



October 2025 Newsletter

From the Editor:

Hi and welcome to the latest iteration of the NPARC newsletter. I'll try to get this out monthly, from September to June, at or about the beginning of the month. What's in it depends on you. Please let me know what you'd like, and if possible send me something for the newsletter. I hope you'll find it interesting!

Anything related to the club or to ham radio in general is welcome. I'd especially appreciate photos and articles about club events, but if you have a personal construction project, POTA adventure, etc., please let me know about them. Please send articles in any of the usual text formats, with as little formatting as possible, and send photos separately. The deadline for each issue is one week before the beginning of the month.

Roy Blake, VE3OQP

roy.blake@gmail.com

Dues are Due!

Our membership year started Sept. 1. Dues are \$65 yearly for RAC members and \$80 for others. You can pay by Interac e-transfer or by bringing cash or cheque to a meeting. For details, see the NPARC website at <https://nparc.ca/membership/>

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.

President's Message

As another summer comes to an end, it is now time to turn our attention to the upcoming seasons to make the necessary equipment maintenance checks on our radio equipment, so we can enjoy a fun and carefree radio activity during those cold months that are sure to come.

It is also time to set aside time to meet members, both old and hopefully new, regale in stories gone by, and plan for adventures to come. Being an NPARC member is more than just paying dues, it's meeting kindred spirits with the same appreciation of radio and everything that it encompasses, whether it's kit building, chasing DX, contesting, fox hunting, or any one of the many other facets of Amateur Radio we are able to enjoy.

So during the next several months, let's get out there and show the world what we have with amateur radio, what we can do with it, and how they can join in, and become a member of one of the greatest hobbies/services on the planet. Let's look forward to seeing each other again in our next great radio adventure. 73

P.S. I thought I should at least contribute this message even though I have not officially been designated President by the membership. If someone else becomes President in my place, please feel free to use this message as your own if you wish. Thanks!

Paul VE3WRP

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

Field Day 2025

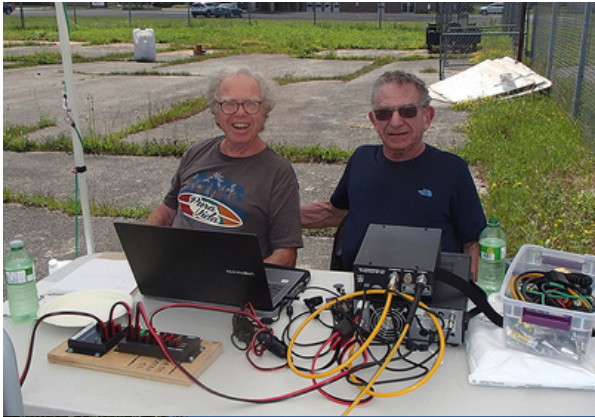


Every year the last full weekend of June features the ARRL Field Day, and every year NPARC is there. This year, as for the last few years, we were lucky to have the use of the Black Creek Community Centre in Stevensville. Lots of room for antennas, plus a full kitchen and washrooms – a rather luxurious field indeed! We were visited by Darren Flagg, a Fort Erie Councillor.

This year the weather was perfect – warm, not too hot, no rain, especially no lightning. We ran all the stations from batteries, sometimes aided by solar panels, so there was no noise or smoke from generators. The only sounds were our voices, some Morse code, and some occasional digital noise. We ran six stations simultaneously most of the time, covering all HF bands and all modes: CW, SSB and digital. Preliminary results showed almost 400 contacts altogether. We took occasional breaks to eat delicious food organized by Geddie and some of us gathered around the fire pit on Saturday evening. So, all in all, a very enjoyable and successful field day.



Field Day 2025



June AGM Notes

The annual general meeting was called to order at 8:20 pm by Carl, VA3CK, and a Minute of Silence was held for Silent Keys: Howard Walmer and Jake Vooght, former NPARC repeater technician. 12 members and one guest, Craig MacGuffin VA3MU were present. The financial report was read.

1) Year End Wrap-Up - NPARC events during the year 2024/2025. ARRL FD, WFD and DX contest at the BCCC, 5 ARES service events, 2 weekly Nets (1 social and 1 ARES), 3 repeaters supported, 4 POTA events (one major), over 500 VB3WC contacts celebrating the anniversary of the Welland Canal, (thanks to Mark Fuller, VA3BGL for looking after the QSL cards and Ken, VA3KWG for card design), support for Treasures in the Trunk, Christmas party, 4 newsletters, El Crossley bursary award, many members also involved in CERT and ARES, now referred to as Community Communication Service (CCS).

2) Alternative Meeting Locations - discussions of possible advantages/ disadvantages of alternative to meeting locations - hard to find an acceptable location. The feeling generally was BCCC in winter is sometimes hard to get to. Noted that one meeting was canceled last year due to heavy snow, but in general the QEW is quickly cleared after a storm - good location for radio activities, resolved - keep meeting at BCCC.

3) Financial Review - a deficit this year, review of major expenses was discussed, some we cannot do without, most expensive is storage, \$1138 per year. Also liability insurance cost. Non-RAC members' cost has been increased to \$13, we presently charge \$10. Discussion of club fees, which have been \$40 per year for at least 8 years. Discussion of reimbursement to be BCCC for use of facilities - would possibly necessitate cashing in the saving certificate or significantly increasing member dues. After discussion with BCCC, resolved that if the members of NPARC become members of BCCC, no further contribution would be necessary. Resolved that next year membership would be increased to \$65 of which \$25 goes to BCCC for Center membership. (Each member of NPARC then becomes a member of BCCC. For example, with 40 members, this is a \$1000 contribution). Since the club is underwriting the members that are not RAC members, the premium for the NPARC membership without RAC membership will be increased to \$15 (total \$80 for NPARC membership without an RAC membership). This gives the NPARC members who are not presently members of RAC, insurance without having to purchase an RAC membership. Note - Some RAC membership numbers provided by members last year are not consistent with the RAC listings. - claims for RAC membership will be carefully scrutinized this year.

4) Storage - it was confirmed that there is no generator in storage, but chairs, cables, ARES vests, pylons, club banners, display boards and spare repeater board and hardware are in storage. BCCC stated that we could have storage at BCCC for \$100 per year since we are all now BCCC members. Paul, VE3WRP, and Lise, VE3WLJ, will investigate and report back. Derek, VA3RFQ, to check and see if any refund could be obtained as we have recently paid storage fee for the next 6 months.

5) Members that haven't renewed - Derek, VA3RFQ, provided list, Glenn, VE3NDW, contacted three on the list, and all indicated that they thought they had paid latest membership, or forgot about it. Resolved that this year and future years, if membership is not paid by November, reminders will be sent out. Confirmed that the club has capability for e-transfer to the treasurer at nparc.ca as some members indicated they never carry carry that much cash, and the club does not accept credit cards.

6) Membership cards – group thought that lanyard-type membership cards are necessary and members should be encouraged to wear them at applicable events - also helps newcomers to associate names and calls. Photos of members are not necessary, new card each year is not necessary, a colored dot or other attachment will be used to indicate the latest membership that has been paid, this is an easy way to spot who hasn't paid up. Paul, VE3WRP and Lise, VE3WLJ to investigate what is possible and advise approximate costs.

7) ARES/ACS report – Jack VE3ZPW gave us an update on the latest RAC/ACS report – a full report will be issued in the fall of this year. Summary - we cannot call ourselves ACS, this is an RAC/Provincial designation. ARES (or equivalent) will now be the sole responsibility of the club - RAC will no longer designate the club ARES chair, this will be the responsibility of the club (as is appropriate training). If we want to drop the “Amateur” out of the name of the ARES activities, it was suggested some clubs are using “Community Communications Services”. To be discussed in club meetings further when the “official” text of the latest information from ACS/RAC becomes known.

8) Jack, VE3ZPW outlined plans for the ARRL summer field day – a final planning meeting to be held next week, Thursday before FD. Due to the Run for Roswell early start this year, Glenn, VE3NDW, suggested maybe set up Friday night for some participants. Glenn, VE3NDW, we'll check policy with BCCC. The BCCC repeater works, but we will ask if we can use the VA3WAJ repeater on the Skylon Tower as primary. The BCCC repeater would be backup. To advise before final planning meeting.

9) Website - it was suggested that the club website needs updating – for example there is still a Big Event listed - question was asked why no big event anymore? The Big event was historically at the Merriton Community Center. Hall rental fee increased dramatically, had to be paid even if no one showed up, (it was scheduled in the Winter Time), flea markets no longer attract RadioWorld, Rose no longer associated with ICOM marketing, another major vendor closed shop, Yaesu no longer is interested, so no anchor vendors to attract buyers. Treasures in the Trunk is a better option financially. To update website, Derek, VA3RFQ and Terry, VE3TOB to review and discuss with John VA3WM. Some discussion as to who should be in the Groups I/O messaging group. No criteria at this time.

10) Why don't young hams take an interest in the club? It was suggested that we don't seem to welcome newcomers, even if they get a one-year free membership. Terry, VE3TOB, volunteered to discuss with some of his “classmates”, others encouraged to see why older members have dropped out. Suggestion of an informal greeter, maybe ask visitors about their interests, rather than just a general introduction. Time for another Mail Chimp survey? Further discussion needed.

11) Meetings can be more interesting - a couple of members have asked to present: Kevin, VA3KGS on Smith charts; Don Kouri, VE3BZ, on a variety of antenna building topics. There is interest in D-Star and hotspots, maybe John, VA3WM, is the local “expert” and can offer advice/guidance. Watch out meetings don't get “too technical” for the average ham. It was felt that a minimum of executive meetings is a good idea, but there were not enough last year - suggested every 2 months after initial kickoff in the fall. Need more show and tell, even if it is just a new piece of equipment, adds interest to the meetings.

12) Repeaters - outline need for others to be involved with the repeater committee to help out John, VA3WM. Craig, VA3MU volunteered. Also need others who are willing to learn.

13) Election - Glenn, VE3NDW, stated that he had contacted 21 members about standing for President - some willing to think about it, but no eager takers. Derek, VA3FRQ agreed to remain as Treasurer this year. Geddie, VE3CJX, will remain as secretary if someone take responsibility for the newsletter - it doesn't have to be a 10 pager - just a single page or two before meetings would be ideal. Roy, VE3OQP, volunteered to do the newsletter. Both Glenn, VE3NDW, and Carl, VA3CK, have major surgeries scheduled for this year but Carl agreed to remain VP if Glenn would Co -VP. Agreed. Still need a president - Ken, VA3KWG remains past president for now.

14) Other items - The executive will plan a fox hunt / picnic BBQ for the fall, as the summer is too busy for most people.

Geddie, Pawlowski, VE3CJX, Secretary

September Meeting Notes

Glenn opened the meeting with his humour and detail as he described using the CHIRP software to program a radio for specific frequencies such as those in a local repeater list. Some notes on his presentation follow on the next page.

The new form for membership is online, showing revised fees and a call to get memberships and dues in for October and continue building membership. A reminder for October 13th for Man a Mile for volunteers. The group received a letter with detailed comments from Paul Walker with thanks. The letter is included in this newsletter.

Derek presented a financial summary and commented about a refund from the storage unit we received when we moved everything to storage at BCCC and with new memberships, things look good to go ahead without cashing the GIC.

Other news was the RAC annual meeting. From that meeting I am still unsure as to the name to be used for volunteer radio operators helping in Community Events and the new relationship with ARRL.

Geddie Pawlowski, VE3CJX, Secretary

Wires-X Rooms

The VE3RNR repeater at 443.175+ MHz is enabled for Wires-X.

Go to <https://wp.hamoperator.com/popular-rooms/favorite-rooms/> for some interesting rooms.

September Meeting

Presentation on CHIRP

1- CHIRP is a free software program for setting up a variety of amateur radio transceivers. There are literally 100's of listed supported units, and it is continuously updated, but, if for some reason, you don't see your unit listed, check on the internet, often you will find information such as "for ABC unit use XYZ, the majority of the features are the same".

2- Be careful downloading the CHIRP software, there are other programs called CHIRP on the internet. Make sure it says for radio programming or similar words. And only download from the CHIRP website, there are a number of "click here" icons that download something, but it isn't CHIRP.

3- Assuming you have the appropriate programming cables, (and a lot of the radios come with the programming cables now), you can connect to a USB port on your computer. The first time you connect, there will be a series of instructions as to how to set up the unit to interface properly with the CHIRP program. One thing I noticed was that while the information may tell you to turn the volume on the radio up to 100%, they can fail to mention to turn down the squelch- you may have to set it to 0 to interface properly.

4- Always a good idea to download the existing programming for the radio first, and save it as a file, that way, if things go wrong, you will have the original program backed up. When you update the frequency page, after you have entered all the stations you want (it's basically a spreadsheet, and there are drop down menus for various parameters such as offset, tone frequencies, etc), when finished, you should also look at the optional "set up" menus, it will be initially set to the default settings, but there you can configure such things as screen opening message, format dual-line displays, screen colors, security codes, beep at end of transmission, VOX and many other options that your radio may have.

5- I like to save the file with a new name before downloading it to the radio. Select download, and away you go. Don't forget to turn off the radio before disconnecting, I have heard of someone getting a problem because of a "power" pulse upon disconnecting.

6- I forgot to mention at the meeting, CHIRP does allow you to send the configuration files to a printer- I found that a paper print out works best for me to check all the parameters. Hope this helps, enjoy using CHIRP!!

Glenn Holden, VE3NDW

Letter from Paul Walker, VE3WRP

September 08, 2025

To the Executive,

With the coming of the new amateur radio season about to commence, I would like to take the opportunity to describe things that I think we may need to consider to continue the club as a viable entity for the years to come. The list I am presenting, is in no particular order, but feel action is needed.

- Consider partnering with community colleges, adult learning centres, libraries and/or other meeting places in an attempt to reach a greater quantity of prospective amateur operator candidates.
- Consider popup events in the major population centres of Niagara, such as library presentation rooms and book them on the weekend or when people have a greater amount of discretionary leisure time.
- Consider the introduction of merchandise with a small mark up on the price to build our finances. We have done this most recently with the Dragonboat Races we attended to promote the club.
- Have HF and VHF/UHF amateur radios that are able to function available at our meetings to be able to demonstrate them to any prospective amateur radio candidate that may show up at our meetings.
- Ask for donations at any of our displays or engagements with which we provide services or information.
- Consider a “Pizza and Pop Night” for some of our meetings instead of just the coffee and cookies or donuts and advertise it in advance to our members. This might provide just enough elements of fun to get people to come out.
- Identify and gain access to science fairs, meetups, maker faires, and larger symposiums such as Defcon, Derbycon, and any other hacking communities. I believe the Club Radio Amateur de Québec have done this already with a yearly hackerfest alternating in Quebec City and Montreal.
- Develop a “Coles Notes” version of the textbook we have used in the past, that closely conforms to the new testing questions recently released by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED). I have heard more complaints than compliments concerning the textbook we have been using to teach prospective candidates.
- Publicize our activities and engagements in some of the smaller local newspapers in the form of reports, stories, and information pieces. I’m sure some of the editors will be happy to receive our information.

- Use MailChimp if we still have it to remind members of important calendar dates such as meetings, contests, and get togethers.
- Search for funding programs that will allow us to offer greater services to our members.
- Re-write our website to be more oriented towards prospective candidates that are looking for information on becoming an amateur radio operator.
- Continue to be “part of” the parade instead of “at” the parade as a way to get our name into the minds of the public.
- Identify lists of upcoming events and how to get our functions listed. Even listing an event on a grocery store bulletin board would be a start.
- Consider any contest event held at B.C.C.C. to be an “open house” event, so interested parties can see what is involved in contesting.
- Create temporary portable signage to use at B.C.C.C., both for the exterior and interior, to guide new prospective members into our meetings.
- Create signage to be displayed at our events to show they are officially sanctioned NPARC insured events to avoid confusion with other entities holding their own activities.
- Allow the creation of specific “Ad Hoc” groups of members in good standing to further promote the well being of the club and its activities as a whole or in part. e.g. foxhunts, technical classes, and other special interests associated with amateur radio. These groups would report on past and future activities at every meeting to keep everyone informed.

Thank you for considering these suggestions. I have volunteered these suggestions in the best interests of the club, and I hope you find these suggestions to be constructive, and worthy of more debate and consideration.

Regards,

Paul Walker VE3WRP

Save the Date: NPARC Christmas Dinner

This just in: Our dinner will be at Betty’s again, about 6:30 pm on Friday Dec. 12. The cost will be \$32. More details to come!

October Meeting

The next NPARC meeting will be at 7 pm, Thursday, Oct. 9, at the Black Creek Community Centre. There will be an election for a new president – see the notice below.

The nominating committee is happy to post that Paul Walker, VE3WRP, has agreed to run for the office of President of NPARC. He is extremely qualified for this position having served on the executive of many local clubs and organizations.

If there are any additional nominations, please inform the nominating committee (Glenn Holden VE3NDW- chair, lgholden@cogeco.ca) of your intention to run for this office. Further nominations can also be made at the October meeting.

Note that this is a special election, not a general election.

Please also note that, to run for the office of President, or to vote in case of an election, you must be a current paid up member of NPARC.

Membership information may be found at <https://nparc.ca/membership>, or in person at the October meeting.

Glenn Holden, VE3NDW- Nominations Chair.

Man-A-Mile Event

NPARC CCS (Community Communications Support- the old ARES) is again planning on providing communications support for the Historic Man a Mile event from Fort George to Niagara Falls. The event has been held for over 100 years. We need volunteers at various locations along the event route (along the Niagara Parkway) to provide communications to update the organizers and advise of progress.

The event is held annually on Thanksgiving day, Monday October 13 from about 8:30 a.m. until noon. Participant will receive a medal and a goody bag".

This is a historic event worth supporting- please contact Glenn Holden VE3NDW asap so we can make final arrangements for locations, etc. Thanks for your participation!

Book Report:

The amazing life of Henry Kendall ,The man who caught Crippen” by Joe Saward

The book is a biography of Henry Kendall, an Englishman who went to sea at the tender age of 15 and rose up through the ranks high enough to become captain of one of the largest Atlantic Liners of the day by age 32. As it turned out, he was also the captain of an ill-fated cruise liner in one of Canada's most disastrous maritime accidents.

Henry Kendall was born in 1878 during the days of Sail and lived well into the 1960s. During his tenure at sea, Henry was instrumental in the adoption of wireless radio on merchant ships as standard equipment. He inadvertently accomplished this by tracking down a fleeing notorious murderer leaving Britain for Canada. By his use of one of the first wireless sets available on a merchant ship, he was able to alert Scotland Yard as to the whereabouts of the murderer named Crippen and had him arrested when he stepped off the ship in Canada.

But the book is more than just that. It is also a chronicle of the dying days of sail and the coming of steam power to the merchant marine and how one man was able to triumph during this transition, then fall back to earth in the most disastrous marine accident that most Canadians are unaware of to this day.

The book walks us through many of Henry's challenges during his career that included murder, shipwrecks, torpedoes, icebergs, scorpion bites, cannibals, sharks, fevers, flying bombs, and a wild leopard. It also chronicles the Canadian Pacific Railway as it sought to grow the maritime part of its business as another aspect of the book.

The book is 241 pages in length and I found the book is well written, providing an easy read allowing the reader a window into a bygone era, in a style reminiscent of a CBC Murdoch Mystery television show. It was a pleasure to read a historic period literature piece with a distinctly Canadian flavour attached to it, when we so often hear of other national exploits before our own.

I am making this paperback book available to other club members on a first come first serve basis for free as that is the way I received it. Please let me know quickly as it might not last long before someone gets it.

Paul Walker, VE3WRP