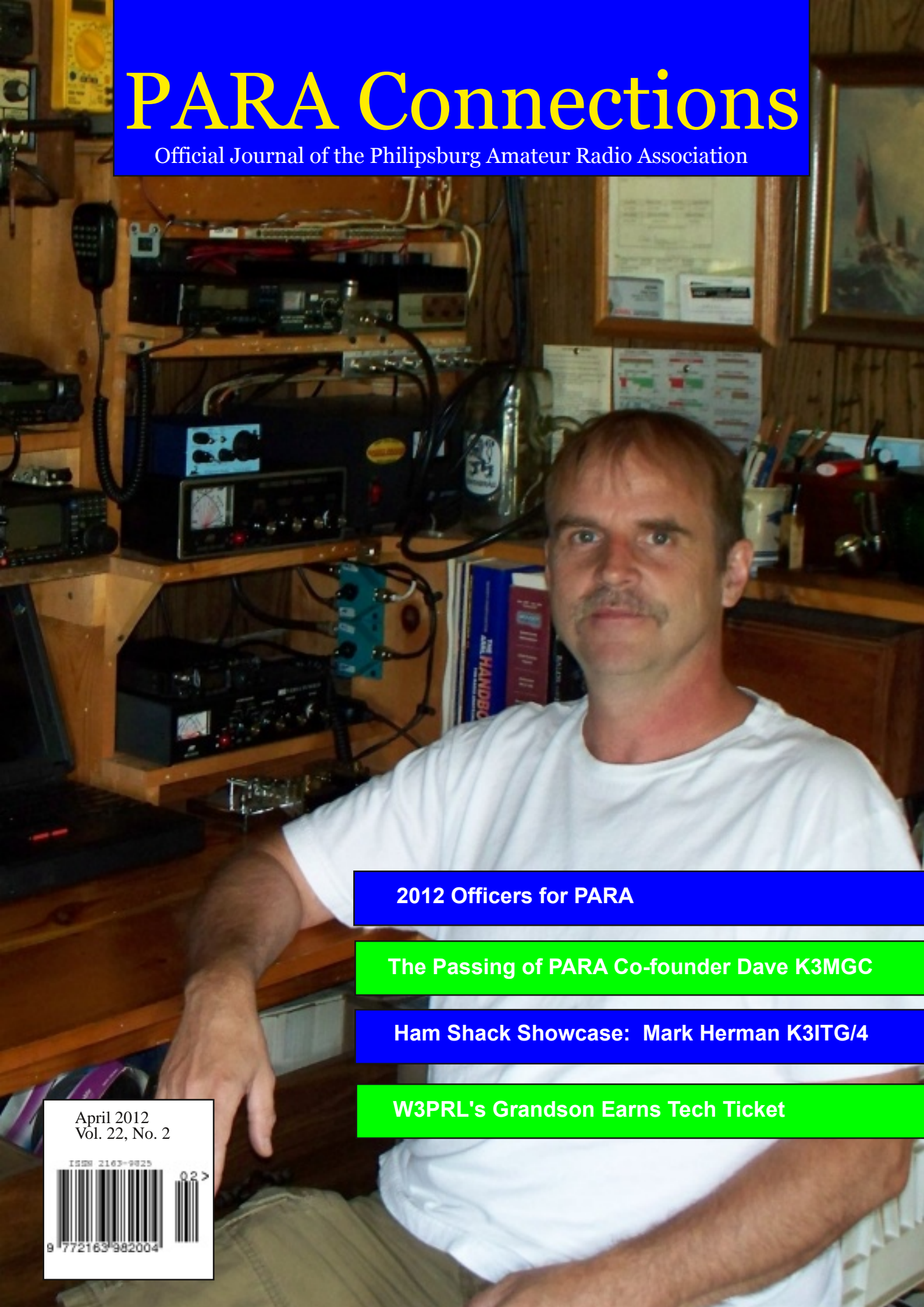


# PARA Connections

Official Journal of the Philipsburg Amateur Radio Association



2012 Officers for PARA

The Passing of PARA Co-founder Dave K3MGC

Ham Shack Showcase: Mark Herman K3ITG/4

W3PRL's Grandson Earns Tech Ticket

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# PARA Connections

Official Journal of the Philipsburg Amateur Radio Association

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### ON THE COVER:

Pictured is PARA's new President Filip AB3HK in his ham shack.

### PARA Leadership

#### President

Filip Cerny AB3HK

#### Vice President

Scott Rummings W3EOD

#### 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.



# The Passing of Dave Posmoga K3MGC

On Tuesday January 31, 2012 Dave Posmoga K3MGC passed away at Mountain Laurel Nursing Home in Clearfield. He was 64 years old.

Dave had struggled health-wise for the past couple of years. But he was always his same cheerful self when fellow hams would encounter him at the grocery store or just stopped by his QTH for a visit.

Most of us will recall Dave as having been one of the two founding members of PARA back in 1992. Dave was part of the PARA VE Testing team, he was the brains behind establishing the 146.640 repeater, and served in various official capacities in our organization over the years. In 2007 PARA honored Dave for his efforts and contributions to PARA by awarding him the PARA Ham of the Year award. One of the people that nominated Dave for that award described him as "always helpful, supportive of all activities, and friendly". Many hams living in the Philipsburg area have, at one time or another, called upon Dave for advice or help for various projects. Dave always made time to help fellow hams out and will be missed.

The local newspaper "The Progress" carried a short notice about Dave's passing on Thursday February 2nd, 2012. According to the article, arrangements were handled by the Reed Funeral Home



In 2007 Dave was honored by being awarded the PARA Ham of the Year Award.

in Houtzdale.

May he rest in peace.

What follows is an article Dave had written for PARA News back in 1993. At that time Dave was the Vice President of PARA and actively working towards building a future for our group.

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## Some Thoughts on Amateur Radio by Dave Posmoga K3MGC February 1993 PARA News

Having been a ham for over thirty-three years, I thought it might be interesting to impart some observations about ham radio, especially to some of the newcomers in our club.

It just seems like yesterday when I received my novice license. Back then I was a young teenager who wanted to talk to the world, but alas, I didn't like the code so the only alternative was to go on 2 meter phone. AM that is. There was no such thing as FM or repeaters. Everything was either crystal controlled or VFO. And when you called CQ you tuned the entire 2 meter band hoping someone would call you back. Of course today it's quite different.

I have had many people over the years as me just what is ham radio? Is it a hobby, a service or what?

Amateur radio operators are licensed by the FCC in the interest, necessity and convenience of the public good. Until the end of World War II they were considered a vast resource by the military in time of war to be drawn upon as radio operators. They contributed heavily in the research and development of many of the technologies that we take for granted today. In just about every company that deals in electronics you will find hams who are technicians and engineers alike.

From the early nineteen hundreds until approximately the early nineteen sixties most hams built a lot of their own equipment. Hams were not only savvy in the theory of electronics but practically applied that theory in building their own equipment. This came about out of necessity since most commercial equipment was way out of the price range of many.

So, are we still considered by the

military to be a vast resource? I think not. But I do believe we are still considered a resource in providing communications on a local level to government agencies such as the Red Cross and Civil Defense agencies during times of need.

Is amateur radio a hobby? Probably by many hams and non-hams alike amateur radio is looked



Pictured here is Dave K3MGC talking with Jim N3ONE and Bill N3ZCN at the 2007 PARA Picnic, held at Cold Stream Dam Park.

upon as a hobby. We certainly do not receive money for our efforts in communications. Than what do we receive? Possibly the gratification of talking to another ham in a far away country, learning about electronics or using the many benefits of ham radio as a stepping stone into a profession or career in the varied and many fields of electronics and communications.

Whatever ham radio is, it certainly is not dull. There are so many facets of ham radio today that it can keep you busy for many years to come.

Our newly formed club PARA (Philipsburg Amateur Radio Association) welcomes all to join. Since our club President Dave Runk (W1DHD) passed his Amateur Extra Class license we have found that there are enough of us who are properly licensed to become VE's, Volunteer Examiners. These are hams who can administer the amateur radio tests. And we'll be located right here in Philipsburg.

As with any club, we depend on our members to keep things moving. If you would like to give a talk about any part of ham radio, by all means do so.

We are also in need of your input to make things better for you as members. Possibly you would like to write an article for the newsletter. Anything that you can contribute would be appreciated.

# New PARA Officers for 2012

At the January PARA meeting a new slate of officers were elected to serve the PARA members. The term for these officers is one year and will expire with the conclusion of the January 2013 PARA business meeting. While some faces changed, others stayed the same. The officers are as follows:

**President:** Philip AB3HK. Filip most recently served PARA as Vice President and has enthusiastically accepted the role of President. Filip continues to serve as the W3PHB Repeater Trustee, a position which he has held for the past five years as well as a Net control station for the PARA Weekly Net.

**Vice President:** Scott W3EOD. Scott is new to the PARA leadership scene and had not previously held any PARA elected office. Scott has become a fixture at the PARA meetings and has contributed his thoughts on technical issues that affect our collection of repeaters. One interesting fact about Scott that many may not be aware of is that Scott once owned a company that manufactured and sold repeater controller cards.

**Secretary:** John N3SPW. John held the position of PARA Secretary in 2011, as well as having held the same elected position back in 1995. John has also held the office of PARA President in the past and continues to be the PARA Connections newsletter editor. In addition John holds the title of Assistant Director of the ARRL Atlantic Division, as well as the North 2 District

**Emergency Coordinator** for the Western Pennsylvania Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES).

**Treasurer:** Jim N3ONE. Jim is one of the un-sung heroes of PARA. He has held the position of Treasurer since at least 1995. Club records from the early years are a bit sparse, but suffice it to say that Jim has been a continuous PARA supporter and we are thankful for all of his efforts.

**Inter-Club Liaison:** Dick K3BIE. Dick has held this position with PARA for the past four years. His function is to act as an "ambassador" on behalf of PARA to other amateur radio clubs in the region. Dick also is an active member of the neighboring Nittany Amateur Radio Club (NARC) and is the editor of that club's "NARC Newsette" publication.

**VE Testing Coordinator:** Joe KB3CBN. Joe took on the role of VE Testing Coordinator in 2011 and continues to hold this position. It is Joe's function to organize volunteer examiner sessions and ensure that the PARA VE testing team is doing everything properly.

It is also noteworthy to mention how Dave AA3EJ has served PARA and our gratitude for his efforts. In 2011 Dave was President, which was the second time that Dave held that position. The first time was at the

club's founding. Dave is one of the two founding members of PARA and always been available to offer advice and assistance to new hams. Recently Dave has been working with a local ham as a mentor in the process of mastering CW operations on the HF bands. Yes, CW is alive and well and I'm sure Dave would be happy to help others master CW as well. Just drop him a line. Dave, thank you for your time and effort to make this hobby fun and exciting for all of us in the local area. You made a difference and helped bring more than a few people along in the hobby.

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

## Share the Hobby

Almost all of us have had the experience of having others ask us exactly what a ham radio operator is. Maybe they were a guest in our homes. Or a tradesman that came to fix the furnace, for example. They were interested enough to ask what all that electronic gear was and maybe you did your best to answer their questions. But did you ask them if they might be interested in getting their amateur radio license?

In 2012 we see the ARRL reporting the expanding number of ham radio operators in the United States. There are more licensed hams now than at any time in the past. But locally growth has been very slow. It is up to us to change this. When someone asks about your ham shack, why not bring them in and let them try to make a HF contact or two? Why not let them get a taste of what its like

to be a ham radio operator?

Once someone expresses interest be sure to work with them, follow up and maybe even supply them with a study book for the Technician class license. PARA has a number of Technician Class study books that are available for loan to interested individuals. It won't cost you a cent to help someone along and maybe you will make a new ham radio operator in the process.

The study manuals are in the possession of Joe KB3CBN, the PARA VE Testing Coordinator. If you know of someone that might be interested in becoming a licensed ham radio operator, contact Joe and he can help you get the ball rolling.

**Special Event Station**  
**W3P**

Philipsburg Heritage Days  
July 9 - 16, 2012

**PARA** An Amateur Radio Organization Serving Clearfield and Centre Counties ORGANIZED NOVEMBER 1962 **W3PHB**



# PARA President's Report: AB3HK



At last, winter has begun the annual move to the southern half of our planet, and I am pleased to see Orion the hunter disappear into the western sky. Signs of Spring are everywhere, and I am at the moment eagerly waiting for the clubs annual trip to the ham-fest at the Timonium fairgrounds. There is always much to see, and hopefully all will find something to bring home. It is always good to see somebody else's junk, and realize that our own ham-shacks are not that badly cluttered. It could always be worse, as evidenced by some of the vendors displays.

Our annual special event station W3P for Philipsburg Heritage days is shaping up to be a three-day extravaganza, featuring:

food, friends, lots of sunshine, and of course, radio. Not necessarily in that order. All are welcome to attend, antennas and power (120 VAC) will be provided, bring your field gear, and above all, have fun. I urge all of you to at least stop by for a pizza, and say hello. The station will be open for operation on the following dates: July 11, 12, and 13, from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM local time. You will find us on Front Street in Philipsburg. Be there or be square.

It cannot be all good news, so here is a little of the not so good news. Our new 146.430 repeater has been, until recently, working very well. As of about two weeks ago, the repeater has suffered from quite a few episodes of de-sense, which is to say, at the very least, extremely frustrating. The problem appears and disappears without warning, or apparent cause. I am fairly confident that we will find the cause of this problem, and make it go away. In the mean time, we may have to, on occasion, commandeer the 146.760 repeater for our activities. In advance, I would like to thank the NARC club for their understanding, their patience, and their cooperation regarding this

matter. A fellow ham recently stated "if you would like to live a stress free ham radio hobby, do not maintain a repeater". So noted, I thanked him for his kind advice.

Our Saturday night club net has been going very well, and everyone is welcome to stop by and say hello. It's easy, it's fun, and it's free. You will find the gang either on the 146.430, or the 146.760 every Saturday night, 9:00 PM local time. Be there or be square.

In closing, I would like to thank everyone for their financial support, and their continued efforts to advance the clubs' mission. That is: to help each other in times of technical difficulties, to offer moral support in times of personal setbacks, to offer humor when something smokes in the ham-shack, to offer communication at public events when we are able, to provide communications in times of crises, and above all, to be kind to our animal friends.

Hope to see you at the next club meeting, be there or be square. 73 everybody!

## January Meeting Minutes

### Members in Attendance:

John N3SPW, Bernie W3BAR, Dick K3BIE, Dave AA3EJ, John Jr., Filip AB3HK, Scott W3EOD, Jim N3ONE.

Meeting called to order by President Dave AA3EJ.

Raffle was held for a new Alinco DJ-17T HT. All tickets were placed into a coffee can and John Jr. pulled the winning ticket. The winner was Bernie W3BAR. The raffle generated \$155 for PARA which will be deposited into the treasury.

Repeater Reports – Discussion led by Filip AB3HK.

146.640-(PL173.8Hz) repeater – operating normally with no reported issues. The PL is turned on to help with some RF noise at the site. Theory is that it is the building's furnace causing the interference.

444.750+(PL 173.8Hz) repeater – operating normally with no reported issues.

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

"The Big .43 Repeater" 146.430 (+1 MHz, PL 173.8 Hz) repeater – The new Telewave ANT150D6-9 is currently waiting at ComPros in Altoona for them to install it. John N3SPW to follow up with them next week to inquire when it

PARA CONNECTIONS

will be installed.

EchoLink – It was discussed and decided to turn our EchoLink node back on. The link will be temporarily directed at the 146.640 repeater until the .43 repeater is brought back on line.

PARA Christmas Banquet – A date was set for the 2012 PAA Christmas Banquet. Saturday December 1st.. N3SPW to investigate possible locations and report at the February meeting.

VE Testing – PARA VE Coordinator Joe KB3CBN was not present at the meeting. A brief discussion about approaching the Boy Scouts to set up an opportunity for them to become familiar with amateur radio. Discussion tabled to February meeting.

Treasurer's Report – PARA Treasurer Jim N3ONE reported that the Treasury had a total of \$1,338 which includes the proceeds from today's raffle. There are no outstanding bills other than the anticipated installation costs from the .43 repeater antenna.

Election of Officers for 2012: An election of officers for 2012 was held with the following results – President Filip AB3HK, Vice President Scott W3EOD, Secretary John N3SPW, Treasurer Jim N3ONE, Inter-Club Liaison Dick K3BIE and VE Coordinator Joe KB3CBN. Joe was not present to accept this position so his

appointment to this position is tentative based upon his decision to accept it.

Newsletter – It was decided that the PARA Connections newsletter should include the e-mail addresses and phone numbers of our association's officers. The next issue will contain this information.

Philipsburg Heritage Days – Dave AA3EJ mentioned that the Boro's Heritage Days Committee has begun their meetings and planning for the 2012 event. Topic tabled to February meeting.

Incorporation and Non-Profit status – A discussion ensued about the possibility of incorporating PARA and the potential benefits of becoming an official non-profit organization in the eyes of the IRS. John N3SPW will investigate the costs and procedures and report back at the February meeting.

Meeting Notice Post Cards – It was noted that attendance at PARA meetings is better on months when a post card is mailed to members reminding them of the meeting. It was decided to resume this practice.

Next PARA meeting on Saturday February 11th at 3 PM. The meeting will include a "Show and Tell". Bring your latest, or vintage, communications related gear to show off.

Meeting adjourned by President Dave AA3EJ.

### 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

The Clearfield County ARES-RACES group holds their meetings at the Clearfield County 911 Center on the second Thursday of each month. All Clearfield County amateur radio operators are welcome to attend the meetings and participate.

Recently ARES-RACES members finished re-programming the amateur radios in the county 911 center building. The radios are now programmed so they can communicate with any repeater in range of the 911 center building.

In addition Scott W3EOD presented a talk at a ARES-RACES meeting on the subject of the Narrow Band Emergency Messaging System (NBEMS) and it's potential uses in emergency communications work.

Currently we hold a weekly ARES net on the 147.315 repeater at 7:30pm on Sunday evenings. Please check in with us and consider becoming involved in the Clearfield County ARES-RACES Group.

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 W3PRL's Grandson Derrick Henry Earns Technician Ham Ticket

There's big news -- PARA member Paul W3PRL's grandson Derrick passed his FCC Technician Class test exam on his birthday, March 15th, at the Skyview Radio Society in New Kensington PA. 15 year old Derrick now holds the call sign KB3YJR. Some of you may recall Derrick participating in a PARA weekly net or two when Grandpa Paul still lived in Grampian. Derrick seemed to be having lots of fun and apparently developed a lasting interest in the hobby.



Photo: Courtesy W3PRL

Pictured left to right is Evan (Derrick's brother), Derrick KB3YJR with Skyview ARS VE Bob Worek AG3U.

On Derrick's QRZ.COM page he says "I have been around ham radio for about two years now. I enjoy the hobby and all aspects of ham radio." "My Grandfather W3PRL has Elmered me along the way". Congratulations Paul and Derrick!

## PARA HT Raffle

At the January PARA meeting a raffle was held for a new Alinco DJ-175 HT. This was intended to be a fund raiser for the organization and have a little fun in the process. Chances were one dollar each. Bernie W3BAR was the winner.



Pictured is Bernie W3BAR with his new Alinco DJ-175 HT which was raffled off at the January PARA meeting.

# February Meeting Minutes

Members in attendance:  
 Dave AA3EJ, Dick K3BIE,  
 Bernie W3BAR, Jim N3ONE, John  
 N3SPW, Filip AB3HK, Leo  
 K3UMT.

Meeting was called to order by  
 President Filip AB3HK at 3:12 pm  
 local time.

Library Meeting Room: Dick  
 K3BIE presented to those in  
 attendance a new form from the  
 library which outlined the  
 acceptable uses of the library's  
 meeting room. It was decided to  
 accept the new terms. Dick was  
 appointed as the PARA contact  
 person for the library and was  
 instructed to sign the form and  
 return it to the library.

Repeater Reports – Discussion  
 led by Filip AB3HK.

The Big 43 Repeater – Since the  
 last meeting the Big 43 Repeater  
 was put back on the air. The new  
 antenna is resulting in excellent  
 coverage. It was felt the antenna  
 made a big difference.

The tower crew that installed  
 the new .43 antenna mentioned that  
 birds were apparently picking at the  
 coax which was allowing some  
 water into the line. They fixed  
 things as best they could and dried  
 out the transmission line before  
 putting everything back together. It  
 appears that their efforts were a  
 success, although we may want to  
 consider replacing the coax line at  
 some point in the future.

A brief discussion was held on

what to do with the old .43 repeater RF  
 deck. It was decided to hold this  
 equipment as a spare.

All other repeaters are working  
 without any known issues.

EchoLink – Discussed options  
 which would solve the issues our  
 EchoLink node is having. The PARA  
 EchoLink node is housed at John  
 N3SPW's QTH. The Internet service  
 provider at that location is TeleMedia.  
 No others are available. A discussion  
 ensued about the possibility of moving  
 the node to another location.  
 Discussion was tabled until March  
 Meeting. At the meeting a spare 2-  
 meter mobile radio was handed off to  
 John N3SPW to replace the one used in  
 the EchoLink node which had burned  
 up. Philip to trouble-shoot the old radio  
 and report back at the March meeting.

VE Testing. Joe KB3CBN the  
 PARA VEC was not present at the  
 meeting. A discussion was held about  
 the possibility of holding an accelerated  
 ham radio study class. The idea was  
 supported by those in attendance if we  
 could muster enough interested people  
 to make it happen. John N3SPW  
 offered to promote the class and see  
 how many people we could gather that  
 are interested.

Treasurer's Report. Jim N3ONE  
 reported that we had received an invoice  
 from ComPros for the installation of the  
 Big 43 Repeater antenna in the amount  
 of \$859.16. After paying this bill, the  
 club treasury stands at \$538.84.

Incorporation. A discussion was  
 held regarding the costs and benefits of

incorporating PARA. It was decided  
 to table the process until a later date.

W3P Special Event Station.  
 Filip AB3HK led things by  
 suggesting that we need to create a  
 rigid schedule for operators of the  
 special event station. This was  
 necessary to prevent just one or two  
 people from carrying the burden of  
 the entire event. All present were in  
 agreement. It was discussed that  
 each operator is responsible to being  
 their own equipment to operate with,  
 that the focus needs to be on  
 interaction with the public, and that  
 we need a clipboard where people  
 can sign up to be contacted if they  
 would like more information.

Timonium Hamfest. PARA is  
 planning its annual road trip to the  
 Timonium Hamfest. Already  
 committed to going are Jim N3ONE,  
 John N3SPW, Dave AA3EJ and Filip  
 AB3HK. John will be driving with  
 three passengers. Joe K3JN would  
 also like to go. If anyone else would  
 like to attend this hamfest we could  
 organize a second car.

Dave Posmoga K3MGC – Silent  
 Key. John N3SPW mentioned the  
 passing of Dave K3MGC. Dave was  
 one of the two founding members of  
 PARA (the other was Dave AA3EJ)  
 and continued to be a member in  
 PARA until his passing. He will be  
 missed.

Next PARA meeting will be on  
 Saturday March 10th at 3 PM.  
 Meeting adjourned by President Filip  
 AB3HK at 4:41 PM local time.

# March Meeting Minutes

Members in attendance:  
 Dick K3BIE, Dave AA3EJ,  
 Filip AB3HK, John N3SPW, Rich  
 KB3QKR, Bernie W3BAR.

Meeting was called to order by  
 President Filip AB3HK at 3:09 pm  
 local time.

Repeater Reports – Discussion  
 led by Filip AB3HK.

The Big 43 Repeater – The  
 repeater has been experience some  
 interference or desense. Currently  
 seems to be fine. Echolink is  
 currently turned off. There was a  
 discussion about the placement of  
 the new antenna on the tower.

444.450 Repeater. Discussion  
 centered around what to do with it.

It is currently a low profile and limits  
 users. Discussed the possibility of  
 finding a new site for it would allow  
 additional users. Discussion tabled until  
 next meeting.

All other repeaters are working  
 without any known issues.

VE Testing. Joe KB3CBN the  
 PARA VEC was not present at the  
 meeting.

Treasurer's Report. Jim N3ONE  
 was not present at the meeting.

W3P Special Event Station. Dave  
 suggested we call the boro office an  
 inquire about the paperwork.  
 Discussion about the schedule for  
 staffing the station. It was decided that  
 we do have enough operators to staff the  
 station. Items needed are promotional  
 materials including signs. Signs should

include messages about “get your  
 amateur radio license”.

Timonium Hamfest. PARA  
 members Dave AA3EJ Filip AB3HK,  
 John N3SPW and Bernie W3BAR  
 are planning to travel to the hamfest  
 this year. In 2 weeks.

Public Service. Dick K3BIE  
 mentioned plans for the Black  
 Moshannon Race on Memorial Day  
 Weekend. More details as they  
 become available.

NARC is doing a special event  
 station to commemorate the passing  
 of Coach Joe Paterno. C all sign will  
 be AJ0JPA.

Next PARA meeting will be on  
 Saturday April 14th at 3 PM.  
 Meeting adjourned by President Filip  
 AB3HK at 4:20 PM local time.





### Mark Herman K3ITG/4

#### April 2012 Ham Shack Showcase

I was originally licensed in April of '97 as KC2BOI. After moving to PA I acquired KB3ITG & then got the vanity of K3ITG (I)nterstate (T)rucking (G)uy. I now live in St. Marys, GA. Still deciding if I want K4ITG or not. I believe your call should match where you live.

I operate mostly VHF & UHF with a Kenwood TM-D710A running APRS using K3ITG-14. You can look me up on [www.aprs.fi](http://www.aprs.fi). I also operate on 10m with a Ranger RCI-2970N2 running 225 watts.

I really enjoy ham radio while running over the road in my 2007 Volvo tractor. It has helped to pass the time while driving from point A to point B.