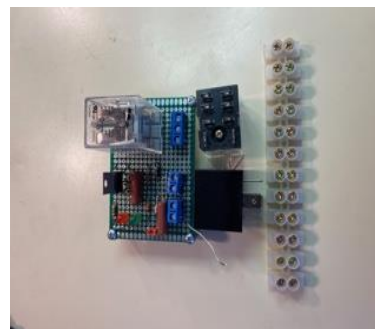
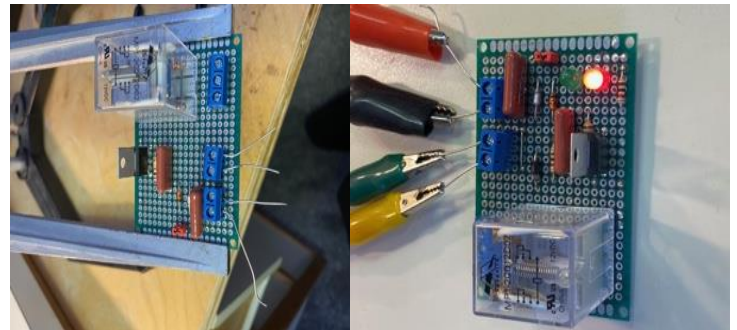


Saturday March 13 was the 5th anniversary of the White Feather Saturday morning get togethers. It seems like just yesterday we started these. We had 16 people show up and enjoy their coffee, apple fritters and great conversation.

So I received this picture, from an anonymous source, about our group at White Feather. When they were allowed to eat inside it was always a race to see who would get the first order and the number one sign in front of them and apparently someone we know well succeeded more than others. Nicely done Mr. President!



Power Supply Protection Circuit



Stan VE3ILU has sent us some information on this protection circuit that he is designing for those inexpensive switching power supplies available on Amazon. It does nothing except light the green LED until tripped. I left it in the tripped mode with the red LED on for over three hours. Then powered down - and tested it again. No problems. During this week I will put it on a breadboard - with a 12V

10mp power supply. ASAP I Will also do a 'write up' on the design and how it works. Making a PCB and a case or box for it - is a job for someone else 😊

de **Stan VE3ILU**

I've Been Everywhere Man

Can anyone tell me what Cypress CA, Anaheim CA, Amboy CA, Grants NM, Amarillo TX, Independence MO, Countryside IL, Chicago IL and Perrysburg OH all have in common?

No? Well, those are all the places that our new Yaesu DR-2X repeater has been the last few days. Hopefully it will be in our hands sometime on Monday and the repeater gurus can get to work getting it configured and installed at the repeater.



What did you do during the lockdown?

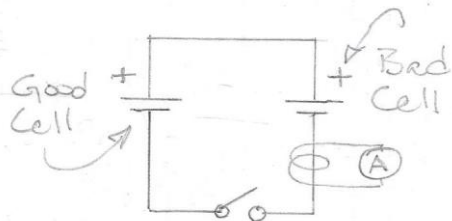
One of the really nice things about the situation we find ourselves in is that the ability to buy things in the stores is greatly limited. Some things can quite easily be purchased online. Paint is NOT one of those things, nor is casing for windows or baseboard or plywood. All things related to working on the house, repainting or renovating are limited to what bits and pieces I have in the shop or in the garage. So, cleaning the shop is a good expenditure of time. The cleaner the shop, the more small jobs I can get done. One of the tasks sitting on the corner of the workbench was my rechargeable battery collection and a defunct charger. The charger is old by the standards of today. It's at least 12 or 13 years old. The implication is that some of the batteries are of similar vintage.

I did a curbside pickup of a new charger and 4 NiMH AA cells at Home Depot here in town. Price and stock were the drivers for selecting them.

We are told that a standard NiMH is good for about 1000 cycles. Given the gentle use in our old camera (which takes pretty good pictures still) I figured I was all set for the 2 sets we had for camera use. My HT is generally kept charged and I have only used the AA battery pack for a quick test here and there. These cells are of the same vintage or perhaps just a bit older.

Well, you can imagine my surprise when the new charger said the batteries were 'toast'. For something that is supposed to not have a memory, these old rechargeable cells seemed to be stubbornly hanging on to the memory of NO JUICE AT ALL!

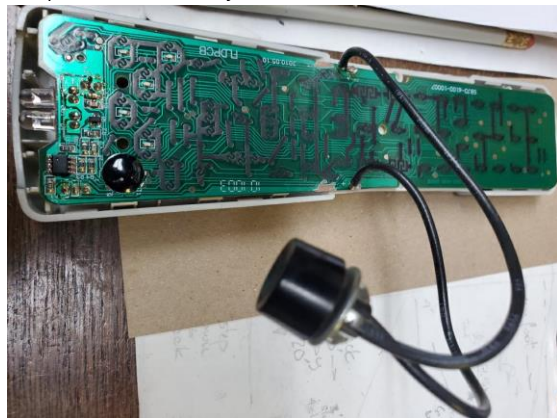
Not wanting to pitch over half of these things out, I did a little digging on regeneration of a NiMH battery. Isn't Google great? The circuit shown below is what most of the cheap skates like myself said would work. The only thing to pay attention was not to let the battery you are trying to regenerate get too hot.



The next step was to dig through my junk to find the bits I needed. Fortunately, I had a dead remote control which used 2 AA cells for power. I also found a nice rotary switch with pigtails handy. The fact that I know that somewhere in my piles of stuff I have momentary push-buttons is mildly annoying. A little grinding of plastic with the Dremel got the battery holder reworked and the circuit board leads severed so that the battery holder would hold batteries in the manner I wanted. Soldering on the switch was all the 'hot' work I needed to do.

The result is a metaphor for my golf game, "ugly but effective". In golf they don't ask 'how', they ask 'how much'. For our hobby it is often as much about the 'how' as the 'how much'. The 'how much' isn't always about dollars either.

This picture shows the adjustments to the circuit board.



The next picture shows the general arrangement of the Ammeter with the battery holder. You can also see some of the candidates for regeneration.....

Website – ve3osh.com



What I did was to load a good AA cell (one of the new ones) in position 1. I checked the voltage of the target 'bad' cell prior to loading. The target 'bad' cell was then loaded into position 0.

Turning on the ammeter and then turning the switch on I was able to gauge how much current was flowing. I also kept a finger or 2 on the 'bad' cell. If the 'bad' cell got too warm (which it didn't) I'd flip the switch off quickly. What I saw was a peak current which quickly tailed off to 0. For each of the cells I did these 2 or 3 times and then checked the 'bad' cell voltage with my trusty DVM. I did let the cells cool to room temperature before loading them into the charger.

As far as too warm goes from my days working on large rotating machines, the guideline was 'if you can keep your hand on the machine, it's not too warm. If I remember correctly that was around 7 watts per square inch maximum. The accepted rule was that a 100W incandescent light bulb radiated about 10 watts per square inch. There's no way I'd even try to keep my hand on a lit 100W bulb.

What I found was that if the pre-regeneration voltage was negative, zero or a couple of millivolts after hitting it with power from the good cell, the voltage would climb to over 300 millivolts. Doing this for pairs of 'bad' cells got them up to the point that I could charge them. It seems that the cut-off voltage to allow a charge was just under 200 millivolts. One of the cells would not test over 150 millivolts despite repeated hits from the good cell. After the third round of hits, I did get it to charge. I consider this to be an anomaly as it was the only one.

I started out with 22 old cells. 6 of them would take a charge which left me with 16 that were 'bad'. By the end of the process, I was left with 5 that just couldn't be regenerated. I haven't decided yet if I'll try this circuit with a little more voltage to give the 5 a shot at 'redemption'.

Not bad for scavenging junk that hadn't gone to recycling yet eh?

How long these cells will last remain to be seen. I'm testing one of them in a repaired solar light and I've got some other solar lights which are old enough to be near the end of the 1000 cycle limit. For now I've got a lot more rechargeable cells available for 'other' things.

I'll let others judge if it was time well spent. I had some fun and the shop is a bit cleaner.

de Ken VE3RMK

Ken VE3RMK also passed along this information and the website is interesting give it a try. This site shows the globe with little green dots, each of which are radio stations. Fun to listen to:

<http://radio.garden/live/toulouse/radiopresence>

Editor's Note

I want to thank **Ken VE3RMK** for his recent articles and **Joe VE3VGJ** for his pictures and information on the Saturday White Feather meetings. A tip of the hat also to **Stan VE3ILU** for his report on the trip circuit he is designing. I would also like to encourage anyone with stories or amateur radio related information to send it to me so we can share with everyone. If you're doing a parks on the air (POTA) or special event or operating from a unique location, take a couple of picture's and send it to me.

Also don't forget the Swap Shop, if you're looking for something to pick up or have something to sale or give away, send me the information and I will put it in the bulletin. My email is va3tps@outlook.com. **73 de Steve VA3TPS**

Email – info@ve3osh.com

Just Another Day at the Office



If you have not been on the Virtual Parking Lot lately or are not in our Facebook group, VE3OSH North Shore ARC, then you may have missed this amazing pic. One of our members, **Stan VE3ILU**, the young, handsome chap in the grey lab coat worked in the radio field in his early years. In this pic he can be seen taking a moment out of his daily routine to show some “common” folk some of the radio equipment at the station where he worked. Who was that pretty lady? Just Princess Margaret! **Stan** tells me that Princess Margaret was well versed in radio technology and was actually carrying on a very technical discussion with him about the equipment he was showing her.

QRM from the Shack

What a busy month this has been. To me it just seems like a week ago I was getting the February bulletin from **Steve VA3TPS** and then this one arrives. Yikes!

We have had a couple more people join the ranks of the North Shore ARC this month. **Roy VA3TLV** wrote the test earlier this month and has been participating in our Virtual Parking Lots and White Feather excursions. We have heard **Roy** on the radio as well making contacts as he travels to work and back. **Roy** bought a brand new radio, I think a Baofeng, and after unboxing it had it sitting on a table. Well, his cat was quite intrigued with this whole radio thing and, as cats are prone to do as they are the spawn of Satan, decided to see how well this new play toy would bounce so proceeded to knock it off the table when **Roy** was not looking. So now **Roy** has some duct tape holding his battery in place after just one day of use. I should mention that there is some irony to this story as **Roy** is a veterinary tech and probably should have known better than to turn his back on a cat. Another new member this month is **Mike VA3AQJ**. Now, I don't know a lot about **Mike** yet but he must be a super guy as he, too, is a computer tech. We have been exchanging a few emails and it looks like **Mike** may be venturing into the realm of digital radio. **Mike** has been on the Rag Chew and I believe the Virtual Parking Lot (sorry, too much happening in my old head to remember everyone who gets on). Welcome to the North Shore **Mike** and **Roy**!

A few neat things happened this month. We had our 5th year anniversary of our weekly visits to White Feather Farms. A week later we had our 5th year and one week anniversary. Fortunately, we have had pretty good weather this past winter for our weekly forays to Raglan and even though the temps may have been on the frosty side at least that is the worst that we had to endure. I can only think of one weekend when it was cold, damp and raining but even that did not deter the hard cores from showing up. After all, you know that **Jeanette** is going to be there and you don't want to be ridiculed by her the next time you show up. ☺ By the way, **Jeanette** is still not wearing sandals or flip-flops so even though spring is “officially” here the true barometer of spring indicates that it is not.

With the renewed interest in digital radio I have been contemplating doing a presentation that I did a couple years ago. We could do it on one of our Virtual Parking Lots and it would take about 20 to 30 minutes. This presentation focuses on the AllStar system that we have on the VE3OSH 2m analog repeater but that is good as you do not need any special digital radios to get into it. You are basically

Website – ve3osh.com

using analog RF to get into the repeater and then digital to link to other nodes around the world. Let me know if this would be of interest and if there is I will brush up my presentation and do it one Wednesday evening.

It is great to see more people providing **Steve VA3TPS** with cool articles for the Update. For those who have contributed I pass along a huge Thank You! For those who have yet to submit I would encourage you to do so. It does not even need to be a technical article. A few pics of your ham shack and/or mobile setups with a brief description would be wonderful. It could give others some great ideas. Ditto for those who have been keeping us entertained on the Virtual Parking Lots. Nothing is too big or too small to share. This is how we learn and I would encourage you to just take a small step out of your comfort zone. You are amongst friends so no need to worry about anything.

For those that like special events you will want to dust off the finals, fire up the rigs, and try to make a contact with the Last Man Standing special events stations. For those that may not know, Last Man Standing is a sitcom on TV starring Tim Allen. In real life Tim is a licensed Amateur and in the sitcom he has a radio in his office and at his home. Well, the series is in its last season and to celebrate special event stations will be operating on just about all bands and all modes. If CW is your thing you will be able to chase them. If you prefer DMR then you will be able to find them there too. The event started this past Tuesday evening and continues until this coming Tuesday evening. I will include a link to a site below that has lots of details on how you can make contact.

I am starting to get used to this warmer weather. I started a project earlier this winter building a 49:1 balun for an end fed antenna so I think I will try to finish off this weekend and maybe even string it up in the trees if I get that inspired. One needs to pace one's self. ☺ I know on the Virtual Parking Lot last night several others have some good plans to help bolster their existing antenna systems and another sounds like they are planning on building a fan dipole. One thing I appreciate about our bunch is the diversity with regards to what interests them in the hobby. Unfortunately, some clubs focus only on certain aspects where our group is more the “show me whatever you are doing” and are accepting of all the various aspects of the hobby.

Well, time to send this edition off to the pdf creator and get it in the email. Looking forward to seeing you on Sunday night!



73 de Laird VE3LKS



<http://www.gsbarc.org/lms/>

Make sure you check out the “Promo Video” for a lot of great info.

Email – info@ve3osh.com