



## May 2026 Feedline



Hello fellow HAMS and welcome to the May Edition of FEEDLINE. I wish to bring a bit of the past and the future into each edition and hope you enjoy the read.

With the upcoming Dayton Hamvention there is a lot of exciting new innovations and technology that will be hitting the market making this hobby of ours even more exciting (if that is possible) and especially with the tech tinkerers within us.

As the blossoms finally take hold across the Niagara Peninsula and the frost recedes from our antenna towers, there is a distinct sense of renewal in the air.

This month, we are shifting our focus from the indoor projects of winter to the "great outdoors" of amateur radio.

Whether you're planning to activate a local park for POTA or just looking forward to a sunset ragchew on repeater, I hope this issue inspires you to get outside and key up.

See you on the bands!

**73,**

Tony VE3ZAV



MESSAGE FROM  
THE PRESIDENT

Summer and Field Day. What a great combination. It can be many things all wrapped up into one wonderful event !

So, what are those things?

The answer is, it can be many things to many radio operators. Here are a few things that come to mind quickly for me.

It is a chance to practice good radio communication.

It is a new location to work from.

It is a team effort .

It is seasoned operators helping those of us that are new to learn from the experience of others.

It's a common goal that unites us.

It's competition in the friendliest of ways with each other and those around the world.

It is an exercise in preparedness and a public event.

This year we will be staging our Summer Field Day at Ball's Falls Conservation Area. There are senior club members that have operated here before and should be able to answer any questions about the location and the operation of the NPARC Summer Field Day. Summer Field Day is also designed to be a public relations event where the public can see what we do and participate with us in a limited fashion. I hope everyone treats the questions from the public with respect and answers in a fashion that wants them to learn more about us.

Plans are being put together now to make this Summer Field Day the best one yet and it is not too early to get started with us in the preparations for the event. Many positions are open such as band captains and teams, GOTA station, meal logistics and other duties. We will be doing a 24 hour operation as bands permit and have room for camping with porta potties and potable water close by, although meals still must be determined. We will also have ample opportunity set up before the official contest starts. More information can be had by talking with the organizers, Peter VA3WET, Glenn VE3NDW, or myself Paul VE3WRP.

I hope you can make the event. It has always been one of our premier events and I am sure 2026 will carry on in that tradition. See you there.

Paul VE3WRP

## The View from the Escarpment: What's New in 2026?

Greetings, fellow Niagara region operators! Whether you're scanning the VHF repeaters from the heights of the Escarpment or tuning your HF dipoles in the heart of wine country, there's no denying that the "ham" landscape is shifting beneath our feet. As we move further into 2026, the hobby is feeling less like a throwback to the 1970s and more like a gateway to the 2030s.

Here is a quick look at what is buzzing in the world of amateur radio—and what's happening right here in our own backyard.

### High-Tech on the Horizon: The Icom X-026

The global buzz this spring is centered on the Hamvention 2026 reveal of the Icom X-026. For months, concept renderings have teased a mobile rig that looks more like a high-end cockpit interface than a radio. The industry is moving toward "DSP-first" designs, where architecture matters more than raw wattage. The focus is now on intelligibility—filtering out the noise of a crowded band with surgical precision.

### Space is Getting Closer

If you haven't tried working the birds lately, 2026 is the year to start.

HamTV on the ISS: The International Space Station has resumed active HamTV transmissions on the 13 cm band. Operators are now receiving full-color test patterns and video directly from orbit.

Satellite Handhelds: New hardware, like the Anytone AT-D890UV, is bringing full-duplex capabilities to handheld radios, making satellite work (like hitting the SO-50) accessible without a complex terrestrial setup.

The QO-100 North America Challenge: Efforts are ramping up to bring Geostationary Amateur Radio payloads to North American coverage, inspired by the success of QO-100 in Europe and Africa.

### The Digital Evolution: More Than Just FT8

While FT8 continues to dominate the HF waterfall, we are seeing a "Digital Renaissance" in other areas:

HF Digital Voice: New protocols like RADE (Robust Amateur Digital Evolution) are demonstrating voice quality that exceeds SSB while using only 1.5 kHz of bandwidth. Imagine noise-free, crystal-clear ragchewing on 40 meters, even during mediocre propagation.

Meshtastic & Hacker Culture: There is a growing overlap between the ham community and the "maker/hacker" world. Tools like Meshtastic and SDR (Software Defined Radio) are bringing younger experimenters into the fold, focusing on off-grid messaging and open-source hardware.

### A Final Thought for the Shack

As we look toward the summer field season, the message for 2026 is clear: Experiment.

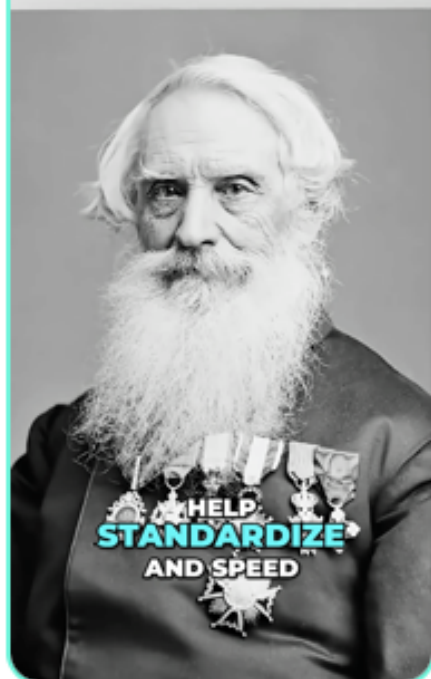
Whether you're exploring the new 44Net Connect system for TCP/IP over radio or simply trying to see how many SOTA (Summits on the Air) peaks you can trigger from the local trails, the hobby has never been more diverse. The Niagara region has always been a "crossroads" for signals and people—let's keep those airwaves busy.

73 to all, and see you on the air!

Tony VE3ZAV

## History Minute: Why do we call it "HAM" Radio?

threw Brady image of Samuel Mc



[👉 Watch Video](#)

It's the #1 question every new operator gets from their friends and family: *"Why is it even called 'Ham' radio anyway?"*

There are dozens of myths floating around the shack—from the "Hertz-Armstrong-Marconi" theory to secret club names from the early 1900s. But do you know the **real** reason the name stuck?

**In this quick 60-second history lesson, we break down:**

- **The "Ham-Fisted" Insult:** How professional telegraphers used the term as a jab at early amateurs.
- **The Myth of H-A-M:** Why that popular "initials" theory is likely just a legend.
- **How We Claimed the Name:** How our community took a "diss" and turned it into a badge of honor.

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# Beyond the Basics: David's HF Master Class Journey

 [Watch David's Full Story](#)

Even with experience on the HF bands, [David \(KJ5IJC\)](#) found that there is always more to learn to become a truly effective operator.

**In this video, David breaks down:**

- **The "Pro" Shortcuts:** How specific software tips for **WSJT-X** and logging techniques streamlined his workflow.
- **Antenna Insights:** Why the clear explanations of setups like the **BuddyPole** were a game-changer.
- **Building HF Confidence:** Why this is the essential "bridge" for new General licensees to feel comfortable making contacts.
- **Real-World Results:** The practical tips and tricks that go beyond core fundamentals to improve daily radio operations.

*"A worthwhile investment of time for both experienced hams and those just starting their journey." — David, KJ5IJC*

# THE NPARC CIRCUIT

## Voices from Above

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Amateur radio has always been the "great equalizer." On the airwaves, a high school student in a basement carries the same weight as a head of state or a global icon. Over the decades, many of history's most influential figures have found solace and community behind a microphone or a Morse key.

Perhaps no callsign is as legendary as **K2ZIR**. Belonging to the late **King Hussein of Jordan**, this wasn't just a hobby for the monarch—it was a diplomatic tool. King Hussein was known for frequently hopping onto the bands, often surprising unsuspecting operators who had no idea they were chatting with royalty until the final sign-off. He viewed Ham radio as a way to foster peace, connecting people across borders that politics could not bridge.

"Ham radio is the only way a common person can talk to a king without being arrested." — Anonymous

From the world of entertainment, **Marlon Brando (F05GJ)** was a dedicated operator. While the world saw a reclusive Hollywood titan, the local Hams in French Polynesia knew a man who loved technical chatter and DXing from his private island. Similarly, **Joe Walsh (WB6ACU)** of the Eagles remains an active ambassador for the hobby, often citing the technical discipline of radio as a perfect parallel to the precision of music.

## The Science of Sound

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The hobby has also attracted the world's greatest minds. **Walter Cronkite (KB2GSD)**, the "most trusted man in America," was a lifelong enthusiast. For Cronkite, radio was the foundation of his career in journalism, and he spent his retirement advocating for the preservation of Amateur Radio frequencies.

In the realm of exploration, Ham radio truly leaves the planet. Almost every astronaut aboard the International Space Station is a licensed operator. **Owen Garriott (W5LFL)** made history in 1983 as the first person to operate a Ham radio from space, proving that the hobby's reach is literally limitless.

Even the titans of tech have roots here. **Steve Wozniak (WV6SBA)**, co-founder of Apple, credited his early interest in electronics to his days as a young Ham. It was this "maker" spirit—the desire to build, break, and improve—that led to the personal computer revolution.

### A Legacy for NPARC:

As we tune our rigs tonight, remember that we share the airwaves with history. Whether it's a senator, a rockstar, or an astronaut, we all speak the same language: 73.

*Do you have a favorite story about a famous Ham? Submit your ideas for the next issue of The Circuit!*

# The Sky is Not the Limit (But Gravity Is)

## A "Feed Line" Safety Briefing

We've all been there. The bands are opening up, you've finally saved enough for that new tribander, or perhaps a fierce Lake Erie gale just turned your favorite dipole into a tangled mess of copper and cedar branches. The urge to get back on the air is strong, but before you grab the ladder and the tool belt, let's talk about the one thing more important than your SWR: **your pulse.**

In the spirit of keeping the NPARC roster full and healthy, here is a quick refresher on staying safe while chasing that DX.

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### 1. The "Look Up and Live" Rule

It sounds like a cliché until you're holding a 20-foot aluminum mast. Before you even unpack the antenna, scan the area for **overhead power lines.**

- **The Distance Rule:** Always maintain a distance of at least twice the height of your antenna system from the nearest power line.
- **The "What If" Factor:** If the antenna falls while you're installing it, where will it land? If the answer is "on the mains," put the tools down and find a new spot.

### 2. Gravity: It's the Law

Most amateur radio accidents don't involve electricity; they involve falling. Whether you're climbing a tower or just perched on a Rona step-ladder, respect the height.

- **The Buddy System:** Never climb or do major roof work alone. You need a "ground boss" who can call 911 (or at least tell you if your coaxial drip loop looks lopsided).
- **Safety Harnesses:** If you're going up a tower, a professional-grade fall-arrest system isn't "overkill"—it's gear. Just like you wouldn't use a cheap Chinese knock-off fuse for your transceiver, don't trust your life to a weathered rope.

### 3. RF Burns: The Invisible Bite

We often forget that the energy we're sending up that feed line can actually hurt. RF burns are deceptively deep and slow to heal.

- **Signs Off:** Ensure the rig is powered down and disconnected before touching elements.
  - **Warning Signs:** If you live in a high-traffic area (or just have curious grandkids), make sure your antenna ends are out of reach. A 100-watt "sting" is a memory nobody wants.
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### 4. Grounding: Not Just for Noise

In the Niagara region, we get our fair share of summer thunderstorms rolling off the lakes. Proper grounding is the difference between a minor localized pop and a melted shack.

**Pro-Tip:** Your antenna discharge unit (lightning arrestor) should be mounted outside the house, bonded to a high-quality ground rod. Don't give the lightning an invitation to come inside and check out your vintage tube gear.

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## The Bottom Line

No contact, no matter how rare the DX, is worth a trip to the ICU. Take your time, check your guy wires, and remember that **the best antenna is the one that stays up—and keeps the operator standing.**

See you on the repeaters (from the safety of the ground)!

73,

*The NPARC Safety Committee*



## UPCOMING EVENTS!



ARRL Field Day 2026 is scheduled for **June 27–28, 2026**, operating from 1800 UTC Saturday to 2059 UTC Sunday. It is amateur radio's premier emergency preparedness exercise and operating event, with 2026 featuring a special focus on the America250 celebration. Participants set up stations in field locations to test autonomous, portable capabilities. [ARRL +2](#)



### Key Details for Field Day 2026

- **Dates:** June 27–28, 2026.
- **Theme:** "Amateur Radio: A National Resource," celebrating America's 250th anniversary.
- **Location:** Find local stations or clubs using the [ARRL Field Day Station Locator](#).
- **Rules & Participation:** Primarily, this is a communication exercise, not a contest, though it is often operated like one. Participants can check official rules at ARRL Field Day.
- **Bonus Points:** Use the hashtag #ARRLFD on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, or YouTube) for 100 bonus points.
- **Merchandise:** Official 2026 gear with a patriotic theme is available through the ARRL Shop. [ARRL +4](#)

### How to Participate

- **Join a Group:** Find a local amateur radio club, such as the [Five Flags Amateur Radio Association](#) or the [Cascade Amateur Radio Enthusiasts](#), that is organizing an event.
- **Operate Alone or Small Group:** Use the "1B" or "1D" categories to operate from home or a temporary, portable location.
- **GOTA Station:** Encourage newcomers or inactive hams to use the "Get On The Air" (GOTA) station.
- **Report Results:** Submit your results via the web app or mail within 30 days of the event. [ARRL +5](#)



# Meeting Minutes



## NPARC General Members Meeting April 9, 2026

Held at Black Creek Community Centre, Baker Road, at Netherby Road

The meeting was called to order at 7:15pm by President, Paul Walker, VE3WRP.

In attendance were Derek White, VA3RFQ, Treasurer and Geddie Pawlowski, VE3CJX, Secretary, having a total of 17 members present. Carl Krasnor VA3CK was away with notice. A roll call and introductions gave opportunity for everyone to greet each other with brief comments

The meeting used Zoom and so was available on-line for those who could not meet in person. This provides for extensive note keeping called assets and were available shortly on conclusion of the meeting providing extensive and detailed summary notes from various perspective and attributed to-do-lists. For inclusion in our Feedline, available on our website, this report is for the purpose of informing members of our financial report, events that are being planned and for which continuing participation is being encouraged as well as a summary of speakers and discussion topics and any resolutions when applicable. Any errors or omissions should be brought to the attention of the executive as soon as possible and would be revised in the next edition of the Feedline.

Our President, Paul, VE3WRP, lead off with recognition of recent silent keys and members who could not be present. He acknowledged our improved financial circumstances after the Big Event 45 at Fireman's Park and thanked everyone for their help and contributions. Summer Field Day, June 27-28 for 24 hour operation is approaching quickly and arrangements to locate at Ball's Falls are under discussion, so planning for the various band captains and for a GOTA station, site safety, set-up and tear down and hospitality and willing volunteers are encourage to come forward now. Check out the information, map and other information at <https://www.arrl.org/field-day>. In conclusion it was recognized that band captains are responsible for the selection and set up of equipment for the various bands and to co-ordinate times of operation and operators to assist during the field day.

It was recognized that last month's meeting was without quorum and so no business meeting could be held. Ash Batros, VE3ANO presented in good detail about U-Console programmable microcomputers, features of interest to the average operator as well as details on programmes and components for the shack and for portable operations.

See: <https://nparc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/FL-202603.pdf>.



## Meeting Minutes



On conclusion, Peter Teminski, VA3WET, who lead the field day event at Balls Falls in 2023, offered to co-ordinate the NPARC Field Day 2026 with help of Glenn Holden, VE3NDW. Others voiced their support and Geddie, VE3CJX will plan for hospitality and breakfast at the site.

Discussions went toward site safety, generator grounding and many other details. A communications plan including preparation of pamphlets to school boards, Woodend, Fireman's Park, etc and full review of the ARRL Contest Rules would also need to proceed as local invitations would need to be made to get the best points for the event. Updates to the NPARC website with the information was also suggested.

A motion was considered to address updating of the repeaters and call signs that had been used by NPARC ARES members. Further information may be needed as to their location, the state of equipment, access and any future use. There are also 2 other stations one at the Rehab Hospital and at Brock Security.

The updates for the **Notice of Change** for the NPARC, Inc. resulted in savings of some \$259 and included focussed efforts by Paul, VE2WRP, Lise, VE3WLJ, and Geddie, VE3CJX using the official Ontario Portal for business registration. Some websites look like they provide the service but are not the official site that we finally used to update our corporate files with the province.

The **Treasurer's Report** was given by Derek, VA3FRQ and indicates we have currently 41 members, 1 life member, and 1hourary member and a new member has been added at the end of the meeting. Derek pointed out the highlights of transactions including liability insurance provided through RAC and so indicating an end of month balance of \$7, 225.44, the GIC and petty cash amounts in total of 13, 747.51 and that with recent donations of equipment and hospitality accounted for an improved closing balance. Derek also would like to find a volunteer to take over his work as treasurer and would be able to help train for the change over.

The repeater Chair Report by John Lorenc, VA3WM pointed out that as the current club call sign custodian is not currently a member, the steps should be underway to transfer the Repeater Call Sign Custodian to John.

Legacy Bursaries in the amount of \$500 were considered for E.L.Crossley and Niagara College. Further discussions and details should be forth coming.



# Meeting Minutes



Sample NPARC T-Shirts, and Community Communications safety vests were prepared by Johnathan, needed some corrections. Safety vests and suppliers have been investigated by Derek, VA3FRQ. Further work on what our needs are and if individuals would be able to have them personalized. Ash, VE3ANO suggested one can use iron crests and names.

A Motion was made to proceed with preparations for the Big Event 46, to be held at Fireman's Park or other locations, reviewing previous events, defining costs etc. and to report to the members in September. The motion was seconded by Jack, VE3ZPW and passed with a majority show of hands.

New Business included discussion of a Meshtastic Repeater Project with a domain of Buffalo, Niagara and Toronto, there being a hole in the Niagara area for this type of repeater. Discussion also included mention of Meshcore, repeaters and linking which could provide for email, texting etc. Jack, VE3ZPW would be able to contribute to the discussion and has links for further information for those interested in following up. Jack indicated that specifically there may be no amateur bands into that type of system.

Our Business year is coming to end in September and preparation's include a recruitment effort for on-boarding new directors and executive for the upcoming annual General Meeting to be held in September. Please contact Glenn, VE3NDW if you are interested in making a good contribution to the growing NPARC Inc.

Availability at the District School Board rooms for meetings or for local courses were investigated by Paul, VE3WRP, indicating a low cost in the order of \$81.00 for a classroom, costs for a custodian would be in the order of \$50/hour. More details will be gathered and reported on.

Minutes prepared by: Geddie, VE3CJX, Secretary, NPARC Inc. dated: May 26, 2026  
We are looking for a volunteer for our QSL Bureau as Mark Fuller has stepped down. Glenn, VE3NDW mentioned that the CASARA group at the St. Catharines Airport will have an open house on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and noted that all are invited to this family day to learn more about this service in Niagara and drone work.

These folks are recruiting and offer training of volunteers, spotters, search and rescue methods, pilots, observers, spotters and radio ops.

The meeting was called to adjournment at about 9:30 pm

**In Summary ....** I hope you have enjoyed this edition of Feedline and remember; this is a newsletter that needs YOUR material to make it a success !

I wish you all a SAFE and enjoyable SUMMER season and chat soon !

73's VE3ZAV Tony

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## NEXT CLUB MEETING : Thursday May 14, 2026 Black Creek Community Centre

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### **NPARC Repeaters**

**VE3NRS**

147.240+ 107.2 tone

Yaesu System Fusion Auto / Auto analog / digital – no wires-x

**VE3WCD**

147.300+ 107.2 tone

Yaesu System Fusion Auto / FM analog

**VE3RNR**

443.175+ 107.2 tone

Yaesu System Fusion Auto / Auto analog / digital – wires-x

### **Repeaters Update from Repeater Chair John va3wm**

Just a brief repeaters update. All 3 NPARC repeaters are operational.

VE3NRS (FM and C4FM digital), VE3WCD (FM) and VE3RNR (FM and C4FM digital with wires-x) operate with reliable 100% availability.

Any questions or concern may be sent to John va3wm at [repeaterchair@nparc.ca](mailto:repeaterchair@nparc.ca). Info may be found at <https://nparc.ca/repeater-list/>.

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## **Club Nets**

Monday, 8 pm, VE3RAF, 145.190+, 107.2 Hz: Community Communication Service Net

- A controlled net dedicated to community service work.

Wednesday, 8 pm, VE3NRS, 145.240+, 107.2 Hz: Social Net

- An informal net for general discussion of ham radio and other things.

All amateurs are very welcome at both nets.