

The Feedline

Niagara Amateur Radio Club Inc. January 2009

2009! Hard to believe but a new year has started. I hope everyone had a safe, happy and joyful holiday spending time with family and friends over-indulging in all the food and liquids of the season. Welcome back



We have things that we have to start preparing for, mainly the Big Event. It's still not too late to offer your help, Contact Peter VE3HM, I'm sure he will find a place for you. This is a very important venture for the club as it is our main source of funds that are needed to pay our bills. Do your part to help. We will also be looking for people to donate sandwiches for the food counter.

I would like to thank Bob VE3KYA, Dale VE3LVW, and Oscar VE3PIO for taking on the internal audit and all seemed to be in order. They've completed the task and I believe they did an excellent job.

Some of you may have noticed this month we had a major crash on our Web Page. It happened when the server went down and we had to move our page. It is still being repaired as, like the rest of us, Nick is a volunteer but he is doing a great job with the help of Trevor and I am sure it will be back to a number one site again.

It may be a bit early but we should be thinking of field day. We will need a leader to head it up and will have to make arrangements for the location and for the generators. Let's get going on this.

There is a chance that we may be asked to assist with the Canada Day parade in Niagara Falls. We will keep you up to-date on this one.

Our Guest speaker for our January meeting will be our own David VE3BBN. I am not sure at this time what he will be speaking about but I am sure it will be of interest.

One last thing. Elections will be here before we know it so maybe we could start thinking of nominations now or maybe you are interested yourself. If you are, join us at an Executive meeting. Just let one of the executive know of your interest and we will give you the date and time of our next meeting.

I would also like to congratulate Geddie VE3CJX on her retirement. Maybe she will find some extra time now haha.. That's enough for now

John Boswell VA3BOZ

Minutes of the December 2008 NPARC Meeting

The meeting was opened at 19:30 hrs, with the usual introduction of members. There were 34 members and 2 guests present. After the introductions the meeting was turned over to Guenther Schweigt.

Guenther gave a very interesting talk on the use of Lead free solders and how to use them. He passed around some samples of items he had soldered. Guenther also stated that the standard in industry is quickly becoming lead-free because of environmental issues, with the European Union and Japan leading the way. He also stated that there were a number of minor issues with the lead-free solder but these occurred in early production runs and that this solder could be used in retrofitting older equipment. After his talk on solder he also gave a short talk on antennas and RF factors influencing antennas and feed lines.

The meeting was recessed for a short coffee break and called back to order at 20:45 hrs.

Acceptance of the minutes of the November meeting was motioned by Jim VE3BCA and seconded by Conrad VE3LOS. The motion was voted on and the minutes accepted as printed in the Feedline. The Secretary had no items to report. The treasurer's report was given by Kevin VE3KGS. Kevin stated the balance in the bank. We received 1 new membership and David VE3BBN handed in some money from Flea Market table rentals. Outgoing cheques were for hall rental at the Legion and rental unit for the club. A motion by Peter VE3HM and seconded by Jim VE3BCA to accept the treasurer's report as read was voted on and approved.

The in-house auditors gave their report and both Dale VE3LVW and Bob VE3KYA stated they were satisfied with what they found (DIFFERENCE Of \$4.00 in accounting errors). A motion by Jim VE3BCA and seconded by Leroy VE3BCA to accept the auditors report was voted upon and accepted.

Old Business

Peter VE3HM gave a report on the upcoming flea market stating that he was getting Grand prize tickets printed and was going to Sunshine Café to discuss Beef on a Bun. The treasurer was looking for a runner to help at the flea market. David Wilson VE3BBN stated that about 1/3 of tables have been sold.

Niagara Peninsula Amateur Radio Club, Inc.
P.O. 20036 Grantham Postal Outlet, St. Catharines, Ontario L2M 7W7

Jake VE3NCL gave a report on the repeaters and fielded a couple of questions about the quality of the signal on VE3NRS and VE3WCR.

New Business

John Boswell VA3BOZ read an email from Barbara Skitch as to Brydon's (VE3ABO) treatment progress. He also read a thank you letter received from Bob Cooke who spoke at the November 13th meeting.

Rick VA3WU enquired about using club call sign on the 10 meter net.

The door prize was won by Jim Servos VE3VLS and there was a special draw for 2 free embroidery stitching at Promotions plus. These were won by Kevin VE3KGS and Denis VE3KVE.

Motioned by Leroy Braun VA3LB to adjourn the meeting.

de Jim, VE3XX

Editorial comment

At the NPARC Christmas dinner in December, John Boswell, VE3BOZ, presented David Wilson, VE3BBN with the NPARC 2008 "Amateur of the Year" award. So it is my pleasure to include in this month's Feedline, an interview that I had with David and some pictures of his shack and antenna farm. This way we can all participate in celebrating his award.

In last month's editorial we mentioned about getting on the air and using our repeaters more. I personally didn't hear much extra activity so here is the message repeated. Let's make a pact with ourselves to get on the air on one of our repeaters and talk to some fellow Amateurs.

If you have any comments or have something that you would like to contribute to THE FEEDLINE; send us (in any form), write-ups on Amateur radio related subjects that we could include in the Bulletin. You can contact us at feedline@nparc.on.ca or even just hand us a paper copy at one of the meetings.

Denis, VE3KVE and Geddie, VE3CJX.

The Big Event Ad.

(Details to follow)

David Wilson, VE3BBN
NPARC
2008 Amateur of the Year



At the Christmas dinner on December 5th 2008, John Boswell, President of the Niagara Peninsular Amateur Radio Club presented David Wilson, VE3BBN with the 2008 Amateur of the Year Award. As result of this I decided that it would be great if we could present an article about David so that all of our members could get to see and read about him, and why he was chosen for this Award. So, I arranged with David to go and see him and visit his Shack and his array of antennas. Here then is a record of my visit and some photo's that will hopefully show you that David is most definitely an excellent candidate for the 2008 Amateur of the Year Award.

David has a large 34 acre lot (yes, you can drool as much as you wish!) and so has lots of space to carry out his Amateur Radio experiments, and experimenter he is! If anyone personifies the (original) Amateur Radio concept of experimentation, David does. He showed me many different projects that he has either finished or is currently working on; In addition he is an enthusiastic member of the Wireless Set 19 Group, which meets 'on-the-air' at 8:00 pm on 80 meters.

When a young guy, David was an ardent listener to CKTV 610 and became hooked on radio. He also had an uncle originally from Burma who got him interested in Amateur Radio. At that time David had limited funds available for hobbies, so at the age of 12 he built his own 80 metre RX/TX. He also learnt the morse code and got onto the air. The transmitter had an output of 5 watts and he constructed his first of many antennas – an 80 foot long wire from his bedroom window down to a support in the garden.

He began frequenting the war surplus stores in Toronto (when he could get there) and picked up all kinds of radio bits and pieces. In 1955 he purchased for \$75 one of the ubiquitous R1155 units that so many Hams owned after WWII.

David spent a couple of years in the Canadian military (RCME) between 1957 and 1959 where he learnt many skills that he has built on since then. When he left the military he went to work for the Domtar Pulp and Paper Company, working in the electrical and electronics departments. He must have liked it as he stayed there until 1994!

In 1998 David studied the Amateur Radio curriculum and regulations with Tom Vince (a venerable Amateur in this area) and got his advanced ticket with the call sign VE3BBN (a useful call sign for code operators).

David is an avid reader and has some excellent reference books related to Amateur radio. Among them is Walter Maxwell's book on Reflections. David's deep practical knowledge of antenna design and construction has been based on such books. In particular David has an enquiring mind that does not accept so-called antenna principles without questioning them, such as the one that states that a low SWR is always the ideal. If anyone wishes to learn more about Walter Maxwell's books, the web site <http://www.w2du.com/> has excerpts from his books that will whet your appetite for more reading.



David's Workbench (one of several)

I was able to see David's two vertical antennas he has constructed on his property. It's fascinating to look at them and consider the amount of work it must have taken to install all of the radials, as well as the antenna itself. This is where the large lot where David lives has come in handy. He has a hefty antenna switch in his shack to enable using his antennas. He also has an antenna that has the name "beverage". It stands about seven feet off the ground. This one is not David's own design, but he read an article about it and built one to see how well it worked!

Among the many homebrew projects David has built, his spark-gap transmitter is truly a work of art. He built this in 2001 when he participated in the 100th anniversary of Marconi's first successful transmissions. David sent me a picture of it that includes David and John Watson, VE3EZP which is included in this article. Other homebrew projects have included a spectrum analyzer, a noise filter that David demonstrated to me – very effective when listening to a code transmission with heavy background noise. With some of the projects, David has taken an existing design and added his own improvements.

We all know that David is excited about the possibilities of linking HF radio using ground wave propagation with VHF and UHF to ensure reliable and guaranteed ARES communications. Club members can learn more by reading his article about "GWEN" (Ground Wave Emergency Network) in the May/June and July/August 2008 editions of the RAC magazine TCA.

when you walk around his shack and hear what he has done in radio experimentation over the years. If there is anyone who could be described as a true Radio Amateur, it would be David. He definitely deserves the accolade of 2008 Amateur of the Year award. Congratulations David.



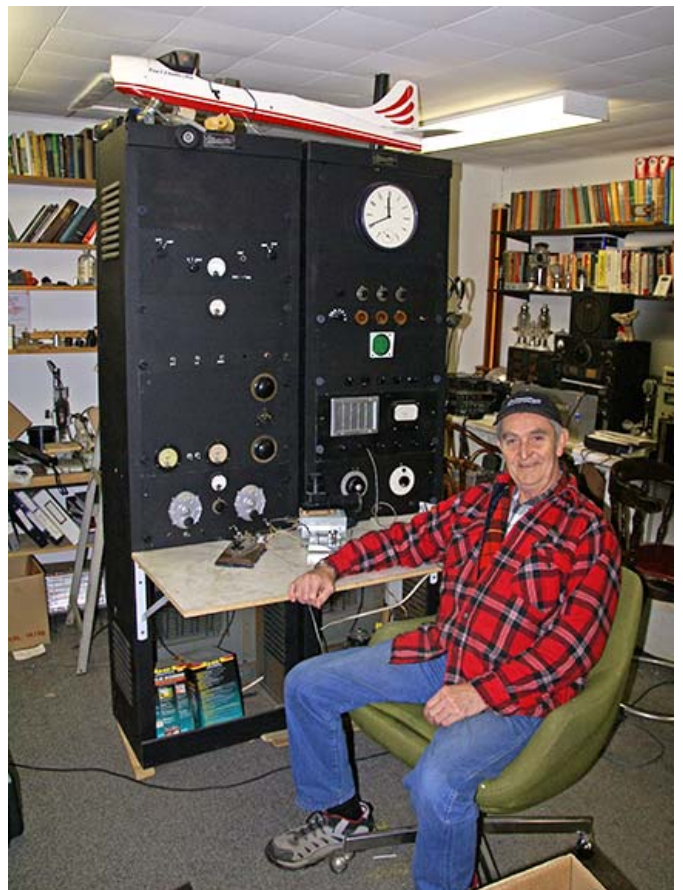
David operating on HF



David operating his lathe

David is an accredited Examiner for Amateur Radio. He also runs 12-week duration Amateur Radio classes in St. Catharines.

Towards the end of my visit David told me that he was on a quest to learn all about radio before he dies. Well, I would venture to say that this commitment is evident



**David with one of his HF R/T Units
(44 vacuum tubes in the transmitter!)**



David and John (VE3EZP) with David's homebrew Spark Gap TX.



One of David's equipment racks



Vertical Antenna (with 48 radials)
This is the Antenna David will use with "GWEN"



Vertical Antenna Loading Coil

NPARC 2008 – 2009 Executive

President:	John Boswell	VA3BOZ	president@nparc.on.ca	
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NPARC Repeaters

VE3NRS	147.240 MHz +	PL Tone 107.2 Hz
VE3RNR	443.175 MHz +	PL Tone 107.2 Hz
VE3WCR	147.300 MHz +	PL Tone 107.2 Hz
VA3NRS	224.580 MHz +	PL Tone 107.2 Hz

NPARC Meeting Schedule for 2008 - 2009

Meetings are held monthly, September to June, 2nd Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm
 Royal Canadian Legion hall, Branch 613, 141 Hwy 20 East, Fonthill, Ontario. All are invited to attend.

Thursday September 11 th 2008	Guest speaker Kevin Smith (Presentation of his diving trip to North Carolina).
Thursday October 9 th 2008	Guest speaker Postponed until November meeting.
Thursday November 13 th 2008	Guest speaker Bob Cook VE3BDB, Vice- President, Field Services. He will be doing a new ARES presentation.
Thursday December 11 th 2008	Guest speaker Guenther Schweigl (Using Lead-free solder plus he is bringing a VNA (Vector Network Analyzer) to check antennas.
Thursday January 8 th 2009	Guest speaker David Wilson VE3BBN.
Thursday February 12 th 2009	Guest speaker TBA
Thursday March 12 th 2009	Guest speaker TBA
Thursday April 9 th 2009	Guest speaker TBA
Thursday May 14 th 2009	Guest speaker TBA
Thursday June 11 th 2009	Guest speaker TBA