

Monthly Update

August 2025

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September Meeting



When: Wednesday September 17, 2025 at 6:00 pm

Location: Purplewoods Conservation Area (Our Repeater site)

NSARC Fall Return BBQ

Wednesday 17 September at 6:00 pm

At the repeater site

Purple Woods Conservation Area

Corner of Simcoe Street and Coates Road

RSVP is REQUIRED so the organizer can plan food quantity needed.

The club Secretary will soon be sending out an email with the RSVP link to sign up. Please take the time to sign up so that we get the proper numbers of people attending.

For more information, to volunteer, or to bring food items, contact Louise VA3LLF. lou.f@me.com

October Meeting

The first regular meeting after the summer break will be on Wednesday October 15, 2025 at 7:00 pm over the Zoom Platform.

Hamshack Hotline Update

The following is an update from **Derek VE3TKE**:

A number of NSARC members have the Ham Shack Hotline system connected to their Cisco Phones. We also have a connection thru this service to our Repeater VE3OSH. This system will be discontinued as of Aug 29, 2025. I have sent out an email to the clubs Hamshack users already. I have found that you can simply just add your new HOIP # to line 2 and leave your HH # as line # 1 until the discontinuation date.

Several club members have already switched to a new service similar to Ham Shack called HamsOverIP (HOIP). I have both installed and working as well. Here is their link <https://hamsoverip.com/>. My new HOIP # is 101784.

The repeater group will be changing the repeater connection Just before the expiry of Hamshack Hotline in late August.

DIGITAL MOBILE RADIO

Another Kind of Real Ham Radio

by Neil McAlister, VA3NH

Digital Mobile Radio (DMR) is often disdained by Amateurs who don't use it because they think it is not "real" ham radio.

They correctly point out that two parties using short, local UHF connections to the Internet, which then does the long haul work, are not conducting an uninterrupted circuit of radio-to-radio communication. That is a factual assessment. The ARRL's Logbook of The World (LoTW), does not include QSOs in DMR mode in its tallies for making awards.

Fair enough. But after using DMR for a while now, my view of this digital mode has softened. It may not be ham radio DX communication in the old school, point-to-point tradition -- but DMR doesn't even pretend to be old school, so what's the big deal? *Chacun a son goût*.

Amateur Radio is a wonderful hobby with many different niches to suit our varied personal interests. Obviously DMR is of no use to Amateurs who enjoy the challenge of chasing station-to-station DX while straining their ears to cut through the QRN and QRM; nor will it serve those who like the excitement and fast pace of contesting. But similarly, CW might logically be preferred by people who are mic shy, even if it is utterly worthless to Amateurs who don't know the code. When you want to chew the rag, it is impossible to have a conversation on FT8. All the different modes of Amateur Radio are enjoyable pursuits for many, though by no means every, ham.

Talking on Talk Groups

Hopeless QRM during a contest merely frustrates operators who want to enjoy a long, relaxing chat. We all know what it's like to try to hold a frequency when several other hams who do not hear the other side of your QSO pile right on top of you. For that matter, try to get through to anybody in any mode when the bands are dead during a geomagnetic storm.

This is where DMR shines. It doesn't even try to snag distant contacts by using your station's technical sophistication and operator skill to achieve point-to-point DX. DMR is for *talking*. It is a pleasant and unpressured means of real communication, an easy way to introduce one's self to other Amateurs near and far. Some of them may share your interests, impart their knowledge and experience, and perhaps teach you things that you never knew before. You can always talk to people with impressively clear audio regardless of band conditions.

DMR contacts are made on a Talk Group (TG). There are hundreds of TGs based on such things as global, regional, or national affiliation; special interests within the hobby; ethnicity; or smaller regional groups of Amateurs. All hams are welcome to join in on any TG, although the language used goes naturally with the geography. Most Amateurs on a Filipino TG speak Tagalog; but if you monitor World Wide TG

91 where the predominant language is English, you can often enjoy quick chats with multilingual hams from many different parts of the world.

Some world wide and national TGs from big countries with lots of hams are busy, so courtesy suggests QSY to a less used TG for prolonged, leisurely chats.

Pi in the Sky

Your local connection to this new world may be as straightforward as using a handheld with DMR mode to connect with our club's UHF repeater VE3LBN. Well, admittedly programming the handheld for DMR isn't really "straightforward" at first, but it becomes easy once you learn how it's done. Internet and ham buddies will help immensely.

Even on a TG with few users, using a public DMR repeater to make your connection ties up that repeater and prevents everyone else from using it while you are in QSO. A second drawback of repeaters can be simple accessibility from a distant or fringe QTH.

Both problems are circumvented by installing an inexpensive, private "hotspot" -- a UHF connection between your radio and the Internet -- at your own QTH. Your QRP transmission on an appropriate simplex frequency disturbs no other hams and it hogs no time on a public repeater.

You may have heard about the tiny Raspberry Pi computers that are increasingly finding a home in our ham shacks (or "ham sheds" as one Australian acquaintance calls them.)

For a newbie, assembling a Raspberry Pi is not a piece of cake. There is much to learn, and the learning curve is steep. However, dreams of improving one's DMR experience are not mere Pi in the sky. With help from YouTube bloggers, detailed explanations from A.I. agents like Perplexity, and assistance from local hams, creating a private hotspot is both possible and very rewarding.

DIY projects have always been part of Amateur Radio. Following in this tradition, the time spent studying instructions, assembling tiny parts and configuring arcane software is ultimately rewarded by a gratifying sense of accomplishment and pride whenever the blue "DMR" notice flashes to life on the tiny OLED screen of the hotspot that you soldered into place yourself.

Back to Basics

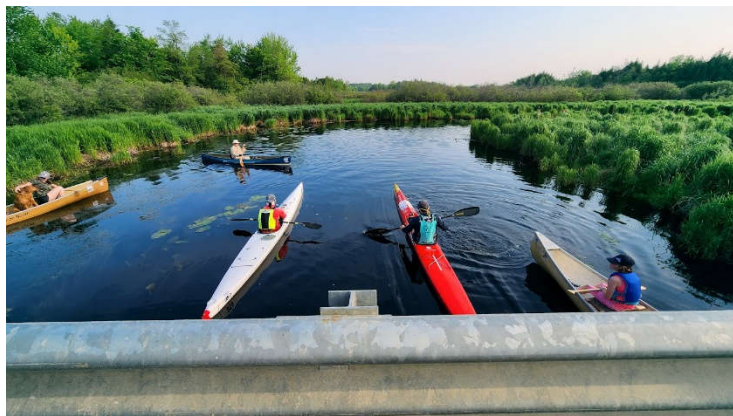
DMR is not your grand daddy's ham radio. But it continues an important Amateur Radio tradition that gets shoved right off the table in the "59 59" rush of contesting or the scripted contact of FT8 -- *meaningful conversation*. DMR is ideal for making new ham radio acquaintances, getting to know some of them, and learning something about their places and their cultures.

VA3NH may never have the pleasure of joining Sandy and his crew for a wee dram in Scotland. However, being welcomed to their DMR Talk Group where we can get together fairly often is next best thing to joining a foreign Amateur Radio Club that becomes more friendly and familiar with each pleasant QSO. That kind of ham radio seems real enough to me.

73 de **Neil, VA3NH**

CANOE THE NONQUON 2025

by **Neil McAlister VA3NH**



For the second year in a row NSARC volunteers helped to make the 55th annual Canoe the Nonquon race in Port Perry a resounding success on Saturday June 7.

We were lucky. Dangerous air pollution from western wildfire smoke that could have cancelled an outdoor athletic event dissipated over Friday night to permit an unhampered start in fine weather on Saturday morning.

18 NSARC Members and Friends volunteered for event communications. The private UHF repeater on Scugog Island that we used during last year's race was shut down when it's owner moved away. Therefore NSARC had the opportunity to try out our club's own portable 2m repeater. Derek VE3TKE furnished coax and borrowed the repeater equipment from Randy VE3RWN. Joe VE3VGJ supplied his portable tower on a trailer, complete with antenna and generator. During the race Joe and Laird VE3LKS set up and manned the portable repeater on location north of Port Perry.

NSARC volunteers staffed 5 checkpoints along the race route, starting on the Nonquon River in the countryside southeast of Seagrave. Our spotters noted the event numbers taped on vessels as the boats passed each checkpoint, through the village of Seagrave, east along the Nonquon to Lake Scugog, then south down the lake to the finish line in Port Perry. Our personnel transmitted this information to Derek VE3TKE and Richard VE3LSZ in Net Control at the finishing line.

Quinton VA3NLM and Nevaeh SWL did double duty, first at the starting line, then as caterers to drive the free BBQ lunch provided by the organizers to distant checkpoints that were still open at noonhour, waiting for more boats to pass by.

The race proceeded smoothly with no emergencies as 163 participants in 105 canoes and kayaks raised over \$11,000 for this fundraiser for the Scugog Shores Museum.

A good time was had by all. Race organizers expressed their gratitude to NSARC for our club's participation and obvious competence in event communications. Already they have asked us to assist them again for next year's race. A call for lots of NSARC volunteers will go out in April of 2026.

Thanks to NSARC volunteers: Joe VE3VGJ, Lex VE3LEX, VA3CWL Keith, Cam VE3IGX, Laird VE3LKS, Richard VE3LSZ, Thomas VE3WKN, Derek VE3TKE, Quinton VA3NLM, Nevaeh SWL, Bob VE3HIX/MM, Grant VA3KJI, Daren VE3NMD, Jeanette SWL, Jean Paul VE3JPT, Doug VA3DCE, Justin VA3BIU, Neil VA3NH.

73 de **Neil McAlister, VA3NH**

NOTE: the NSARC received the following letter from the organizers:

Hello Neil and the North Shore Amateur Radio Club Team,

On behalf of the Scugog Shores Museum team, we wanted to extend a thank you for your help with communications at the 55th Annual Canoe the Nonquon event.

*Your presence helped us provide a safe experience for paddlers and we are so grateful for that contribution. From the race excitement to shared camaraderie, the day was a great success. We had 105 vessels, 163 participants and raised over **\$11,000** for the Museum.*

We have uploaded a number of photos and highlights from the day to our [Scugog Shores Museum Facebook page](#) and encourage you to take look at some of the great moments. You can also find the [news release](#) and [race results](#) on our website.

Thank you again for your valued support. We look forward to the opportunity to partner again at next years race scheduled for Saturday, June 6, 2026!

Kindly,

*Michelle Rahm
Amanda Gallagher
Helen Lister and the Scugog Shores Museum*

Job Well Done NSARC!!

Portable Repeater & Antenna Tower



As some may know I modified a portable commercial lighting tower into an antenna tower for ham radio remote events. I won't go into a lot of detail as I plan on doing a presentation for one of our club meetings in the fall.

It was purchased from Ritchie Brothers Auction in Bolton. The generator was removed and is now standby power at a farm in the GBA. The winch cables were replaced, interesting how the extending setup works. An adapting plate was made and replaced the bracket which held the lights. This allows for up to a 2" OD extension mast to be secured. Presently a 1 1/2" OD x 10 foot EMT conduit is used. A shelf was installed as you can see in one of the photos. The repeater would be located on the top and the cavities on the bottom. The repeater and cavities are removed when transporting, trailer is not a smooth ride! Patio stones were added to replace the weight of the generator this is to maintain its balance and bouncing when travelling. When extended the tower is 28ft, 8.5m tall, with the extension mast it tops out at 37 feet, 11.3m, this is to the base of the attached antenna.



It got its first workout when the club supplied communication for the Canoe the Nonquon event, in Port Perry. Setup was about 30 minutes and it was on the air, a Diamond X50A dual-band base/repeater antenna was used. All worked well and the area had good coverage. It was also used at the Aquino Tank weekend, it was fitted with a Comet CHA-250B HF multi band antenna, it also supported an EFHW antenna. You can sort or see this in the photo with the Saber Jet. In the fall when I do a presentation, I will have more details, photos and a time lapse video, also I can try to answer questions. One last item, you will also learn who's fault it was I got this thing :)

Joe VE3VGJ

2025 Field Day

Here are a few pictures of our Field Day at purple Woods





These are just a few of the pictures from Field Day and you can view many more on the Club's Facebook page.

Upcoming Events

NSARC Fall Return BBQ -September 17, 2025

More information will be available soon from **Louise VA3LLF**

Hike or Bike -September 21, 2025

More information available soon from **Derek VE3TKE**

Cannington Hike or Bike -September 28, 2025

This is a new event for NSARC. More information available soon from **Derek VE3TKE**

October Monthly Meeting – October 15, 2025

Will be on the Zoom Platform on Wednesday October 15, 2025 at 7:00 pm.

Swap Shop

We are looking for items for sale!

If you have items for sale or if you have items that are free for the pick-up, feel free to list them here in the club swap shop.

Station of the Month

If you would like to share your setup, send your pictures and info to Steve VA3TPS at va3tps@outlook.com

Editor's Note

Thank you to **Neil VA3NH** for his article.

Don't forget I am looking for articles for the bulletin or any special events or information Ham Radio related.

We haven't had any members shack or mobile setup pics in a while. There must be some out there so send them to me with a short description of your station and setup.

From The President

Well another summer is almost over. How do I know, hearing the first CNE radio ads is a sure sign that another summer is almost over. It's that bittersweet signal that the season is drawing to a close, marking the final days before Labour Day.

I do have some news about our Purple Woods Repeater site. As you know I have been in constant contact with CLOCA asking when we can replace our repeater tower. CLOCA was waiting until that "Other" tower was gone to start discussing our repeater tower.

Well it has happened. CLOCA has advised that we will need to sign a new lease agreement and as part of this new lease agreement CLOCA will now be asking for some revenue and other items to be included in this new lease

Nick VA3NPW and myself then requested an in-person meeting to discuss this new request and to clarify the other items. We discussed a number of items and got good feedback. The meeting resulted with NSARC having to provide a business plan to CLOCA to be reviewed and hopefully accepted so that we can proceed with executing the new lease agreement then the tower replacement.

I have written up the NSARC business plan and have submitted it to our executive team for review and comment. I am just waiting on Nick's comments and details that I asked him to provide me. Once finalized, it will be sent again to the executive team for final approval and then it will be submitted to CLOCA.

If the business plan is accepted, I will then call a Special Meeting of all NSARC members and present the business plan for review and comment. Then I will call for a recorded vote of acceptance. If it is accepted, we will then execute the agreement with CLOCA.

I will provide more details when I get them.

I hope to see everyone at our BBQ on September 17th at Purple Woods.

Derek - VE3TKE

The Static Section

This section of the Newsletter will be for information and will not change.

White Feather Fun!

Some of the club members meet up on Saturday morning at **White Feather Country Store**. 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 join the gang in the south east corner of the parking lot. Make sure to bring a lawn chair as we sit outside in the parking lot even when it's cold or raining. 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. Below are a couple of recent pictures from the July get together's at White feather. Pictures provided by Jeanette.



Club Executive

President – **Derek VE3TKE**
Vice President: **Peter VA3PKM**
Secretary: **Neil VA3NH**
Treasurer: **Nick VA3NPW**
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: **Position is open**
RAC Representative: **Ken VE3RMK**

Repeaters

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

Tuesday Night Rag Chew

The club's weekly Tuesday Night Rag Chew starts at 7:00 pm. Our current net controllers are: **Aldo VA3AG**, **Grant VA3KJI**, **Derek VE3TKE**, **Neil VA3NH** and **Steve VA3TPS**.



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 hrs 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.

Just a reminder to everyone that our Net Controllers are doing a great job volunteering and are there for us every Tuesday at 7:00pm so that we have a Net, so how about dropping by and checking in and say hello. It only takes a few minutes and the Net Control operators will appreciate it.

Wednesday Night Virtual Parking Lot

The club has a weekly Virtual Parking Lot (VPL) meeting on the Zoom platform starting Wednesday night at 7:00 pm for members and guests. Everyone is welcome to attend. On the third Wednesday night the club has its member meeting on the Zoom platform first and after the meeting is finished, we have our virtual parking lot for those who are still on-line.

If you would like to attend our weekly VPL send an email to **Derek VE3TKE** at president@ve3osh.com. Our club Secretary **Neil VA3NH** will be sending out the Zoom link prior to the Wednesday meeting time. It has actually has been quite a success as more people can show up, due to distance or schedules, and yet we can still do show & tells by simply sharing our screens. It is not uncommon to have 20 to 25 participants but we can easily handle more. So, quit complaining about being bored and hop on the Virtual Parking Lot also remember that you can also ask questions of the group as well.

At our Zoom VPL meetings, we have Amateurs from around the globe.

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