

The

June 2022

NARA Newsletter



President's Message – Randy VE7FAA

After a very wet spring NARA members will soon see a return of summer with Field Day, the Canada Day contest, and providing communication support for various community events. Whether you want to sharpen your skills or just have fun with other hams, we encourage you to get out and participate in club activities; they are a fundamental to the Amateur Radio Service. Watch for details of how to get involved.

We are happy to announce that NARA will this year have an operating station for the Canada Day contest at the cabin on the property of David VA7DXX near Ladysmith. Great thanks to David for this, details follow. Work continues on locating a new club premises for NARA after the March fire, and once anything is in the works club members will be informed.

And to be clear, NARA continues to be in great shape despite the setback of the fire. We have an active and dedicated membership, a hard-working executive, adequate funds, and remain firmly embedded and present in the community.

Field Day - June 25 & 26

This year's Field Day returns as an in-person event. The owners of the Sunnus Farm in Cedar have graciously given NARA the go-ahead to have Field Day at their waterfront site in Yellow Point.

The Sunnus Farm provides a lovely setting right on the water with stations being set up only a few metres from the shoreline as pictured.

NARA will set up two stations for HF and VHF. Two laptops will be radio networked for logging purposes using N3FJP software.

We must of course respect and follow any covid safety regulations. While masks are optional, if you are experiencing any covid or flu-like symptoms, or have been exposed, we ask that you do not attend.

The essential information is:

Location: Sunnus Farm, 3008 Yellow Point Road, Ladysmith

Dates: Starts officially on Saturday, June 25, at 11 AM local (1800 UTC); and ends Sunday, June 26, at 1:59 PM local (2059 UTC).

Set up: On June 25 will start at 9 AM

Camping: Overnight camping is available, but NARA needs to know in advance for planning purposes

Breakfast: Will be served Sunday at 10 AM (thanks to Randy VE7FAA)

On Site Repeater/APRS: An on-site repeater will be set up from 0900 local on Saturday together with an APRS beacon. The repeater will transmit on 440.000 MHz (plus shift with a 141.3 Hz tone). Both the repeater and APRS beacon will use the callsign VA7DXP

Coordination: Devan VE7LSE, Mike VA7WPM, and David VA7DXX

If you are going to attend Field Day, please contact Mike VA7WPM at keelcove@shaw.ca. Mike will be able to email a package of information to you giving you details.



Canada Day Contest

This year's Canada Day contest will be hosted at VA7DXX's location north of Ladysmith. VA7DXX's cabin is currently being fitted out with operating positions (thanks Devan, David, and Rosemary). David's wire antennas will be available for the contest. The plan is to have two stations available signing VE7NA, one on HF and the other covering 6m and 2m, all modes. As with Field Day, two computers will be networked and will use the N3FJP software.

The Canada Day contest starts on Thursday, June 30, at 5 pm and goes 24 hours. Set up will start at 3 pm. If you wish to attend or have any questions, please email David VA7DXX at va7dxx@gmail.com for a map of how to get to his location. Please indicate if you intend to visit or operate on Thursday or Friday or both. Again, if you are experiencing any covid or flu-like symptoms or have been exposed we ask that you do not attend.

How is DX – David VA7DXX

This weekend, May 28-29, sees the popular HF contest called the WPX CW contest (worked prefixes). One of the stations on the air will be KH7T in Hawaii, an easy hop for any of us here in Nanaimo. If you want to see what a big contest station looks like have a look at this on YouTube: [NH7T 2022 - YouTube](#).

From the West coast of North America these are the top 20 countries needed by operators for DXCC:

Crozet Island (FT5/W)
North Korea (P5)
Bouvet Island (3Y/B)
Glorioso Island FT/G)
Mount Athos (SV/A)
Syria (YK)
Kerguelen Island (FT5/X)
Monaco (3A)
Pratas Island (BV9P)
Prince Edward and Marion Islands (ZS8)
Turkmenistan (EZ)
Scarborough Reef (BS7H)
San Felix Islands (CE0X)
Trindade & Martim Vaz Islands (PY0T)
Somalia (T5)
Libya (5A)
Avez Island (YV0)
Pakistan (AP)
Macquarie Island (VK0M)
Peter 1 Island (3Y/P)

The three countries marked in red I have not yet worked from Ladysmith so it seems that the listing could be correct. Fortunately both Crozet and Bouvet Islands have planned Dxpeditions within the next eight months.

Special Prefix - Queen's Jubilee

A reminder that Canadian amateurs can use a special prefix to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee (70 years on the throne) until July 14. VE stations can use the prefix VX, and VA stations can use the prefix VG.

Several other countries also have special prefixes for the Queen's Jubilee. For example, the ZB prefix for Gibraltar will use ZQ for the month of June. Of course, UK amateurs will be able to use the /70 suffix with the GQ/MQ/2Q prefix if desired.

NARA Fall 2022 Basic Course

NARA's training group will be putting on a Basic licence exam course this fall through October and November. A short introductory Zoom meeting will take place on Oct. 8 at 10 AM. Remaining sessions are planned for Wednesday evenings starting at 7 PM through October to Dec. 6 with the exam to follow. The course will be offered via Zoom to reduce travel time.

This course will be a step-by-step visually orientated course aimed to give students a foundation in amateur radio, take them through the exam material and allow them to get a call sign. The course covers radio fundamentals and also includes typical questions from the exam bank to help the learning process.

To register and to receive additional information and study suggestions please contact Mike VA7WPM at keel-cove@shaw.ca. When emailing Mike please provide your full name and address together with telephone and email contact information.

AREDN Update

With the return of better weather NARA's Amateur Radio Emergency Data Network (AREDN) project is set to resume. We have been waiting for improved weather to install two Ubiquiti sector antennas at the Lost Lake repeater site. This is to extend AREDN to the Sunshine Coast where the Sunshine Coast Amateur Radio Club purchased a 60-degree sector antenna.

There will also be a group buy of four high-gain Mikrotik

dish antennas, two of which will be over on the Sunshine Coast, so testing will start shortly. Another 90-degree antenna will be put in place, as well as a small 18-inch Mikrotik dish antenna to connect to the installation on Mount Benson.

It is hoped that this will provide additional infrastructure as more people start using AREDN.

For more information go to <http://www.ve7na.ca/aredn/>.

Bathtub Race

After two years away due to covid the Nanaimo Bathtub race resumes on July 24. Organizing NARA's participation will be Chris VE7TOP and Jack VE7GDE. While further details will be given in the July newsletter, those interested in participating should contact Chris VE7TOP at canton@shawbiz.ca.

Bike Race – Volunteers

This year's VELOS off-road bike race will take place on Aug. 28 in the same area as last year. This year's course has not yet been finalized but NARA Community Radio Services section is now calling for volunteers. If you can make it on Aug. 28, please advise Mike VA7WPM at keelcove@shaw.ca ASAP.



WWII Lancaster Restoration in Victoria

On behalf of the British Columbia Aviation Museum in Sidney, the West Coast Amateur Radio Association in Victoria has put out a request to amateurs who might be able to locate parts for the restoration of a vintage Second World War Lancaster bomber.

According to WARA, "the artifacts the project is looking for (which radio amateurs might help find) include transmitters, receivers, power supplies/dynamotors, antennas, interphone station boxes, mounts for any of this equipment, and also cabling and connectors."

More information and links can be found on the WARA website. If you think you can assist, the restorer on the project is Paul MacNeill, paulmn@shaw.ca.

NARA Balloon Beacon Project

To kick off this ambitious club project Jack VE7GDE has donated to the club a lightweight low-power WSPR transmitter complete with GPS. The idea is to use a high-altitude balloon to transport the solar powered WSPR beacon and to track it. Other payloads may include a lightweight APRS tracker. But how the project will develop is up to the group involved. Jack is looking for other club members to participate, especially those with related knowledge and experience. If you want to join the balloon project group email Jack at ve7gde@gmail.com.

Other Club Projects

Two other club projects are being discussed at present. One is for an attenuator kit and the other for an HF one-to-one balun, typically used for a half-wave dipole antenna. If you are interested in either project, please contact Jack VE7GDE at ve7gde@gmail.com.

Wilderness Protocol

The Wilderness Protocol was discussed at a NARA tech-talk meeting on May 30. If you missed the talk here is a brief summary.

The Wilderness Protocol is intended for amateur radio operators who are travelling through wilderness areas beyond the range of repeaters or cell coverage. Those who require help will call on normally accepted FM calling channels at certain times of the day. The primary frequency is 146.52 MHz, with 52.525, 223.5, 446.0 and 1294.5 MHz as secondary frequencies. In practice 146.52 MHz is likely the best frequency to use because far more amateurs have equipment for the 2m band than the other VHF/UHF bands.

Please program these frequencies into your radio memories and be aware of the protocol, it could save a life.

The Wilderness Protocol recommends that those stations able to do so should monitor the primary and secondary frequency, if possible, every three hours for five minutes using local time starting at:

7 AM local time, for five minutes followed by:

10 AM, 1 PM, 4 PM, 7 PM & 10 PM.

Anyone travelling beyond the range of repeaters or cell coverage should be aware of this protocol.

NARA General Meetings

Although details are not finalized NARA may resume in-person meetings in June. The proposed venue for the June meeting is the Makerspace location at 2221A McGarrigle Rd, Nanaimo. It is hoped that this venue can be used along with a Zoom component. Watch for the NARA general meeting announcement coming soon.

Tech Talks

No tech talks are presently planned, but Devan VE7LSE has asked that if anyone has a topic to please email him at ve7lse@gmail.com.

Finding the NARA Field Day site

If you are travelling from Nanaimo:

1. Head south on Highway 1 towards the town of Ladysmith

The volunteer group of NARA members producing this newsletter would like to thank all those who provided material for this month's issue.

The NARA newsletter is normally published on the last Friday of the month proceeding the month of issue.

News items and comments should be mailed to:

news@ve7na.ca

2. Continue past the Nanaimo airport and turn left onto Cedar Road at the traffic lights
3. Continue up the hill on Cedar Road until you come to the Chuckwagon Market/gas station on your right
4. Turn right onto Yellow Point Road
5. Continue along Yellow Point Road for some 9 km until you see the Sunnus farm sign on your right
6. Follow the NARA signs through the farm to the field day site. Please drive slowly and follow the 10 km/hour speed signs and please take care when passing farm animals
7. Remember the on-site repeater VA7DXP will be operational for assistance and the APRS beacon on 144.390 MHz will mark the NARA field day location

