

Monthly Update

www.ve3osh.com

December 2023



Club Executive

President – **Derek VE3TKE**
Vice President: **Peter VA3PKM**
Secretary: **Neil VA3NH**
Treasurer: **Bob VE3HIX**
Membership Secretary: **Thomas VE3PDK**

Committee's

Repeater & Technical -Trustee: **Daren VE3NMD**
Website: **Laird VE3LKS**
Club Examiner: **Aldo VA3AG**
Newsletter: **Steve VA3TPS**
Net Manager: **Steve VA3TPS**
Presentation Coordinator: **John VE3KZT**
RAC Representative: **Ken VE3RMK**

Repeaters

The club repeaters are located at Purple Woods Conservation area in north Oshawa. Here are the required details:

2m VHF FM Repeater – VE3OSH

Frequency: 147.120 MHz
Input Tone: 156.7 Hz
Input Offset: +600 kHz

70cm UHF Fusion/FM Repeater – VE3NAA

Frequency: 443.000 MHz
Input Tone: 136.5
Input Offset: +5 MHz

70cm UHF DMR Repeater – VE3LBN

Frequency: 443.9875 MHz
Colour Code: 3
Input Offset: +5 MHz
DMR ID: 302340

APRS iGate – VE3OSH

Frequency: 144.390 MHz

November Meeting

Our monthly member meeting presentation was by Allan **Boyd VE3AJB**. It was a very informative presentation on the Yaesu Fusion system and the FTM-500DR new mobile radio.



Christmas Pot Luck Dinner

This years Christmas Pot Luck Dinner will be on Wednesday December 20, 2023 at the Viva Retirement Centre in south Whitby. We are limited to 30 people, due to the room size so at this time it will be open only to NSARC members and family.

Martha VA3SBD will be organizing this event, so you MUST contact her to advise if you are attending and how many? Also, what you will be bringing to the dinner.

Her email is: va3sbd@gmail.com , so please contact Martha and let her know.

Tuesday Night Rag Chew

Were Back!!

We have had some members step up and volunteer for our weekly Tuesday Night Rag Chew that starts at 7:00 pm. Our crew of net controllers is: **Aldo VA3AG, Grant VA3KJI, Derek VE3TKE, Peter VA3PKM, Quinton VA3NLM** and **Neil VA3NH**. Also **Nick VA3NPW** has offered to be a spare and fill in once in a while. This is not a formal net but rather a lively round-table. 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 2000 hr on Tuesday's pop onto VE3OSH and join the conversation.



A big thank you to all our Net control operators for stepping up!!

If anyone would like to give Net control a try one week, let me know and we will fit you in as a guest net control.

Wednesday Night Virtual Parking Lot

The weekly Virtual Parking Lot meeting will be held on Zoom so make sure **Derek VE3TKE** has your email address. Derek's email address is VE3TKE@gmail.com. **Neil VA3NH**, the club Secretary, will be emailing out the zoom invites prior to the event. It has actually been quite a success as more people can show up, due to distance or schedules, and yet we can still do show and tells by simply sharing our screens. It is not uncommon to have 20 to 25 participants attend but we can easily handle more. So, quit complaining about being bored and hop on the Virtual Parking Lot.

At our zoom meetings we have Amateurs from around the globe, Hawaii, Labrador, Sudbury and Kapuskasing and Australia. I thought being in Fenelon Falls I was DX but apparently, I am just another local ham. So come out and join us on Wednesday's!

So, try to remember Wednesday nights and drop by our Zoom VPL and say hello and see who is visiting from around the globe. It starts around 7:00 pm and last until the last die-hard leaves but you can pop in anytime and say hello and stay as long or short as you want.



IT'S ALIVE! ENJOYING AM RADIO

by Neil McAlister - VA3NH

Often dismissed as "Ancient Modulation," AM (amplitude modulation) has all but disappeared from the HF Amateur Radio bands, except among some dedicated vintage radio enthusiasts.

One might assume the same to be true for medium wave (MW) "broadcast band" AM radio. After all, when was the last time that most of us listened to an AM broadcast? Some automakers don't even put AM on their car radios anymore.

Better listening options make noisy, fade-prone, low fidelity AM broadcasting unattractive and unnecessary in urban areas. Long gone are the days when teenagers strained their ears late at night to catch the gravelly voice of famous D.J., "Wolfman Jack," in glorious mono on a bedside, AM receiver.

The romance of medium wave DX-ing on AM radio is over. Many pundits have pronounced AM broadcasting dead -- or at best, a zombie mode that interests only a few hobbyists and listeners in rural areas who cannot get FM stations. Even far from cities, satellite and Internet provide clear, digital programming, further shrinking the audience for AM.

Today there is little reason for anyone but a die-hard "prepper" to buy even a cheap AM receiver. In any case, most hams have such equipment already: our HF transceivers usually offer AM reception over the entire spectrum from from 0-30 MHz.

Some of us still own excellent SWL receivers too, sitting forlorn on the shelf since our pre-ham days. I blew the dust off my Kenwood R5000 of 1980s vintage to hear what I could hear.

ANTENNA? SIMPLE!

Problem one was an antenna. Inexpensive AM receivers typically use coils wrapped around ferrite rods -- directional and effective for nearby stations. But the R5000 and many other high end receivers from days of yore require an external antenna. Some scientific solutions for MW reception, like a loop or a proper long wire, are far too large for many locations or too big and ugly for practical use indoors. What to do?

As it happened, also sitting on my shelf was an "active indoor antenna" from a well-known manufacturer -- basically a preamp and selectable chokes. This accessory had worked well a couple decades ago; but times have changed. Nowadays the ether is heavily polluted by RFI from a plethora of cheap, poorly designed and unregulated home appliances, TVs, LED lights, wall chargers and computers, as well as noisy outdoor transformers and power lines. My once helpful active antenna amplifies this whole, immense load of RF garbage just as much as the desired signals from distant AM stations, merely boosting the mix of unintelligible noise from S2 to S9. Scratch one experiment.

As it turns out, the Bauhaus principle of simplicity applies also to antennas in this case: less is more. Several hams told me to try anything, which was certain to be better than doing nothing, and cheap too. For reception only, a fancy, tuned antenna is not needed. Attach a random wire to the receiver's high impedance connector, throw that wire out the window, and see what happens! In my QTH north of Oshawa, fourteen feet of thin wire strung discretely along the baseboard of a second floor room gave remarkably clear signals from a half dozen regional AM broadcast stations, and somewhat noisy signals from another six stations further away after dark.

Then an accidental discovery. Thoughtlessly, I had been using a "wall wart" to charge my cellphone, plugged into the same outlet as the R5000 receiver. Oh duh. When I moved that charger elsewhere for convenience, most of the noise on the R5000 disappeared! Places like Chicago, Philadelphia and NYC come in almost as clearly as several Toronto stations.

WHAT'S ON?

Broadcast radio is only as good as its programming. So what's on the air?

The golden age of shortwave listening has passed. Informative, objective reporting from Radio Canada International or the BBC World Service is no more. There is little to be heard in the English language on SW AM now except for a few stations peddling religion and politics.

But a surprising number of MW broadcasters remain active, and can still interest thoughtful listeners.

It's not all wholesome entertainment on the AM broadcast band. On certain stations south of us, AM has been hijacked by "talk radio" where nasty curmudgeons shout into their political echo chambers to amplify their own paranoid conspiracy theories. A wise philosopher once observed that, "Any fool can have an opinion -- and most of them do."

Fortunately, some AM stations within earshot of southern Ontario serve useful purposes in niche markets. Regular, frequent, area-wide news headlines, weather and traffic are reported by one well-known station heard all over the greater Toronto area. Another station broadcasts round the clock sports info. Others serve local markets, emphasizing community events. In-depth newscasts can be heard if you tune in at the right times.

Now that early darkness and long winter nights have set in, it's the best time of year to explore AM broadcasting and maybe even to catch some unusual DX on MW.

So, is AM broadcasting really dead? No! It's alive! Pull that old receiver out of the crypt, Igor, and throw the switch!

.
73 de Neil - VA3NH

Speaking of AM!

ONTARS is pleased to announce a new AM net every Friday at 6:30 pm on 3.755 Mhz.

Join: Angelo VA3ACO, Rick VA3WU, David VA3DNB, Vito VA3VMD and Nick VE3UFA

These guys operate classic AM equipment and would welcome your check-in.

Great Band Conditions on HF

Florida Hams Make Contact 100 Miles Apart via 10-Meter

Repeater... in Switzerland: When 10 meters is open, amazing things can happen. Lu Romero, W4LT, knows that well. He said, "When 10 is open, I often venture up into the top of the band to see if there is any FM activity. I've always liked to use 10 FM, especially when conditions are marginal to observe the Faraday phase distortion on signals. Before FT8, 10 FM was always a good way to discover where the band was propagating to in addition to the beacons. If you hear FM (especially repeaters) operating, then the propagation is really good!"

At around 1500z on October 23, 2023, the band was open. Romero stated that he went to the top of the band and "found multiple signals in both simplex and via repeaters." "Usually, I receive a repeater in New York City, KQ2H, one of the strongest signals I can get down here in Florida when 10 is open, but today there was another strong signal [of] 10 kHz above it," he said.

Using a FLEX-6400 at 75 W and the C32XR beam at 108 feet that 2727 Courtice Road, Courtice he maintains for the [Tampa Amateur Radio Club](#), he heard an ID through the splatter from the KQ2H repeater. "It was [HB9HD in Switzerland!](#) I set up for split and reduced power to 75 W on the Flex and gave the repeater a kerchunk." Romero was able to contact a Swiss ham, Rene, HB3XVR, on the repeater's 70-centimeter link.

Then, on October 31, again around 1500z, Romero tried the repeater once more. "I found the repeater full quieting, even stronger than it was on October 23, and with no QRM from KQ2H, so it was clean and easy to copy!"

For the heck of it, I called CQ several times on the repeater. I received no callers, but finally, I received a signal that was fading up and down. I called again and that signal stopped fading for a while, and I was able to work David, WA3LXD, over the HB9HD repeater. After a little while, his signal settled down, and David asked me what my QTH was, and I told him I was in Tampa. He laughed and said we worked each other 'the hard way,' because he was in Ocala, about 100 miles to my north," said Romero.

As Solar Cycle 25 continues to rise toward its peak, amateurs can expect to encounter more exciting propagation, especially on the 10- and 6-meter bands. In this case, the signals traveled roughly 9,800 miles round trip. Your mileage may vary.

Editors Note:

I have noticed some great openings on 10m band the last couple of months and I made 150 qso's during the CQWW SSB contest just on 10m alone. I fired up my old Home Patrol scanner last week and updated the software and hooked it up to my 6m to 40m vertical in the back lot and almost every day I am hearing 10m FM qso's on 29.600 and I regularly hear Florida and Texas in 10m FM. So fire up those rigs and have some 10m fun!!

Saturday Weekly Get Together!

Some of the club members meet for coffee on Saturday morning. We now have two locations to choose from. One is inside and the other is outside.



Website – ve3osh.com

White Feather Country Store is the out door location. This location is for people who like to sit outside regardless of the weather. Neither rain, snow, cold weather or warm weather deters this group from meeting year round. 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 8:30 am, 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. **White Feather Country Store** is located at the corner of Simcoe St. and Raglan Rd. in Raglan, just south of our repeater site.

Coffee Time is the other location that we have some members attend during the winter months. This location is indoors and heated. Derek VE3TKE the club President took the picture below of the members that attended last week. As you can see it quite busy on Saturday morning. So come early to get a seat.

Coffee Time is located at 2727 Courtice Road in Courtice.



What does it mean?

Recently one of our newer Hams was asking what some of the terms in Amateur Radio mean. So, we will run a short column with some Ham Radio terms and their meaning, for some of the old timers this is old hat but hopefully will help younger and newer Hams.

PSK31: **PSK31** or "Phase Shift Keying, 31 Baud", also **BPSK31** and **QPSK31**, is a popular computer-sound card-generated radio-teletype mode, used primarily by amateur radio operators to conduct real-time keyboard-to-keyboard chat, most often using frequencies in the high frequency amateur radio bands (near-shortwave). PSK31 is distinguished from other digital modes in that it is specifically tuned to have a data rate close to typing speed, and has an extremely narrow bandwidth, allowing many conversations in the same bandwidth as a single voice channel. This narrow bandwidth makes better use of the RF energy in a very narrow space thus allowing relatively low-power equipment (5 watts) to communicate globally using the same sky-wave propagation used by shortwave radio stations.

Quad antenna: Type of directional antenna (sometime called *cubical quad*) that consists of a driven element and one or more parasitic elements, each formed into a square or rectangular loop, the lengths and spacing's of which are dependent on transmitting frequency

RF choke: Choke (sometimes *common-mode choke*), often air-core, applied to a transmission line or circuit, and often made from the same cable used for the transmission line, to suppress or attenuate RF feedback due to common-mode current on the transmission line back to the originating equipment

RF feedback: meter, speaker, headphone, etc.) or cabling of Effect (sometimes called *shack RF* or *RF in the shack*) of an RF signal being emitted (and then possibly even rectified) and superimposed on the circuitry (microphone, chassis, controls, the transmitter generating the RF signal, or other household equipment, such as a computer speaker, TV set, telephone (land-line in particular), broadcast radio receiver, headset etc., often the result of common-mode current, also incorrect name for RF signal reflection on a transmission line

Email – info@ve3osh.com

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

According to Thomas VE3PDK, our membership secretary, and Bob VE3HIX, our treasurer, this is the most wonderful time of the year! We are making your membership renewal even easier this year. Step 1: go the membership section of our club page and submit the online form. Step 2: send the club an e-transfer to treasurer@ve3osh.com or give either Bob or Thomas your fees in cash. NOTE – if you are claiming that you are a RAC member make sure you check with RAC to make sure your membership is paid up. We have to double check this for our RAC insurance policy so please do not try to claim this if you are not a current RAC member. The dues are staying the same for 2024 at \$30 for a RAC member and \$40 for Non-RAC member

Swap Shop

For Sale



Yaesu FT1000MP MK V Field 100 watt HF Transceiver 10m to 160m. the AC power supply is built in. Or you may also operate this transceiver from 13.8 VDC. This radio also features a built-in high speed automatic [antenna tuner](#) capable of matching loads between 16.5 and 150 ohms to better than 1.2:1 SWR. There is an [access door](#) on top panel for adjustments. This radio includes the MH-31B8 hand mic. This radio is a Yaesu Classic and has the Inrad 1800hz Roofing Filter installed and also the DVS-2(digital recorder). Comes with manual and original box. Also comes with Yaesu SP-6 speaker. Asking **\$1100 or Best Offer**.

Contact **Steve VA3TPS** for more information on either item at va3tps@outlook.com

For Sale

1. Icom IC-92AD Dual Band D-Star Transceiver.
2. Icom HM-175 GPS Speaker Microphone
3. Icom BC-177 Charging dock with Icom BC-123 SA Charger
4. Icom IC_92 AD Instruction Manual
5. RT Systems Windows Cloning Software with RT Systems USB-92 USB cable

All are in good working order. **\$350**



Ken Fitzgerald, VA3KJF at webhog@me.com... 905-435-6311

For Sale

(from Larry VA3FHG SK Estate)

Alinco DJ-G5T/E dual band hand held. Includes manual, drop-in charger, cigarette power adapter, spare battery, mic and antenna. Was tested and working on VE3OSH. **\$150**



Diamond SG-7200 dual band VHF/UHF mag mount antenna. **\$50.**

Kenwood TM-D700A dual band, **APRS ready**. Includes mic, display separation kit and display mounting bracket. No manual but it can be downloaded for free from the Kenwood site. Tested and working on VE3OSH. NOTE – does not have a GPS so one will need to be connected if you want to use it for sending out beacons while mobile. **\$350.**



Garmin GPSMAP 60CSx gps. Includes manual, Trip and Waypoint CD, City Navigator North America CD, cigarette power adapter and USB cable for updating. Tested and working. **\$150.**

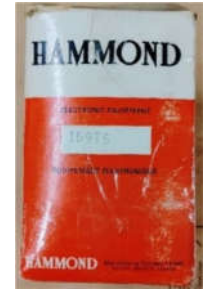


TigerTrak TM-1+ Trackin Module. APRS tracler. Untested and no GPS or cables but from what I have read you would need to make/buy one based on your radio. **\$15.**



Contact **Laird VE3LKS** at VE3LKS@yahoo.ca for info on these items

For Sale:



Hammond 169TS Transformer – never used. \$80 new at Hammond. Asking **\$25.** Proceeds go to the club. Contact **Laird VE3LKS** at VE3LKS@yahoo.ca

For Sale

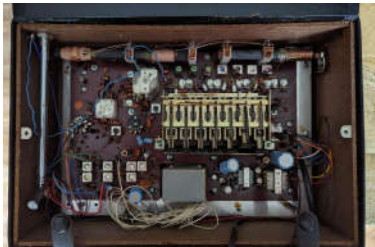
- 1) Yaesu FT5D hand held, VHF/UHF/C4FM/Wires-X in new condition comes with Original box, all accessories that came with it and as extras:
 CD-41 Rapid charger
 MH-34 Speaker/Mic
 SDD-13, 12 volts adapter to use ht in the car or charge battery in the car.
 SCU-39 Kit, with the cables to run PDN mode
 SCU-19 programming cable.
 All for \$ 550.00 Or best offer.

- 2) Anytone AT-D878UV Plus (GPS/Bluetooth/APRS) Hand held.
 Extra Battery, Charger and bluetooth earpiece for hands free Operation.
 Asking \$ 350.00 or best offer.
 Contact Aldo: va3ag@sympatico.ca

73 Aldo VA3AG

For Sale

Ross 2311 World Master multi band, "solid state" receiver. Good cosmetic condition, clean inside. FM broadcast band works. Other bands (VHF, aircraft, LW, SW, AM, MB, etc.) untested. \$60 OBO. Contact Neil VA3NH at nhmcalistemd@protonmail.com



Station of the Month

Don't forget I need some more pictures of your Radio Shacks so send the picture and info to Steve VA3TPS at va3tps@outlook.com

Editor's Note



Well, it is that most wonderful time of the year again, children and grandchildren are making their list and getting excited. Ham Radio operators are moving some gear around and making some space for the new radio or maybe a tuner or an amplifier!

I would like to send from my family to you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and best wishes for a Safe and fun Holiday!!

Upcoming Events

RAC Winter Contest: The RAC Winter Contest is coming up on December 30 from 0000z to 2359z hours. This is a fun contest where all the American's and a few other countries chase us Canadians. It is a great opportunity to say hello to all of our fellow Canadian Amateur Radio operators and is very relaxed contest for most of us.

From the President

It has been an interesting year. I have been spending a lot of time and effort working on getting the club's repeater tower replaced or repaired. Trying to communicate with the company that purchased the local Internet provider (Company) with possible options with no luck. With the lack of communications with the Company, we decided to contract MacFarlane Communications to replace our tower with a new one. The same type and height of 64 feet. We instructed MacFarlane to proceed and then the next day I received an email from CLOCA that the Company has started to communicate their desire to install a new 100 foot tower at Purple Woods. This then started many discussions with the Company to discuss what they are offering and what we would like. We recently had an on-site meeting to show all parties involved the Purple Woods site. It was a great meeting and I am currently waiting for further information and details from the Company. So stay tuned... Yes I know this is now in the 17th month since our tower failure.

On January 17th, 2024 we will be having our Annual General Meeting. I ask that all members attend this meeting as we will be having an election and we require a higher number of members to attend this meeting so that we have the required quorum. If you are unable to attend, you can send in a Proxy form to the President. The Proxy form and further details about how to use this form will be emailed out to all listed members before the January meeting.

We have two members of our executive that have completed their two year term. They are the club Membership Secretary Thomas VE3PDK and myself as club President. As per our new by-laws, we will require both to submit their written resignation to me before the January meeting. As per our new by-laws they both will have an option to stand for re-election. So start thinking about who could take on these tasks for the 2024-25 term if they do not stand for re-election.

The end of the year is coming fast. As we will not be having a December member's meeting or virtual parking lot meeting on December 20th, due to our Christmas Pot Luck dinner, I would like to take this time to wish all of our NSARC friends and members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
