

NERG NEWS

Incorporated 1985 in Victoria
Reg No A0006776V - <http://nerg.asn.au>

November 2002

7:45 PM Thursday 14th November 2002

Greenhills Community House

At the meeting this month:

Contesting for beginners and experts

Greg Williams, VK3VT

NERG Inc.
PO Box 270
Greensborough
Victoria 3088

What's on this month?

This month Greg William, VK3VT, will be talking about the art of radio contesting. We all know the aim of contesting is to win, but you can improve your chances greatly by learning a few "secret" techniques, by getting well organized and by doing some practice.

After Greg's talk we should be on the right track for the next big NERG events at the John Moyle field day in March 2003.

October Report:

We are indebted to Russell for his enthusiastic and informative talk on astronomy at our October meeting. Russell covered a lot of ground (or should that be space!) but kept it at a level that we could all understand. Various models and half completed mirrors made it all that bit clearer. On several occasions we were asked if we'd had enough but they kept wanting more!

Also many thanks to Tony for bringing his home made Dobsonian reflector telescope along for a close look at the moon. After listening to Russell's talk we could appreciate the time and effort Tony has put into grinding and polishing his 8-inch reflector.

Provided there are there are no Gamma Ray bursts, sudden appearances of black holes, or surprise asteroids then Russell will be heard on the Astronomy net on 80m each Friday night at 10pm around 3.543 MHz SSB.

NERG promotional gear

Dave VK3JMB has been investigating options for producing clothing for NERG members. We can get Polo shirts, Caps, and windcheaters with machine sewn logos at quite reasonable costs. What we need now are some ideas on what to do with the logo. Maybe its time for a new logo - please pass ideas on to Dave soon so he can keep the project going!

Memberships - Well..almost!

Ooops, another months grace for unfinancial NERG members as I still haven't sent out red letters. Maybe next week....



Amateur Exams here soon!

Exams will be held in the first week of December. To order yours, contact Greg VK3VT (03) 9432 0563 ASAP.

Jamboree on the air

Last month Mark VK3LI and Mark VK3XXX operated the JOTA station for the Yarra Ranges scouts and cubs at their camp at the Black Spur Riding School (near Narbethong). This year they had about 40+ kids in total.

Most activity was on 20m, linking up with Scouts and Cubs around the planet. Communications back into Melbourne was through the VK3RHF repeater on 10m, 6m, and 2m. The fireworks display was a great hit too. A full report will follow next week.

RTTY Average Age = 52

Jim, VK3DBQ, worked out that the average age of amateur operators in the recent JARTS WW RTTY CONTEST was 52 years. (To calculate this Jim substituted RST for Age!)

BeeJeepers - The Answer

Last month Don, VK3KDT, asked: "What is a BEEJEEPERS NUT" and what's it used for?

The "BEEJEEPERS NUT" is the nut used to retain the rotors of a Helicopter onto the drive shaft. It is a common name given to it by those in the trade.

It gained its name from the last thing heard from helicopter pilots if the nut comes off....

Progress reports:

VK3CNE Packet BBS

The NERG packet node/BBS on 144.700 MHz as been up and running in its test phase. Some of the ports such as the DX cluster are yet to be linked to the rest of the world but can be experimented with in the mean time. VK3's DBQ, JMB, and have been able to work the BBS so far.

VK3RMH 6m Beacon

Did I say it would be back on air in a fortnight's time? Instead Mr Murphy made a visit and ruined this plan (I can probably blame him for my Melbourne Cup bets too...). So this time I'll just say "sometime soon"....

Things were progressing rather well last month until I did a TVI check. A spectrum analyser check confirmed some rather nasty parasitic oscillations as the key went down. Apparently the transmitter didn't like the high-Q cavity filter. Also we lost a fair amount of power into the bargain. As a result the transmitter in being revised to give higher output power and clean up the TVI.

4-digit codes for IRLP

The number of IRLP nodes around the world has grown so great that they are now addressed with four digit DTMF codes. The old three digit codes just have another '0' added onto the end. This means our NERG repeater is now node 3650, and to connect to an old node (say) 422, just press 4220 0. Disconnection is just '73'.



Contestants on the Murray Marathon, 2000 (photo: International Federation of Red Cross)

WICEN and the Red Cross Murray Marathon

The Murray Marathon is a canoe marathon running for 5 days (between Christmas and New year) and covering a distance of 404km from Yarrowonga to Swan Hill on the river Murray.

The purpose of the event is to raise funds for the Australian Red Cross and also to raise the profile of Red Cross in the community. It is also the biggest WICEN exercise for the year!

In 2001, approximately \$180,000 was raised for the Australian Red Cross with 809 registered paddlers from around the world participating in the Murray Marathon.

The Red Cross Murray Marathon began in 1969 and has occurred every year since then, therefore 33 years and ongoing. WICEN became involved in 1971 and has been involved every year since then, one of our members has accrued 23 years, while others have exceeded 15 years.



WICEN's Involvement

Between 38 and 40 WICEN volunteers make the commitment to assist the Australian Red Cross by leaving

home early on Boxing Day morning to arrive in Yarrowonga early in the afternoon, set up camp and prepare equipment for the 5 days ahead.

The WICEN radio network is essential for providing effective communication, safety and logistic support, between all points along each day's marathon route. WICEN mans up to 7 boat on the water, 4 mobile positions, and up to 9 land checkpoints, including a Communications Net Control Station.

The day starts, for some, as early as 5.30am and can finish as late as 7.30pm depending on the conditions of the river.

The first group of canoes leave Yarrowonga at 7.00am on the 27th December. The Marathon finishes in Swan Hill on New Years Eve. Most people celebrate New Years Eve at Swan Hill before returning home on New Years day.

It is an inspiring site to witness the mini-city of around 4000 dedicated marathon participants moving down the Murray from Yarrowonga to Swan Hill. The Marathon "city" moves along the river camping at sport's grounds etc. at Yarrowonga on the

26th, Tocumwal on the 27th, Echuca on the 28th and 29th, Cohuna on the 30th and Swan Hill on the 31st December.

It is a huge commitment to leave your family on Boxing Day for 7 days, volunteering your time to Australian Red Cross. Some whole families make this commitment.

WICEN is one of six groups that make up "The Safety Team" for the Murray Marathon:

- 1) **The Murray Marathon Health Support Team.**
Red Cross First Aiders.
- 2) **The Land Patrol.** Members of the Land Rover Owner club.
- 3) **The Communications Team.**
Members of WICEN (Vic.) Inc.
- 4) **The Water Patrol.** In the past this was members of the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol, but in 2001, were a group of friends that own boats.
- 5) **The Camp Management Team.** In 2001 were Red Cross Volunteer's, but have been until then Scout Venturers.
- 6) **The Traffic Management Team.**
Have at times been members of Venturers, Red Cross Volunteers etc.

WICEN has recognition of its function in the Red Cross Marathon Magazine that is provided to everyone who participates both as a canoeist and volunteer. WICEN volunteers also receive a marathon T-Shirt.

So if you would be interested in assisting WICEN and RED CROSS, please phone 5962 6098 or email to gpt@celestial.com.au. Remember, you do not have to be a member of WICEN to participate in this worthy activity, all we ask is that you sign on as a Casual member for the week, that way you are covered by our insurance.

Carol Tremellen - OIC Communications

Letter of appreciation

G'day NERG Members,

Thank you for the use of the VK3RMH repeater and its IRLP capabilities during my recent visit to Melbourne. I truly appreciate the hospitality shown me on the air while I was down-under. Having the ham radio to speak with friends and family back home helps make the journey easier. Any NERG member is welcome to use node 3760 when they are in the southern California area.

Best 73, Chris Durso,
AA4CD, VK3CMD, California, USA
(Chris works for Pacific Microwave Research, Inc. and gave a talk on Digital Video Transmission at the EMDRC. Ed).

ACA releases AILS fact sheet

Amateur radio operators should be aware that the conditions of their licences also cover the use of an Amateur Internet Linking

System (AILS) such as IRLP and EchoLink. A new ACA fact sheet reminds us that AILS must not be used to extend an amateur's operating privileges in both Australia and overseas. For instance, a novice limited licensee may not use an AILS to transmit in the high frequency band through another amateur station in either Australia or another country.

Also, while interlinking of amateur stations is not prohibited, AILS users must hold a current amateur licence and communications must be isolated from the general public through the use of software, hardware and operational measures. See the ACA news: <http://www.aca.gov.au/consumer/fsheets/consumer/fsc66.htm>

Mobile the US way

Here is an interesting letter from Bruce, VK3JWZ:

I had an Echolink* contact with Steve, VY1SK, in Vancouver last night. He is a retired Electrical Engineer from Motorola.

Steve spends his retirement travelling around the remotest parts of Asia, on DX-peditions, with his wife, in his old Chrysler van (450,000km on clock, and an engine compartment that wouldn't soil white gloves).

The gear that he has on board is incredible and beyond me. Suffice to say that his contact with me was from his van, via a 980mhz link, to his remote computer, 65 miles away at his home. And it takes more than an electrical blackout in a remote village to discourage him from keeping his scheds on HF.

Steve publishes his adventures on an email bulletin to over 600 Hams worldwide.

I was able to talk with him on Echolink while he sent me emails; I read them, and then we discussed the photos while I looked at them.... Truly amazing!



Steve and Imelda's van with two of the six batteries used for power (600kg worth!).

[* **Echolink** runs on a personal computer and connects you to a remote radio transceiver via the Internet. You use a microphone and speaker with the PC sound card to hold QSOs just as you would with a normal radio, except the transceiver is someone else's and can be on the other side of the world. Echolink is great for people who only have access to a computer or can't reach an IRLP node.]

eDX100 Award

The first 'eDX100' award, issued on the basis of electronic (or 'eQSLs') was awarded to Dov Gavish, 4Z4DX, on the 25th of Sept. The eDX100 award is equivalent to the ARRL's DXCC, but is issued for receiving electronic QSLs from a minimum of 100 DXCC entities through the eQSL.cc system at <http://www.eqsl.cc/>

The Electronic QSL Card Centre, is operated by Dave Morris, N5UP, supported by an advisory board of volunteers around the world. (from gb2rs, via Q-news WIA Qld.)

Christmas Hills ARDF Report

From Doug, VK3JDO.

On Saturday 23/06/2002 an ARDF event was held in conjunction with the Christmas Hills Round of the Yarra Ranges Bush Orienteering series.

The course setter was myself Doug VK3JDO with a large amount of help and input from Mark VK3BYY. The venue for the event was the One Tree Hill Reserve. This was my first attempt at setting an ARDF course and a lot was learnt. This area is as the name suggests quite hilly.

The map provided covered an area approx 2km long by 1km wide at the narrow end widening out to 2km at the southern end of the reserve with hazards such as disused mine shafts, cliffs and thick tea tree scrub in places. It was reported to be almost impenetrable. This country is also very steep in making TX#4 quite hard to get to which would test competitor fitness.

There are numerous walking tracks in the area, but no public vehicle access. With locked gates at each access point to the reserve, walking is the only way to gain access to the area. (However I did meet the CFA out driving two of their trucks on the main track when setting up TX#1)

Five transmitters were set up on both 80M (minus No.3 on 80m, which was not turned on) and 2m, all of which were co-located for ease of set up.

The start location for this event was a junction of tracks in a saddle on a ridge at the end of O'Shea's Rd.

The finish was outside the main building of the Christmas hills Primary School. These two locations are separated by approx 1250m. The finish was also separated from the course by Watson's creek and some private property, with a corridor of reserve land and reserve land along Watson's creek.

Crossing Watson's creek proved to be a hazard for Mark VK3JMD who unfortunately fell very heavily off a slippery log, knocking himself out for about 10 sec. He injured his shoulder causing and early end to his competition. (I hope you have recovered fully Mark)

There were the usual bumps and scrapes but no other serious injuries. (That I can recall).

TX#1 was located about 500m from the start at about the mid point of the map near the junction of 2 tracks.

TX#2 was located approx 1250 from the start, half way up the side of a hill.

TX#3 was located approx 250m from the start but out of site of starting competitors at the top of a hill.

TX#4 was located approx 1250m from the start and approx 500m from the finish atop a hill in the southeast corner of the map.

TX#5 was located near the junction of One Tree Hill Rd and Mine Shaft Rd. This is about the highest part of the map approx 1200m from the start.

Due to the separated start and finish location some transport was required. Thanks to Greg VK3VT for your help doing this.

And thanks to those who came along, as there's no point putting out a course if no one comes.

Note, TX 3 was not running on 80m and the failure was on my part I set up the TX and antenna but did not turn it on. (Note: take something to listen to TX's !)

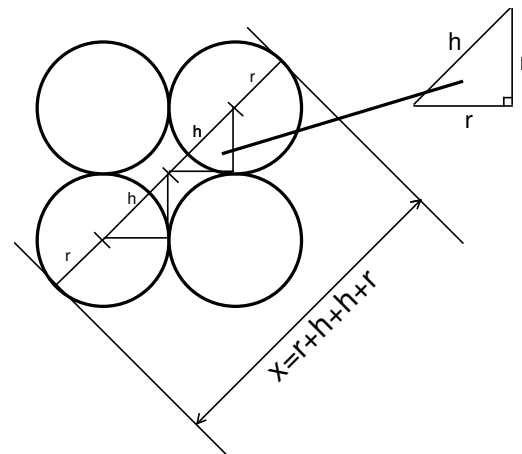
Place	Name	Band	Division	Time	TX's
1	Brian 3YNG (+1 O point)	2m	Runner	1:26	3
N/A	Bruce 3TJN (Over time)	2m	Runner	2:02	5
N/A	David 3XAJ (Over time)	2m	Runner	2:20	4
1	Greg 3VT	2m	Walker	1:55	2
1	Adam 3HDF	80m	Runner	1:23	4
2	Mark 3JMD (Injured)	80m	Runner	0:38	1

Too tight?

From Chris, VK3CKH

The question came up whether a bundle of four LDF5-50 coaxes would fit through a 90mm cored hole in a concrete wall. To find this out we need to know the width of the bundle of cables. I found that a lot of people didn't know how to work this out so I had to figure it out and documented it to show them. Its not rocket science but it may bring back some pythagoral memories from high school.

Of course the drawing represents the best case width and in reality the bundle will be a bit wider because the cables will not be



$$h^2 = r^2 + r^2$$

$$h = \sqrt{r^2 + r^2}$$

$$h = \sqrt{2r^2}$$

$$x = r + h + h + r$$

$$x = 2r + 2h$$

$$x = 2r + 2\sqrt{2r^2}$$

The diameter of the cable is 27.5mm so $r = 27.5/2 = 13.75\text{mm}$

$$x = 2 \times 13.75 + 2\sqrt{2 \times 13.75^2}$$

$$x = 27.5 + 2\sqrt{378.125}$$

$$x = 27.5 + 38.89$$

$$x = 66.39\text{mm}$$

perfectly parallel and there will be tape at intervals to keep them bundled together. However, the 11mm clearance at the four closest points will allow for this and the bundle will fit with a bit of careful handling.

Calendar

(compiled with the help of WIA news, and WANSARC and RAAF Williams newsletters.)

Nov 23/24 CQ WW DX Contest CW

Nov 28 VK WADDA CUP

Nov to Jan 31 JARL, Japan Amateur Radio League celebrates 75th anniversary with a DXpedition 8N1OGA on Ogasawara Island

Nov (all month) Special event station HP100RCP for Radio Club of Panama to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Panama

Dec 26 - Jan 12, 2003 Ross Hull Memorial VHF Contest CW/SSB

Dec 16th - Maggie Iaquinto VK3CFI speech to the Space Association of Australia on communications with the MIR space station. Meeting room, Richmond Library, 415 Church Street, Richmond (near Church and Swan Streets), 6.30pm for 7pm start.

2003

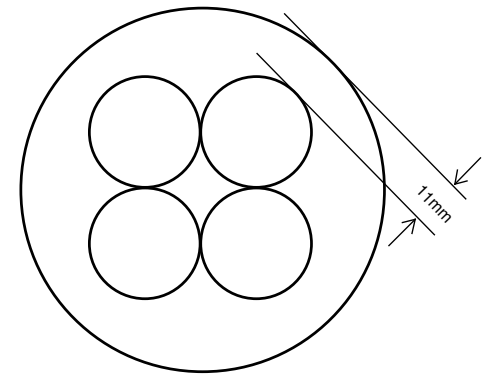
Jan 11/12 Summer VHF Field Day CW/SSB

Mar 8-9 2003 Commonwealth Contest

Mar 15/16 John Moyle Field Day CW/SSB

May 24 VK/trans-Tasman Contest SSB

May 31 QRP Day CW



The NERG Inc. Reg No A0006776V <http://nerg.asn.au>

The North Eastern Radio Group, Inc. is an amateur radio club devoted to encouraging members and others to enjoy the hobby of amateur radio. It tries not to hang on ceremony and endless reporting but rather participate in the fun aspects of this fascinating hobby.

Membership Fees (due each August):

Full: \$30 Family: \$40 Concession: \$20

Send to: NERG Treasurer, PO box 270, Greensborough, Vic., 3088

Committee

President	Greg Williams	VK3VT	9432 0563
Secretary	Mark Beacham	VK3XXX	9459-9876
Treasurer	Marg Baxter	VK3VOJ	9467 1253
Committee	Dave Pricter	VK3JMB	9465 9708
	Peter Cosway	VK3DU	9379 3626
Social Sec.	Don Haslam	VK3KDT	9439 1102
Repeaters	Mark Harrison	VK3BYY	9435 3043

Meetings

2nd Thursday of each month at 7.45 PM (excepting Dec. & Jan.)
Greenhills Community House, Yandell Reserve, off St. Helena Road,
Greensborough. (Melway map ref 21-B1)

Classes

NERG occasionally runs classes and exams for Amateur license candidates.

Callsigns and Repeaters (25km North East of Melbourne)

Club call - VK3CNE <http://www.qsl.net/vk3cne>

6m rpt VK3RMH FM 52.550 MHz in 53.550 MHz out

70cm rpt VK3RMH FM 433.325 MHz in 438.325 MHz out

IRLP node 635

6m beacon VK3RMH CW 10 Watts 50.295 MHz – Soon!

10m bec'n VK3RMH CW 20Watts 28.2565 MHz

Occasionally home to the Scout Radio & Electronics Group repeater:
2m VK3RSR FM 146.375 MHz in 146.975 MHz out

NETS

NERG NETS run on 146.575 MHz FM Simplex (8.30 – 9.30 pm Thursdays).
Please join the discussions. NERGs often monitor this frequency and the 70cm
VK3RMH repeater.

WEB Sites: <http://nerg.asn.au> and <http://www.qsl.net/vk3rmh>

NERG NEWS submissions and comments invited:

editor: Mark Harrison VK3BYY

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NERG

North – East Radio Group VK3CNE
Incorporated 1985
BOX 270 GREENSBOROUGH VIC 3088

MEETING this week::

7:45 PM Thursday 14th November (the 2nd Thursday of each Month) at:
Greenhill's Community Centre, Yandell Reserve, Greensborough
This Month – Greg Williams, VK3VT – Contesting for Young and Old

CALENDAR 2002

Nov. 14th	NERG Meeting – Topic: Contesting for Young and Old
Nov 23/24	CQ WW DX Contest CW
Nov 28	VK WADDA CUP
Dec. 12th	NERG Christmas BBQ – Greg's Place. BBQ supplied. BYO drink.
Dec 26 to Jan 12	Ross Hull Memorial VHF Contest, CW/SSB
Jan 11/12	Summer VHF Field Day, CW/SSB