



Nortown Amateur Radio Club

Minutes of the June 1st, 2012 Meeting

Present:

Tom, VE3BKA
John VA3MDJ
Doug VE3EES

John VA3AAD
Ian VE3IJS

Vince, VE3ELB
Jim, VE3GRT

Recent member-attendees who were absent:

Tony VE3VME
Vipi VE3PID
Frans VE3VNC

David VE3VNE
Elliot VA3EJF
Geoff VE3GEG

Bert VE3ENA
Ron VA3GRE

Ian, VE3IJS chaired the meeting.

Old Business

Repeater

The current situation is:

- (1) John, VA3AAD has ordered a vertical mono-band 70 cm. base station antenna, a NCG/Comet Model CA-712-EF. Estimated cost < \$170. Expected delivery is mid-July.
- (2) No change: At the repeater's location at 2 St. Clair East, we will replace the existing Sinclair 4-bay dipole antenna with the new Comet antenna. Before installing the Comet we will measure the repeater's power output at the antenna.
- (3) No change: We will disassemble the Sinclair, at least partially, looking for evidence of corroded connectors.
- (4) Vince, VE3ELB has linked one of his his existing EchoLink nodes to the repeater. The node number is 713682. Members, and other hams, whose QTH's are not close enough to access the repeater, can now do so over the Internet. Members who can trigger the repeater can now access EchoLink through their transceivers. Instructions are on the last two pages of these minutes.
- (5) Once Vince can provide EchoLink with an Industry Canada certificate, he will have the VE3NOR call sign attributed to this node. (Tom, VE3TEG, the registered "owner" of the call sign, has just received a replacement certificate. It has now been forwarded to Vince.).
- (6) No change: John, VA3MDJ will program a 70 cm. Motorola transceiver for use at Vince, VE3ELB's QTH, to be used for the EchoLink connection.

- (7) John, VA3AAD will try to obtain a set of programming commands for the repeater so that the “tail” can be shortened a little.

The informative URL for EchoLink, with free software downloads, is at:

<http://www.echolink.org/>

Club members are encouraged to download this software, register their call signs with EchoLink, and learn how to make use of this operating mode., Eventually, we’ll be able to hold our Sunday morning Net on our 70 cm. frequency pair.

No change re: Elliot, VA3EJF’s new IRLP software. He has resolved to try again to get this to work.

Fox Hunt

Since not enough members emailed Doug, VE3EES to express interest in participating in a fox hunt this summer, the idea has been shelved for further discussion in the Fall.

Doug, suggested that construction of directional antennas become a Club project in the Fall. Vince, VE3ELB suggested that merely holding a hand-held receiver close to one’s body also provided some directionality.

Upcoming Presentations

June 15, 2012	Tony, VE3VME – Field day (June 23, 24) preparations
Sept. 21, 2012	John, VA3AAD – RF cavity resonators..
October 5, 2012	Either Elliot, VA3EJF or Ian, VE3IJS.

Volunteers will be needed for the next season’s meetings. Please remember that we’ll need two presentations a year from each active member..

John, VA3MDJ reminded members about the loose-leaf book [our Presentation Binder] that is now kept in the Club meeting cupboard for use by members planning to develop presentations. Presentations need not be complicated or lengthy, and can be on any radio-related topic. ARRL members (only) can access all except the most recent issues at:

<http://www.arrl.org/experiments-1-through-10>.

John stated that he will be adding previous PowerPoint presentations to a CD that will be placed within the Presentation Binder. Members are requested to bring in and give to John, VA3MDJ old copies of QST and Radcom so that he cut out and file useful articles in the binder.

Club Future

In the interests of time. there was no further discussion about the Club’s future. An updated summary of the “to-do” items, arising out of the two last meetings, is:

- (1) No change: Next year’s executive will explore the possibility of having other clubs come under our corporate and liability insurance umbrella, our repeater pair our EchoLink node and our excellent Field Day location. A start might be to invite another Club to one of our meetings.

- (2) We will continue to try to connect IRLP to the repeater and will keep our eyes open for a better repeater location (although, with four other antennas on the same roof-top, our location may not be all that bad.) Our immediate goal is to try out a new repeater antenna. Now that EchoLink is connected to the repeater, and provided that Club members do make use of it, relocation may be unnecessary.
- (3) In October, Tom, VE3BKA, the incoming Club Treasurer will close out the Club mail box which has been prepaid until January 2013.. Before doing this:
 - a. Elliot, VA3EJF has now modified the Club web site ;
 - i. to require applicants for WAVE and WACAN awards to email scanned QSL cards in PDF format.
 - ii. to show only the Club email address,
 - iii. to show that the repeater PLL tone is 103,5 Hz.
 - b. John, VA3AAD (in the treasurer's absence) has been unable to advise the bank that we will no longer need to have monthly bank statements mailed ,and to change the Club's mail address. He and the Club President will have to make a trip to the bank branch in the Fall.
- (4) John, VA3AAD has changed the Club's snail-mail address, in the RAC Club listings, to our legal corporate address.
- (5) No change: Next year's executive will contact RAC to determine whether that organization would take over the WACAN and WAVE awards. Based upon RAC's response, a decision will be made as to whether to discontinue these awards.
- (6) No change: Collectively, we're holding our breath, hoping that th City doesn't start to charge us for the meeting room in the Fall.

Field Day

Will be the weekend of June 23, 24, with the final details settled at our next meeting on June 15th .

Members who have not confirmed participation to Tony, VE3VME are asked to do so immediately, to:

carroll@istar.ca

Bring your tent or SUV to sleep in, and snack food to subsist on during the day (most folks take a break and go out in the evening to a decent restaurant – same for breakfast the next morning) Location is about an hour North of Toronto, this side of Barrie. We should get there well before 10:00 AM Saturday and have everything packed up by 3:00 PM on the Sunday. Everyone had a great time last year.

New Business

Conversion of VHS Tapes

Doug, VE3EES stated that he has equipment that can convert VHS video tapes to DVD format. He would be happy to help Club members, who have radio related memorabilia, to make conversions.

Finances

The raffle yielded \$5.00 and the coffee collection \$5.93.

Presentations

Ian, VE3IJS gave an overview of EchoLink's capabilities, A copy of his presentation is attached to these minutes.

Vince, VE3ELB, who has connected his EchoLink node to the Club repeater, led a discussion about how to connect to EchoLink.

- For those who are able to trigger the repeater, press the asterisk key (* or 08) on your radio's DTMF keypad. The status of the node will be announced.
 - All active nodes are listed at <http://www.echolink.org/logins.jsp>
 - Key in a node number that you would like to contact
 - At the end of your QSO, press "73" to disconnect.
 - Other EchoLink commands are listed on the next page (page 5) of these minutes, so that you can print them.
- For those whose QTH is too far away to trigger the repeater (we hope to fix this with a different antenna) download the EchoLink software from:
 - <http://www.echolink.org/>
 - You will have to register yur call sign and wait for confirmation.
 - Then follow easy instructions to connect to any EchoLink node.
 - All active nodes are listed at <http://www.echolink.org/logins.jsp>
 - To connect to the Club repeater, the node number is "713682".

Vince, VE3ELB demonstrated his interesting and very informative web site at: <http://ve3elb.ham-radio.ch/>

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on Friday, June 15th. Tony, VE3VME will lead a discussion of plans for field day (to be held on the following weekend).

John, VA3AAD

Ian, VE3IJS

ECHOLINK NODE 713682
USER DTMF COMMANDS

FUNCTION	DTMF COMMAND
STATUS	08
PLAY INFO	*
RECONNECT	09
RANDOM USER	01
RANDOM LINK	03
RANDOM CONFERENCE	02
CONNECT BY NODE	DIRECT INPUT OF NODE NUMBER
DISCONNECT	73