ERC April 2023 Newsletter



President: Ted VE3TRQ Vice-President: Frank VA3FJM Secretary: Kirk VA3KXS Treasurer: Paul VA3PDC Trustee: Wes VE3ML QSL Manager: Kirk VA3KXS Repeater Trustee: Wes VE3ML Website Admin: Ted VE3TRQ Lighthouse: Maple Syrup Display: Newsletter: Bob VE3IXX ERC Website: <u>https://ve3erc.ca</u>

ERC REPEATERS

UHF 444.700 + TONE: 131.8 UHF 444.700 + TONE: 123.0 VHF 147.390 + TONE: 123.0 VHF 147.255 + TONE: 131.8 EMERGENCY SIMPLEX: 146.550 UHF-IRLP node 2404,ECHOLINK VE3ERC-L VHF- IRLP node 2403,ECHOLINK VE3ERC-R

> In an emergency, tune Into our repeaters, UHF 444.700 or VHF 147.390 or HF 3.755 LSB or Simplex 146.550 For coordination and assignments.



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Thanks to Kevin VA3RCA for this photo from Dayton 2023. See more on page 11.

THE PREZ SEZ!



President's Update for May 2023

HAMs helping HAMs.

mateur radio has a long history of HAMs helping each other in many ways! All of us have probably had at least one "Elmer" (a strange name for a mentor, introduced in the early 70's) or have been that "Elmer" for someone else. And who hasn't helped someone else put up an antenna, connect a computer, or configure a radio.

We also, as a Club or individually, help the estates of Silent Keys properly dispose of all that Amateur Radio equipment. Many non-HAMs are hard-pressed to deal with all the things we HAMs tend to collect over the years (are we "hoarders?)

Eventually all of us reach the point where we are unable to maintain a full station. We still have the need to communicate and keep in touch with our hobby, so finding alternate ways not involving local radios and RF becomes important. We may find that helping fellow HAMs stay active without radio equipment happens more and more often. Hot spots, DMR, EchoLink anyone??

Ted VE3TRQ



CONTRIBUTIONS TO VE3ERC-CLUB NEWSLETTER

Do you have an article you'd like to submit? Or photos? Do you have any comments you'd like to make?

Perhaps you'd like to share a photo of your shack, a special project you are working on or a special

> interest! SEND THEM TO: Bob bobve3ixx@gmail.com (519-787-2279)





WEDNESDAY NITE NET CONTROLLERS

APRIL 12 - FRANK VA3FJM APRIL 19 - TOM VE3DXQ APRIL 26 - M E E T I N G MAY 3 - TONY VE3DWI MAY 10 - BRIAN VA3DXK MAY 24 - M E E T I N G MAY 31 - TED VE3TRQ JUNE 7 - BILL VA3QB JUNE 14 - BOB VE3IXX JUNE 21 - REG VE3RVH JUNE 28 - M E E T I N G JULY 5 - FRANK VA3FJM



May 13: On this day in 1946, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) granted Southwestern Bell a license for radio-telephone service, which enabled those in St. Louis to be the first in the nation to make and receive phone calls in their car.

Covering a 75-mile radius of downtown calls to an auto had to be placed through a mobile operator at 2654 Locust. This was transferred over normal telephone lines to the office at 1010 Pine, where the call went out over VHF radio from the 250-Watt transmitter on the building's roof.

Service cost \$15 a month, after a \$25 installation fee. There was an additional charge per call, depending on time. As seen in this photo, necessary equipment took much of the trunk space. The first radiotelephone call was placed in St. Louis on Jun 17, 1946.

Thanks to Tony VE3DWI for this Blast from the Past.





Dan Romanchik, KB6NU



Moon Mission: Artemis 2 Astronauts May Connect With Youngsters On Earth Via Radio

In late 2024, the Artemis 2 mission will send a crew of astronauts around the moon, and most of them happen to be certified amateur radio (ham radio) operators. This fact has excited the amateur radio community, as they anticipate the possibility of the astronauts making a call back to Earth from deep space. Phil A. McBride, the president of Radio Amateurs of Canada, stated in a recent interview with Space.com that it is important for young people to have the opportunity to speak with astronauts and be inspired. After 40 years of communication with low Earth orbit, the hope now is that Ham radio will extend its reach to the moon.



Will we soon be able to contact hams orbiting the moon?

Operation of the ARMACO, LODESTAR and many other SWR Bridges By Tony Lelieveld VE3DWI

In this article the term "SWR" is used, even though the official term is "VSWR". Nowadays we are getting accustomed to have good and quite accurate test equipment to our disposal. One particular type is the venerable "SWR/Power" meter both in analogue and digital format. Most indicate both "Forward" and "Reflected Power" with separate or, mostly, dual meters in one housing. One indicates "Forward" and the second shows "Reflected" power simultaneously. The point where the two needles cross each other is an indication of the SWR and a separate scale on the meter indicates that. MFJ, and others, incorporate them in most of their medium and high power "Antenna Tuners". Please note that they're not tuning the antenna but matching impedance differences between our transceivers and the antenna. They really should be called "Impedance Matching Units"

Note that I infer that we are using modern "solid state" equipment with a standard output impedance close to 50 Ohm. The ones I describe in this article are standard SWR Bridges which should be connected with a short piece of 50 Ohm coaxial cable to the Transceiver and the coaxial feed line to a resonant antenna which has an Impedance as close to 50 Ohm as possible. If the antenna is not resonant on the frequency of operation, and/or represents a different impedance than 50 Ohm, insert an "Impedance Matching Unit" (commonly called an "Antenna Tuner") *at the output of the SWR bridge* and between the feedline going to the *antenna*. I am emphasizing this strongly as, often confusion about this happens. If you look at schematics of "MFJ", and other, "Antenna Tuners", you will notice that the very first part of the circuit the RF power goes through is the *SWR Bridge*.



Here are some pictures of three SWR meters made by, possibly the same manufacturer, for various retailers of CB and Ham equipment. Do not look down upon the "CB" type SWR meters. They were designed for the 27 MHz band but work very well in all of our HF ham bands. In all of them the actual bridge is very well constructed and they even do a, somewhat, reasonable job at 144 MHz. They can be found at ham fests for \$10 or less, depending on physical condition, and, are well worth the price. They all have virtually the same circuit for the FWD and REF power measurement. Some, like the "LODESTAR" and "JANA" also have a crude Watt meter position which may or may not be calibrated at 10 or 100 Watt. Other than that, power anywhere in between is just a relative indication.



Here are three models with different layouts. The "ARMACO" does not have a Power setting. The power setting does not indicate SWR and the sensitivity control has no effect. Obviously, the sensitivity control only works in the "FWD" and "REF" mode settings. All three have a "Field Strength" function by using a small antenna.



The structure of the bridge is sturdy and mechanically stable and does the job.



On the "JANA" and "LODESTAR" models the FWD and REF setting, switches between 10 and 100 Watt. In SWR mode, ignore the "Watt" description as they have no meaning there.

If you really whish to do so, you could adjust the pots for setting the "full scale" power indication for 10, and, 100 Watt.

The following describes the procedure to use for measuring SWR or, relative, power.

1: Set the FWD/REF switch in the FWD position.

2: Set the Sensitivity control (potentiometer) at the minimum CCW (Counter Clock Wise) position.

One important note, new hams sometimes forget to change their rig's mode from "SSB" to "AM" or "TUNE". Remember "SSB" has a "<u>Suppressed Carrier</u>" and will <u>NOT</u> produce <u>ANY</u> power unless you talk or whistle into the microphone. Don't feel embarrassed as most of us have done this at some time or other.

3: Key the TX with a lower power carrier in "AM", or if available, "Tune mode" and adjust the sensitivity control CW (Clock Wise) for maximum deflection. If you use "QRP" power (usually 5 Watt or less) you may not get a "full scale" deflection in the FWD position. This is not a problem but it will reduce the REF reading too.

4: Switch to REF and read the VSWR. Any reading up to 2:1 SWR is acceptable. If you use an "Impedance Matching Unit" You should be able to get the SWR to 1:1.

When we did bi-annual SWR, or Return Loss, measurements in the OPP, MOH, MTO and MNR Communication Systems, anything at or below 1.5:1 was acceptable. So don't sweat the little bits.

Below is some explanation of the basic circuit and workings of the various SWR Bridges.

Diode CR2 rectifies the RF carrier going FWD and, with the sensitivity control, you set the meter at full scale indication.

Diode CR1 rectifies, if any, the RF being reflected and, with the switch in the REFL position, indicates this on the meter.

Make sure you connect the proper side to the TX and Antenna or the meter will be operating reverse and may not give a proper indication.



ERC April 2023 Newsletter

The, below "JANA" and "LODESTAR" SWR meters with RF power measurement show the same basic circuit in the non-highlighted section of the schematic as the above "MONIMATCH" one.

The light Green highlighted section is strictly for the relative RF power indicator and with the SWR switch in the POWER position does not use any part of the SWR metering circuit.

The light Purple highlighted section is used for RF field strength indications. It gets the RF from a small antenna that screws in a threaded terminal in the side or top of the case. The diodes rectify the RF and connect it to the top of the sensitivity control. Needless to say, in this mode the meter is handheld or free standing and <u>NOT</u> connected to a transceiver.



In our hobby it is important that we can measure the parameters we are concerned about in order to operate our equipment in a safe and proper way. Be aware of any dangers when using equipment while the covers are removed. The old axiom of "keep one hand in your pocket while dealing with dangerous Voltages" is good advice.

When performing measurements on and near antenna installations, use common sense, be alert and above all "stay safe." Enjoy our wonderful hobby for many years and pass your acquired knowledge on to younger members of our hobby. Be a "Mentor and/or Elmer" and you will get great satisfaction out of it. **73, Tony VE3DWI.**

Kevin Adams VA3RCA, who runs the "3640 Net" every Sunday evening at 7 pm sent the following:

I traveled with my friends Dan VE3VKR and Rick VA3KOF. All of us had an amazing trip! We met up with friends from here in Ontario, and also people we have talked to and never met. In spite of the threat of rain, the weather was actually pretty good. Sunny every day. It only rained at night. We all came back with treasures that were on our want lists! The highlight of the trip for me was writing the American Amateur Radio exams. I'd been studying for a month and half and passed the Technician, General, and Extra exams. This morning I applied for the call sign N8RCA. I hope I get it! I should know in a couple of days.



Back Row from left: VE3CNF/W8 Brad (Cleveland). W2OT Marty (Cincinnati), VE3VKR Dan (Midland), VE3YW Rich (Chatham), VE3RCA Kevin (Alliston).

Front Row from left: VE3UFA Nick (Maple), VA3VMD Vito (Unionville), VA3ACO Angelo (Brampton), VA3KOF Rick (Orillia)









Mike VE3MKX wrote the following:

Dayton Hamfest, is a must attend event, at least once in your life. The size of the event alone, the number of commercial vendors (6 huge buildings), the massive outdoor swap meet and the huge food court catering to any appetite. If you see something you like in the fleamarket area, you better buy it, because when you come back, it will be gone or you will forget where you saw it for sale... the event is that big ! Rumour has it they had over 40,000 hams in attendance this year!

Things to do,, Contect University event, Four Days in May event, Wright Patterson plane museum, Voice of America radios station museum, and many many other clubs (CW, POTA, AM-

SAT, DX ect), and commercial companies have dinners in the evening that you can participate in. It is a full weekend of non stop dawn til dusk events and socializing with old and new hams that you just met. The friendliness of everyone there is incredible !

The pics that are in a banquet hall are part of the Four Days In May QRP event,, home brew night and club night... some amazing projects and club kits available for viewing and purchase ! You can chat with the designer and kit builders and get some tips !!









73 Mike VE3MKX



Special thanks to Mike VE3MKX and Kevin VA3RCA for sending so many pictures, I had a hard time deciding which to include.

ERC Elmira Radio Club Inc. – Annual General Meeting Minutes

May 24, 2023

Attendance - Members	Attendance - Officers	
Bill Reid VA3QB	Ted Rypma VE3TRQ – President	
Bob Koechl VE3IXX	Frank Monteith VA3JFM – Vice President (Chair)	
Bruce McLellan VE3QB	Paul Curtin VA3PDC – Treasurer	
Gary Kornstein VE3JGK	Kirk Sinclair VA3KXS – Secretary	
Jack Sinclair VA3WPJ		
Jim Heidmiller VE3JMU	<u>Guests</u> :	
John Scheeringa VE3JXX	None	
Linda Willis VE3CZ		
Marianne Lelieveld VE3MXT		
Mike Willis VE3FE		
Reg Horney VE3RVH		
Rich Clausi VE3DCC		
Roger Sanderson VE3RKS		
Thomas Daniel VA3VRA		
Tom Mahony VE3DXQ		
Tony Lelieveld VE3DWI		

Meeting Location: Elmira Firehall & Zoom

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order:

- a. Meeting was called to order by President, Ted Rypma VE3TRQ at 7:30pm and he welcomed everyone present.
- 2. Roll Call:
 - a. A roll call established all who were present and it was noted quorum had been attained.
- 4. Approval of Agenda:
 - a. The Agenda had been circulated via email prior to the meeting.
 - b. <u>MOTION</u> to approve the agenda as circulated.

Motion By: Bill VA3QB

Carried

5. Presentation

- a. None.
- 6. Secretary Report: Presented by Kirk Sinclair VA3KXS.
 - a. Correspondence Received:
 - i. Groves Memorial Community Hospital sent a thank you letter for the donation Ted VE3TRQ made on behalf of the Club in memory of Johan Bouwer
 - b. Minutes of the April 26, 2023 meeting were emailed to members on April 28, 2023.
 - c. <u>MOTION</u> to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2023 meeting.

Motion By: Kirk VA3KXS

Carried

- 6. Treasurers Report: Presented by Paul VA3PDC
 - a. Details of transactions for the month of April were displayed on the screen.
 - b. There was some discussion regarding plans to spend some of the club funds:
 - i. In general, there is some upcoming work on the repeaters and infrastructure planned.
 - ii. We do need a reserve of funds to replace repeaters in the event of failure.
 - c. <u>MOTION</u> to approve the financial statements for April 2023.

Motion By: Paul Curtin VA3PDC

Carried

7. Presidents Report:

a. This year has been a mix of good and bad. On the positive side, Covid is over and in person meetings are possible. On the negative we have lost some long-time members. Thankfully we have picked up a good number of new members. We need to get more involvement, which means we need things to get involved in. We missed the Elmira Maple Syrup festival and CAER, but hopefully we can get good turnout for Field Day and the Point Clark weekend. As a club we do a good job of, and need to continue, helping each other fix equipment, figure out new technologies and generally ensuring the well being of club members.

8. Annual General Meeting:

- a. Officer Elections Rich VE3DCC
 - i. Per the bylaws: "voting shall be done during the AGM and in the case of an unopposed slate, in which a nominee is the single candidate nominated for a particular office, the nominee is elected by 'acclamation'." This is the case for all executive offices this year.
 - ii. Elmira Radio Club members nominated for executive positions, all unopposed:
 - 1. President Reg Horney VE3RVH
 - 2. Vice-President Frank Monteith VA3FJM
 - 3. Treasurer Ted Rypma VE3TRQ
 - 4. Secretary Tom Mahony VE3DXQ

- 5. Trustee Wes Snarr VE3ML.
- iii. <u>MOTION</u> to accept the slate of candidates as presented.
 Motion By: Tom VE3DXQ
 Carried
- b. Year-end Treasurers Report Paul VA3PDC
 - i. Paul and Ted presented the details of the 2022 year-end Treasurers Report and answered questions from the membership.
 - ii. The 2022 Treasurers Report was audited by Wes VE3ML and our income tax documents will be mailed out tomorrow.
 - iii. <u>MOTION</u> to approve the 2022 year-end Treasurers Report as presented. Motion By: Paul VA3PDC Carried
- c. Club Sanctioned Events Ted VE3TRQ
 - <u>MOTION</u> to declare that all club-organized activities for the upcoming year are officially sanctioned events.
 Motion By: Bill VA3QB
 Carried

9. Committee Reports:

- a. Club Equipment Review Committee Frank VA3FJM / Tony VE3DWI / Kirk VA3KXS
 - i. Review of inventory found in item **14. Appendix Club Inventory for Review** with determination of whether to sell or keep.
 - ii. The Club will keep the Yaesu 897 radio & power supply from Doug Kuhn's estate as the Club's primary radio.
 - iii. The two Kenwood TS-440S radios will be made available for sale along with the Icom IC-746. Prices will be reduced if sold to club members.
 - iv. The club will keep the G5RV antennas and the emergency equipment (cones, vests, glasses, hardhats)
 - v. The club is missing two Yaesu 8800R radios.
 - vi. The club is missing two Standard Communications GX3000U repeaters.

10. Unfinished Business

- a. Central Ontario Hamfest June 4, 2023
 - i. Frank VA3FJM is looking for help around 8AM to setup antennas. He will be on the air for ON-TARS between 9am and 10am
 - ii. If you are able to attend and help Reg to work the tables and sell items, it would be appreciated.
- b. Field Day June 24/25, 2023 Bill Reid VA3QB

- i. Bill has confirmed we are permitted to use the runway site at Northfield & Line 86 again this year. Some funds will be required for use of the washroom facilities.
- ii. Bill will send out an email asking for people to act as band captains willing to bring and setup their own equipment and stations.
- iii. Field day is 24 hours, people are welcome to work all night.
- iv. Food will be your own responsibility.
- v. Setup starts around 10AM on Friday. Typically the group visits a restaurant in Elmira during the day on Friday.
- vi. <u>MOTION</u> to authorize a budget of up to \$500 for field day. **Motion By**: Paul VA3PDC **Carried**

11. New Business

a. Proposal from Frank VA3FJM to create an Emergency Services Committee, this is something we can look to do next year.

12. Announcements

- a. Frank VA3FJM provided an update on Jim VE3JLC.
- b. The next meeting will be held Wednesday, June 28, 2023.

13. Adjournment

a. MOTION to adjourn at 9:08 pm

Motion By: Tom VE3DXQ

Carried

14. Appendix - Club Inventory for Review



Manuf.	Model	Serial #	Description ERC Inventory 2023 Frank Monteith VA3FJM	Comment	Loc.	Club \$
Alinco	MV330DM	1097	Switching Power Supply with power pole connectors	Silver Metal Box.	Kirk	
Degen	G5RV	New	10-80m tinned flex weave dipole, includes ladder line and 50' of RG8X.	Original Cardboard Box	Kirk	
			with PL259 Connector			
Unadilla	G5RV		Copper wire with plexi-glass center insulator, ladder line and insulator.	Jobmate Plastic Case	Kirk	
Diawa	CN103-L		Watt & SWR meter for VHF & UHF	Black Soft Suitcase	Kirk	
ICOM	IC-746	1637	HF Transceiver with Turner Plus Three Desk Mic (no power cable)	Black Soft Suitcase	Kirk	\$200.00
Kenwood	TS-440S	1010265	HF Transceiver with Power cable (power poles).	Silver Metal Box.	Kirk	\$200.00
			+ Hand Mic + Headphones + Manual + Service Manual	Silver Metal Box.	Kirk	
N/A	Safety Glasses		Qty: 10	U-Haul boxes	Kirk	
N/A	Safety Vest		Orange - Size X-Large Qty: 4	U-Haul boxes	Kirk	
N/A	Safety Vest		Orange - Size Medium Qty: 1	U-Haul boxes	Kirk	
N/A	Safety Vest		Orange - Size Large Qty: 4	U-Haul boxes	Kirk	
N/A	Small Cones		Qty: 28	U-Haul boxes	Kirk	
N/A	Hard Hats		Qty: 3	U-Haul boxes	Kirk	
N/A	4-wire cable		9m(?) black cable	U-Haul boxes	Kirk	
N/A	3-wire cable		Short	U-Haul boxes	Kirk	
N/A	1 wire cable		Short	U-Haul boxes	Kirk	
N/A	Aluminium Plats		Qty: 3	U-Haul boxes	Kirk	
Yeasu	897		HF,VHF, UHF 100W		Ted	
N/A			13.2V 50A Repeater Power Supply (Approx 200 lbs		Frank	
			Professional UHF Antenna		Frank	
		-	Quad Beam Antenna		Reg	

My teacher pointed me with his ruler and said: "At the end of this ruler there's an idiot!"

I got detention after asking which end.

by Daniel Romila, VE7LCG

In February 2023 I was confronted both with the situation of having too many repeaters and with the situation of not having enough repeaters, and dealing with quick fixes and conflicts generated by the lack of repeaters.



Nowadays repeaters for radio amateur use can be bought with less than \$600 CAD (=\$449 USD), shipping and taxes included. One also has to buy the power supply, the antenna and the cable for it.



At the same time, it is possible to get away with a very cheap solution, like buying two Baofeng walkie-talkies and a cable to connect them, for around \$100 CAD (=75 USD).

183.1 km South FM Echolink AllStar WW7PSR / Seattle, Capitol Hill 146.96000 -0.6 MHz 103.5 Hz

I wanted very much to work the WW7PSR repeater, from Seattle (Capitol Hill). It is 183.1 km South of me. I live in Coquitlam, a suburb of Vancouver at 130 meters above sea level, with clear view towards South. I was lucky to connect with W7OH on my first try. I could even hear myself on EchoLink, since the repeater is also connected via EchoLink. There were other radio amateurs there, too, who were surprised that I was using the radio amateur standard phonetic code for letters. Initially I was concerned about triggering two other Canadian repeaters nearby, but the different CTSS tones solved the problem.

68.6 km East FM IRLP VA7CRC / Chilliwack, Chilliwack Mtn 146.96000 -0.6 MHz 110.9 Hz

183.1 km South FM Echolink AllStar WW7PSR / Seattle, Capitol Hill 146.96000 -0.6 MHz 103.5 Hz

198.8 km North West FM VE7RCR / Campbell River, Menzies Mtn 146.96000 -0.6 MHz 100 Hz

When I moved onto 145.13 MHz and heard a conversation between two operators I was totally confused about which repeater they were using They knew each other and had a long conversation, in which I never heard any call signs exchanged. Probably they did it at the very beginning and I missed that part of the conversation.

96.4 km South FM VE7US / Victoria, Highlands 145.13000 -0.6 MHz 114.8 Hz

133.8 km South FM WF7W / Port Angeles 145.13000 -0.6 MHz 100 Hz

191.2 km South FM W7AW / Seattle, West Seattle 145.13000 -0.6 MHz 103.5 Hz

I am capable of activating both VE7US and the WF7W repeaters.

So, the question was: if I want to join the conversation, which tone do I use - 114.8 Hz or the 100 Hz? How could I know?

I can give more examples, but the reader can understand the problem of having a very crowded and populated area between the Canadian Vancouver area and down South in United States, towards Seattle. Over a 200 km direct line of sight distance I can hit an incredible number of repeaters. Luckily, the frequencies are very well coordinated. <u>*Without such a strong discipline and good radio amateur spirit it would have been hell.*</u> I counted 433 repeaters in 200 km radius in the Repeater Book from my location, CN89nf.

On the other end of the Spectrum, Romania, a country in East Europe, has 34 repeaters declared in the Repeater Book for a radius of 200 km from Brasov, a big town in the center of the country. I used the location KN25vr, which belongs to the radio amateur YO6NAM. I expanded the search to a radius of 300 km and the Repeater Book offered me a total of 62 repeaters, some located in other countries than Romania. According to Wikipedia, in 2023 Romania has a population of around 19 million inhabitants, and a surface area of 238,397 squared km. The previous example, with 433 repeaters

on a radius of 200 km was from my home, British Columbia, having a population of 5.3 million and a surface of 944,735 squared km (almost 4 times bigger). But the 433 repeaters versus 34 repeaters was a comparison on a same 200 km radius.

Several years ago I praised a team of skillful radio amateurs from Romania who built a national radio network called RoLink from almost nothing. Some of the repeaters were linked into a national



network. A cheap solution was found to compensate the small number of repeaters in territory, under the form of RoLink nodes. They are in fact dedicated small computers, based on a Raspberry Pi board, a radio part, and everything on it is connected via Internet to the national network.

Such small dedicated devices are in fact personal repeaters connected to the Internet. The radio outputs low power – the radio integrated circuit is the same as the one from the UV5R Baofeng walkie-talkie. There were plenty of available frequencies for such personal repeaters, since the territory is practically empty of repeaters.

(As an aside, a 10 minute video, in English, about such a small personal repeater can be found at:)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EprSIw-5I6w

The idea was that somebody would buy and install such a node, make it operational and let everybody nearby use it. This idea worked for a while and the territory of Romania was starting to get covered by such small repeaters, connected in a unique national radio network, RoLink.

Unfortunately, in 2023 it looks like the network has broken. The people who initially made RoLink could not agree. It did not work well before 2022, as there were several episodes of connecting and disconnecting the two branches of RoLink, which are both still called RoLink.

Apart from the war of pride between the two branches, the assumption that somebody will buy a piece of equipment, spend some \$200 CAD on it (=150 USD =140 EURO) and will let it function for others to use, did not work. Owners do disconnect the electric power supply for their nodes, and/or disconnect from the Internet.

A network that "is there" only randomly, in a practical sense "is not there".

Private and personal small equipment cannot compensate the lack of a solid number of dedicated repeaters in the territory.