

The

April 2025



NARA Newsletter

President's Message - Randy VE7FAA

April is always a special month for amateur radio with World Amateur Radio Day on April 18, and this April is also unique for NARA.

Radio amateurs all over the world in April celebrate the founding of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) in Paris in 1925, now celebrated as World Amateur Radio Day. You can read a brief account of the history of the IARU in this newsletter. On World Amateur Radio Day we make a point of getting on the air and having at least one contact. Many Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC) stations will be on the air; being in British Columbia look out especially for VE7RAC. Making a contact can be one simple way of supporting both Canadian and international radio organizations which protect our interests.

Also this month radio amateurs around the world celebrate the birthday of Guglielmo Marconi which was on April 25, 1874. International Marconi Day this year is Saturday, April 26. In the spirit of Marconi's radio tests, I would also like to draw your attention to the item in this newsletter about the NARA NVIS propagation tests to take place on Saturday, May 31. If that is not enough, on April 27 we also celebrate the birthday of Samuel Morse in 1791.

And why is this April special for NARA? This month we will see a new format for general meetings. This will be the first of three in-person general meetings at which a short meeting will be followed by a coffee break and then a presentation. On Wednesday, April 9, Jack and myself will give the first presentation. If this format works for NARA members we will use it more often. In addition, new NARA membership cards will be given out to members who attend. Details of the time and venue are given in this Newsletter. I look forward to seeing you there.

Island Events	Date	By
General Meeting ☕	April 9 @ 7pm	NARA
Merville Swap Meet	April 27	Comox
General Meeting ☕	May 14 @ 7pm	NARA
General Meeting ☕	June 11 @7 pm	NARA
Field Day (ARRL)	June 28-29	NARA
Canada Day Contest	July 1	NARA
Nanaimo Bathtub Race	July 27	RNBS
NIARS Campout	August	NIARS
Bike Race	August?	MIVA
Canada Winter Contest	December	NARA

Finally, since the VE7NA NARA club station is now located at the Royal Canadian Air Cadets Collishaw Squadron on Nanaimo Lakes Road, we want to give a special shout out for the air cadet monthly pancake breakfast. This is a regular event on the third Sunday of each month. The breakfast is frequently attended by many NARA members and provides another opportunity for us to get together, in this case to support the air cadets who host our club station.

NARA April General Meeting Info

Date: Wednesday, April 9, at 7 pm (Note the change to Wednesday from the usual Thursday meeting time)

Venue: 719 Nanaimo Lakes Road, Nanaimo, BC, VR9 7E3.

Program: General meeting, coffee break, plus a presentation on the 'Electrical Code for Radio Amateurs.'

Membership Cards: New NARA cards will be given out to those who attend.

NARA's Regular Coffee Klatches

Every Tuesday at 10:30 am and Saturday at 9 am.

Comox Ham Swap Meet

The first swap meet on Vancouver Island this year, set for later this month, has been organized by the Comox Valley Amateur Radio Club. Many NARA members will be attending.

- **Date:** Sunday, April 27, 10 am to 1 pm
- **Venue:** Merville Hall, at 1245 Fenwick Rd, off Hwy 19A, north of Comox
- **Door prizes** and coffee and donuts available
- **Vendors** interested in tables can contact Brian VE7RD at sells795@telus.net.

World Amateur Radio Day – April 18

World Amateur Radio Day on Friday, April 18, celebrates the founding of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) on that day in Paris in 1925. Some 25 countries were represented in Paris at the formation of the IARU. Since 1925 the IARU has represented the Amateur Radio Service(s) through dedicated volunteers at international and regional levels.

Radio amateurs were the first to discover that the short-wave (HF) amateur bands could deliver outstanding long distance (DX) communication. But instead of being left out of the rush to allocate the HF spectrum to purely commercial interests, in 1927 the bands we now have, at 160, 80, 40, 20 and 10 metres, were allocated to radio amateurs at an International Radio Conference in Washington. Later, the IARU gained access for radio amateurs to the 15, 30, 17, 12 and 60 metre HF bands. Amateur radio owes much to the IARU and its volunteers over the decades. Today the IARU is the critically important face of amateur radio in working with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), based in Geneva. For radio amateurs our most precious assets are our amateur radio bands. The IARU is our organization which supports and defends amateur radio at the international regulatory level.

This month there will be a celebration in Paris for the IARU. No doubt the French National Society (REF) will put on a very special event, as the French always do!



Radio amateurs in Canada can support the work of the IARU by joining the Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC). A portion of your membership fee goes towards assisting the IARU with its essential work.

On World Amateur Radio day itself, RAC official stations will operate across Canada from 0000Z to 2359Z (April 18). The RAC official station call signs are VA2RAC, VA3RAC, VE1RAC, VE3RHQ, VE4RAC, VE5RAC, VE6RAC, VE7RAC, VE8RAC, VE9RAC, VO1RAC, VO2RAC, VY0RAC, VY1RAC and VY2RAC.

Canada Winter Contest 2024 VE7NA wins in its Category

Thanks largely to Jack VE7GDE, who made some 650 SSB contacts out of the total of 810 contacts during the RAC Canada Winter Contest, NARA has won in its category. David VA7DXX commented, “we did not set out to win anything, just to have some fun.” Congratulations to NARA, here is the announcement from the RAC magazine, *‘The Canadian Amateur.’*

MULTI-OPERATOR SINGLE-TRANSMITTER LOW POWER

This year David Evans, VA7DXX, and Jack Olsen, VE7GDE, took top honours and the Tony Allsop, VE3FTA Memorial in the Multi-Single Low Power category using the VE7NA call sign with a score of 293,540. Lowell Sweet, VY2OX, and Ricardo Angel, VY2AN, using the VY2RAC call sign captured second place with a score of 280,350. Third place was taken by Matthew McConnell, VA3UMM, and Ashtyn Ribble, VA3TYN, using the VA3UMM call sign with a score of 81,016.

NARA's Website:

<https://ve7na.ca/>



NARA's Basic ISED Exam Course



The NARA Basic courses have been designed to teach the information required to pass the Basic exam. The course sessions are designed specifically for people who are not science-based. The course is visually orientated, which builds up concepts step by step. To join the NARA online self-study course or to sign up for the next live course please email training@ve7na.ca.

Germany's New Chancellor and Radio Amateur



Friedrich Merz has been the leader of Germany's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party since 2022. Following the German elections in February, Merz's party, won the highest

percentage of votes, and he will become the next Chancellor of Germany. Though apparently not active at present, Merz is a radio amateur, licensed as DK7DQ. You can check him out on QRZ.com. Incoming Chancellor Merz is not the first head of state to be a licensed radio amateur, but good to know that the new German leader is well aware of the Amateur Radio Service(s).

Bob and Betty Smits Legacy



As agreed at NARA's March general meeting, NARA will make a donation to the Vancouver Island Regional Library system. This celebrates the contribution made by Bob Smits VE7HS (SK) and his wife Betty to the work of NARA. This year the donation will be \$500, with a request that it go toward enhancing amateur radio, electronics, and technology within the library's collection. Bob Smits was NARA's treasurer and when he died in 2021 he left a generous bequest to NARA which is mainly invested to provide a small annual income for NARA.

Samuel Morse (1791-1872)

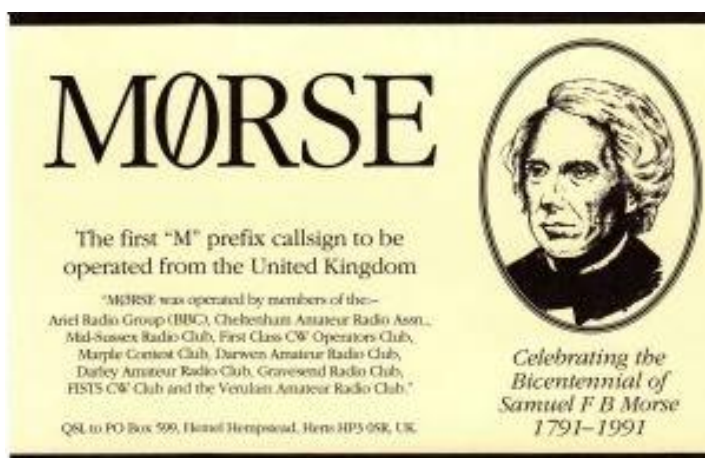


Samuel Morse studied religious philosophy, mathematics, and science at Yale College in New Haven, Conn., and while there supported himself by painting. In 1810 he graduated from Yale with honours. In England in 1811, Morse gained

admittance to the Royal Academy and as a young artist produced his masterpiece, called the Dying Hercules. He went on to have a successful career as a painter.

Between 1832-1835 Morse developed an electric telegraph and then invented, with his friend Alfred Vail, the Morse Code in 1838. This code represented letters of the alphabet, numerals, and punctuation marks using dots, dashes, and spaces.

The callsign MORSE (M Zero RSE) was first issued in the UK to David (now VA7DXX) in 1991 on the 200th anniversary of Morse's birthday. It was the first ever M series callsign to be issued in the UK. This once special event callsign has now been reissued to the First Class Operators Club (FOC) who are now the custodians of this callsign. You can expect the callsign MORSE to be in operation before and after the birthday of Samuel Morse on April 27.



The callsign MORSE was first used by a number of UK Clubs to celebrate the bicentennial of Morse in 1991.

New ISED Minister



Anita Anand, under the new Mark Carney Liberal government, becomes the new Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED), which is responsible for the Amateur

Radio Service in Canada. She takes over from François -Philippe Champagne, who is the new Minister of Finance. Of course, these appointments could well change with the federal election now taking place on April 28.

NARA NVIS Propagation Tests (Volunteers requested)

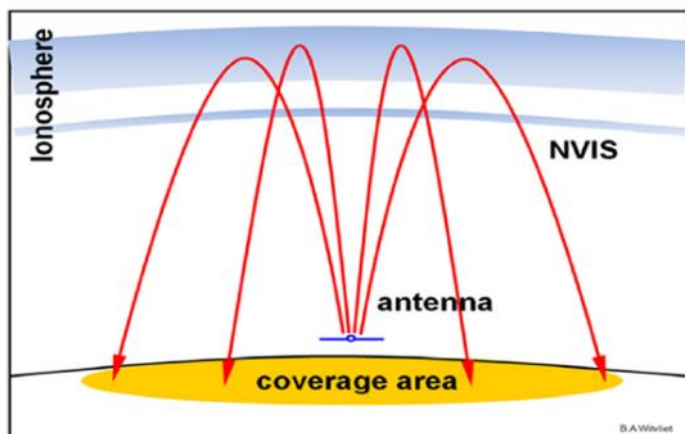


NARA is looking for some volunteers to take part in a four-hour scientific test of NVIS (Near Vertical Incident Skywave) propagation on May 31.

In 2023 NARA conducted an NVIS test using the 80m band. This was a daylight test to see what ranges could be achieved with the D-layer present. The D-layer forms during daylight and will absorb or attenuate lower frequency signals, thus preventing long distance communication. Keen HF operators will appreciate that lower frequency bands do not propagate well during daylight hours and this is because of D-layer absorption.

This upcoming test scenario is to find out what ranges can be achieved on the lower frequency bands during daylight in a simulated emergency situation. The power to be used will be 100 Watts, which will be the typical maximum power used by an emergency operations centre in the Amateur Service.

NARA is looking for a number of SSB operators to assist with these tests. The date is Saturday, May 31, between 11 am and 3 pm. The location for the tests will be Ladysmith, using the call sign VE7NA. Three bands will be used: 80m, 60m and 40m. NARA will require a minimum of six operators/loggers. Logging information is essential for these types of tests. If you are able to assist please contact Jack VE7GDE at ve7gde@gmail.com.



This NVIS diagram does not really show the D-Layer absorption. As the distance goes up the absorption through the D-layer increases thus giving a maximum range during daylight on the lower HF bands.

VE7NA Update

More work and testing has been undertaken at the NARA's station VE7NA. Here is the update provided by Mason VE7PMD.

The VE7NA radio room project is progressing steadily, with the anticipated completion date set for June, in time for the upcoming technical talk (at the June General Meeting). The project team consists of Mason VE7PMD, Brandon VE7TZB, and Greg VE7GGH.

Technical challenges have been overcome, and secure remote access distribution methods have been finalized for both administrative and operational purposes. Remote audio capabilities have also been implemented, allowing interested parties to participate in the radio room's activities.

Comprehensive documentation is currently being finalized to facilitate user access to the radio system. Additionally, efforts are underway to consolidate tunnel usage on AREDN, providing a centralized connection for all users.

On March 17, the Monday night Island Trunk net was successfully hosted on-site with the equipment fully operational. Reports from the HF portion of the net have been overwhelmingly positive.

The VE7NA radio room will host its inaugural contest on March 29, the CQ WPX Contest, which will be conducted locally. Significant progress has been made in the radio room, achieved through the collaborative efforts of the team and the invaluable support of the executive team.

Individuals interested in joining the beta team or transferring their AREDN tunnel to the 808 wing are kindly requested to contact Mason VE7PMD at ve7pmd@gmail.com.

Temporary ITS link for VA7ITS

The VA7ITS repeater (444.725), usually transmitting from Mount Benson, remains in temporary operation from Ladysmith and continues to function as a key link for the ITS into Victoria. It has not yet been possible to visit the VA7ITS site on Mount Benson to assess a fix.

How is DX – David VA7DXX

To celebrate World Amateur Radio Day on Friday, April 18, numerous special event stations will be active all over the world, including Canada. Here are just a few: EM7IARU (Ukraine), LX100IARU (Luxembourg), ZS100SARL and ZS100IARU (South Africa), E7100IARU (Bosnia & Herzegovina), HS100IARU (Thailand), A9100IARU (Bahrain), OZ100IARU (Denmark), AO*IARU (Spain, using several numbers in the callsign), GB100IARU (Great Britain), HL100IARU (S. Korea), and DA0IARU (Germany). I am sure that there are many more, so look especially for the suffix 'IARU.' In Canada look out for stations using the 'RAC' suffix, especially VE7RAC.



Active Dxpeditions during March in which I was interested included VK9CU (Cocos Keeling Islands), VP8CIW/VP8TXF (Falkland Islands), VU4AX (Anderman & Nicabar Is.), 3B9DJ (Rodrigues Island) and 6W7/ON4AVT (Senegal).

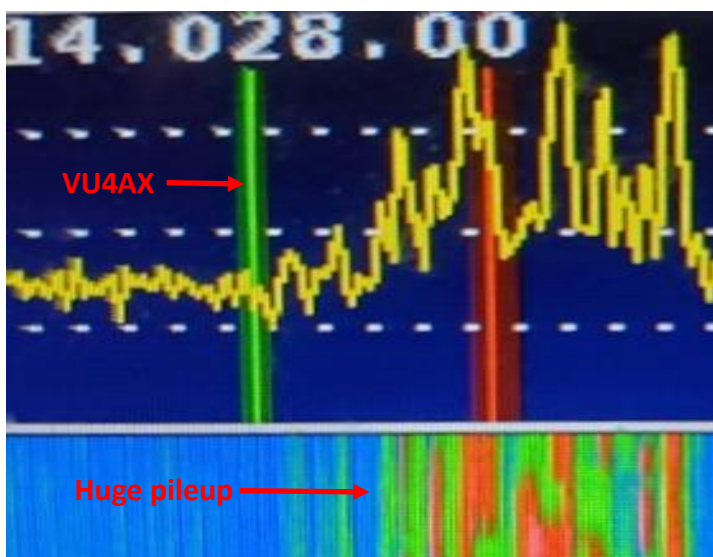


VU4AX Team



VP8CIW/VP8TXF

The VU4AX DXpedition to the Anderman and Nicabar Islands in the Indian Ocean proved to be very illusive for me. On Day 1, on the morning of March 10, their SSB signals on 17m were S9. But signals from Europe were clearly stronger and despite 20 minutes of calling I did not make it. However, a very few North American stations did get through. For the next four days there was on-and-off auroral activity, which attenuated VU4AX's signals at the times of the openings to North America. On Day 6, the morning of Sunday, March 16, their 20m CW signals were S9 with a huge number of North American stations calling. Fortunately VU4AX stood by for North American stations at exactly the right time of day. I was extremely lucky indeed to make it through the pile up, and 25 minutes later to make a 17m CW contact with the group. On Monday evening, March 17, the Dxpediton showed up on 10m CW at exactly the right time for propagation and I managed to work them, even though their signal was only 549. Some 7.0% of contacts for VU4AX were with North America with Europe plus Asia taking 88.7% of their contacts.



The VU4AX CW pileup on 20m CW on Mar. 16.



On March 3, I was especially pleased to work Mo A92EE in Bahrain on 20m CW. I had worked Bahrain before on SSB 25 years ago, but never on CW. On his QRZ.com page, Mo (Mohammed) comments "New to the amazing CW, QRS (slow down) please and heads up my fist is not so good. I am continuing my training and practice." Bahrain is a small Island in the Persian Gulf off the east coast of



Saudi Arabia. A tricky path from Nanaimo over the North Pole. To the east of Bahrain is Qatar. Bahrain has a population of about 1.5 million and has a landmass of some 760 sq kilometres. I now have 11 countries left to work on

CW. Of course several of them, North Korea for example, are never likely to appear on CW.

I dabbled in the British Empire Radio Union (BERU) CW contest on March 8. It was very slow going with lots of beam turning and a slow contact rate of only about 30 contacts per hour. Some nice DX though, including ZD7BG (St Helena), 5Z4VJ (Kenya), 9H6A (Malta) ZL/G4BUO (NZ) and 5B4WN (Cyprus). Conditions were good but marred somewhat by some intense aurora causing the usual rough sounding CW notes, especially on European signals.

Johnston Atoll in the Pacific ocean, the DXCC entity with the prefix KH3, has indeed had an interesting history. The atoll has been under US military control since 1934. It was used as a naval refuelling station, a testing site for nuclear and biological weapons, a secret missile base, and a site for the storage and disposal of chemical weapons. Certainly in the past Johnston Atoll has been a hive of US activity. The USAF completed remedial action for the contamination of the atoll in 2004, and as far as I am aware there has been no amateur radio activity from the atoll for over 20 years. My one and only contact with KH3 was in 1999, and having asked many other hams, no one seems to have had any contacts since about 2001. Right now, Johnston Atoll is the sixth most wanted DXCC entity on a worldwide basis. Yes, North Korea (P5) remains at the top of the list. But Johnston Atoll is back in the news because the US Department of the Air Force (DAF) is interested in the construction and operation of two landing pads on Johnston Atoll. These would be for their rocket cargo "Vanguard" program. They anticipate up to 10 re-entry vehicle landings each year over a four-year period. Right now the DAF is proposing an environmental assessment. All this may mean that KH3 could be activated again. Access to Johnston Atoll is at present granted only by the USAF, and a

special-use permit is also required from the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Any takers?



Johnston Atoll used to be a hive of US activity but is presently uninhabited. The atoll features an 1800m long runway which is some 200m shorter than the runway at Nanaimo airport.

April sees many Dxpeditons coming onto the airwaves. They include: Surinam (PZ5IP), Ogasawara (JD1), Maldives (8Q7EF), French Polynesia (TX7XG), Br. Virgin Islands (VP2VI), Palau (T88UW), Bonaire (PJ4CB), East Kiribati (T32AZ), Galapagos (HD8G), Gambia (C5), Thailand (E28AM/P) and Austral Islands (TX9A).

International Marconi Day (IMD)



The city of Cadiz, Spain, has a street named after Guglielmo Marconi, who twice visited Cadiz in 1923. A special event station, AO7IMD, will operate there to



celebrate Marconi's birthday this month. And on International Marconi Day, this year on April 26, the Cornish Amateur Radio Club in the UK also celebrates the first

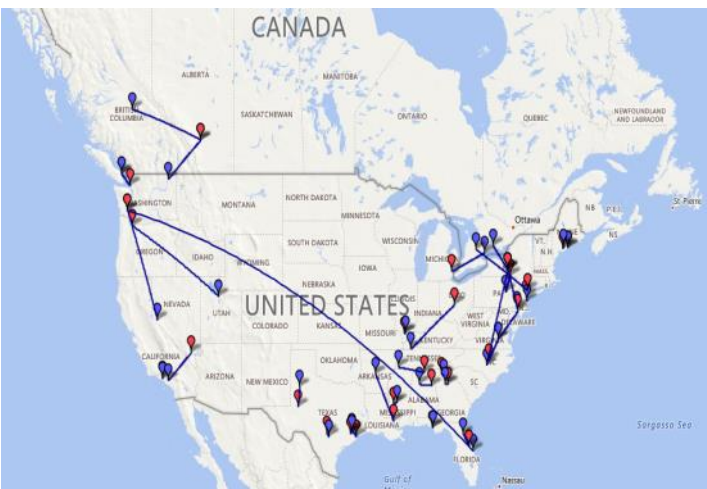
transatlantic radio communication in 1901 using the callsign GB4IMD. Marconi in 1901 demonstrated for the first time that radio signals could cross the Atlantic ocean. This ground-breaking experiment was between Poldhu, Cornwall, England, and St John's, Newfoundland. Marconi proved that radio transmissions were not limited by the horizon and opened up further advances in radio communication.

VE7SAR 6m Beacon in Surrey

The VE7SAR 6m beacon is back on the air following a PA failure. The beacon sends the following on CW. “VVV de VE7SAR/B – CN89oc – Pwr is 2W – Ant is horizontal (long dash)” and repeat.

Winlink Connection Monitor

For fans of Winlink there is a new piece of software on the Winlink website called ‘Connection Monitor.’ This software plots Winlink connections in real time on a map. Once the program is started you will begin to see lines on the map showing links. The software covers Pactor, Packet, and VARA. Settings allow you to determine parameters such as the minimum link distance, time the link is displayed, etc. Being able to monitor live mailbox links in progress on a map quickly gives you an impression of how much Winlink is being used. It is a neat piece of software.



Winlink’s Connection Monitor software showing live links.

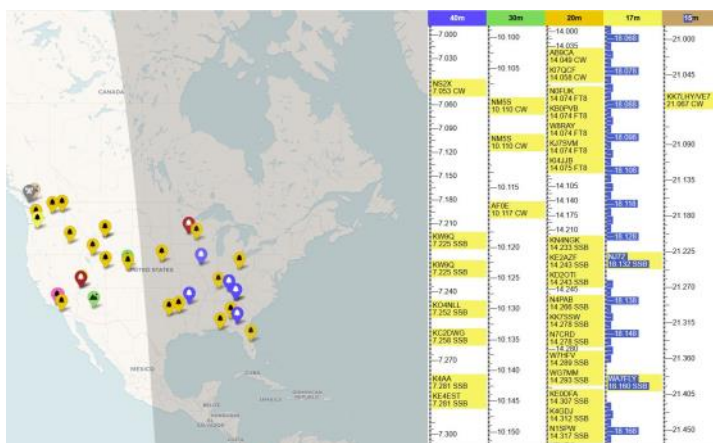
WPX SSB Contest - Mar. 29-30

In early March, announced too late to be reported in the March Newsletter, NARA received a contest challenge from the Black Sheep Radio Club in Victoria.

The challenge was participation in the WPX SSB contest over the weekend of Mar. 29-30. Two NARA stations were rapidly assembled using the callsigns VE7NA and VX7NA. VE7NA from the club station at 808 Wing and VX7NA from Ladysmith. Both NARA stations decided to use 100 Watts. We will have a full report on the challenge in the May issue of the NARA Newsletter.

Field Spotter

Fans of POTA, SOTA, IOTA and other on-air activities will now be able to see where these activities are taking place. If you log onto the website <https://fieldspotter.radio> you will immediately be able to see the locations of a number of on-air activities and special stations. Put your mouse on any of them (and click) and you will open up a window giving details of the event. Field Spotter will display POTA, WWFF, IOTA, MOTA, SOTA, GMA, Castles and Lighthouses and is a great way to visualize where all of these events are taking place. This is a very neat website thanks to Ian M0TRT. Field Spotter works equally well on a cellphone or PC.



The Field Spotter website visualizes the locations of many of the special on-air activity locations.

Maple Ridge Swap Meet

A reminder that the Maple Ridge Amateur Radio Club (MRARC) Spring Ham Radio Swap Meet takes place on May 4. Contact swapmeet@mrarc.ne if you intend to book a table at this event.

The Satellite Downlink: Testing My New Ultra-Portable Satellite Rig - Bruce VE7PTN

In last month’s article, I discussed the “Fram2” private astronaut mission scheduled to launch March 1 or later and to include the “Fram2Ham” SSTV payload (<https://www.ariss.org/fram2.html>). The launch did not take place in March and is now scheduled for April 1. Initial “Keplerian Elements” or “keps” are available at <https://www.ariss.org/keps.html>. These are the settings necessary for satellite tracking

programs to locate the spacecraft. Some tracking programs have already added a Fram2Ham entry to their list of trackable spacecraft in anticipation of the launch. The Fram2Ham payload will transmit Slow Scan Television (SSTV) images of three polar regions. The images for each region will be divided into four “puzzle piece” images that will be mixed up and transmitted individually. Anyone may participate by receiving images to complete their own puzzles and submit images to receive a diploma. See the User Guide link at the bottom of the Fram2Ham website (<https://fram2ham.com>) for more details. The event will likely be short, only a few days in duration.

Also last month, I had said I would discuss APRS via the International Space Station (ISS) this month. I had planned to work the ISS APRS during March to develop some recent experience. Unfortunately, the ISS orbital schedule for March meant that most of the passes were too late in the day to work for me. So, I will leave that topic for another month. This month I will discuss an “ultra-portable” satellite rig that I am planning to take on a trip to Europe during June. I will be in Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway for several weeks and I will operate FM satellites. Part of this trip includes a 12-day bus tour through the Scandinavian countries (<https://www.trendtours.de/reisen/nordkap-lofoten>). With all the holiday activity, it will be important for me to pack light!



The route map for the North Cape & Lofoten bus tour of Scandinavia that Bruce VE7PTN will take during June. Image from the Trendtours webpage.

To travel as lightly as possible, this time I will not take my dual Icom IC-705 setup and instead I have decided to take just a dual-band VHF/UHF handheld. That means I won't have the all-mode ability necessary to work the linear (SSB) satellites, just the FM satellites. But this handheld option does have the additional “advantage” of giving me an excuse to buy an Icom ID-52. I do already have a dual band handheld, the Kenwood TH-D74. It is a feature-packed radio to be sure; however, I have found this unit to be somewhat fragile and might not be reliable on the trip. More important for my planned use, the D74's built-in QSO recorder will only record one band at a time. I would need to add a separate recording unit to the rig to record both the uplink and downlink. The ID-52 does record both bands simultaneously and has a more rugged waterproof rating. So, I went ahead with the purchase of another handheld radio. (My count is now up to four handhelds – that's not too many, right?) Sadly, the ID-52 is only half-duplex; if it was full-duplex capable, it would be the most capable handheld satellite rig available. I could probably find a used Kenwood TH-D72 around somewhere; that handheld is full duplex, but it has no QSO recorder so extra gear would be required.



The Icom ID-52 as configured for satellite operation; the SMA antenna connector is adapted to BNC for easy attachment to the Arrow II satellite antenna.

My new ID-52 arrived promptly from Radioworld. I already have an Arrow II satellite antenna with the split boom and diplexer option. I quickly got to work assembling my rig for testing. I programmed the radio with the necessary FM satellite frequencies using the great software from RT Systems (<https://www.rtsystemsinc.com>). My first opportunity to test it out was on a morning AO-91 pass. Unfortunately, the bird was not working correctly (it is hit-and-miss these days) and I heard nothing. Later that same day, I got to put the waterproof rating to the test and worked the ISS during a light rain shower. Success! I made two QSOs and the recorder worked great. I say I made two QSOs as that was what I thought. I did have my home IC-9700 satellite rig working in an automated mode recording the pass so I could listen back and hear my downlink. When I did get into the satellite, the downlink from the handheld sounded great. However, I immediately discovered the disadvantage of the half-duplex operation. In not being able to hear my own downlink during the QSO, I did not realize that on one QSO, my "QSL" transmission did not get picked up by the repeater on the ISS, so the other operator likely did not know that I was confirming contact. First lesson learned: I need to make extra sure that I am heard by the other station.

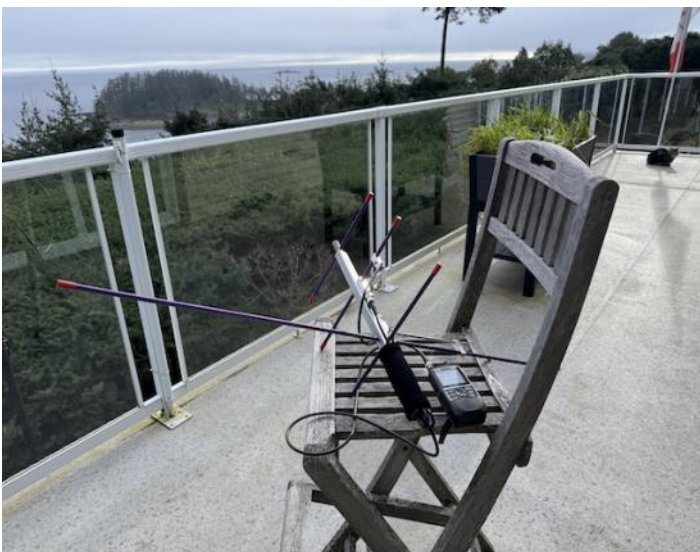


The Icom ID-52 with the full Arrow II satellite antenna. This model of antenna includes a built-in diplexer, and the boom made be broken down into two pieces for transport.

On my next pass, the lesson learned was front of mind. This time I was working SO-124, a relatively new FM satellite. I heard and called station WTODX. He came back and corrected his call sign for me, I had missed a letter and called him as "WTOX". I read back his correct call sign, gave him my grid and I received his "QSL". Afterwards, I again listened back to the pass as recorded via my IC-9700. I was stunned to hear that the QSO I thought was between me and WTODX did not actually include me. My uplink was exactly timed with another station's transmissions. They too got his call sign wrong and they were the one corrected, not me! Second lesson learned: **I need to make extra sure that I am heard by the other station.** Wait, that sounds familiar. This half-duplex operation is going to take some practice! What's more, I have since heard from other satellite operators that I can expect FM passes in Europe to be even busier than in Canada/US. Operating without full duplex is even more challenging in Europe. I am getting excited about joining the mayhem that is EU satellite ops. Perhaps because much of my operating will be in northern Europe, it won't be that bad since the whole continent will not be in the footprint for me for the whole pass. At either the beginning or the end of a pass when much of the footprint is over the polar region, things should be quieter, right?

I am impressed with the performance and portability of the ID-52 and Arrow II setup. I even found a cheap 22-inch tripod case on Amazon that will be great storage for the disassembled Arrow II. For even more portability, I decided to try out the "half" Arrow configuration that I have seen in posted photos by other operators. In this configuration, only the handle end of the Arrow II antenna boom is used, along with one VHF element and three UHF elements. This antenna setup is incredibly lightweight and compact. To test it out, I tried a couple low ISS passes. Unfortunately, although I could hear the repeater on the three UHF elements, I could not compete. The other stations were nearer to the ISS and probably delivered higher wattage than my handheld with a single element. Not entirely discouraged, I tried another morning AO-91 pass that would go directly overhead. It worked! I was able to get into the sat without trouble and my downlink sounded great as recorded by the IC-9700. Of course, AO-91 is UHF up

and VHF down, unlike the ISS which is VHF up and UHF down, so not an entirely comparable test. Some more half Arrow testing is needed to confirm performance. That said, I feel ready for my European adventure. My next step is to apply for my European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications (CEPT) operating permit via Radio Amateurs of Canada (<https://www.rac.ca/operating/cept-permits/>) and familiarize myself with the “Recommendation T/R 61-01” document (<https://docdb.cept.org/download/2ae38a89-e58a/TR6101.pdf>). Watch for my Europe roving report in a summer edition of the newsletter.



The Icom ID-52 with the “half” Arrow II satellite antenna. In this configuration, only the handle end of the Arrow II antenna boom is used, along with one VHF element and three UHF elements.

In other news, a new constellation of eight cube satellites launched in March each include an amateur radio FM repeater payload. In 2022 a similar constellation, called “Tevel”, was developed by Israeli researchers and launched by the US. They were great satellites and provided radio amateurs with many QSOs until they deorbited as planned. The March launch is by the same research group and is called

“Tevel2”. The FM repeaters are to be activated soon, significantly increasing the number of FM satellites available for radio amateurs. (This should be very helpful for me and my EU rove.) The constellation is planned to remain in orbit for three years.

That’s all for this month. 73.

Parks to Parks Activity



NARA Members please watch your email for further details of the next Parks 2 Parks activity on Apr. 19, 2025.

NARA Meetings for April

April 7: NARA Exec. Meeting — Google Meet

April 9: General Meeting — In person, 808 Wing at 7pm

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

The deadline for the May 2025 issue of the NARA Newsletter is noon on Sunday April 27 with an intended publication date of April 30.

News items, comments or articles for publication should be mailed to:

news@ve7na.ca

NARA Coffee Klatches

Day	Frequency	Time	Location
Tuesday	Weekly	10:30 am	South end Smitty’s: #50 10 the Street
Thursday	3rd 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, the Rock City Centre