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>> GENERAL MEETING **May 21, 2014 - 7:30 PM !! <<**
Lower Providence Township Building
Eagleville, Pennsylvania

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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:

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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

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

From the President - May 2014

Gene Mitchell K3DSM

It appears that winter has finally gone. It was a long and nasty one. I lost the electric during the ice storm for 6 days and the generator fuel lasted only because I had the for-thought to ration the propane. That is one of the drawbacks to propane. The propane delivery arrived on the 6th day, just 1 hour before the electric was restored. The generator was still running, but the gauge barely showed a number. Although I felt that the propane supplier gauged me, it didn't compare to what another propane company charged me for the propane for my shop at almost 1.50 more than the propane for the generator, and both were ordered at the same time during the power failure. (Yes, I use 2 separate suppliers). When the present tank for the shop goes empty, that supplier is gone. I also did loose my HF antenna to a fallen branch, but that recently was fixed.

Do you remember the Raspberry PI computer mentioned and demonstrated earlier at our last meeting? Well, there is another similar computer that Troy Sorzano, a friend of mine, brought over the other day. It's the Arduino. What makes this really worth mentioning is what he did with it. It was mounted in a small cardboard box lined with aluminum foil. It had a miniature GPS board and a separate LCD screen and several push buttons also mounted on the side and a servo motor inside to control the lid. Also inside was his EZ Pass. The GPS was programmed to open the lid when he was at a specified Turnpike Interchange or at a known toll booth, determined by the GPS. OK, so what, you ask? Did you know that there are readers along many highways and in big cities that track EZ Pass that are not at toll booths. The Dept of Homeland Security operates these. Did you also know that DHS also places license plate readers along some of the highways? Most of us knew that many local police departments have these installed on their patrol cars. Police Departments use them for locating and tracking stolen cars, I think this is a great idea, but why does DHS also use this tracking?

I have links to the Arduino computer and to information about the EZ Pass device and also about the tracking on the "Special Links" page of 5DRadio.com. There are also lots of other good links and information there too. We talk about things like these on the Computer Corner Radio Show, Saturday mornings at 8. Podcasts are also available on iTunes. Also attached to this newsletter are about 3 pages of interesting information, kind of a compilation of highlights from the show.

Have an old computer with Windows XP? Just because Microsoft no longer supports XP, doesn't mean you have to get rid of your computer. You have several choices: use it till it's so loaded with Malware (just don't use it for financial work) that it grinds to a halt; load Linux onto it and enjoy a system that doesn't get so messed up; or you can get hold of a Linux "Live CD" and just boot to Linux from the CD, saving the trouble of loading it. You might actually learn to like Linux. If you need a new computer though, you can still get Windows 7 if you shop right, but that window will close soon. Windows 7 Pro allows you to download and run a virtual machine and Windows XP within, free from Microsoft, so choose carefully.

Many of you may have heard about the Tredyffrin Township battle over antenna towers, but some comments were made at the meetings that were not kind to amateur radio. In fact, this battle could affect all hams in Pennsylvania and other surrounding states. It most likely will end up in court and go all the way up the chain. The battle seeks to void PRB1 and even Pennsylvania's version of the same. Comments were made claiming that ham radio is no longer of value in providing emergency service. Both of these meetings were video taped and available on the Internet. Although the application was for a tower height of over a hundred feet, the tree level is also at a hundred feet. At first, I thought the height was excessive, but when I look at my 70 foot tower and the trees that grew to over a hundred feet while I have lived here

over the last 35 years, I wish mine was going to be as high as this. Reference was made to using a long wire instead, meaning that many do not understand UHF and VHF line of site.

As I write this, there is still a missing 777 out there, maybe in the Twilight Zone or even cloaked as some rumors have it. It boggles my mind that this ever happened. It also amazes me that absolutely no wreckage or fuel trace has been found. Did someone possibly generate a false ping that they followed?

I have a new toy, thanks to a birthday gift from my son, Mike, N3QLZ. I can now check the status of my garage door and even control it from my Smartphone using the MyQ internet gateway. Speaking of Smartphones, I am now out of contract and looking. Will it be a Galaxy S5 or the coming iPhone Pro with 5.1 inch screen? I am also still up in the air over whether to change providers because I will lose my unlimited Internet.

The 76 repeater is in need of some major fixing. I am going to propose a new amplifier, among other things at the coming meeting. Hope you can come out and voice your concerns as this will involve more than normal capital expenditures.

The Kimberton Hamfest will take place, this year on a Saturday, July 12th, and this presents a problem for me attending. I am hoping to find a PARA member who will be able to set up and tend a booth so our organization will have a presence. Any takers? I will be doing the radio show during that time.

Our Tuesday night Net is still going strong, with 3 of us every week and sometimes 3 or 4 others on some occasions. We have a good time comparing notes about any and everything. It also keeps the PARA machine exercised.

Things You Should Know

**From Gene's Computer Outlet & The Computer Corner Radio Show on WCHE-1520 and 5DRadio.com
Saturday 8am**

Pictures from digital cameras may contain location data (latitude/longitude) that could give your location to thieves or other bad people. Posting one of these pictures while on vacation or away from home tells the thief you are away from your home. Pictures of your house may tell the thief where you live. So goes your privacy.

Filling out surveys and contest entries most likely will give your personal information to data companies that could share the information. Your date of birth, social security number, and phone number, your relatives, your address, all of this can be used against you. Think twice about filling them out.

Anti-virus software alone will not protect your computer from Malware. Certain utilities as well as Windows itself have defects (vulnerabilities) that allow Malware to slip under any anti-virus protection. Flash, Adobe Reader, and Java are common utilities that cause this to happen. This is why all these must be kept up to date. It is best to allow these updates to happen automatically.

Popup messages can be designed to make you believe that by clicking on them, you can update or add protection to these certain utilities. Never click on any part of these messages. The only safe way to get rid of the popup is to start the task manager and close the popup or simply close the browser and restart the computer. Computing is not so simple any more.

Never click on any link in any email message, no matter who it is from. Your friend's or relative's address book may have been copied by the bad guys and the message with the link may not have really been from them. The process of tricking you into believing you should click is called "social engineering".

The practice of reading your email from "WEB Mail" is safer than reading it with an email client (Outlook or Outlook Express, etc). This still doesn't make links safe though.

One of the best email programs (clients) is Thunderbird and it is free. It's from Mozilla. The best part is that email and logon information can all be backed up in one swoop with another free program called Mozbackup.

Linux (Ubuntu) is a good replacement operating system for your old computer, rather than giving it up or recycling it. Linux is free. It operates better than faster and most Windows. Although it has a slightly different look, it operates the same way as Windows with icons and a mouse. It usually comes with a web browser and sometimes "Open Office", which, by the way could completely replace Microsoft Office. There are even free Graphics programs like "Gimp" that does the same as Photoshop. There is even a good and free accounting program called "GnuCash" that works similar to Quickbooks. If you use the Linux "Live CD/DVD" to boot your computer (rather than install Linux), you will never get your computer infected, meaning you can go to any web site in the world or click on any link in your web mail, without fear of any Malware. For this reason, never give up your old working computer – install Linux or use the "Live CD/DVD".

A "whole house" lightning protector, installed by an electrician or your main breaker box, can save your major appliances and light bulbs from Lightning and major surges. It doesn't replace the surge protector for sensitive electronics including computers, but may save that surge protector from taking a hit.

An "un-interruptible power supply" or UPS should be on your list of protection for your computer. Windows does not like hard power failures. A properly sized (about 1000VA or more) "Smart" UPS should come with software that will keep most modern computers running for about 20 minutes before automatically shutting down Windows properly. Never have your printer connected to the battery backed connector.

Laptop computers have a weakness: the power connector. A tug on the cable could break the connector inside the laptop causing a very expensive repair, typically \$200 to \$300. Also, when carrying the power cable for the laptop, make sure there is no excessive sharp bend in the cable so as to break the internal connection. Note also that laptop screens, when broken, are expensive to repair. Care needs to be taken, especially when young kids are around. There is special insurance for laptops through a company call "Safeware". It covers breakage with little to no deductible. Find them on the Internet.

Back up your pictures, music, financial data, and other data or document files to 2 other devices like a USB Flash drive, CD/DVD, or external hard drive. Hard drives do fail. Some Malware also erases hard drives.

Windows 8 computers can be very frustrating to operate. There is a free download called "Classic Menu" that makes Windows 8 look like Windows 7. Make sure you download the Windows 8.1 update if you use Windows 8,

Printing to a PDF file can save paper.

Cleaning the dust out of your computers power supply and CPU fan could save you a service call. Dust causes heat build up and that causes component failure.

Pulling the hard drive out of your computer before recycling it could save you embarrassment. Many recycled computers are sent over seas and the bad guys are good at looking for data including deleted files. Your hard drive, if still working, can be used for storing data from a USB connection. If it is dead, destroy it with a drill or sledge hammer.

Take the time to create "system restore disks" from your newer computer, especially before it gets Malware. The process could save you a hundred dollars on top of any service, should your computer get messed up.

Laptops with failed screens can still be used with an external monitor. Plug it in and operate the function keys to activate it.

Always plug in the power cord to your computer before connecting the monitor, keyboard, mouse, Ethernet, to prevent static electricity from zapping your computer.

Make sure you know your wireless SSID and password for your router – that should be attached to the router on a sticker. Also, do not operate a wireless router without security. A drive-by thief could use your wireless connection to break into a commercial or government computer network and it would be traced back to you. You may find your door being broken down by police before you get a chance to explain your open connection.

A modern scanner such as "Scan-Snap" can be used to scan and email documents rather than having to fax them.

Adding memory to any computer, tower or laptop, can be a harrowing experience if you break the memory socket in the process. The repair could cost hundreds as the system board has to be replaced. Static electricity can also damage the memory or the system board. Know what you are doing.

Never use the same password for email and financial accounts. In fact, each account should have separate passwords. Keep a small notebook in a safe place with them.

Many computer utilities are useless and many are also Rogue or fakes. You do not need registry fixers, or system optimizers to speed up your computer. Or the likes. Don't click on them.

Laptop fans need a clear opening to circulate air to cool the insides. Setting the laptop on a soft surface such as a bed or most furniture does not allow air to properly circulate. That practice may cause premature failure. Also, the dust must be cleaned from the air channel or failure will result.

Any phone call from Microsoft, anti-virus company, or even an ISP is usually a rogue or phony call and you should not give them any information or do anything they suggest. All they want is access to your computer to put Malware on it to get information.

Cover your Web Cam when it is not in use. Remote software can turn it on.

VLC Media Player is a very popular utility to remove copy protection from some software. Most web sites that have it for download also are infected. Be very careful.

Read the EULA for every piece of software you download and look for extra software that also downloads. Uncheck the pre-checked boxes. Even well known free programs like Ccleaner, AVG, Avast, Chrome, and many others also deliver unwanted programs, because they paid for that right.

Verizon and Comcast use Ethernet over Coax to carry the Internet from one room to another. It's called MoCa. Verizon has an adapter to breakout the Ethernet so you can have a direct connection to your computer in another room that has TV.

When your sound doesn't work in your computer, look for a muted or lowered volume control. Also check that your speakers are plugged into the correct connector. It could have been accidentally moved. The speakers are usually the green colored connector.

Backup your Tablet and Smartphone to your Laptop or Tower. Then backup that information to a Flashdrive, external hard drive, or Optical drive. Two of the three makes for a good backup procedure.

A "virtual machine" is software that allows you to create a special computer inside another computer. VMware can be installed into Windows 7, Windows 8, or even Linux. An example of this has been set up at our studio on a Windows 8 computer. Inside the "virtual machine" is Windows XP, Windows 7, and even Linux. Each can be turned on or off at will. Each can be copied inside the computer. An example of use would be to install XP and make several copies of the same image. If an image ever goes bad or gets infected, you simply wipe the bad image and start a new one. The base system or Windows 8 in this case never gets infected with Malware. You could run Windows XP forever in this fashion.

The Windows 7 Professional license gives you the right to download a "virtual machine" and Windows XP from Microsoft to run inside it. From here, you can run software that may not run in Windows 7. Give it a try. I use it.

Gene's Computer Repair - 2095 Valley Hill Rd - Malvern, Pa 19355 - 610-590-0451

Philadelphia Area Repeater Association

PARA



FM & TV

Fall General Meeting - 13 November- 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 - K2QNI, Ed - K3ZKO, Ron – W3IWJ, Irv – KC3AHS, Pete – W3CQC, Tom – K3TBY, Ed - N3FKR, Rocky – KC3AHS, Pete & W3GK- Gordon

In accordance with his agenda, President Mitchell, K3DSM brought the meeting order at 1930 hours and led the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

W3CQC 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, who was nursing Dick's, K3ITH latest grandchild, Dick made the Treasurer's report.

Savings:	310.41
Checking:	1,077.68
Vanguard	9,797.89

Total Cash Assets: \$11,185.98

K3ITH reported there are 75 members in good standing with 7 members remaining outstanding.

Dick reported that Marie Swayze, the widow of SK, Dick Swayze, K3ECV, made a generous donation as a result of the sale of ECV's gear. K3ITH prepared a thank-you note for K3DSM's signature to be sent to Marie. K3QNT requested that the board as a whole thank Marie with mention in these minutes. All agreed. Motion to approve the treasurer's report was made, seconded and passed all in favor.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

K3ITH/K3DSM reported that **146.16/76** is up and running. However, the final amplifier is on its last legs and needs to be replaced. Output power is erratic. Bob Famiglio, K3RF suggested to Dick that we examine the purchase of a Kenwood Commercial Final Amplifier for the repeater. There was also some follow up discussion regarding the power supply and back up battery bank at this site. K3ITH also reported that there is an overgrowth of weeds and small trees inhibiting access to the repeater site. Dick asked members if anyone had a weed-whacker/chain saw or other implements of destruction.

146.22/82 is up and running thanks to K3ZKO. The links, however, are off. Ron displayed for all, the damaged collinear antenna that had been fried by a recent lightning strike. Very impressive!

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

224.940 & 223.860 are up and running – 443.900 is up and running.

52.41/53.41 is suffering presently from a loud squeal due to corroded slots in voter mainframe. K3ITH is seeking a solution.

According to K3ZKO, the **ATV system** is still in transition/ testing and is seeking a new home on high ground to provide market-wide coverage. Ron has produced an excellent “Technical Manual” for the 22/82 site with a copy there and another at PARA headquarters.

OLD BUSINESS

K3DSM mentioned that the weekly ‘PARA-NET” at 8:00 PM is doing well with 3 or 4 check-ins weekly. K3QNT reported he can no longer hear the output of “76” at his QTH. Perhaps when the final amp is fixed, things will improve. Gene also reported that PARA had a table and display at the recent Kimberton Hamfest.

FUND RAISING

K3QNT reported no current progress on fund raising.

NEW BUSINESS

As it the custom for the Fall General Meeting, elections were held for officers of PARA. After two requests from President Mitchell for nominations for President, K3QNT moved to elect K3DSM for another term as our beloved President. All in favor.

After a similar request for nominations, Bob, NX3S was re-elected in absencia. W3CQC moved to retain K3QNT as Secretary. It was moved that KB3POA be retained as Treasurer. However, being absent and unable to defend herself, that nomination was tabled.

The board presently consists of W3CQC, W3GSC, AB3O and K3QNT. President Mitchell explained there was an opening for another board member. K3QNT swiftly nominated and moved for the appointment of long-time returning PARA member, K2QNI. The motion was seconded and all in favor. Congratulations Ed!

PROGRAM PRESENTATION

Tom, W3EX, made an excellent power-point presentation regarding his success of his Ham Radio Station being remotely controlled from anywhere, including his yacht in the Chesapeake! He made a detailed presentation on how to purchase and use the various commercial software and hardware offerings such as “Team Viewer”, SKYPE and a clever on-line control of a power strip with a “Web Power Switch-6” at his station. With these devices and software properly installed, Tom can operate two different rigs with a variety of antennas all from the comfort of his laptop, wherever he may be at the time. He demonstrated for the group calling K3ITH from his home on the 16/76 machine with K3ITH answering with his HT in the meeting room. The audio appeared to be excellent and no latency was noticed. It was noted that these methods can enable many Hams to avoid “Communism by Contract” issues by having their transmitting & antenna facilities elsewhere.

During the presentation, K3ITH explained his less elaborate method of remote control use with a “Remote Rig” unit which uses two units, one each, deployed at both ends. This system requires no computer as long as the rig involved as a compatible remote head. Dick’s Kenwood Dual-Bander was demonstrated. Other rigs include the TS-480-SAT and the modern ALINOC SR8-HF series, which enable full HF operation including CW.

K3QNT gave a short presentation about the value of being professional during an emergency incident. Using power point slides, QNT asserted that one should never assume the PIO or media have knowledge of Ham Radio operations and value. He offered Health and Welfare traffic handling from disaster areas is sorely needed and appreciated. His power point is available to all for the asking.

ADJOURN

With no further business, K3DSM requested a motion to adjourn; it was approved all in favor at 21:25 hours.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lloyd

Lloyd Bankson Roach, K3QNT, Secretary

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.

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>

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

Thank you. Dick K3ITH

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>>> PLEASE NOTE <<<

NEW MEETING DAY: WEDNESDAY

MEETING DATE: May 21, 2014

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)