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Philadelphia Area Repeater Association

Membership Information

PARA is an association of members that operate and support 19 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, 146.88 MHz, 146.94 MHz, 146.97 MHz, 443.90 MHz, 223.86 MHz, 224.94 MHz, 224.98 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:

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(01-25-2004)

From the President, by Gene, K3DSM

Well, I guess I am here for another 2 years. Either I am doing a good job or there is little interest from others. I am worried about that “interest” thing though. It seems like only a few do the work in any organization. PARA could use a few more good heads, either involved on the Board or Publishing or Maintenance. What does ham radio and PARA mean to you? I would be lost without my ham radio.

I read with interest, an article about the ham, who hadn't been on the ham bands for several years, who also picked up a newspaper and saw ads for free ham equipment, lots of them. He inquired and found out most of the ham bands had been auctioned to other services because the hams weren't using their previously assigned bands. The article is quite a wakeup call. The article was published by Delaware County Amateur Radio Association. Many of us have had our licenses for long times and seem quite content to just use the radio occasionally. Unfortunately, our numbers are still not growing fast, and activity keeps on dwindling. That's not good, because commercial interests want our frequencies and the pressure is on.

New technologies for communications are right around the corner, mostly related to the Internet and personal data communications. You have to have your head buried not to notice the crowding of the cell phone channels. There are actually times when you can't get a channel, even without there being an emergency. There is talk of either Nextel needing to relocate their frequencies or some public service channels will have to be reassigned.

Another interesting story comes from a local broadcast-communications engineer who has told me that Nextel has displaced a great majority of commercial 2-way radio systems; in other words, radio systems on many of the towers have vacant channels and transmitters. If you think those channels will be reallocated, think again, because commercial interests not only have a more powerful lobby than ham radio, but their users are enjoying less interference, once a very big problem.

I also get a kick out of the hams using Echo-Link, who claim they are back into ham radio again because of Echo-Link. Unfortunately, the Echo-Link is almost entirely over the Internet and not on our ham bands. I do agree it is interesting, but not the same as ham radio, on radio. The part where it attaches to our repeaters is good, but that's not the big use or interest. We have got to get our radios back on, and we have got to interest the youth of today.

I recently built a transmitter kit. Yes, a real kit from Ramsey. I thought about it for a long time before I did it, but I enjoyed doing it and it reminded me of the Heathkit days. My eyes are not as good as they used to be, but I did it, and I can say proudly that I did it. Many of us, that started back in the 50's and 60's, did this routinely. Now, everything we buy, it pre-built. My first transmitter was built from plans out of an ARRL book, not even a kit, and wow, what a thrill when I made my first contact. I guess the real challenge is to figure out how to get youngsters thrilled in something other than a computer or the Internet.

On another note, I see that Verizon has started the EV-DO network in this area. I wrote about “its coming” in the last issue of PARAGraphs. It seems like it is everyone's dream to use the Internet anywhere. That time is coming fast. Right now, you can, but it's not quite worth the price for the present speed. EVDO changes all that. EV-DO offers 300-400K, anywhere a cell phone works. You simply plug in a cable to the properly equipped cell phone and connect that to your computer's USB port. That is the speed of DSL in most cases, and wireless too. EV-DO should be released at \$80 a month initially, and that is expected to drop to \$50 a month. \$50 will be the magic number.

Anybody see the ICOM ID-1? Data and voice on 1200 Mhz and at 128K. I don't know the legalities of using the Internet on Ham Radio, but it sounds interesting. Wish I had the extra bucks to play with that.

Check out my personal web pages at www.k3dsm.net or <http://para.k3dsm.net>

Notice to PARA members in the Northwest Quadrant

No members from Northwest Quadrant attended the PARA November 2003 General Meeting where elections were held for the Northwest Director.

PARA should have two directors from this quadrant to represent its repeater and interests. If you are interested in serving, please e-mail me, Gene K3DSM, at genem@bee.net. If there are more than one interested, we will announce an election. This is your chance to be involved with PARA with a vote on the Board of Directors. There are now only four scheduled Board meetings a year - it is possible to have an unscheduled meeting should the occasion arise. Even if you are slightly interested, so indicate so we can discuss it.

Thank you, Gene K3DSM, President
E-mail: genem@bee.net

FREE MAGAZINES

Written by Dick K3ITH

FREE to good home: ... QST, 73, and CQ magazines all the way back to the 1930's and 1940's. Anyone know a personal or public library looking for ham radio magazines? Please contact Fred W3PHL at 610-933-6918 in the evenings. Must pickup.

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

INTERESTED IN WRITING FOR *PARA-GRAPHS* ??

Several great articles were submitted in past issues by your fellow PARA members such as Joe K3JV, Larry W2CAM, Hank W3GSC with help from Vince N3AGD, Gene W3ZXV, 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

Thank you. Dick K3ITH

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PARA Swapfest 2004

and General Meeting

Tuesday May 11, 2004

Swapfest at 7:00 PM
General Meeting at 7:30 PM

Save this date now

St. Gertrudes Church Hall, 209 Merion Ave, West Conshohocken, PA
Easy to find and plenty of free parking

Talk in 146.76 MHz

First of all, we want you to come out and join us at the meeting. We have a good program, you can have a great time talking “eyeball” with fellow hams and guests, and you might unload or find something neat. Second, we want you to invite non-members and others from surrounding clubs. Make a copy of this page and spread it around to surrounding clubs. As we have done in the last few years, we are going to have our indoor flea market as well as tailgating in the parking lot. (no admission and no fees). Bring your unused equipment to sell, swap, and trade. There are tables available on a first come basis. *(Please don't bring junk to leave behind and please use care when placing equipment on the tables)*. There will be refreshments available and a 50-50. There will also be some incentives to join or rejoin **PARA**. We only have two meetings a year and it's about time you came out for a change. Take a break from the Internet and TV. We have started the meeting earlier and we end between 9 and 9:30 PM, so now what's your excuse?

The technical committee has been busy upgrading sites and a detailed prepared report will be given. The 76 repeater should be in full operation and better than ever. A status report on the grant will be made.

The 94 repeater is more alive than ever with EchoLink and our alliance with Chester County ARES RACES is better than ever.

PARA's "ROLL"

PARA membership is holding. That's a good sign because it was downhill before. There is better activity on 82, 94, and 76 both during the day and evening. Meetings have been better attended. The Board is working hard for its members with fewer meetings and better contact by email.

Look to <http://para.buxcom.net> and <http://para.k3dsm.net>

PARA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEMBERS AND ASSIGNMENTS

<u>TERM</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>CALL</u>
2004/2005	PRESIDENT:	Gene Mitchell	K3DSM
2003/2004	VICE PRESIDENT:	Pete Butler	WB2B
2003/2004	TREASURER:	Paul Tabatschkow	N3UD
2003/2004	CORRESPONDING SECRETARY:	Mark Sardaro	KA3VTM
2004/2005	RECORDING SECRETARY:	Larry Gasperone	W2CAM

DIRECTORS:

2004/2005	NORTHEAST	Bud Batyi	N3JQB
2003/2004	NORTHEAST	John Brochon	K3ZFD
2004/2005	NORTHWEST	(vacant)	
2003/2004	NORTHWEST	Stan Bentley	KB3EXB
2004/2005	SOUTHEAST	Joe Ruder	N2SXH
2003/2004	SOUTHEAST	John Goheen	KB2ADL
2004/2005	SOUTHWEST	Al Rabenau	W3AHR
2003/2004	SOUTHWEST	Joe Vilardo	K3JV

***PARA-graphs* Editor & Publisher Dick Stewart K3ITH**

E-mail: para76@juno.com Web Site: <http://para.buxcom.net>

PARA MEMBERSHIP EXPIRED??

Do you know when your PARA membership dues are due? It's real easy to check. Just look at the mailing label on this issue of *PARA-graphs*. The first line contains your call letters and membership expiration date; the format is a 4-digit year followed by a 2-digit month. If your membership expiration date is circled in **red** then your **PARA dues are now due**. Please send a \$20.00 check payable to **PARA** to:

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Thank you for renewing promptly!! **If you viewing this issue in softcopy** you may also send e-mail requesting your membership expiration date. Please send your request to: para76@juno.com

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. With each issue of *PARA-graphs* several copies are returned by the Post Office marked "**RETURN TO SENDER, NO FORWARD ORDER ON FILE**". Please forward your new address so we may keep our database up-to-date and, of course, *PARA-graphs* in your hands.

WELCOME OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Please welcome the following new PARA members:
Al W3AHR

FCC CHAIRMAN TOUCHES ON BPL INTERFERENCE ISSUE IN PRESS CLUB SPEECH

FCC Chairman Michael Powell has cited the Commission's promotion of Broadband over Power Line (BPL) technology as an example of a government policy that supports expansion of broadband technology to all Americans. At the same time, Powell said, the FCC needs to ensure BPL doesn't interfere with licensed radio services. In his January 14 speech before the National Press Club, Powell mentioned BPL among "new emerging platforms" for broadband delivery.

"With BPL you theoretically reach every American with broadband to every power plug in America," Powell said. "Our goals of universal service will be substantially advanced if that service were fully deployed." Powell also acknowledged interference concerns that have been dogging BPL and raised by the Amateur Radio community and by at least two federal agencies: the Federal Emergency Management Agency--now a part of the Department of Homeland Security--and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), which manages spectrum allocated to government users.

"We will continue to explore ways to support this technology while protecting services from interference," Powell pledged.

In the next breath, Powell pointed out that the FCC also is looking to increase the feasibility of broadband delivery via satellite. "Because satellite technology has the ability to reach the entire country," he said, "it holds tremendous potential as an effective Internet solution for many parts of the nation, especially rural and remote areas, at affordable rates."

When it issued its BPL Notice of Inquiry (NOI), ET Docket 03-104 <http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-03-100A1.doc>, last April, the FCC suggested that BPL technology would be one way to provide broadband service to rural dwellers. Some technology experts suggest that, because of the equipment needed to deliver BPL broadband to rural customers, BPL would not be cost-effective for such residents.

In a bit of unintended irony, Powell's speech, "The Age of Personal Communications," bore the subtitle "Power to the People."

Since BPL applies high-frequency RF to parts of the power grid, one aspect of the NOI was to gather information on potential interference to authorized spectrum users. To date, the NOI has attracted nearly 5150 comments, many from the amateur community.

The FCC has indicated that providers of BPL equipment "are free to continue to deploy their networks in conformance with existing Part 15 rules." BPL providers already are setting up BPL systems in several communities.

NTIA Acting Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information Michael D. Gallagher recently told a gathering of the Power Line Communications Association <<http://www.plca.net/>> that the risk of interference to government or other spectrum users provides an incentive to BPL operators to "design and operate their systems to avoid such interference." He said the NTIA has been studying interference risks and the potential "for making risks more tolerable." He said the objective is "to accommodate BPL with acceptable risk."

The ARRL anticipates completing an independent BPL engineering evaluation early this year. The study will explore how BPL might affect HF and low-VHF amateur operation as well as how Amateur Radio operation could affect BPL systems.

Additional information about BPL and Amateur Radio is on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/>>. To support the League's efforts in this area, visit the ARRL's secure BPL Web site <<https://www.arrl.org/forms/development/donations/bpl/>>.

The following thanks to the ARRL and THE ARRL LETTER dated January 17, 2004:

CONGRESSMAN-HAM ASKS FCC TO WAIT FOR NTIA STUDY BEFORE ACTING ON BPL

US Representative Greg Walden, WB7OCE, has called on the FCC to put off any further action in its Broadband over Power Line (BPL) proceeding until the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) releases the results of its BPL study and the public has had a chance to comment.

"I feel that it is important to give the NTIA study thorough consideration before proceeding further with BPL technology, in view of the importance of avoiding interference to federal government HF communications," Walden said in a January 15 letter to FCC Chairman Michael Powell. An Oregon Republican, Walden is one of two Amateur Radio licensees in the US House.

The FCC released a BPL Notice of Inquiry in ET Docket 03-104 <http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-03-100A1.doc> last April.

In comments <http://www.ntia.doc.gov/ntiahome/fccfilings/2003/bplcomments_08132003.htm> filed last August, the NTIA expressed "broad concern" about BPL. The agency--which administers spectrum allocated to federal government users--has said the FCC "must ensure that other communications services, especially government operations, are adequately protected from unacceptable interference."

The NTIA, which is part of the US Department of Commerce, subsequently undertook evaluations of BPL field test sites, in part to gauge the technology's interference potential. Walden noted that the NTIA's field work was scheduled to wrap up this month, and that its observations and conclusions would be released sometime during the first quarter of this year.

Walden told Powell that, given its interference potential to federal and nongovernment radio services in the HF and low-VHF range, the issue of BPL is "of great concern to me." He did not indicate in his letter that he was an Amateur Radio licensee.

"It is important that the commission give serious consideration to both the NTIA study and the subsequent round of public comment on the study results," Walden asserted. While agreeing with the goal of increased competition in broadband delivery, Walden encouraged the FCC to "give sufficient attention" to concerns raised regarding BPL's potential to interfere with other radio services. He also asked Powell to respond outlining how the FCC intends to proceed in the matter.

The Following thanks to the ARRL and THE ARRL LETTER dated January 24, 2004:

ARRL TO PROPOSE NEW ENTRY-LEVEL LICENSE, CODE-FREE HF ACCESS

The ARRL will ask the FCC to create a new entry-level Amateur Radio license that would grant HF phone privileges without a Morse code test. The League also will propose consolidating all current licensees into three classes, retaining the Element 1 Morse requirement--now 5 WPM--only for the highest class. The ARRL Board of Directors overwhelmingly approved the plan January 16 during its Annual Meeting in Windsor, Connecticut. The

proposals, put forth by the ARRL Executive Committee, were in response to changes made in Article 25 of the international Radio Regulations at World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 (WRC-03).

"Change in the Amateur Radio Service in the US, especially license requirements and even more so when Morse is involved, has always been emotional," said ARRL First Vice President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, in presenting the Executive Committee's recommendations. "In fact, without a doubt, Morse is Amateur Radio's 'religious debate.'" Harrison said the League's proposal would provide "a true entry-level license with HF privileges" to promote growth in the Amateur Service.

The League says its proposal would continue a process of streamlining the amateur licensing structure that the FCC began more than five years ago but left unfinished in its Amateur Service license restructuring Report and Order (WT 98-143) that went into effect April 15, 2000.

A new entry-level license class--being called "Novice" for now- would require a 25-question written exam. It would offer limited HF CW/data and phone/image privileges on 80, 40, 15 and 10 meters as well as VHF and UHF privileges on 6 and 2 meters and on 222-225 and 430-450 MHz. Power output would be restricted to 100 W on 80, 40, and 15 meters and to 50 W on 10 meters and up.

"The Board sought to achieve balance in giving new Novice licensees the opportunity to sample a wider range of Amateur Radio activity than is available to current Technicians while retaining a motivation to upgrade," said ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ. The ARRL plan would grandfather current Novice licensees into the new entry-level class without further testing.

The middle group of licensees--Technician, Tech Plus (Technician with Element 1 credit) and General--would be merged into a new General license that also would not require a Morse examination. Current Technician and Tech Plus license holders automatically would gain current General class privileges without additional testing. The current Element 3 General examination would remain in place for new applicants.

The Board indicated that it saw no compelling reason to change the Amateur Extra class license requirements. The ARRL plan calls on the FCC to combine the current Advanced and Amateur Extra class licensees into Amateur Extra, because the technical level of the exams passed by these licensees is very similar. New applicants for Extra would have to pass a 5 WPM Morse code examination, and the written exam would stay the same. Sumner said the Board felt that the highest level of accomplishment should include basic Morse capability. Current Novice, Tech Plus and General licensees would receive lifetime 5 WPM Morse credit.

Among other advantages, Sumner said the plan would allow new Novices to participate in HF SSB emergency nets on 75 and 40 meters as well as on the top 100 kHz of 15 meters. The new license also could get another name, Sumner said. "We're trying to recapture the magic of the old Novice license, but in a manner that's appropriate for the 21st century."

The overall proposed ARRL license restructuring plan would more smoothly integrate HF spectrum privileges across the three license classes and would incorporate the "Novice refarming" plan the League put forth nearly two years ago in a Petition for Rule Making (RM-10413). The FCC has not yet acted on the ARRL plan, which would alter current HF subbands.

The ARRL license restructuring design calls for no changes in privileges for Extra and General class licensees on 160, 60, 30, 20, 17 or 12 meters. Novice licensees would have no access to those bands.

See "ARRL to Propose New Entry-Level License, Code-Free HF Access" on the ARRL Web site, <<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2004/01/19/1/>>, for the specific subband allocations ARRL is proposing for each class.

The amateur community and other interested parties will have an opportunity to comment on the ARRL proposal once the League formally files a Petition for Rule Making and the FCC puts it on public notice.