

NARA Newsletter



President's Message – Randy VE7FAA

June was a busy month for NARA with three important radio events happening on consecutive weekends. First was the bike race on June 16, at which some 20 club members provided safety radio coverage for the cyclists. NARA took the Mount Benson UHF repeater off the Island Trunk System for that event and it provided excellent voice coverage over the entire racecourse. Then on the weekend of June 22-23 we had Field Day. The weather on the Saturday really did not live up to Field Day expectations, but for those who attended it was a great exercise in setting up stations in the field and making contacts all over North America. Then, starting on June 30, we had the Canada Day contest at VA7DXX's cabin in Ladysmith. The Canada Day contest is always a relaxed event and ideal practice for beginners to try contest operating. All three events went well.

A special thank you to all those who attended and to those that took part in organizing these events. Reports on the bike race and Field Day are included in this issue of the *NARA Newsletter*. The Canada Day report will be in the August issue. As always, each event has its own learning opportunities which can be used to improve future performance.

In late July we look forward to attending the Bathtub race, and many NARA members will be attending the North Island Amateur Radio Society work bee and campout in mid-August.

NARA is what its members make it and we are certainly fortunate to have a keen executive and a core of members who always go the extra mile to take part in and organize our events, thank you.

Island Events	Date	By
Nanaimo Bathtub Race	July 28	NARA
NIARS Campout	Aug. 15-20	NIARS
CVARS Flea Market At Cobble Hill	Sep. 8	CVARS
Canada Winter Contest	Dec. TBA	NARA

Bathtub Race

Bathtub weekend happens July 26-28. The race, as usual, takes place on the Sunday and NARA will be there to help track the tubs. Watch your email for further information. The Bathtub Society website is www.bathtubbing.com.

ICOM 7300 Milestone

The ICOM 7300 was launched in 2016 and quickly became a market leader. ICOM recently announced a significant milestone in achieving sales of over 100,000 units around the world.

The 7300 was ICOM's first radio with an RF direct sampling system. This technology converts RF signals directly into digital data which can then be processed. The 7300 includes an integrated real-time spectrum scope and waterfall. With its competitive pricing the 7300 has established itself as a true benchmark in its price range.



The ICOM 7300 has sold over 100,000 units worldwide.

More NARA Basic Training Success

About 15 students are presently studying the NARA Basic course using NARA's relatively new online self-study training system. The NARA Training Group just heard of two recent successes: Greg VE7GWC and Kathy VA7JGM both passed with Honours. Congratulations to both.

To access the NARA online training courses please email training@ve7na.ca. Anyone making inquiries will first be sent the document 'About NARA on-line Training', giving full details of the NARA courses. If someone then applies to take the NARA online course, they are sent the further document 'Welcome to NARA on-line Training courses'

Field Day - 2024



Field Day in June is traditionally hot and dry but this year was the opposite. On Saturday we had cool and rainy weather until late afternoon. Then the sun came out and it felt more like the sort of Field Day weather that we have known in the past few years.

Sunnus Farm in Yellow Point, south of Nanaimo, is an ideal location for Field Day. The area on the property that we use, with the kind permission of the Sunnus Farm family, is perfect with space for those who want to camp overnight and space for our operating and food tents, to say nothing of antennas. Sincere thanks to the Sunnus family for their support of NARA and the Field Day exercise. This year NARA had two main operating tents split as 40 and 20m in one tent, and 80, 15 and 10m in the other. A large food tent was also erected for the Saturday evening potluck meal. The turn out for this year's Field Day was lower than in the previous couple of years, perhaps due to the weather. This meant fewer operators for NARA's planned five stations. Still, the club made 471 contacts after a slow start when conditions really did seem rather poor. The split in contacts was 45% on CW, 47% on SSB and 8% on digital, plus two satellite contacts. For most of the contest the 3 main CW operators, VA7DXX, VE7BGP and VE7IAD were ahead of the SSB operators because of the poor conditions. However, at the end of the contest the SSB contacts just nudged ahead. Everyone had a fun time with lots of the usual socializing, eating and operating.

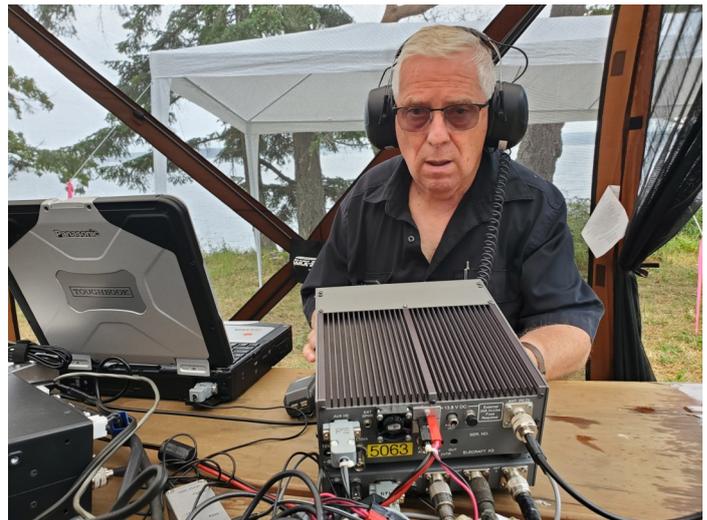
Food and drink featured well during this year's Field Day, with a potluck supper by Linda VE7JLO's team on Saturday evening, and the traditional Sunday morning breakfast from Randy VE7FAA's team. Both meals were excellent and, well, if you missed either make a date for next year! You would certainly be challenged to have such plentiful and delicious meals for \$5 a head!

One incident caused some concern when a NARA member driving on the property was observed exceeding the farm's 10-kmh speed limit. NARA has provided a written apology to the Sunnus family for this, but it highlights the need for all members to act safely and know and abide by all rules at club events.

Another great NARA event with thanks to all those who attended and helped with the organization.



Burnie VE7IAD operating on 20m CW and David VA7DXX operating his home made Elecraft K2 on 40m CW.



Jack VE7GDE surprised at making many contacts on 40m SSB.



Mike VA7MLZ and Devan VE7LSE trying out some digital FT8 communication during Field Day. CW and digital contacts score double points!

NARA Meetings for July

July 4 - NARA Executive Meeting (Zoom)

July 11 - NARA General Meeting (Zoom)

Field Day - continued



The Bruce VE7PTN and XYL Andrea team making two satellite contacts for NARA using the RS44 satellite.



Jack and Gerry enjoying the Saturday evening potluck dinner from Linda's team. By then the weather had cleared up.



The 80m, 15m, and 10m operating tent.



An unexpected prize draw after Sunday's breakfast. Mason VE7PMD won a Fara-J flexible 70cm antenna.



The now traditional Sunday breakfast by Randy's team.

NARA APRS – Mt. Benson 

NARA anticipates that by the end of July the APRS digipeater on Mount Benson should be operational. The digipeater will be running just a few watts output from this excellent site at 1023m altitude. The coverage will transform mid-Island APRS connectivity on much of the Island Highway. This installation will also provide good APRS coverage in the back country west of Mount Benson. Thanks Mason VE7PMD for spearheading this project and connecting with Island Communications who are allowing NARA to set up this digipeater at their Mount Benson site.

NARA Coffee Klatches 

Day	Frequency	Time	Location
Tuesday	Weekly	10:30 am	South end Smitty's: #50 10 th Street
Thursday	3 rd Thursday of the month	7:00 pm	Tim Hortons: 2320 Northfield Road
Saturday	Weekly	9:00 am	North end Smitty's: 2980 North Island Hwy, in Rock City Centre

How is DX – David VA7DXX



As far as I know there are three serious DXers on Vancouver Island who have now worked 339 DXCC countries. This means that each has only one more country to work to achieve all 340 entities on the current DXCC countries list. These are Rick VE7TK in Victoria who needs Bouvet Island, Ralph VE7XF in Comox who needs Mount Athos (Greece), and myself. I need Peter and Paul Rocks, located 940 kilometres off northeast Brazil.



The Saint Peter and Saint Paul Archipelago located off NE Brazil, last activated in 2012 using the callsign PT0S.

There may be others on Vancouver Island or in BC who are also on the cusp of working all 340 countries on the current DXCC list, but I don't know of them.

Of course, there have been other countries on the list in the past which have now been deleted, mainly for political reasons, and some due to climate change. In the latter category, and as one example, Kingman Reef in the Pacific is now under water because of rising sea levels. Those deleted for political reasons include Tibet, Manchuria, Tangier, British Somaliland, and Portuguese Timor. There are currently 61 deleted countries that are no longer on the DXCC countries list. Although many of us have worked some of these deleted countries in the past, they no longer count for the DXCC credit.



Kingman Reef is no longer on the current DXCC list because of rising sea levels. It really is amazing that almost every corner of the planet has seen amateur radio activity.

Exciting news from Ken LA7GIA concerning the Peter I Island DX-pedition, with dates confirmed from Jan. 28 to Feb. 26, 2027. The group has received the landing permit from the Norwegian Polar Institute and is currently negotiating the vessel contract. This DXpedition team will consist of 19 operators. They presently have 10 signed up and are looking for a further nine. Of course, this is an expensive DX-pedition with a high participation fee and a 30-day duration plus travel time.



Peter I Island located in the southern Atlantic. It's an uninhabited volcanic island claimed as a dependency of Norway.

During July the following DXpeditions should be on the air: Maldives (8Q7EC), St Pierre & Miquelon (FP), Reunion (TO7PX), Seychelles (S79), Svalbard (JW), Cyprus SBA (ZC4MK) American Samoa (K8R and KH8), Honduras (HR9), Lord Howe Island (VK2), Nicaragua (YN2RP) and South Cook Island (E51). By the way 'Cyprus SBA' stands for the 'Sovereign Base Areas' of Acroteria and Dhekelia which are the parts of Cyprus still under British jurisdiction.

Since NARA is located on an island you might be interested in the Islands On The Air contest, which takes place on the weekend of July 27-28. This contest is run by the RSGB and full rules can be found at <https://www.rsgbcc.org/hf/rules/2024/riota.shtml>. The contest is on the 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10m bands on CW and SSB with the contest exchange as report (e.g. 59 or 599), serial number and IOTA reference number. The IOTA reference number for Vancouver Island is NA-036.

While on the topic of Islands On The Air, Cezar Trifu, VE3LYC, has been inducted into the CQ DX Hall of Fame. Cezar is the IOTA Operations Manager and Deputy GM of IOTA, and apart from his own DXpeditions was one of the seven operators who spent a week on Bouvet Island in early 2023. Congratulations and well deserved Cezar.

Finally, the IARU HF World Championship contest takes place over the weekend of July 13-14. The contest begins at 1200 UTC on Saturday and goes 24 hours. Look out for the headquarter stations of national radio societies around the world. The RAC stations use the suffix RAC and will operate from most provinces. The full rules for this contest are published at <https://www.arrl.org/iaru-hf-world-championship>.

IARU Officers

The International Amateur Radio union member societies have ratified the nominations of Tim Ellam VE6SH/G4HUA as President, and Thomas Wrede DF2OO as Vice President. The former Vice President of the IARU, Ole Garpestad LA2RR, who has visited Vancouver Island on two occasions and attended a NARA Field Day, was given a heartfelt thanks for his voluntary work for the IARU. Tim Ellam frequently visits Vancouver Island. His BC call sign is VE7HSH.

The Banff to Jasper Relay Race David VA7DXX

Beautiful British Columbia is not just a phrase that we see on our vehicle plates; BC really does have wonderful scenery. If you have ever driven 150 kilometers east of Vancouver on Highway 1 then the mountains become spectacular. If you head towards Hope and then up Highway 5 there is more mountainous terrain, and if you continue north on Highway 5, through Kamloops towards the Alberta border and East on Highway 16, then there is more spectacular scenery, including Mount Robson, the highest mountain in the Canadian Rockies. But perhaps the most stunning scenery of all in the Rocky Mountains is to be found on the Icefield Highway between Jasper and Banff on Highway 93. This highway is on the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains just inside Alberta.

Highway 93 between Banff and Jasper is the setting for the annual Banff Jasper Relay team running race. This year's event on June 8 was cooler for the runners, which meant slightly faster sector times with each participant covering about 18 kilometers. As usual a group based out of Edmonton supported race safety, with several teams leapfrogging over each other to cover the course checkpoints.

The prime function of the amateur radio team is to monitor the safety of the runners with a particular focus on bears on or near the course. If a bear is seen, the

radio team has radio interoperability with park rangers who then take appropriate action. The other agreed responsibility of the radio team is to sweep each sector of the course. This involves following the last runner to the next checkpoint. Both David VA7DXX and Rosemary GONDB were part of the radio team this year.



Runners getting ready to start their leg of the race.

NARA CW Training

NARA CW training is ongoing and has continued to deliver three new letters of the alphabet per week. At the end of June letters A to R have been delivered. After the alphabet NARA will deliver the numbers and then essential punctuation. NARA is delivering its CW training sessions in two ways. First, on air via the VA7DXH 144 and 220 MHz repeaters at 9 pm every Wednesday. Second, with the audio files from each session available via the NARA Training website. On the website the recordings can be played as often as required.

NARA has run into some technical issues in delivering the sessions over the air, but these issues are now solved.

Those who signed up for the NARA CW course already have access to the NARA shared drive. If you want to learn CW the NARA way, please email NARA at training@ve7na.ca.

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

The deadline for the August issue of the NARA Newsletter will be noon on Sunday July 28 with an intended publication date of July 31.

News items and comments should be sent to

news@ve7na.ca