

7th Annual Philipsburg Area Amateur Radio Picnic



On Saturday, August 24th, PARA held its 7th annual picnic for Philipsburg Area Amateur Radio operators and their families. If you missed it, you missed some really fine food and fun! The picnic was held at Cold Stream Dam Park in Philipsburg and our picnic shelter was situated with a nice view of the lake. It made the perfect backdrop for the event and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.



And we can't forget to mention the expert grill work by our own Lou WB3AAI. It's now safe to call Lou's "grillmanship" a PARA tradition and this year Lou was presented a white chef's cap to make his role official!



From the Office of the President

Filip AB3HK

Well, here we are again. The summer is gone, and old man winter is knocking on the door. I am sure that most of us have a list of things that need to be done before the snows come. My list appears to be getting shorter, although, the more I look, the more I find to do. The lesson there is, I think, to stop looking.

The next club event will be the Christmas banquet, which is held at the Elks Country Club, in Philipsburg. The food, as well as the service is very good, so I will look forward to seeing you there.

If time allows, this year we may actually have backup battery power for the 146.430 repeater.

Rich, KB3QKR, offered to install the module, so I am

thankful for his help. Speaking of repeaters, Rich and John, N3SPW, have been very busy building (home brew) D-STAR repeaters. The 147.255+ is on the air, and is working very well. A UHF D-STAR repeater will replace the current analog 444.750 (Same frequency pair), and the analog UHF repeater will be placed into service as a portable repeater to be used in public service events.

Future projects include remote receivers for the 146.430, so there is something to look forward to.

Overall, I would say that the club has put in place a fairly impressive communication infrastructure for central Pennsylvania, so congratulations is in order.

Thank you all for your input, as well as your support.

Events

PARA Net - Every Saturday 9 PM on the 146.430 (+1 MHz, PL 173.9 Hz) repeater.

PARA Business Meeting -- 2nd Saturday of Each Month (excluding July, August and December) at 3 PM. Holt Memorial Library, 17 N Front St., lower level Community Room - Use the rear entrance.

PARA Christmas Banquet -- Sat December 14, 2013 - at the Philipsburg Elks Lodge and Country Club. 5 PM Cocktails, 6 PM Dinner. Reservations are due by November 30th. RSVP to John N3SPW at 814-553-5649 or jsszwarc@yahoo.com

PARA Repeaters

146.430 +1 MHz, PL 173.8 Hz.

W3PHB "The Big .43 Repeater", Rattlesnake Mountain, Rush Township.

164.640 -, PL 173.8 Hz.

W3PHB Chester Hill Boro.

444.750+, D-STAR KC3BMB B Decatur Township.

147.255-, D-STAR W3PHB C Kylertown.

144.390 APRS Digi-peater. W3PHB-1 Decatur Township.

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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. *PARA Connections* is Edited by John Szwarz N3SPW. PO Box 207, Kylertown PA 16847

444.750+ Repeater Digital Conversion

On Saturday October 19th Filip AB3HK and Jim N3ONE visited the PARA 444.750+ repeater site and retrieved the existing analog repeater equipment from the site. This was in preparation for converting the repeater to D-STAR capabilities. The new D-STAR repeater is expected to be installed and operational at the site before Thanksgiving. The new D-STAR repeater will use an identical Motorola R-100 UHF repeater unit. These units were manufactured in



Pictured is PARA's new Motorola Brand D-STAR 444.750+ repeater and gateway computer.

the 1980's and 1990's by Motorola and require very little modification for use as amateur radio repeaters. The new D-STAR repeater is already constructed and awaiting final configuration of the gateway controller computer. For

home-brewed D-STAR repeaters, the gateway computer acts as both controller card and allows the repeater to link to other D-STAR repeaters, much like EchoLink in analog amateur radio repeaters.

On October 30th the FCC issued PARA a second club call sign KC3BMB which we will use on the new D-STAR repeater. W3PHB is already in use on the 147.255+ repeater. Due to the fact that D-STAR uses call signs to route audio to other repeaters, a call sign can only be used on one D-STAR repeater at a time.

When the new call sign is issued we will complete the final installation of the software and install the repeater at the site. Rich KB3QKR should also be recognized for his ongoing contributions and support of this project as well.

WPRC Meeting

The Western Pennsylvania Repeater Council (WPRC) held its annual election of officers meeting on Sunday October 20th and PARA was well represented. Voting rights at WPRC meetings are based on the number of coordinated repeaters the organization represents. PARA owns and operates four repeaters, giving us four votes at the meeting. Representing PARA at the meeting were Scott W3EOD, Mike WB3EQW, Rich KB3QKR and John N3SPW. The meeting was held at the Logan Township Municipal Complex in the Altoona area. Immediately following the meeting was a pot-luck dinner and many eye-ball QSO's.

Ham of the Year Award

November 30th is the final day to submit your nomination for the PARA 2014 Ham of the Year Award. This award, now in its 7th year, is given out to deserving amateur radio operator who has made significant contributions to the local amateur radio community, encouraging others and earned the respect of fellow hams.

The award is presented at the annual PARA Christmas Banquet and is commemorated with an engraved wall plaque.

To nominate the ham of your choice for 2014 visit the PARA web site at www.philipsburg-ara.org and complete the on-line form.