Ohio ARES District 9
Winlink Vara HF P2P Getting Started Guidelines

This document with the attached Images was created to assist anyone that may have issues getting Vara HF P2P to connect during our District 9 Winlink P2P Test sessions. Since everyone's station is different the following is presented as very general guidelines.

After downloading and installing both Winlink Express and Vara HF and making sure you have the appropriate cables(s) connected between your rig and computer open Winlink Express. In the Winlink Express window that opens select Vara HF P2P from the drop down menu to the right of **Open Session**. Then click on **Open Session**. A New window, Vara HF Peer-to-Peer Session, should open. Another window, VARA HF (with the four dials), may also open. For now your attention should be on the Vara HF Peer-to-Peer Session window, bring that window forward by clicking within that window. Continue with these steps:

Check the Settings - Check and review the settings for both the Radio Setup and Vara TNC Setup.

1. In the Vara HF Peer-to-Peer Session window click on **Settings** in the menu and select **Radio Setup**. The Vara HF P2P Settings window should appear. This is where you need to enter information to allow Winlink Express and Vara HF to communicate with your radio via CAT control. Different radio/computer combinations will require different values. Image 1 shows this window with the information that works with my IC-7300 and Lenovo laptop. Your settings may vary. After making any changes click on the **Update** button at the bottom of the widow.
2. Returning to the Vara HF Peer-to-Peer Session window you now need to specify the station you want to connect and the frequency of the connection. See the circled area in Image 2. From left to right enter: Callsign - WD8SAB (may change for specific D9 P2P sessions); Center Freq. - 7063.50 (up 1500 Hz from the dial frequency); Dial Freq. - 7062 (should auto populate to center frequency + 1500); Bandwidth (Select 500 from dropdown menu on the right.) Once these settings have been selected you can click on **Add to favorites** and your setting will be saved and available for recall for future connections with this station.
3. Continuing in the Vara HF Peer-to-Peer Session window click on **Settings** in the menu and select **Vara TNC Setup**. Most of this information will be filled in by default and should work fine. The circled areas on Image 3 may need to be changes. In the drop down box to the right of **Maximum signal bandwidth** select 500. For our D9 P2P Testing we are using the 500 Hz. bandwidth to accommodate those that have not yet registered their copy of Vara HF and during times of poor propagation conditions the reduced bandwidth may increase the chance of a P2P connection. After making any changes click on the **Update** button at the bottom of the window.
4. The bandwidth setting needs to be checked in a second location. Your attention should now change to the the VARA HF v4.8.6 window, the one with the 4 dials. If the window is not visible you may need to find it in the Task Bar and click the icon to open the window. Click on **Settings** in the menu and select **Vara Setup**. Compare the window that opens to Image 4 and the circled area. At my station I checked both Allow VARA check for update via internet and Accept 500 Hz connections. Then close the window.

To start a Vara HF Peer-to Peer connection with the selected station station first listen and make sure the frequency is not busy then click **Start** in the menu of the Vara HF Peer-to-Peer Session window. Winlink Express will start the process of calling and then listening for a response. If the station you are calling hears you and is available it will answer and a connection will be establish. Any P2P messages in your outbox addressed to the station you are calling will be sent and any P2P messages for your station will be received. The progress of this interaction between the two stations will be displayed in the Vara HF Peer-to-Peer Session window. The status of any sent or received messages will be shown as progress bars move across the screen. The number of sent and received messages will be displayed. A disconnect message indicates the back and forth activity has ended. Click **Exit** to close the Vara HF Peer-to-Peer Session window and return back to the main Winlink Express window.

Things to remember:

1. Peer-to-Peer only works between two stations at a time.
2. Both stations must be on the same frequency at the same time.
3. Currently for our District 9 Vara HF P2P tests we are using a bandwidth of 500 Hz. To accommodate and encourage more users.
4. Both stations must have **Opened** a Vara HF P2P **Session**. This is indicated by the appearance of both the Vara HF Peer-to-Peer Session and the Vara HF windows.
5. Only messages created in Winlink to be Sent as a Peer-to-Peer Message and Posted to Outbox will be exchanged once a connection is made.
6. Before you Start a Vara HF P2P session check your Outbox in the main Winlink Express window to make sure that any outgoing P2P message is listed as such in the Recipient column. It should appear as CALL (P2P). If not double click on the message, select Peer-to-Peer in the drop down menu to the right of Send as, then repost it to the Outbox.
7. Your rig needs to be set to transmit in Upper SideBand. Vara HF P2P is a digital mode and digital modes use USB regardless of band.
8. If you connection dose not occur, wait and try again later.

Please let me know if these instructions worked for you as well as any suggestions you may have for improvements.

73 - Rick
WD8SAB

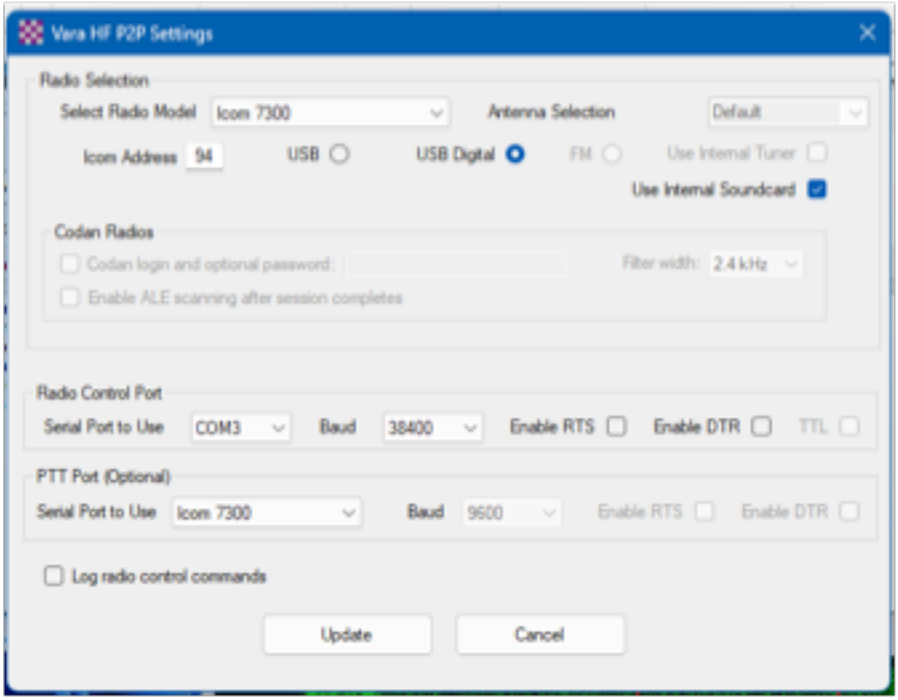

Image 1 - Vara-HF Peer-to-Peer Sesion Window, Seetings, Radio Setup

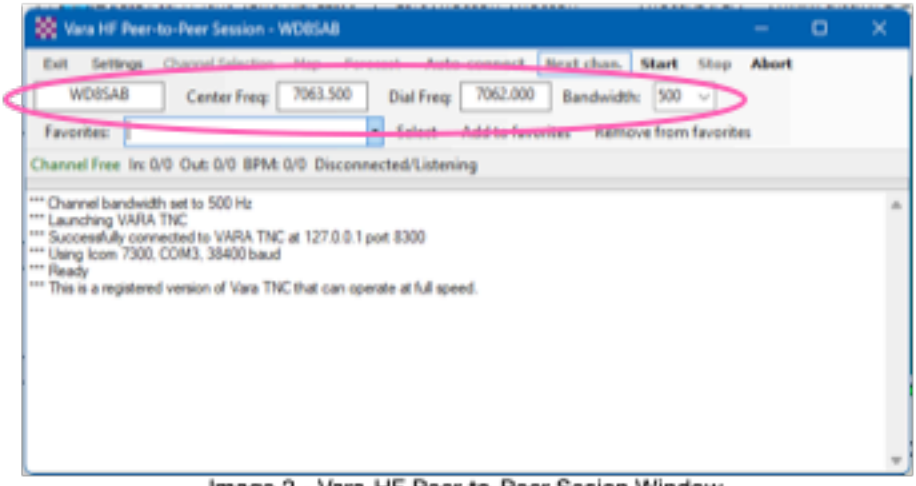

Image 2 - Vara-HF Peer-to-Peer Sesion Window

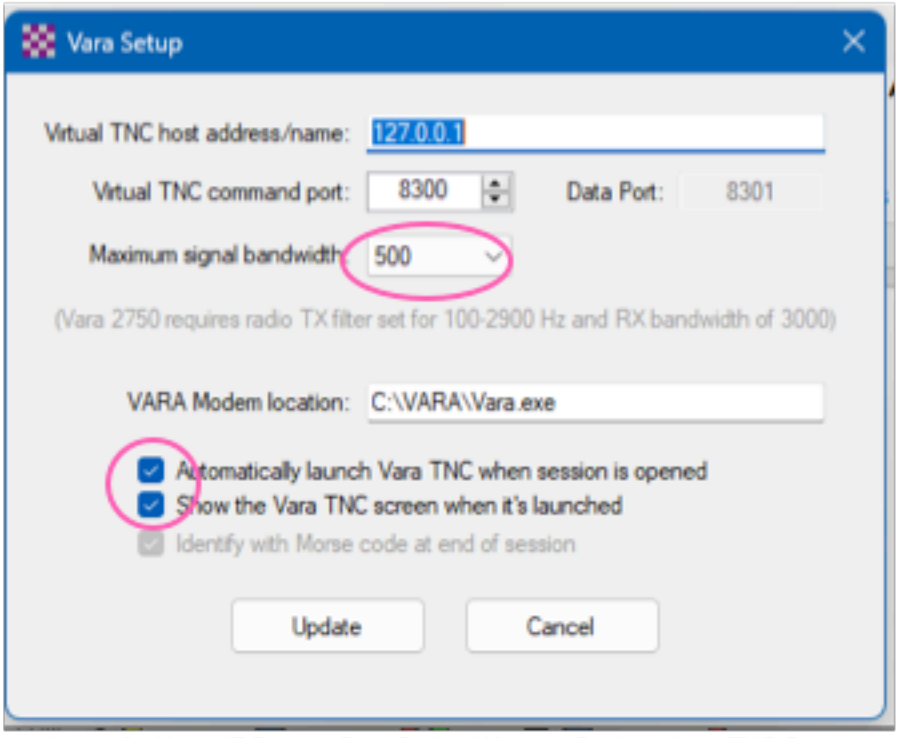

Image 3 - Vara-HF Peer-to-Peer Sesion Window, Settings, Vara TNC Setup

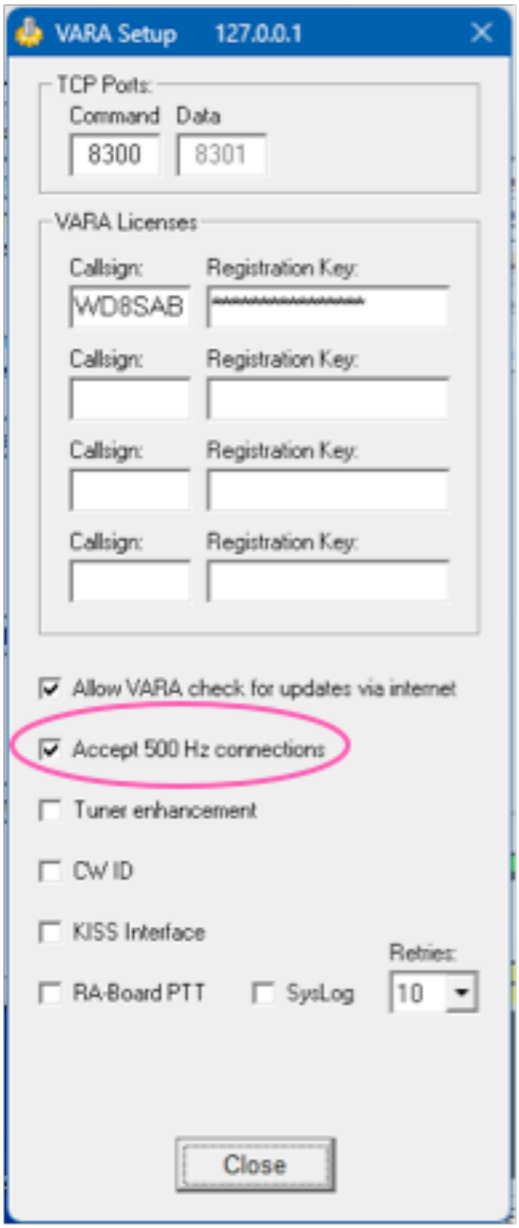

Image 4 -Vara HF Window, Settings, Vara Setup