

interesting. I am working on a special speaker for the May General Meeting. He is not confirmed yet so I am leaving this as a mystery.

Remember we need to elect the Nominating Committee this month. Three members of the Executive including myself, are coming off the board this year. Our nominating committee will need to search diligently for some volunteers.

I am looking forward to seeing you all this month on April 11, at the General Meeting in Thorold.

General Meeting March 14, 2019 Niagara Region, Thorold



Minutes taken by Dennis, VE3XC, Secretary

The meeting was called to order by the President Steve, VA3FLF at 7:18pm. Henry VA3OV volunteered to make tickets for the 50/50 draw.

There was a round of self-introductions of those in attendance (about 20)

*Moved by Dennis VE3XC / Seconded by Kevin VA3KGS :To accept the minutes of the last general meeting as printed in the Bulletin and corrected tonight. Carried.

Announcements: Steve VA3FLF
Groups.io :There are about 30 members signed up.

CQ WPX Contest: This weekend we will have a station at Black Creek.

Field Day: Confirmed for Black Creek on June 22 and 23. The stations can be outside and we have the building for our use as well. Kevin, VA3KGS suggested that it is not worthwhile to run an 80m station.

Treasurer's Report: Clayton VE3AUO: General Account includes money owed to Shirley Faber in answer to a question from the floor. We also have a GIC. The Big Event final figure is not quite ready but profit appears to be sizeable. The President said that the Big Event Committee has doubled to two members: Clayton VE3AUO and Dennis VE3XC.

Secretary's Note I: From the recording it appears that the Treasurer's Report was not voted on.

David, VE3RNF spoke about the equipment donated to the Club by Jake, VE3NCL. The proceeds of those sales have gone to the Club and David suggested that the Club recognize Jake's generous donation with a note of thanks. Steve suggested that we should also have some sort of presentation for Jake, VE3NCL to recognize his many years of work on the repeaters for us. Perhaps the two could be combined.

Upcoming Events: John, VE3HWE
CQ WPX contest on March 30

Ride for Roswell June 22. This will finish by 10am on the same day as Field Day.

July Canada Day Parade: July 1st with the July HF contest as well from that location.

Canal Days: We need a co-ordinator. Our participation depends on the location we are given.

Fort George: John VA3WM says that is set up for August 25th

Terry Fox Run: Sept 15th

CIBC Run for the Cure: In October (exact date unknown)

Man a Mile: Oct 14th

Scouts JOTA: John waiting to hear from them. Location to be determined.

Santa Claus Parade: Nov 17th

Sign up Sheets for these events are on the desk

Ham Class: Steve needs to know tonight if you want an Advanced Class There is a sign-up sheet. The Basic Class will start April 18th at Black Creek. Phil VE3ACK and Kevin VA3KGS have about 9 to 15 students.

New Business: Steve commented that three members of the present Executive will be stepping down for next year. Those are President Steve VA3FLF, Vice-President Henry VA3OV, and Secretary Dennis VE3XC.

Nominations will be in May, Elections in June along with all the Committee reports. Steve would also like to have a Pizza Party at the June Annual General Meeting.

I.T. Committee: At the last Executive Meeting it was decided that John, VA3WM will head up this committee to look into our Information Technology and information issues, our future needs and possible improvements.

The Scope of this committee is: To review NPARC's requirements for web based technology and make recommendations for changes and improvements to the Executive if so needed. This includes web-sites, data storage, email, customer relations software and any other platforms or web services. Although there is no time frame for completion the by-laws direct that the report be provided at the June Annual meeting. Denis VE3KVE suggested that Cyber Security be addressed also. This committee can be formed by the President and does not require a vote. Those interested in being on

this committee see John,VA3WM.

Jim,VE3BCA told the members that he has a complete set of QST magazines from the 1950's to today. He is willing to give them away to any interested member.

* Moved by Henry VA3OV / Seconded by John VE3HWE :Adjournment.
 After a short break Steve,VA3FLF gave an informative demonstration of FT-8.

SUNDAY NIGHT BLAZE DESTROYS WELAND CHURCH

When a fire started Sunday, March 24 at 6:30pm inside the Be In Christ Church, Kevin VE3RRH and wife Lynn,VE3FNY, had a front row seat as flames shot through the roof! The church was located just over their backyard fence. Around 10pm smoke whipped up by 80km/h winds filled the couple's home, they needed to evacuate. Welland firefighters poured gallons of water on the building in freezing temperatures, leaving the scene until 2:30am. An early estimate set damages at \$750,000. Photos Kevin took the next morning showed an inch of ice had covered his house and his radio antennas. His favourite R7 vertical antenna was no longer vertical under the weight of the ice.



Kevin writes, "attached to my garage is a 24 ft tower with my beloved Cushcraft R7 antenna. Now anyone who knows me know I constantly sing the praises of this antenna and my Cushcraft R5. Can you imagine my shock to return home on Monday to find my house, garage, yard and antennas coated in more than an inch of ice, and my R7 laying at almost a 90 degree angle to the tower. The winds were still blowing hard but were diminishing and the ice prevented me from rescuing my antenna for over 2 weeks. It took 3 days of sunshine to melt the ice off the

antenna and when it was finally free it rose to about a 25 degree lean, the second and third straight sections of the antenna had major bends just above the joints. After 2 weeks of waiting I was finally able remove the R7 and replace it with my R5. During the wait I still managed to work many FT8 contacts on the R7, the antenna preformed well and the SWR never changed.

The last report from Kevin was he replaced some tubing and the antenna is ready to re-install on the tower. Kevin was NPARC President from 1993 to 1995.



1. Navy Island National Historic Site **NO PUBLIC ACCESS** <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/on/fortgeorge/decouvrir-discover/navyisland>
2. Ridgeway Battlefield National Historic Site <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/on/ridgeway>
3. Fort Mississauga National Historic Site <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/on/fortgeorge/decouvrir-discover/fortmississauga>
4. Mississauga Point Lighthouse National Historic Site <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/on/fortgeorge/decouvrir-discover/mississaugapoint>
5. Butler's Barracks National Historic Site <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/on/fortgeorge/decouvrir-discover/barracks>

6. Queenston Heights National Historic Site <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/on/fortgeorge/decouvrir-discover/queenston/visit> - land around Brock Monument, including the parking lot, is Niagara Parks jurisdiction, web site indicates picnic facilities and washrooms
7. Fort George National Historic Site <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/on/fortgeorge/decouvrir-discover/history-histoire>

In general, Amateur Radio operators are welcome to day use these Parks Canada sites. Some suggestions include parking in designated areas, operate from your vehicle, bring your own table and chair where there may not be a picnic table, use battery power, bring your own antenna which may be on a tripod or strung in the trees, proudly wear your NPARC member id, be safety conscious and use safety traffic cones to demarcate your operating area and mark your feedlines with caution flags. Note that popup sun shades are considered to be tents and as such are not permitted unless a permit in the order of \$2,000 per day is obtained.

I have agreed to keep my Parks Canada contact informed of any NPARC member planning to activate at one or more of the Niagara Region Parks Canada sites. As such, please send me an email, repeaterchair@nparc.on.ca / va3wm@outlook.com with the dates on which you are planning to activate.



CQ WW WPX SSB CONTEST

A handful of amateurs joined forces at the Black Creek Community Association clubhouse in Stevensville to participate in the annual phone contest sponsored by CQ Magazine. Those who stopped by had a great time, setting up antennas, operating club call VE3VM or just socializing with others. According to Steve, VA3FLF, the contesting was very low-key. It certainly wasn't an intense operation. Thanks to Mike, VA3MPA for the use of the Centre.



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Photos by Geddie VE3CJX & Glenn VE3NDW

LIGHT BULB RADIATES POSITIVE MESSAGE

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Fort Erie Observer, Thursday, March 21, 2019

forterieobserver.ca

Amateur radio club set to hold ham radio classes

Sarah Ferguson
Fort Erie Observer

The image of a ham radio operator sitting alone in the dark corner of the basement with his or her equipment may have happened in the "old days," says Fort Erie's Stephen Riddle.

But the president of the Niagara Peninsula Amateur Radio Club (NPARC) says that is no longer true and it's a perception that the club's radio enthusiasts hope to change.

"Amateur radio, (or ham as it's known to most people) is both a hobby and a service," he explains.

The NPARC offers Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES), which is amateur operator volunteers service members organized and ready to assist in public service and emergency communications. Should a national emergency or a regional emergency arise, Riddle says volunteers are ready to assist local hospitals and the Region.

"We do events like the Ride for Roswell, the Canada Day Parade and the Niagara Falls Santa Claus Parade. We are able to assist different organizations in the event of emergencies." Speaking about the hobby aspect of ham radio, Riddle says it's "a lot of fun."

"We're able to talk to people around the world using communications. There are all sorts of digital communications. There's satellite, radio and the internet. There's so much to it now." Club members recently competed in a QSO Party, a world-wide event that is held for fun to give amateur radio operators an opportunity to connect with other enthusiasts. Riddle explains that QSO means "conversation" and amateur radio clubs around the globe were tasked with the challenge of building an antenna and using a lightbulb as part of the design. The goal was to see how many

people could be contacted using the antenna. Several club members gathered at the Black Creek Community Centre on March 9 and 10 where the eight-foot-high antenna stood and attempted to contact other clubs. "We definitely made a few contacts. Italy and Cuba were the furthest ones," Riddle says.

After the event, the local club submitted a contact log. It will be about another week or two until the winner of the contest is announced, once the data has been compiled. While amateur radio is an important hobby and skill to have, Riddle admits it is a challenge to find new recruits for the NPARC, which currently has 60 members.

"The challenge today is getting the younger people interested in the hobby," he says.

"The technology side of it is just amazing. There's so much more to it than talking on the radio anymore."

He says forms of communication that people use regularly—the Internet and phones—aren't always available in the event of an emergency.

Riddle notes that during recent hurricanes, several islands in the Caribbean had no communication and amateur radio was the only way to communicate with people. To operate a ham radio, Riddle says a licence is required. NPARC is offering classes at the Black Creek Community Centre beginning April 18.

The classes will be held Thursday nights at 7 p.m. and run for eight weeks. The cost is \$70 per person and includes a study guide.

Anyone interested in the class can send an e-mail to executive@nparc.on.ca or examiner@nparc.on.ca. For more information about the club visit its website at www.nparc.on.ca.



Niagara Peninsula Amateur Radio Club/Special to The Observer
Members of the Niagara Peninsula Amateur Radio Club were tasked with building an antenna and included a light bulb in the design as part of a world-wide amateur radio contest

On Saturday, March 9th, several dedicated club members used their antenna building skills to create antennas using lightbulbs for this unique QSO Party. Glenn, VE3NDW, used two small decorative Edison bulbs mounted on a board. Attached to a FT-857D it copied several stations on 40 meters. So it did receive! The more successful mega-vertical fitted with a giant light bulb at the peak, logged contacts with stations in EUR and NA on FT8. It was a truly enlightening event! Later Steve contacted Sarah Ferguson of the Fort Erie Observer and a positive story appeared in the March 24th edition.

Check this link for complete information and results from the Lightbulb QSO Party.

<https://hamsignal.com/blog/lightbulb-qso-party-results>

Group photo, page 9, left to right, David, VE3RNF, David, VA4DPG, April, VE3BHG, Henry, VA3OV, John, VE3HWE, Steve, VA3FLF, Cam, VE3OVR, Mike, Mike, VE3MPA. Photos by Denis, VA3ONO



2019 EVENT LIST - VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

22 JUNE - Ride For Roswell, 22/23 JUNE - Field Day, 01 JULY - Canada Day Parade,
01 JULY - RAC Canada Day Contest, 02/03/04 AUG. - Pt. Colborne Canal Days,
25 AUG. - Ft. George, 15 SEPT. - Terry Fox Run, 06 OCT. - CIBC Run for the Cure,
14 OCT. - Man-A-Mile, 20 OCT. - Jamboree OTA, 17 NOV. - N.F. Santa Claus Parade

VHF NETS

NPARC Net, Wednesdays, 20:00, VE3NRS, 147.240+, 107.2 Hz Tone – always looking for check ins and net controllers. Niagara ARES Net, Mondays, 20:00, VE3RAF, 145.190+, 107.2 Hz Tone. Trans Canada IRLP Net, Wednesdays, 11:00, VE3WCD, 147.310+, 107.2 Hz Tone, IRLP 9013

NIAGARA ARES

March 2019 was a quiet month with little activity. We conducted four ARES Nets on our regular repeater VE3RAF 145.190MHz. Check ins varied from 6 to 12 individuals. During our weekly net we change repeaters to practice and prevent various communications issues. A new Fusion repeater is operational from a location in Fonthill offering great coverage throughout the Region. VA3RFM, 442.250 MHz, Tone 107.2 Hz, +5MHz offset.

A digipeater was installed at the same location to offer access to the Winlink (WL2K) Gateway and the CMS server from every corner of the Region.

On the third Wednesday we conducted our regular meeting. We started 30 minutes early for a message handling exercise. In groups of two we were dispersed HT 's in hand within a 1km area of the venue. Three messages were sent successfully. Debriefing was held to review points of interest. Some lessons were learned and corrective actions taken. We will be conducting more exercises throughout the spring and summer.

We are looking at ways to expand our digital capabilities in the future.

Henry VA3OV EC, CEC Niagara ARES va3ov@bell.net

**Environment Canada CANWARN Storm Spotter Training,
Wednesday, May 8th at the Niagara Region HQ, Thorold.**

OVER 2 ME... Feedline Editor Denis VA3ONO

I'm really keen on CNPOTA 2019. Low power SSB portable operation is my cup of tea. I tried to activated the Ridgeway Battlefield historic site on old highway 3 west of Ft. Erie in March. Outside in the cold I made one contact with my 20 watts and chatted with a ham sitting in a warm Florida park. BTW, did you know it was the Irish Americans, called Fenians, who attacked Ridgeway hoping to free pre-confederation Canada from British rule. The site has a nice covered pavilion but as the rules state, don't take over and ruin the experience for any visitors using the park. Much closer to my QTH are the bulk of the available Niagara CNPOTA sites. A simple cairn enclosed behind a low fence with a gate is at the extreme north end of the 9-hole Niagara-on-the-Lake golf course over-looking Lake Ontario. It marks an 1812 battlefield that was two miles west of here. There is a small parking lot but it is currently full of construction equipment and no parking signs are posted. Work is progressing on a long section of shoreline and a roadway has been constructed below the bank to facilitate that. Two other historic sites are virtually hidden up the road on the golf course. Fort Mississauga is one and the site of the 1804 Mississauga Point lighthouse, is the other. The lighthouse is long gone from a spot near the old red brick fort. It was the first lighthouse on the Great Lakes and marked the entrance to the Niagara River. It's a beautiful location where you get two activations and enjoy the water view at the same time. My kit bag is packed and I'm ready to go!

