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**P A R A**



**>> GENERAL MEETING **November 13, 2013** - 7:30 PM !! <<**  
**Lower Providence Township Building**  
**Eagleville, Pennsylvania**

**NEW PARA WEB SITE: <http://www.w3phl.org>**

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# Philadelphia Area Repeater Association

## Membership Information

PARA is an association of members that operate and support Amateur Radio Repeaters and links in Southeastern Pennsylvania and Southern New Jersey. PARA was formed in 1970 and incorporated as an IRS 501c3 non-profit in 1973 through a merger of several repeater groups.

PARA repeaters serve the Amateur Radio community for normal everyday hobby communications as well as provide a system for emergency and disaster communications. PARA also promotes technical developments which ham radio has done so much of in the past.

PARA has four quadrant repeaters and one regional system on the 2-meter band as well as other repeaters on the 224 MHz and 440 MHz bands. PARA also has an Amateur TV System that relays television signals in the Philadelphia and Wilmington metropolitan areas.

Your membership dues support those repeaters listed below and help assure availability for emergency communications: 146.76 MHz, 146.82 MHz, 146.94 MHz, 443.90 MHz, 223.86 MHz, 224.94 MHz, 52.41 MHz, 439.25 MHz (ATV), and all links between the remote receivers.

## Joining PARA

NEW MEMBERSHIP FEES AND DUES ..... \$ 25.00  
YEARLY RENEWAL ..... \$ 20.00  
5 YEAR MEMBERSHIP ..... \$ 85.00 (\$90.00 FOR NEW MEMBERS)  
LIFE MEMBERSHIP ..... \$400.00  
SENIOR LIFE MEMBER ..... \$100.00 (AGE 65 AND OVER)  
ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP ..... \$ 20.00 (non-hams) no voting privileges

Associate memberships, when licensed, may upgrade to full membership with no additional initiation fee.

Members also gain one free month on their membership for each new member you sponsor.

Corporate annual sponsorship memberships are also available: \$100, \$500, \$1000, \$5000, etc.

Annual sponsorships of \$500 or more will receive free advertising in PARA's newsletter.

Certificates of sponsorships are given to corporate sponsors.

Please detach & fill out (PRINT) the form below and mail with a check or money order to:

**PARA, POST OFFICE BOX 64, VALLEY FORGE, PA 19481-0064**

Membership Type: New  Renewal  Full individual Ham  5 Year  Life  Sr Life   
Associate  Corporate  Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ CALL \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (REQUIRED) \_\_\_\_\_ OK TO LIST  YES  NO

E-MAIL (REQUIRED) \_\_\_\_\_

ARRL MEMBER (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_ SPONSORED BY \_\_\_\_\_

I CAN HELP WITH THE FOLLOWING: TOWERS  ANTENNAS  BLDG MAINTENANCE  Equipment Maintenance  WRITING/PUBLISHING  PUBLIC RELATIONS  Other \_\_\_\_\_ (10-23-2012)

## From the President Fall 2013 Gene Mitchell K3DSM

If I read right, there are twice as many licensed hams now as when I got my ham license back in 1958. What I am also seeing is that there are many more places to be on the radio dial too. We are spread out all over the VHF and UHF spectrum. One of the things that really bother me is that many of our friends want to be on repeaters away from mass activity, and that is why there are so many repeaters to monitor or use. From the splinter repeaters to UHF, they went onto their own private repeater. Part of this is a control problem. I too once thought I wanted my own repeater. In fact, I did it twice. First was my 446 MHz autopatch that I eventually gave PARA in the beginning. That's the one that gave PARA the autopatch idea. Then, I did it again on 224 MHz with my own private repeater. For me, it was the sense of building it and experimenting. Running a repeater is no small project.

I sit in my shop working on computers all day, and my scanner is busy on 2 meters and 440 MHz scanning the bands. There is lots of activity. In fact, I have to turn the volume down when the phone rings or someone stops in. Hams that I used to talk to are all over the dial. My point is: we should have a calling channel, and then move off. Oh, we used to do that, didn't we? We still have our distractions: hundreds of TV channels, iPod music, and computers. How about leaving your receiver or scanner on while you compute or watch TV?

Last June, we had one of our best meetings, so I am told. It was show and tell. The Raspberry Pi seemed to be a hit. There were lots of gadgets and all were interesting. Since Tablets and Smartphones are so popular, let's bring on the Tablet App Wars: Let's discuss what Apps we use. Ron has made me aware of some really good ones.

If you ever got tired of reloading Windows, or tired of all the infections or Malware, give VMWARE a chance to solve your problems. Joe N3YGW uses Windows 8 on his Laptop with VMWARE and then loads Windows XP into that. Once set up with drivers and programs, you take snapshots of the Virtual machine. If something ever goes wrong, simply go back to a good snapshot and start over. He also has a Windows 7 and Linux running as virtual machines in the same box. Another alternative is the "ClickFree" C6 image system. It's easy to use.

Speaking of all those Tablets, I had my hands on the new "Surface Pro" from Microsoft, loading software for a customer. Once you realize its potential, you too might be interested. You can load your old existing software like Office 2003, DreamWeaver, and even Photoshop 5.5 and carry around a fully functional computer in Tablet format.

Speaking of Tablets, are you keeping up your Tower or Laptop to backup your Tablet or Smartphone? Malware is attaching Tablets and Smartphones and your only solution is to do a reset, which causes total loss of your pictures, music, and other information.

There are some important announcements coming forth at our November meeting. Be sure to be there to hear them. The Bacton Hill Remote link has been down for several months, but with a new link receiver at Worcester, that will soon be solved. Camden suffered a direct lightning hit, vaporizing the antenna. That has been replaced.

I am into another good sci-fi thriller: "Revolution", the NBC series about all the power going out. This is a must see series, just like "Jericho" a few years ago. Both these series really make you think about all the things that could go wrong in our society. Nothing works: batteries, motors, communications, etc. What caused the power to go out is not so far fetched in our future years, once you figure out what happened.

Remember: PARA-Net Tuesday evenings 8PM 146.76 MHz

# Philadelphia Area Repeater Association

# PARA



FM & TV

**PARA General Meeting - May 7, 2013  
Held at Lower Providence Municipal Building  
Eagleville, PA -USA**

In attendance were:

K3DSM, Gene – K3ITH, Dick – K3QNT, Lloyd – AB3O, Asa – W3EX, Tom – K3ALV, Steve – W3GSC, Hank – K3ZKO, Ron – W3IWJ, Irv – KC3AHS, Pete – W3CQC, Tom – K3TBY, Ed & NX3S, Bob

In accordance with his agenda, President Mitchell, K3DSM brought the meeting order at precisely 1930 hours.

He led the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States.

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

K3DSM made a motion to waive the reading of the secretary's report. Seconded by K3QNT and passed all in favor.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

In the absence of KB3POA, Dick, K3ITH made the Treasurer's report.

Savings:	310.41
Checking:	977.09
Vanguard	10,017.90

Total Cash Assets: \$11,305.40

K3ITH reported there are 91 members in good standing. Motion to approve the treasurer's report made by AB3O and passed all in favor.

## **TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT**

K3DSM reported that 146.16/76 is up and running. However, there was a troublesome power supply and RFI difficulty on one of the inputs. With some assistance from K3ZKO & WN3A, K3ITH tracked the mystery RFI down to a possible corroded RF connector. All is now well with 16/76. Repeater is running at full scale but may not be at full power.

On another issue, K3ITH reported that our aging back up battery supply is in need of two new wet cells and a 24VDC charger. After some discussion the board approved of expenditure to purchase a new 24 vdc charger for the battery pack. This was moved by K3DSM and passed all in favor. A search was recommended for new batteries, perhaps found at the upcoming Dayton Hamfest.

34/94 at West Chester is up and running at the Chester County Justice Center under the auspices of W3EOC.

22/82 in Camden up and running.

224.940 up and running – 443.900 is up and running.

53.41 is up and running and used by the Montco ARES-RACES Net weekly.

According to K3ZKO, the ATV system is still in transition and seeking a new home on high ground to provide market-wide coverage.

### **Repeater Sheds**

K3DSM and K3ITH reported that both transmitter huts at Worcester and Valley Forge are in serious need of repair. K3DSM asserted the Valley Forge hut is over 35 years old. A call went out to the membership in attendance that a work party is needed to reinforce both structures. K3QNT offered to contact WN3A & K3XY, who do a lot of transmitter site work, on perhaps locating a suitable transmitter hut that has been retired or no longer in use.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

K3DSM mentioned that the weekly ‘PARA-NET’ at 8:00 PM is going strong with good check-ins weekly. A wide variety of topics are discussed on the weekly net. It has helped keeping the repeater active. K3DSM reported the net even has an SWL, which no doubt increases our ratings!

### **FUND RAISING**

K3QNT admitted he had not devoted enough time or effort to this enterprise since the November meeting. However, contacts were made at Verizon, Comcast, Huston Foundation, PECO Energy, QVC and GE Space Center/Martin Marietta/Lockheed Martin or whatever that thing in Valley Forge is now called. W3EX passed along a possible lead which Lloyd will follow up. The purpose of the fund raising efforts is to raise approximately \$8,000 for CAPEX improvements to the entire PARA System.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

K3DSM reported that our new domain of [www.w3phl.org](http://www.w3phl.org) is a success. The board authorized expenditure to renew the domain address. Gene also reminded us of the upcoming Kimberton Hamfest on July 7, 2013.

K3QNT moved that we continue our presence there by purchasing a table with the usual PARA banners and materials. Members are encouraged to use the table to sell gear they may want to offer. K3QNT offered to man the table with K3DSM.

Gene reminded the membership that PARA holds a liability insurance policy on its repeater sites. The board moved and approved of a renewal of policy for 2014.

## **PROGRAM PRESENTATION**

K3ITH and K3DSM gave a physical demonstration of a new computer product called, "Raspberry Pie." Based on Linux technology, one of the members compared it to a "Heathkit Computer" in that the components were assembled according to need. Dick explained this very small and simple platform could download the desired operating system and with chip that served as a "hard drive", the tiny computer could easily serve in Amateur Radio D-STAR service as well as a number of other applications. The cost of the basic unit is \$35.00. Gene, K3DSM demonstrated a similar package using a Raspberry unit to operate a SEAGATE Media system with a GO FLEX Media Drive. This unit creates its own Wi-Fi signal and can drive anything it can hear. W3EX found the signal immediately on his iPhone.

K3ZKO – demonstrated his hand-held Spectrum Analyzer, RF EXPLORER for the group. The unit is good from 15 MHz to over two Gigs. At a cost of under \$300.00, it certainly rivals its big city cousins, with some costing over twenty grand.

Tom, W3EX showed his homebrew hand held PTT switch with both momentary and full closure buttons built into two PVC caps tied to a mono 1/8" audio jack to control VHF and HF radios. Its simplicity was compelling enough for the item to appear in a future issue of QST. Tom also explained his Souderton-based "Remote Control" HF station, which he can operate anywhere as long as he has an Internet connection. He agreed to show his prepared power-point and a LIVE demonstration at the next PARA Meeting in November of 2013.

K3QNT suggested that PARA as an organization has an opportunity to get out in front of these emerging technologies with short seminars, which all Hams could attend.

## **ADJOURN**

With no further business, AB3O moved and it was passed all in favor to adjourn at 21:34 hours.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Lloyd*

Lloyd Bankson Roach, K3QNT  
Secretary

## For Sale – See Gene K3DSM

Toshiba Thrive Tablet \$225

Toshiba Netbook \$150 (with Windows 7)

Yaesu 220 HT \$100 with Desktop Charger

Icom IC37A 220 Mhz Mobile \$100

Ham M Rotor (new) \$300

14" LCD \$50

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### Pictures of the 146.82 MHz Camden Repeater Antenna hit by lightning:



### Pictures from PARA May General Meeting:



## MOVING ???

If moving, please notify **PARA** of your new address as soon as possible. The Post Office will **NOT** forward your mail after 30-days. Please forward your new mailing and e-mail addresses so we may keep our database up-to-date and, of course, *PARA-graphs* in your hands.

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## ADVERTISING in *PARA-graphs*

At the November 1999 Board meeting approval was received to accept ads in *PARA-graphs* to help offset ever-raising printing and postage costs. The following per issue ad schedule was approved:

Full Page \$125. Half Page \$75. Quarter Page \$50. Business Card \$25. Non-Commercial Classified 3 lines \$10.

Repeat ad in following issue(s) will receive a 10% discount. Contact Dick K3ITH to place an ad.

This and past issues of *PARA-Graphs* may be found at:

<http://para.buxcom.net> or <http://para.k3dsm.net>

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## INTERESTED IN WRITING FOR *PARA-graphs* ??

Several great articles have been submitted in past issues by your fellow **PARA** members such as Hank W3GSC with help from Vince N3AGD, and Gene K3DSM. Please feel free to submit anything Amateur Radio related.

Articles may be mailed to our PO Box, or e-mailed to [k3ith@arrl.net](mailto:k3ith@arrl.net)

Thank you. Dick K3ITH

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**>>> PLEASE NOTE <<<**

**MEETING DAY: WEDNESDAY**

**MEETING DATE: November 13, 2013**

**Doors open at 7:15 PM, Meeting starts at 7:30 PM**

**MEETING LOCATION:**

**Lower Providence Township Building**

**100 Parklane Drive**

**Eagleville, PA 19403**

**(Some GPS units may show Norristown or Eagleville)**

**Directions:**

- 1. From King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, take Rt. 202 South to Rt. 422 West to the Oaks Exit.**
- 2. At the exit ramp turn Right onto Egypt Road and take the second Left onto Pinetown Road.**
- 3. Go to the second stop sign and turn Left onto Eagleville Road.**
- 4. Go to the traffic light at Ridge Pike and proceed straight into the Lower Providence Township property; bare right and follow the driveway to the township building which is beyond the public library.**

**Talk-in on the PARA 146.760 MHz Repeater (PL 131.8 Hz)**