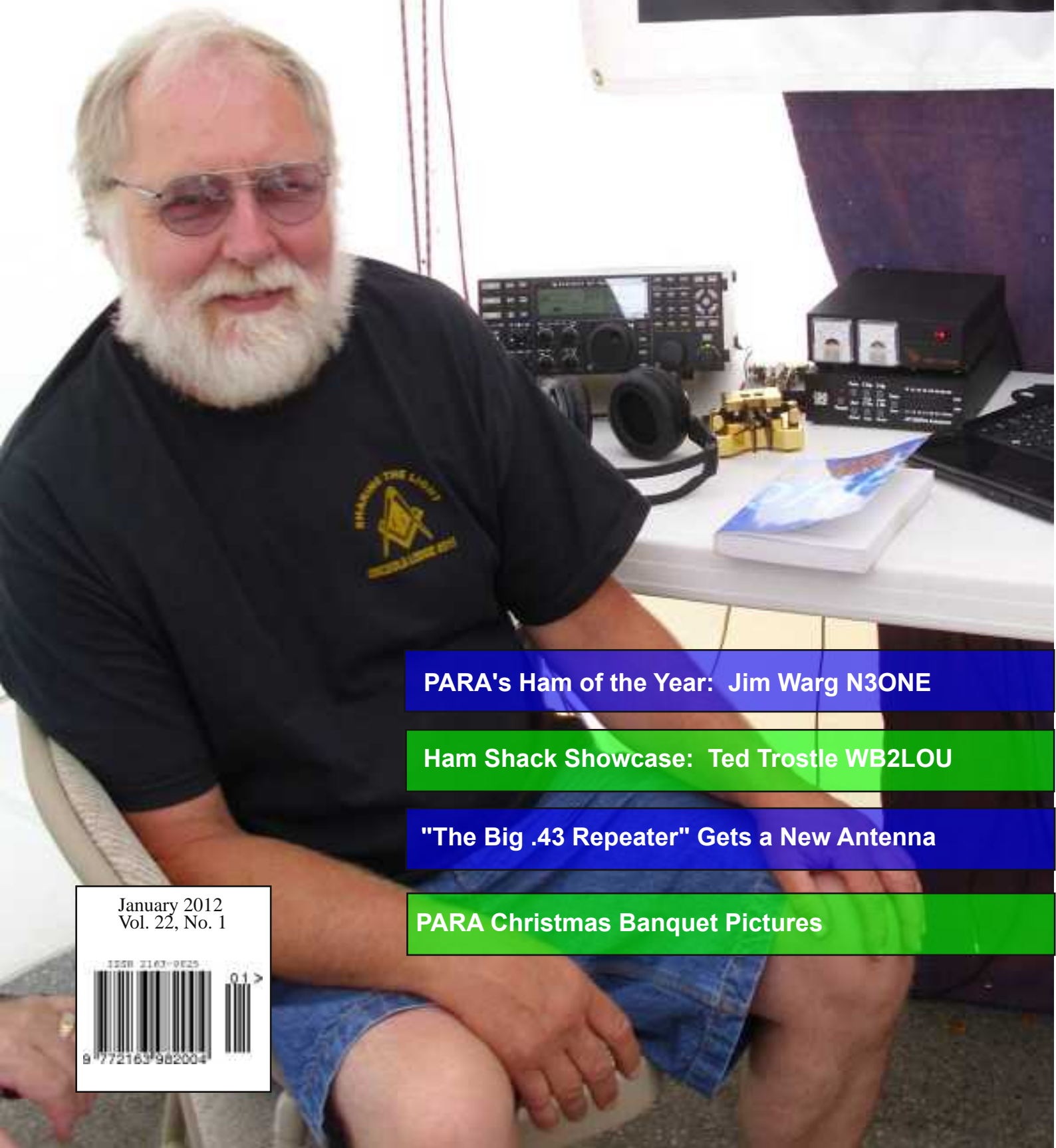


# PARA Connections

Official Journal of the Philipsburg Amateur Radio Association



**PARA's Ham of the Year: Jim Warg N3ONE**

**Ham Shack Showcase: Ted Trostle WB2LOU**

**"The Big .43 Repeater" Gets a New Antenna**

**PARA Christmas Banquet Pictures**

January 2012  
Vol. 22, No. 1



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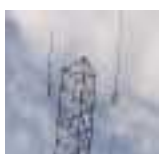
# PARA Connections

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### ON THE COVER:

Pictured is Jerry Bush WA3GFL at the 2010 Philipsburg Heritage Days Special Event Station W3P. In the background is the CW station which includes Dave AA3EJ's Electrakraft K3.

## PARA Leadership

### President

Dave Runk AA3EJ

### Vice President

Filip Cerny AB3HK

### Secretary

John Szwarc N3SPW

### Treasurer

Jim Warg N3ONE

### Interclub Liaison

Dick Thompson K3BIE

### VE Testing Coordinator

Joe Howe KB3CBN

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*PARA Connections* includes the *PARA News* (est. 1992) newsletter.

Membership in PARA includes a subscription to *PARA Connections*. Licensed amateur radio operators and unlicensed individuals are eligible for membership. Membership is free, but an annual donation of \$15 is suggested. Membership information is available at [www.philipsburg-ara.org](http://www.philipsburg-ara.org).

*PARA Connections* is Edited by John Szwarc N3SPW. 417 2nd Street, Kylertown PA 16847



The Philipsburg Amateur Radio Association is an American Radio Relay League Affiliated club.

# 2012 PARA Ham of the Year

## Jim Warg N3ONE

It has become a custom of PARA to announce the recipient of the PARA Ham of the Year Award at the Christmas Banquet. His year the banquet was held on Saturday December 10th and it was announced that the PARA Ham of the Year is Jim Warg N3ONE.

Jim has faithfully served as PARA's Treasurer since 1995 - 16 years! Jim has always made time to help new hams get started and offer advice. He is a member of the PARA VE Testing Team holding both W5YI and ARRL VE credentials and has assisted with the various repeater projects PARA has undertaken over the years. This award couldn't have gone to a more deserving person. Congratulations Jim!

Back in 1994 Jim wrote an article for the PARA News (the title of PARA's newsletter at that time) which detailed his life long radio journey which ultimately resulted in becoming a licensed amateur radio operator. As a tribute to Jim, that article is being reprinted here.



Jim and Ilo Warg at the 2009 Philipsburg Amateur Radio Picnic. The location was the picnic pavilion next to the Chester Hill Boro building.

PARA News -- January 1994  
By Jim Warg N3ONE

My radio interests date back to the late 1940's to early 1950's. As I recall, it started with building crystal sets and eventually one or two tube receivers. We only had one local AM radio station in Bethlehem PA that was WGPA. Success with the old crystal set and other radios depended on my budget for ground and antenna

wire. These were put up numerous times for various reasons. Also, the whisker-crystal contact was extremely important. The old set played constantly as long as the station was on the air. In fact it played so well my mother thought people were in my room talking when it was vacant.

Eventually as FM and television made more headway I inherited the family Silvertone radio which covered some HF bands. As a side interest I also sat down one day and figured out how to build a battery powered phone system to keep in touch with local friends. The phones could be disconnected, but on occasion were left on by mistake for others to hear some interesting

conversation not intended outside the family. This, along with the constant battle to keep up the lines led to the end of the system.

After high school graduation I entered the US Army Corps of Engineers and again had some contact with radio. While stationed in Korea (16 month tour of duty)

some of my hours, while running generators on night duty, were spent in the Battalion HQ radio shack tuning the HF receivers to transmission around the world, but mostly out of Australia. The radio group also started a course on radio fundamentals which unfortunately lasted a short time. After returning to the states and later civilian life I bought a Hammarland HQ 100 A-7 tube receiver. For the next twenty years I listened to HF bands as much as possible never having an antenna which lasted very long due to trees being cut down. This prompted me to take down and rebuild an old 80 foot company radio tower over a period of two to three months. The slow process also gave others a chance to get somewhat used to a tower in the yard, neighbors and my wife in particular.

At this time I took a more serious look at amateur radio and became licensed. I started looking at modern equipment and was shocked at the progress made since the old days. After a few months and following the advice of my brother-in-law K1ZKR, I bought a Kenwood TS-850S along

with the appropriate accessory equipment. I now stood fast with an operable transceiver and 80 meter dipole antenna.

On a local basis I was still more or less on my own, no elmer for guidance. This changed when



Jim and Ilo Warg at the 2010 PARA Christmas Banquet which was held at the Moshannon Valley Superbowl.

W1DHD Dave Runk spotted my dipole and introduced himself about a year ago. I had been studying for my technician license but had little outside contact with the hobby until then. Dave, now upgraded to AA3EJ, kept me from slipping into low gear, especially with the 13 WPM code requirement. At the end of January '93 Dave upgraded and I passed several elements with enough credit to become eventually licensed as Tech Plus. After one more session in February at which time Dave became an Amateur Extra Class. Come April after continued studying during the winter months, I passed my Advanced element, at the same time Norm VanCleve (*Editor's Note: Norm's call sign is N3PJA and he now resides in Akron Ohio*), sitting next to me, was on his way to becoming a Technician Class licensee. After many months of continued practice and pep talks from Dave, I passed the 13 WPM code test and upgraded. After accomplishing I would say it takes some dedication by oneself as well as others living with you during this time.

At this time I'll just sit back a while, support the club activities and get caught up with other things. It's a great hobby and well worth all the effort, especially with help from club members.

# The Big 43 Repeater Antenna

As surely everyone in the area already knows, The "Big .43 Repeater"<sup>TM</sup> is currently off the air. The problem was a faulty antenna and we are awaiting the installation of a brand new Telewave ANT150D6-9 antenna. This 4-dipole array design will allow us to create a custom directional signal and fill in some of the nulls in our coverage area.

The purchase of this antenna was made possible by a loan to PARA funded by a member. This loan allowed us to order the antenna. In addition to the cost of the antenna, PARA will need to pay for professional installation costs as well as related mast, mast support and miscellaneous parts. While PARA members were contributing funds to repay the loan, the PARA member who funded the loan decided to cancel the loan. This allows PARA to use the funds collected so far for the expected installation costs.

At this time PARA is waiting for the ComPros tower crew to install the new antenna. The most recent communications from ComPros indicated they were planning to install the antenna the week of January 9th 2012. We have instructed the tower crew to arrange the antenna elements such that a cardioid radiation pattern is created. The intended coverage area sweeps from Bellefonte/State College to the east, south to Altoona and Philipsburg and turning west to Clearfield and Treasure Lake. The "sweet spot" in the coverage area is intended to be the Philipsburg area.



Shown here is a photo of the Centre County EMA tower on Rattlesnake Mountain which is home to PARA's .43 Repeater. This photo shows the antenna that failed and is in the process of being replaced.

In November 2011 the "Big .43 Repeater"<sup>TM</sup> started acting up.

Several PARA members visited the repeater site and tested the antenna with a SWR meter. It read a 9:1 SWR -- Something is drastically wrong up there! Replacement of the antenna was the only logical action and PARA began the task of planning for its replacement. The "Big .43 Repeater"<sup>TM</sup> has been off the air since early November.

**PARA Weekly Net**  
**Saturdays at 9 PM**  
**146.430 Repeater**

**LOOK** → Keep up on PARA activities and stay in touch with local hams by participating in the PARA Weekly Net.

**PARA** An Amateur Radio Organization Serving Clearfield and Centre Counties  
**ORGANIZED NOVEMBER 1982** **W3PHB**

## Some .43 History

February 16th marks the 4th anniversary of PARA placing the new 146.430 (+1 MHz offset) repeater into service at 15:50 hours local time in 2008. The idea of building this repeater was hatched in mid 2007 and gained momentum as the funds to accomplish this project became available.

As PARA officials continued to negotiate with Centre County EMA officials about the possible use of a surplus 911 tower along US 322 in Rush Township, it was decided to temporarily locate the repeater at Jim N3ONE's QTH in Philipsburg with a temporary antenna on his 100 foot tower.

The original repeater consisted of a GE Master II E radio which had been modified for duplex operation. We started with a 110 watt Master II radio which was backed down to 75 watts. Temperature compensated crystals were used so it would have as little drift as possible, as well as a TS-64 CTCSS board which could be remotely activated and deactivated.

The controller was a NHRC-4 basic controller. The antenna temporary antenna was a Diamond F22-A with 6.7db of gain. The duplexer was a Sinclair 4-can set and the power supply was a standard Astron RS35M.

Negotiations with Centre County EMA produced an unexpected result with the tower along US 322 not being the final location. Instead PARA was offered the use of a different, also surplus, Centre County EMA tower on Rattlesnake Mountain and on December 3rd 2008 the 146.430 repeater was moved from Jim N3ONE's QTH to the new Rattlesnake Mountain site. The repeater remains there today.

In 2010 PARA member Paul W3PRL coined the phrase "the big .43 repeater" when speaking about the .43. As fate would have it, the phrase stuck and you will often hear local hams referring to this repeater as "The Big .43 Repeater".

### Special Event Station **W3P**



Philipsburg Heritage Days

July 9 - 16, 2012



# PARA President's Report



includes a new roof, new laundry orr/electronic build bench area

and screened porch for next spring and summer usage. This past event now completed for the PARA organization included the annual banquet with Jim Warg N3ONE being awarded "Ham of The Year" - congrats to him as he is currently the treasurer of the PARA club.

We are anxiously awaiting the installation of the new .43 repeater commercial antenna which will enable the .43 repeater to be functional again being heard all around this central PA area. This will be done weather permitting and then we will concentrate on the "echo-link" for other out-of-range stations to check into our saturday night night. Lou WB3AAI now in FL and checking his tan can hardly wait!!.

Hope you all have a nice

Christmas holiday and looking forward to hearing you on the HF bands soon. Have a nice holiday..

David Runk, aa3ej Pres.  
PARA



Many Talents: Pictured here is PARA President Dave AA3EJ performing on stage at the 2010 Grange Fair in Centre Hall PA. Photo by Dick Thompson K3BIE.

Well it's now almost winter and the garden tools and lawn mower put away for the winter, the snow shovel and blower are now taking front seat..and hope all the antenna projects have been completed cuz its going to get chilly with white stuff on the ground shortly.

Hope you all had a nice Thanksgiving holiday and as we approach another holiday we need to reflect upon the opter projects which havn't been completed. In my case I have completed a total renovation of my QTH which

## November Meeting Minutes

Members in Attendance: John N3SPW, Leo K3UMT, Jim N3ONE, Filip AB3HK, Dave AA3EJ, Joe KB3CBN, Sal WA3SAL, Dick K3BIE. Meeting called to order by President Dave AA3EJ at 15:17 UTC.

Treasurer's Report –PARA Treasurer Jim N3ONE reported that the Treasury had a total of \$800 at the start of the meeting. At the meeting an additional \$386 was received from the membership. After these donations are deposited, the total will be \$1,186.

Repeater Reports – Discussion led by Filip AB3HK. "The Big .43 Repeater" 146.430 (+1 MHz, PL 173.8 Hz) repeater – The new Telewave ANT150D6-9 was ordered on November 1, 2011 from RF Specialties, Inc. in Ebensburg Pennsylvania. They gave an estimated shipping arrival date of November 10, although it has not yet arrived. The cost of this antenna was \$996 and was funded with a loan from a PARA member. The antenna is not shipped with a support mast. A discussion ensued about the best material and suppliers

for the support mast.

444.750+(PL 173.8Hz) repeater – operating normally with no reported issues. PARA had previously decided to place this repeater up for sale to provide funds for the .43 repeater antenna project. Based on the treasurer's report, it appears this is not necessary. It was decided to remove this repeater from the www.eHam.com listings and not to sell it. Further, a discussion took place about the possibility of re-purposing this repeater at a different location where it might get more use. Discussion tabled without action.

146.640-(PL173.8Hz) repeater – A new Diamond 6 db gain antenna was installed. Reports are that coverage was significantly improved with the added gain.

144.390 PARS Digi-peater – operating normally with no reported issues.

VE Testing – Joe KB3CBN reports that there are no candidates for the scheduled testings session following the meeting. Leo K3UMT suggested approaching the Boy Scouts to recruit new hams radio

operators. John N3SPW was directed to get in touch with Rich KB3QKR about setting up a demo for the scouts in the spring. Report at next meeting.

PARA Christmas Banquet – Report given by John N3SPW. The Christmas Banquet will be on Saturday December 10 at the Philips Hotel in Philipsburg. Reservations are appreciated so we can give the restaurant an estimate of the number expected.

HT Raffle – for PARA Members only – In an effort to raise funds, PARA will raffle off a new-in-the-box Alinco 2-meter band HT. This will be done at the January 2012 meeting. Chances will be \$5 each. You need not be present to win, but you must be a PARA member and the money must be received prior to the drawing. This drawing is not available to the general public.

Next PARA meeting on Saturday January 14th at 3 PM. Meeting adjourned by President Dave AA3RJ at 16:23 UTC.

### Centre County RACES / ARES



**Carmine Prestia K3CWP**  
ARES Emergency  
Coordinator  
RACES Radio Officer

RACES Sponsored Repeater:  
W3GA 146.760- (PL 146.2 Hz) Rattlesnake Mountain

ARES / RACES Net:  
Sundays 9 PM on the 146.850 (PL 146.2 Hz) repeater

No report was submitted for Centre County ARES/RACES.

### Clearfield County RACES / ARES



**Mike Errigo WB3EQW**  
ARES Emergency  
Coordinator  
RACES Radio Officer

RACES Sponsored Repeater:  
N3QC 147.315+ (PL 173.8 Hz) Rockton Mountain

ARES / RACES Net:  
Sundays 7:30 PM on 147.315 (PL 173.8 Hz) repeater

On Thursday January 12th at 7PM, the Clearfield County ARES/RACES group will hold their first meeting at the Clearfield 911 Center. Since this is the first meeting we will be discussing how we will organize so that we can cover the emergency radio needs of Clearfield County. Since we only have about ten amateurs who participate at this time, we will be combining ARES and RACES in Clearfield County. If you research both groups you will note that they cover different phases of an emergency situation. Our goal will be to use our resources to cover all of what ever emergency occurs. This is not a unique arrangement. The entire state of Wisconsin is served by a combined group of RACES and ARES. When researching counties in Pennsylvania, I found that Centre County is also served by RACES/ARES.

Currently we hold a weekly ARES net on the 147.315 repeater at 7:30pm on Sunday evenings. So whether you are interested in either or both services, please check in with us as we define our roles for Clearfield County. So please plan on attending our first meeting.

**When Only The Best will Do**



**Coffee Mugs  
T-Shirts  
And Other  
PARA Logo Merchandise**

[www.cafepress.com/philipsburgara/](http://www.cafepress.com/philipsburgara/)

## Paul Lowes W3PRL Named WPA Section Traffic Manager

### PARA Member Since 2008

Bulliten from  
John Rodgers N3MSE  
ARRL WPA Section Manager  
December 29, 2011

With the passing of Bob Bashaw, W3ZEH, recently I have selected Paul Lowes, W3PRL, as the new section traffic manager. Bob's passing was quite a shock as I had spent time chatting with him at WACOM hamfest last month. I will miss Bob as a friend and colleague.

All section traffic reports and traffic net reports should be sent to Paul either via the wpa traffic net on 3983 at 6 PM every evening or via email at w3prl@arrl.net

Thanks to Paul for stepping up an taking on this job. Please congratulate Paul and give him your cooperation.

It's always a good feeling to see hams who got their start with PARA to step up to the plate and take on new and bigger things. And that's certainly the case with Paul Lowes W3PRL. Paul's acceptance of the WPA Section Traffic Manager position is a huge step and I'm sure he will do well in this position.

Paul sat for his Technician VE test at a PARA VE testing session in 2008. He was granted the call sign

KB3QKQ and later applied for the vanity call sign W3PRL. In 2011



Paul Lowes W3PRL is the new ARRL WPA Section Traffic Manager. Paul is shown here at his new shack in New Kensington PA.

Paul earned his General Class ticket and is currently studying for the Extra Class exam. Last year Paul moved from Grampian to New Kensington PA where he now resides. Paul has become a very active ham radio operator and has recently become proficient with CW and now has six CW QSO's in his

logbook.

Congratulations Paul!



### **Ted Trostle WB2LOU** January 2012 Ham Shack Showcase

**A**s a child born in Bellefonte and raised in State College, I started becoming interested in electrical things when my 5th grade teacher showed me a shortwave radio. An Uncle gave me an Atwaterkent radio which had a few short wave bands. I would spend many hours tuning and listening.

Sometime during my 8th grade I discovered the Penn State Amateur Radio station and learned that they were a primary link with the Kon Tiki expedition. During that summer in 1947, I listened to the communications between PSU and the Kon Tiki.

While I went on to college, served in the US Army Signal Corp, plus marriage and raising a family, I never lost the desire to be licensed. Finally I was licensed in March 1977 while working on Long Island, NY and upgraded to the Advanced class the same year. For a brief time I operated a small amateur radio retail business. In 1979 I became the ARES Emergency Coordinator for Suffolk County, NY during which I managed 2 comm centers during a minor hurricane that swept across Long Island. I returned to State College in 1981 and became the ARES Emergency Coordinator for Centre County.

I have earned the WAS CW endorsement and the DXCC SSB and CW endorsements.

My station at one time was an extensive well equipped operation. However, I have scaled down over the past several years. Currently I run a FLEX 3000 and an ICOM 746 barefoot into a Windom OCD antenna at 35 feet.

Ninety-five percent of my air time is using various digital modes like HRD, MultiPSK, HRI Winmor TNC and recently I have been experimenting with EasyPal a new digital HD TV mode on 20 meters.

# PARA 2011 Christmas Banquet



On Saturday December 10th PARA members gathered for the annual PARA Christmas Banquet. The venue was the 1921 Restaurant inside the newly renovated Philips Hotel in downtown Philipsburg.

The food was spectacular and the company was even better.

Over the years PARA has held the Christmas Banquet at different locations. This year was the first for the 1921 Restaurant. Everyone seemed pleased with the atmosphere and quality of the service. In 2010 the Christmas Banquet was held at the Superbowl bowling alley in the private dining room. This was a nice private room, but was a bit on the noisy

side due to the bowling activities going on just feet away from our dining room.

Long-time PARA members may recall the 1994 and 1995 Christmas Banquets when PARA joined with the Quad Counties Amateur Radio Club (Clearfield) and the Nittany Amateur Radio Club (State College) for a combined event at the Harbor Inn in Philipsburg. Sadly nobody seems interested in this type of cooperation

anymore. For the past three years PARA officials have raised the idea of a combined event for all the clubs only to be rebuffed with "our members don't want to drive that far". Maybe some day in the future area amateur radio club leaders will see the value in bringing our members together and once again gather for a combined event.

Plans have not yet been made for the 2012 PARA Christmas Banquet. As soon as information becomes available it will be posted on the PARA web site at [www.philipsburg-ara.org](http://www.philipsburg-ara.org).

