Nortown Amateur Radio Club

Minutes of the March 15th, 2013 Meeting

Present:

John VA3MDJ	Frans VE3VNC	Jim VE3GRT
Bert VE3ENA	Tom VE3BKA	Ron VA3GRE
Elliot VA3EJF	Doug VE3EES	John VA3AAD
David VE3VNE		

Recent member-attendees who were absent:

Geoff VE3GEG	Vince VE3ELB	Vipi VE3PID
Tony VE3VME	Paul, VA3/VE3PGF	Ian VE3IJS

John, VA3MDJ chaired the meeting.

Old Business

Repeater

Elliot, VA3EJF reported that the "M120" repeater is now at John, VA3AAD's QTH and although operational and connected to his roof-top antenna, has limited coverage. He and John have not yet been able to adjust the 200B controller to optimize the sensitivity of the receiver in the Mitrek repeater.

Hopefully, over the next few weeks, Elliot and John will be able to make "A/B" comparisons of the coverage of the two repeaters..

Monday 9:00 PM UHF Net.
No change. Because of the current lower height of the Club's repeater antenna, UHF communication is limited,. Nevertheless, members who find themselves out of range should try to join the Net over Echolink.

Fox Hunt

So as not to cause any offense, the above clip is purely fictional and is not meant to represent, either physically or emotionally, any Club member, either living or dead.

It was agreed that the Fox Hunt will be held on Sunday, May 12th. Please mark your calendars. The Fox, Doug, VE3EES, will provide more logistical details at the next meeting. As a reminder, six members - VA3AAD, VE3IJS, VE3ENA, VA3MDJ, VE3VNC and VA3EJF have already agreed to participate.

John, VA3MDJ stated that he had a number of 1/8 " copper welding rods that could be used to make a Fox Hunt Yagi. He will bring some to the next meeting.

John, VA3MDJ will bring to the meeting the Club's MFJ-259 UHF VSWR teste, for those who wish to test fox hunt antennas. The tester has PL-259 and type N connectors. Members should bring their own BNC or SMA adapters,

Future Presentations

April 5	Frans, VE3VNC	Subject t.b.a.
April 19	Ian, VE3IJS	Subject t.b.a.
May 3	(need a volunteer?)	
May 17	Tony, VE3VME and Elliot, VA3EJF	
		Field day preparation
June 7	(need a volunteer)	

There will be no meeting on June 21, the day before the field day weekend.

No change: John. VA3MDJ reminded everyone that he has inserted additional articles into a loose-leaf book that is kept in the meeting room cupboard, and that describes many potential presentation topics. Several members are also available who can coach other members in the rudiments of PowerPoint preparation, which is really quite easy and intuitive.

Skywide ARC

No change. Nortown and Skywide officers intend to explore areas of common interest.

Albert Yates Award

No change. It was agreed that an election for the award would be held at the May 17th meeting, at which date elections for Club executive will also be held. There will be no prior nomination process – members present at that meeting will simply write a nominee's name on a paper ballot and the award winner will be determined by a majority.

New Business

ARRL 40-Year Member Award

Club members congratulated Doug, VE3EES, on receiving his 40-year member award. Doug is a life member of both ARRL and RAC.

Financial

The meeting coffee collection yielded $6.75 and the raffle $8.00..

Presentation

John, VA3AAD gave a PowerPoint presentation to remind the meeting about the definition of dBm units of signal power. (PDF is attached). He followed this up with a demonstration where he used a signal generator to insert a modulated FM signal into the antenna connector of a hand-held transceiver. He slowly reduced the signal strength until the modulated tone began to break up. When to squelch was set to zero, there was no definitive break point. However, when the squelch was set to a mid level, the breaking signal strength approximated the rated receive sensitivity of the transceiver.

He also varied the signal generator's frequency and demonstrated that the hand-held could receive useful signals as much as ± 9 kHz. above or below the receiver's frequency.

Showing his age, he was in such a hurry to pack up after the presentation that he forgot to distribute two hand-outs. One develops formulas relating signal strength in dBm to voltage. The other lists a range of signal strengths from 0 dBm down ti -139 dBm (the elctron noise at room temperature) and relates these to various transceiver S-meter readings. These documents are also attached to these minutes.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 8:00 PM on Friday, April 5th at the Bayview Community Centre. (There will be no meeting on Good Friday, March 29.) Frans, VE3VNC, our antique and military radio collector is on tap for that presentation.

John Shepherd, VA3AAD
and
John Carlisle, VA3MDJ