

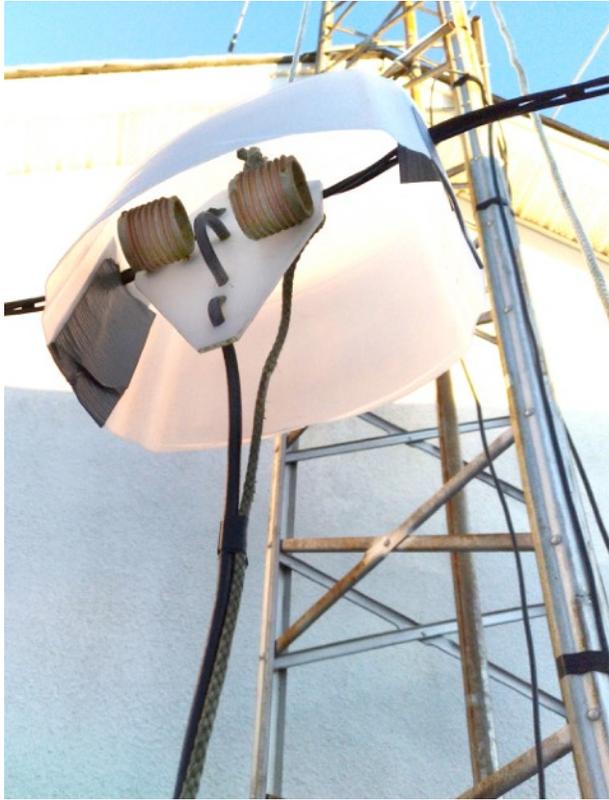


Feedline

Virtual ZOOM Meeting 7pm Thursday, January 13th. Contact webmaster@nparc.ca



Be Strong! We are all in this together!



My Maple Leaf 40/80 Shorty antenna has been up for about 7 years. It's a great antenna for a small yard. Recently I have been experiencing high SWR's after/during rain and snow events. I lowered the antenna centre point and examined the dipole's feed point and exposed coils. As expected the coils were coated in ice. And I noticed the varnish coating on the coils had oxidized and is worn away which is contributing to the effects of moisture on my SWR.

To solve this problem, I took a plastic windshield washer fluid container and fashioned a rain cover over the feed point and coils. First I removed the ice and water from the coils with a heat gun.

I took the container and removed the top half of the container, then slit the sides so I can fit the container over the radiators, I cut a hole into the bottom of the container(now the top of the rain shield) to allow the hoisting rope to access the feed point. I ran the rope through the top hole in the container, retied the rope to the feed point, and slid

the container down over the radiators. I then put silicone over the holes, taped the slits on the sides of the container and hoisted the antenna back up to it's place on the tower. A check of the antenna's SWR shows it is back to normal and I expect it to stay that way regardless of the weather.



Registration for the RAC Advanced Course is now underway!

<https://www.rac.ca/rac-advanced-course-for-maple-leaf-operators-winter-2022/>

The next RAC Advanced Courses start on Sunday, February 27 and Monday, February 28 with 10 weekly sessions. You need to be a RAC Maple Leaf Operator Member (present or future) to register for this online course.

VE3ERQ SK

Lloyd Kubis, VE3ERQ, was born in 1938 in south-western Ontario after his family emigrated from Czechoslovakia in 1936. His parents and his older brother John opened the Kubis restaurant in Kingsville, ON, in 1947. As a youth he worked in the kitchen. Lloyd graduated from the University of Windsor's new engineering degree program held at Essex College, part of the former Assumption University in Windsor in 1961. He was one of the first one hundred, all male, students in the program's first year. Lloyd is quoted in a university publication in 2017 saying, "Because of the lack of extensive engineering lab facilities, we were given a broader education in law, finance and economics, which later on proved very worthwhile, especially in my case." Kubis landed a job with Motorola right out of university and advanced through Motorola's Toronto operation. Lloyd developed expertise during the production of the first mobile telephones and early cellular equipment in the 1980's using Motorola chips and was promoted as Motorola grew world-wide.



and

During his 38-year career with Motorola he travelled and lived in the Asia-Pacific and was a vice president and a director of government relations in the region. After retiring he and his wife Susanne maintained homes in Australia and Canada. When they returned to their Lake Ontario condo permanently Lloyd shipped crates of amateur radios and test equipment he amassed over the years. Due to HOA restrictions he operated a Flex remote station at a nearby marina on Port Weller's east pier. Formally a member to Toronto area clubs, he joined NPARC and was a regular contributor at club meetings when discussions involved repeaters. A memorial service will be held at a later date. Online obituary www.georgedartefuneralhome.com

VE3NKH SK



Former member, John Carl Gilmour, 1954 to 2021 was a life long resident of Ft. Erie. He was a well known SCUBA diver, accomplished computer and network consultant, pilot, motorcyclist, new car lover and amateur radio operator who liked to hold Town of Fort Erie politicians to account. His ashes will be spread in the Niagara River where he spent many happy hours diving.

QRZ.COM PB5X ROBERTO'S HAM SHACK

He has a web page explaining his RFI Hunting techniques.



CONTEST CORNER

Support for your local parks. POTA Event Jan. 15-16
ARRL January VHF Contest Jan. 15-17
North America QSO Party SSB Jan. 22-23
Winter Field Day Jan. 28-30

VE3NRS Club Net, Wed., 8pm 147.240MHz, + 107.2 Tone.

Membership information available at nparc.ca

President - pending January meeting

David Van Koughnett VE3DVK Vice President

Geddie Pawlowski VE3CJX Secretary

John Lorenc VA3WM Treasurer

Stephen Riddle VA3FLF Past President

Meeting Dates & Upcoming Speakers

Jan. 13	Tom Witherspoon	K4SWL	SOTA/POTA/WFD
Feb. 10	Clint Bradford	K6LCS	FM Satellites
Mar. 10	Dave Goodwin	VE9CB	RAC Portable Challenge
Apr. 14	Ask an Elmer Night		Submit Questions
May 12	In Person Meeting		
June 9	Field Day Planning and End of Year Business		

ADVENTURES IN QRP/USDR LAND - Glenn Holden VE3NDW

This all started back in November when Steve, VA3FLF, at our monthly on-line meeting, made a presentation based on his experiences with QRP based transceivers. Rather than cart around a bunch of equipment, the ability to sit down at a picnic bench, throw up an antenna and work POTA or any one of the other OTA's using a self contained QRP rig was attractive. But, what to buy? Wow, some of those rigs Steve mentioned, like the 817 cost a lot of money, even more than my last car tune up and that was expensive! Perusing the internet, I came across some low cost micro-processor based SDR transceivers (USDR or as some manufacturer's call them, USDX). You could get a kit for as low as \$100, but my older eyes are not up to soldering those small components onto circuit boards any more, and I have no way of cutting holes in chassis, so a pre-manufactured unit was in order.

A quick look at the internet again, revealed that I could buy a pre-manufactured unit for as low as \$169 (shipped to Canada), but the unit I really liked was the USDR+ from Bangood, it included a built in battery (supposedly good for 8 hours operation) as well as a built in mike, speaker and even a Morse code key! Wow, everything in one package, including the heat dissipating ruggedized enclosure, a remote microphone and a charger all for \$217 Canadian dollars shipped to Canada, and since it was from China, no taxes to boot! Much cheaper than my last tune up!



Now, knowing the shipping situation from China was backlogged, I didn't expect to see the thing for a month or two, but low and behold, it arrived in less than one week, delivered right to my door within a couple of hours of exactly one week from the time I ordered it! One big problem- unlike

the usual Boafeng transceivers that have, to be nice to them, a very minimum set of Chinese instructions with them, there are NO and I mean ZERO instructions of any kind with the unit. Thank heavens for the YouTube thing, at least, some hams have reviewed similar units. If you worked fast, you could write down what the reviewer was doing so you could at least go through the set up menu afterwards. The unit has some really nice features, but you might have to go through the menu to activate them.

It has a nice clear two line display- when transmitting, the green backlit keys go red, the “R” on the screen turns into a “T”, and the upper display shows not only the SWR ratio, but also the power output in watts! Another nice feature is in CW- when set up, you can pre-program a set of up to 200 characters for those automatic CQ calls, and the upper line shows the display as it transmits them. A real bonus, the unit has a built in keyer as well practice mode, and during CW receive, it has a built in Morse de-coder, the upper line showing the CW message received. However, it only really works well with strong signals, otherwise you get a lot of “E” in the text from noise bursts. Bonus again, it even shows what I was sending. Including my errors of course!



By the way, the last photo on the right showing the top of the transceiver and the little red button, this is not the PTT button as some YouTube reviewers think. It is the Morse key and I found it would work ok on QSK to about 10 WPM. At least that is the maximum speed I am capable of with just pushing the little button!

Some other unexpected features, too many options to list:

- Tuning from 20 kHz to 99 MHz, but optimized for the amateur bands
- Two VFO's fast switch between VFO's- the VFO's can be on different bands and the frequencies are retained in memory
- Receiver increment tuning (RIT)
- Variable band width - sideband and CW independently adjustable
- CW side tone adjustable
- Provision for external key (straight or paddle- keyer built in), speaker, headset, microphone, remote power source, control line to external amplifier, UART for connection to a computer control PC, etc. The mike on the unit itself is small, and you have to hold it close to your mouth when speaking, ie: bring the transceiver up to you mouth- awkward, so I can see why they included the external microphone.
- Does indeed work in CW, LSB, USB, FM and AM. I've made contacts using CW and sideband, but not AM and FM although they work ok when receiving!
- Supposedly operates on up to 15 volt dc remote source, but I don't think I would try it- maybe up to 13.8 v- which is my station bus voltage, please let me know if anyone has gone higher!

Now for the complaints on the internet- first I guess we should look at the problems that seem to have been resolved- The SDR + symbolizes that the software has been upgraded to the latest fix, dated October, 2021. Previous complaints were that the audio quality on transmit were poor and the CW had key clicks. I have made contacts on both sideband and CW and in both cases, the receiving station tells me that the signal is ok. The latest information indicates that these problems, and some stability issues (I'm not sure what they were) have been resolved in the "+" software update. I did note that some units for sale on the internet DO NOT have the plus upgraded software- so buyer beware. If you remove the microprocessor, you can, however download the updated software from a number of sites on the internet- not for the faint of heart though.

Probably the biggest complaint is that it does not really TX 5 watts/10 watts. True and not true- I did some testing using a 50 ohm dummy load with a calibrated watt meter and got the following results, these are all measured when operating on CW and at the end of a 10 second key down, which should give us a true RMS output. The measurements start with a fully charged internal battery, but the first set of measurements I made was after 1/2 hour of charging the battery- hopefully this would eliminate any "surface" charge effects, the second set of measurements is again using the internal battery, but 2 hours after the first set of tests, and the third set of measurements is using an external "12V" lead acid battery (actually measuring 13.2 volts):-

Frequency	1/2 hour output	2 hour output	External battery output
3.5 Mhz	4.52 watts	4.49 watts	5.13 watts
5.4 Mhz	9.74 watts	9.68 watts	10.78 watts
7.1 Mhz	7.85 watts	7.84 watts	9.18 watts
10.1 Mhz	4.19 watts	4.18 watts	4.82 watts

14.1 Mhz	5.43 watts	5.42 watts	6.18 watts
18.1 Mhz	2.21 watts	2.18 watts	2.51 watts
21.1 Mhz	5.81 watts	5.78 watts	6.49 watts
25.0 Mhz	2.38 watts	2.38 watts	2.67 watts
28.0 Mhz	5.65 watts	5.64 watts	6.19 watts

So judge for yourself, it looks like the unit will produce 5 plus watts on the internal battery, 10 plus watts on an external battery, but not on all bands! As the original USDR/X was limited to only 6 bands, it looks like there might have been some compromises necessary to add the two additional bands.

I'd like to close with one complaint that I have. While there are some schematics of the earlier iterations of the micro SDR/X, there is no schematic of this particular unit on the internet! There is some indication on the internet that the sockets of this particular unit are all of the 4 contact miniature phone type, but no one seems to have any indication of what contact does what. It was suggested to disassemble the unit and look at the circuit board, but I am very reluctant to do that to a new unit. What I did was buy a miniature 4 contact to 4 contact male to male extension cord, cut it in half, bared each of the 4 conductors, rang them out then tested between each conductor individually. In most cases, the appropriate contact is between the shell and either the tip or the first ring. However, I have not yet looked at the UART connector, that's for another time.

Next month, if I have time, I take a look at the auto micro-tuner and the famous low cost QRP Guys No Tune Antennae adapter both of which arrived over the holidays.

Stay healthy and stay safe everyone!

Howard Walmer, VA3HGW, recently received an Honorary Membership from the club. In a thank you note from Howard he thanked the NPARC members and included two old photo. One of



himself and another he took many years ago at a club dinner dance. The speaker could be Doug Hobbs, a CKTB, Sportscaster. Who are the others? You can reach Howard at 110 - 7 Tabor Dr., St. Catharines, ON. L2N 1V9



WHAT DOES A REAR DOOR LOCK HAVE TO DO WITH POTA?

By Steve VA3FLF

I had been dying to get the new ICOM IC-705 out for a POTA run. I had been so busy the last month with family issues I just could not find the time or the opportunity. Well I checked the weather forecast and things looked great for an activation on New Year's Eve!

I had been using my bulky Yaesu FT-817ND with all the extra pieces to run digital modes. I had a lot of fun over the summer and fall working several activations. My primary

reason for getting the IC-705 was the ability to link the computer with the rig via an Access Point Wifi built into the radio or by using one Micro-USB cable as the connection. Also, I needed to lighten my load so to speak with bringing out less equipment and gear.

I loaded up the rig in my case (containing my radio, tuner, and a small Bioenno 1206 battery), grabbed a roll of RG-8X, my trusty Buddy Stick Pro and a laptop. I was thinking to myself that is way less equipment than bringing tripod and a pole for an End Fed and a tub full of miscellaneous unneeded stuff.

I spotted myself at the Fort Erie Historical Site and off I go on my adventure. I get to the fort and find it barricaded off. Not to be deterred I changed my plans and headed to the Ridgeway Battleground. I arrived and discovered that I had the park to myself. I usually set up out of the tailgate of my vehicle but decided this time that I have plenty of room to drop one of the back seats and sit in the other.

I set up my Buddy Stick for 40 Meters and run my coax in through the window. I found a nice comfy position in the seat and turned on the rig after everything is connected. I reached for my analyzer to check the SWR and it doesn't power up. What? I just used this thing last week. Well, it appears I either forgot to turn it off or hit the power switch when I put it in the case. No biggie, the IC-705 has an internal SWR sweep. I ran the sweep thinking what a smart ham I was and found it was infinity across the band.

I decided to check the antenna connection and reached for the door handle and it doesn't open. I can't get out of the back seat because the child lock is on. That is one of the mandatory settings when you have the grandchild. A little mumble of a bad word or two and I have to get out of the seat. I can't go to the front, so my only option is out the back hatch. Tripping over a carry case and a case of water in the car, I managed to crawl out. I realized again that I am not as young as I used to be but



at least I didn't have to call 911 for an assist. I immediately changed the child lock setting and checked the antenna.

Everything looked good so what was the problem? Another uttering of a few choice words, I see that I forgot to connect the rig to the tuner. This time the SWR sweep was great and I was 1:2 to 1 on the low end of 40 Metres.....just where I wanted to be.



From this point on things started looking up. The radio connected to the computer with no problems using the Access Point. I worked 21 contacts PSK, FT8, FT4 and one SSB on 20 and 40 Metres. A few years ago I probably would have gotten so angry I would have just packed up and went home. What I have learned over the years is to stay calm and work through the issues. It happens to the best of us but never give up and enjoy the hobby. I can't wait to give it another shot soon.

NPARC General Meeting Minutes – December 9, 2021

Invitation with meeting link was sent by webmaster NPARC VE3VM on Dec. 6, 2021

Topic: NPARC December Virtual General Meeting with Dana Shtun, VE3DS, speaking on 144 MHz and Higher

Time: December 9, 2021 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Call to Order (Steve VA3FLF)

Announcements (Steve, VA3FLF)

- Great Feedline lot of information and announcements
- Holiday party was great.
- Lot of good speakers coming up this year. Thomas Weatherspoon K4SWL, SOTA/ POTA
- ARRL Field Day Results are in. See Feedline, club aggregate 9364
- Business Meeting to follow after the presentation by Dana Shtun, VE3DS*

Business Meeting

Minutes of previous meeting were accepted. (Geddie, VE3CJX)

Treasurers Reports and Updates (John VA3WM) included Financial Reports and Membership Numbers and Renewals and Santa Clause Parade summary of NPARC participation at the event. (David, VE3RNF)

Old Business / New Ham Class Expected to begin Jan 6, 2022. (Steve VA3FLF), Repeater Update- VE3WCD (John, VA3WM / Henry VA3OV) and Black Creek Update (Henry, VA3OV)

New Business / Nominating Committee Announcement: Ken Gansel VA3KWG has come forward to assist the executive until elections can be held (Glenn, VE3NDW) Wednesday Club Net and Net Control Roster to be formed (John, VA3WM).

Adjournment: 9:30pm.

* for follow-up on our speaker please check out <http://www.listenersguide.org.uk/swl/dx/dxcc/?c=VE3DS> and Introduction to the World of VHF Meteor Scatter - Dana VE3DS - May 2020 - Front Range 6 Meter Group

By Geddie, VE3CJX, Secretary

OVER TO ME..... Denis Cahill Feedline Editor

STOP THIS ROLLER COASTER. I WANT TO GET OFF!

Back in November it looked like our December would be a wonderful fun time. We thought kids, parents, family and friends could all mingle during the holiday season. The vaccinations were beginning to control Covid. Then the Omicron variant moved into town and true to what the experts were saying, began multiplying quickly. Several in our family took rapid tests and were positive after a family Christmas get together. Thankfully everybody had at least two shots of vaccine and endured what turned out to be a very nasty, achy, five plus, day cold.

I saw a newspaper cartoon that summed up how I feel about Covid. It showed groups of people scampering through broken sewer pipes like rats. As they approach a cracked section, one person would scream, "Look! Light at the end of the tunnel!" The point was, the pipe just carried on and on and at each little opening another head would emerge to shriek, "Look!! Light at the end of the tunnel!" It was like the Bill Murray movie, Groundhog Day. Like a roller coaster ride that never ends. We are all wishing and hoping that one day somebody can put the brakes on this pandemic for good!



Illustration by Gary Clifford VE3DZP