



FEEDBACK

The Official Newsletter of the Georgian Bay Amateur Radio Club



March 2023
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President's Message

Marvin VE3VCG

As many of you already know, I traveled to Mexico to stay with Mexican relatives for three weeks and have a break from the tedium imposed by Canadian winters. I did not bring radio gear with me on this trip because, according to my research, it is difficult for visitors to get official permission to operate in Mexico at this time.

Being uncertain about how to get official permission in a timely fashion, I decided to take a different approach. My strategy was to make contact with some local Mexican HAM's and perhaps learn about what it is like to be an amateur radio operator in Mexico. This I thought would make an interesting article for the GBARC newsletter or other publications.

Regrettably this plan also ran into a roadblock when I discovered that the QRZ database contains no information about Mexican HAM's. Not deterred, I carried on looking for other sources of information which might be helpful. I assumed that somewhere I'd find a public database featuring Mexican HAM's, but searches in English came up with few useful results.

Our hosts in Mexico kept us pretty busy going, doing and seeing things in and around the area. There is no shortage of things to go see or do. I couldn't devote the time needed to doing

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2023/ 2024 Executive

President Marvin VE3VCG
Vice-President..... John VA3KOT
Treasurer.....Doug VE3DGY
Secretary.....Rob VE3RWY

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research to find local HAM's and I was frustrated by lack of time, unstable internet service and lack of usable results.

Finally, on the last day of my trip, it dawned on me that I should be using Spanish and not English in my search queries. So I fired up Google Translate and worked out a search query which did produce some results.

What popped up at the top of my first search in Spanish was Unión de Radio Aficionados Mexicanos, A. C. which translates as Union of Mexican Radio Amateurs, A.C.

Next, I found a list of Mexican Radio Amateurs, Repeater Stations and Special Distinctive Signals on a web page for ENACOM.

Another group located is the ARAM found at <https://ararm.org/> exploring this website offered up additional information about this group and their magazine but nothing that led me to a QRZ type or official government list of Mexican HAM call signs.

I filled in several contact forms on various club or organizational websites, in Spanish asking to make contact. So far as of this moment I've had no response.

Now that I'm back home in the Great White North, I will continue researching and will keep you informed about my progress if any. If there are club members who have routine contact with HAM's in Mexico, or any publicly available amateur radio databases in Mexico please let me know.

Join us for our weekly get together "On the Air"

The club meets each Wednesday evening on VE3OSR and VE3GBT at 7:30 pm local time, and on 3.783 Mhz +/- immediately following.

Net Control Station Volunteers WANTED

Send email to netmanager@gbarc.ca



World Amateur Radio Day

Tuesday, April 18, 2023 at 0000 UTC until
Wednesday, April 19, 2023 at 0000 UTC

A global event covering all regions of the
International Amateur Radio Union (IARU)

<https://www.rac.ca/operating/world-amateur-radio-day-april-18/>

<https://www.arrl.org/world-amateur-radio-day>

<https://www.itu.int/hub/2021/04/home-but-never-alone-celebrating-world-amateur-radio-day/>



This is NOT a recommended way to work on your antenna





Hams Helping Hams

Antenna down due to wind, ice or other? Building a new antenna? Setting up software to do FT8 on your HF rig? Setting up your first DMR radio? Setting up a pi-star hotspot? Configuring your HF rig to talk nicely with your computer? Just want someone's unadulterated review on a new or "new to you" piece of equipment that you are looking to purchase. Whatever the reason, who do you call? Where do you look? Can't find it on the internet or prefer to discuss with someone... Now you can contact "Hams helping hams."

"Hams helping hams" is new program under the ONTARS net. With the different level of expertise among many hams in Ontario, it only made sense to have a small program for those experienced to help those looking for assistance. Most times, often we will ask for help or help others without realizing it, because most of us want to see each other do well, progress and improve their setup. The nature of most Amateurs is to help each other and improve the hobby in general. It may be simple advice to another ham on trimming their antenna. It may be station grounding/bonding or it may be helping a fellow ham improve their audio whether it be TX settings, power supply issues or the dreaded RF getting into their signal.

Because it is under ONTARS which is an 80m net, it doesn't just end at HF radios, antennas, tuners etc. The service can be used for everything amateur radio including handhelds, mobile rigs, coax, hotspots, remote stations, digital software, digital setups (all bands and modes) and even shack computers. If you are looking for assistance, there is probably someone that has been through it before.

The service can be hands on, but is meant to offer solutions to a problem and some guidance. The requester is the person doing the hard work with their setup through guidance from someone with experience. Having said that, I have helped fix up some shack computers using Microsoft Team-viewer from my QTH. The service is **NOT** meant to be antenna installation, tower climbing, electrical work etc etc. There are experts out there that can help with that. Any unsafe or hazardous situation is not a part of this program.

Anyone looking for assistance is directed to email VE3OZW with their issue or question and the group will be canvassed to look for a suitable match and link the requester with a person that can offer assistance. It may morph from there to groups.io or something similar. Lastly, as an update we are off to an excellent start with 7 Ontario Amateurs signed up to provide support and technical knowledge to help with most anything involving ham radio. Many thanks to those that have stepped forward to help and we are always looking for more helping hands to add to the list. If you are interested, send an email to Richard VE3OZW (email address is on QRZ) and I will get you added to the list. 73



Websites of Interest

Copy/Paste the urls below into your browser

Ribbit Digital Text VHF/UHF Ham Radio Tactical Communications

<https://youtu.be/TGzgljEt9wA>

Get the instructions you need with fixing almost anything

<https://www.ifixit.com/>

The Complete Malware Removal Guide

<https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/download-operation-cleanup-complete-malware-removal-guide/>

ORIGINS OF THE HANDIE TALKIE - The Forerunner of Today's Cellphone

<https://www.clarkmasts.net.au/origins-of-the-handie-talkie/origins-of-the-handie-talkie-page-1.htm>

Minutes of Meeting

GEORGIAN BAY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Minutes of the Monthly Club Meeting of the Georgian Bay Amateur Radio Club
28th February 2023, Meeting convened at 7:00pm EDT
Georgian Bay Amateur Radio Club

MINUTES OF MEETING

DATE: 28 February 2023

PLACE: M'Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre, Owen Sound, ON

CHAIR: John Corby VA3KOT

ATTENDANCE: John Corby VA3KOT (Vice President), Doug McDougall VE3DGY (Treasurer), Philip DeKat VE3DPB, Dave Newcombe VE3WI, Bobby Pavlovic VE3PAV, Tom St. Amand VA3TS, Jim Reeves VE3JMD, Greg Larocque VE3RQY, Richard Osburne VE3OZW, Adam Karasinski VE3FP, John Gainor

QUORUM: There was not a Quorum for this meeting since only two Executive members were present.

PREVIOUS MINUTES: Minutes of the January meeting were published in the newsletter. The minutes were approved (motion: Dave VE3WI, second: Tom VA3TS).

TREASURER'S REPORT: Doug VE3DGY reported on the club's current financial status.

OLD BUSINESS:



Laptop: the club's laptop, donated by Greg VE3RQY, was placed into service for the first time. Thanks Greg!

Current QNI Contest Leaderboard:

1st Place: Greg VE3RQY

2nd Place: Richard VE3OZW

3rd Place: Bernie VE3BQM

NEW BUSINESS:

Newsletter: Tom VA3TS has resumed the role of newsletter editor to lessen the workload on our President.

Morse Code Class: Mark VA3FIN requested assistance demonstrating and teaching Morse Code to his son's Grade 7 class at Eastridge Community School in OS. John VA3KOT built several practice sets for this project. One session has been run with Mark and John instructing. John reports it was a great success, with lots of interest shown by the students. More sessions are planned. Well done!

Accredited Examiner: Tom VA3TS is stepping down as the club's AE. Two volunteers have come forward to pick up this role: Norm VA3NIR and Dave VE3WI. Thanks to the volunteers for this important function.

Activities Committee: A recent forum discussion was prompted by a QRZ.com article on attracting and retaining club members. Inspired by that discussion, John VA3KOT suggested formation of a Club Activities Committee to promote radio-focused activities to build interest in the club and ham radio in general.

So far, John and Dave VE3WI have volunteered for the committee.

Members: please step up and help.

John's first activity suggestion was to register with the Parks On The Air (POTA) organization and plan activations of local parks. John showed the rig he uses for POTA.

Other suggestions:

- participate as a club activity for the Ontario QSO Party in April (Tom VA3TS)
- not too soon to start planning for Field Day (Adam VE3FP)

The activities committee idea was discussed extensively. **Members: please think about what activities you would enjoy and post your thoughts on the forum for all to see.**

Storage at the Center: Provision of a cabinet to store GBARC equipment, including laptop, rig, etc was discussed. Greg VE3RQY will follow up with the Center staff.

PRESENTATION:

Greg VE3RQY gave presentations on Spike & Surge Suppression and Filters, based on training material he uses at Georgian College. Thanks very much Greg.

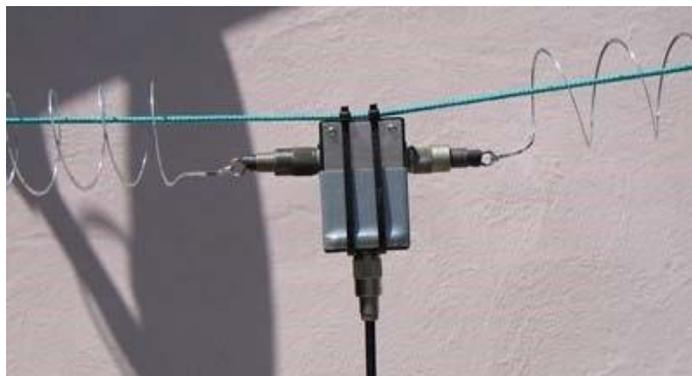


The Slinky Antenna

A lot of signal for not many \$\$\$ by Frank N4SPP/F4WCN/N6XN

<https://nonstopsystems.com/radio/pdf-ant/slinky10.pdf>

The Slinky is a toy made from a 90 turn spring. Way back in 1948, so the story goes, a bored machinist cranked one out on a lathe and was playing with it when someone suggested it might make a fun toy. I was one of the lucky kids to get one for a long past Christmas and had a ball with it. Sixty years later I'm still playing with them and still enjoy them every bit as much. (maybe more).



Since the early fifties Hams have been experimenting with these things; using them in various configurations as antennas. Here's what one anonymous author has to say about it:

"It turns out that Slinky has some interesting electrical properties at radio frequencies. Since it is a helix made of conducting material, it will be self resonant at some frequency. In fact, a standard Slinky coil resonates as a quarter wave between 7 and 8 MHz when it is stretched to lengths between 5 and 15 feet. To tune the Slinky within that range one must only extend the coil to approximate size, then expand or contract it to reach the desired resonance. At a length close to 7-1/2 feet a standard Slinky is quarter-wave resonant on 40 meters. So a 40 meter dipole made from a pair of Slinky coils will fit in any apartment, balcony, or hotel room and can be put up in a matter of minutes. Dipoles resonant at frequencies above the 7-8 MHz range may be created by removing turns to shorten the helices or by shorting out turns. A twenty meter dipole for example, can be made by cutting a Slinky coil in half or simply by feeding it with a delta match in the center. For target frequencies below 40 meters, one adds turns from another Slinky coil or clips wire pig tails on the ends. For example, by adding one more coil to each side and stretching the whole to about 30 feet in length, you can make an 80 meter dipole that will fit in most attics and motel hallways."

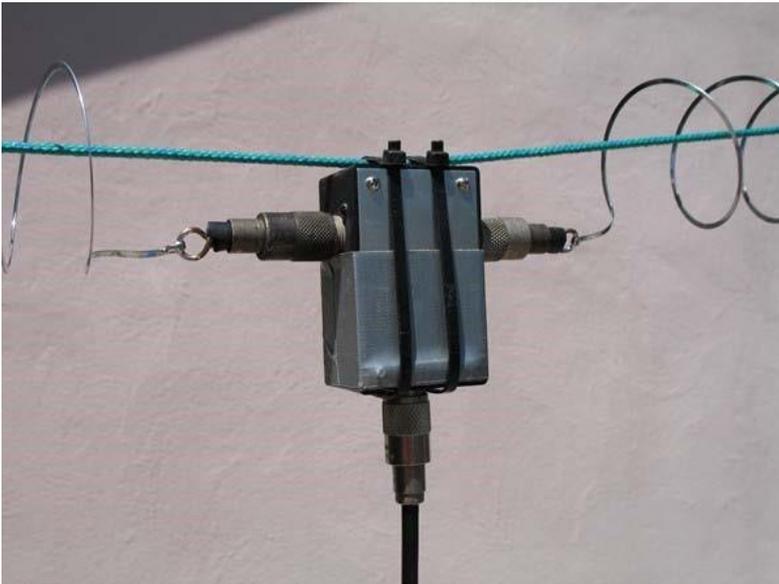


Will it work for field-day? Without a doubt, but the question remains: How well will it work? We shall see. Some facts are certain: They are cheap and easy to make and a cinch to put up. For a backpack antenna, they don't come much smaller. It can be configured as a mono-bander as described above, or a multi-bander by stretching it out and playing it

through a tuner. I plan to try it both ways at field-day.



The only downside I can see other than the fact it won't be full-sized is the fact that it is tin plated. Makes it a cinch to solder but will turn to rust if left outside for more than a couple of days. Here are the photos I took while putting it together. If it turns out to be even a modest performer you might want to make one for yourself...it doesn't get much easier than this:



Here's a close-up of the feed point. The antenna is not self supporting so it is strung on a "messenger line" which is just a length of nylon cord stretched tight between two supports.

A longer range view showing a nearly 40-meter configuration. In this shot the coils are stretched out about 8 feet in either direction and held in place with alligator clips attached to the messenger line. In the final version there will a lighter cord attached to the end of each coil so the length can be adjusted at will.

Another close up of the feed point. The black box contains the guts of a cheap balun (the non-ferrite type) that I took apart because I didn't like the original design. Instead of the cheesy plated eye-bolts that most come with I used SO-238 type UHF connectors. This permits a nice electrical contact that is easy to assemble and disassemble. A third UHF connector on the bottom makes a convenient place to hang the feedline. The duct tape and plastic tie wraps make it a tad stronger...the box is just a cheap RS project box made from ABS; practically melts in the sun!

Here's how to make the end connector. Just a loop of #10 copper wire soldered into the PL-259. A small scrap of coax jacket keeps the wire from



contacting the shell of the connector. It probably would not matter if it did because the connectors are not grounded anywhere. The center of the feedline goes to the center of one SO-238 and the braid of the feedline goes to the center of the other SO-238. Being mounted on plastic, the body of the connector just "floats" electrically.



This is the dis-assembled antenna with a couple of baluns to give you an idea of what is in the plastic box. The balun on the left is the "gold standard" which has been around forever. It has a ferrite rod inside the coil but in spite of the quality of this unit, it uses those lousy plated eyebolts! Inside the tube, the wires connect to a solder lug which is under



the eyebolt's nut. If you should happen to accidentally loosen the eyebolt, the connection will go bad and there is no way to retighten it. Use with caution. The balun to the right of the W2AU unit is like the one I used. No ferrite and it's just a tri-filer winding on a short piece of schedule 40 pipe. About 25 cents worth of material but difficult to make. It fits inside the box nicely. If you don't want to use a balun it should work fairly well without one. Just use a standard dipole center connector and solder everything together just like a conventional dipole.

This photo shows the detail of connecting the Slinky to the loop of wire. Cut the end off the Slinky at the clip and bend a hook in it with a pair of thin nosed pliers. Hook it into the loop of wire and crimp it down with the pliers. Apply lots of solder and you're all set.



I ran it up to 25 feet, stretched the coils out to nearly 15 feet in each direction and put it on the analyzer: 1.2:1 SWR with an impedance of right at 40 Ohms at 7025 kHz. The rig is gonna love it! I got the Slinkys in the photo layout at WalMart. \$1.98 each



Net Control Station Volunteers WANTED

Send email to
netmanager@gbarc.ca

For Sales / Wants

Email your ads to contact@gbarc.ca

The Last Word

A few words of appreciation to those that contribute to this newsletter by submitting news stories or interesting web links or ideas. If you have something then send it to webmaster@gbarc.ca, any format, any size, anytime, but if you want it to appear in the current months newsletter, then send it by the 3rd Tuesday of the month.



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<https://www.gbarc.ca/lists/?p=subscribe>

Membership for details regarding membership in the club go to: <https://gbarc.ca/members.php>

The next newsletter will be in April 2023.

Join the Radio Amateurs of Canada

Our National Voice <https://www.rac.ca/>

