



Niagara/GTA ARES

Volume 5 Issue 2

November 17, 2020

Special points of interest:

This newsletter is published periodically and focuses on the interests of radio amateurs in the Niagara area working with ARES Amateur Radio Emergency Service managed through Radio Amateurs Canada.

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You are INVITED!

[Check In and Tell Us How You are Doing...](#)

Niagara ARES Voice Net

Mondays at 8:00 pm:
VE3RAF (145.190 MHz)

Niagara ARES Digital Nets

a) Wednesdays:
Winlink Packet (145.030 MHz)

b) Sundays at 9:00pm:
Winlink VARA-FM (145.090 MHz)

Preparation, Practice & Patience

Winter is at our door steps, the pandemic is still affecting our daily life. We have encountered periods of inactivity but we managed to start some new projects.

We are holding regular virtual monthly meetings on ZOOM to keep us informed of various activities happening around us. We use this medium extensively to promote our group activities and provide training.

The Niagara ARES weekly Monday night net on VE3RAF 145.190MHz is well attended from within the region and beyond.

On Saturday October 31st Canadian ARES Group held their yearly SET (Simulated Emergency Training). Our group participated jointly with GTA ARES. Because of the restriction due to Covid-19 we were restricted in our operational locations. All the Hospitals, Fire Hall, NRH were off limits to our radio operations. We had to be creative, we designated various safe locations and easily accessible to operate our mobile communication equipment. Your own driveway or a parking lot nearby was chosen.

The Scenario was: Severe Winter Storm “Freezing Rain”

For our Regional Exercise we setup a:

- Net Control Station (NCS)
- Emergency Operation Center (EOC) for NRH
- 3 Regional Hospitals
- 3 Regional Shelters

We concentrated on sending digital messages using VHF and HF radio stations.

- Winlink Packet
- Winlink VARA-FM
- Winlink VARA-HF

We sent 140 pieces off traffic to the main locations during a 3 hours period. Everyone performed very well, equipment and personnel were thoroughly tested and everyone delivered.

We will continue our weekly exercises with Winlink or Voice Message transmission until it becomes second nature.

Niagara Falls Santa Claus Parade

On Saturday November 14, volunteers from NPARC / Niagara ARES braved the crowd and the virus to help with emergency communications during Niagara Falls Santa Parade. Weather was great. Organizers, volunteers, performers did a Super Job to make it a Success.

I am proud and grateful to be part of such great dedicated team. Thank You for stepping to the plate when needed. It felt good to be out again and do something worthwhile. We will have to wait sometime before going out there and have fun.

Here is a Thank you note from the Organizer:

Hello my friends,

*Thank you for volunteering for the **First EVER** Niagara Falls Santa Claus Parade Drive Through!!*

*This special event would not have been possible without **YOU!** Thank you for helping to bring joy to Niagara Falls.*

Thank you to each and every one of you for your time, your care for our community, your community spirit, and your smiles behind those masks!!

We received some great feedback from the families who drove the route, enjoyed the entertainment, and had the opportunity to see Santa. Plus the performers had a blast and loved being outside to perform for the first time this year! Unfortunately, not all of the cars that lined up along our streets were able to get in to Queen Street, as more than 1,000 vehicles came out to drive past Santa Claus, and approx. 700 vehicles were able to drive past. As Mayor Jim Diodati said, "We are a victim of our own success, as we had no idea that the new idea of the Santa Parade Drive Through would be this successful".

Thank you for helping to make this event possible.

Niagara College & YourTV

Niagara College Broadcasting and YourTV were in attendance yesterday and YourTV will air the Parade at a later date on Channel 700. Also, the 2020 & 2019 Niagara Falls Santa Claus Parades will air on various December dates.

Visit yourtv/Niagara for airtimes. Both Parades will be available for viewing on their Video On Demand Channel 602.

Thank you again for your time and energy in volunteering. Wishing you all a safe and wonderful holiday season.

Please stay safe and stay well.

Respectfully,

Lori

On the Air

The Winlink VARA-FM Gateway on 145.090MHz is operational, VE3ZPW-10.
Winlink Packet Gateway on 145.030MHz, VA3OV-10 is also operational. You can use the Digipeater VE3RFM on same frequency to extend your range.

Some of you have not used Winlink RMS Express for a while. It maybe time to update the operating system and Winlink. They should be updated weekly including your radio stations need to be checked regularly. When disaster strikes is not the time to perform maintenance.

To keep informed on upcoming changes in Winlink check their web site at <https://www.winlink.org>. Check in the NEWS section. There you will find an extensive video library that will assist you and provide answers to some of your questions.

Check the aresniagara.ca web site calendar of events for up to date information.

Meeting on Zoom November 18, 2020 at 1900. Check your email for an invitation prior to the meeting to avoid any issues.

Weekly Niagara ARES Net on Monday night at 2000 on the VE3RAF repeater 145.190MHz, T 107.2Hz.

We have restarted the Niagara Round Robin Social Net daily, Monday to Friday at 0900 on the VE3RAF repeater, 145.190MHz, T 107.2Hz. The purpose of this net is social interaction and open information sharing. Topics include but are not limited to current events, hobbies, Amateur radio, general welfare and others. We are looking for Net facilitators/controllers. You can offer your services as a net host by contacting Jack at jack.benes@gmail.com.

73 Be prepared. Stay safe.

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