



PARTicles

The newsletter of PART of Westford, MA – WB1GOF



December 2010



President's Column

We had a great November "Show and Tell" meeting! Not only did we have high attendance, but the things people brought were really interesting to see. My thanks to all of you for attending and for bringing things to show to others.

Our December meeting will not take place as usual. Instead, we will have the PART Christmas Party on the third Tuesday of the month (December 21, 2010) at the Yangtze River Restaurant. Tickets are sold out thanks to high interest in this event. I look forward to seeing all of you there!

Our monthly PART breakfast will NOT be held on Saturday, January 1, 2011 since that is New Years' Day. Instead, we will move the breakfast to Saturday, January 8th, 2011.

The speaker for our January 2011 meeting will be Frank Etzler (N8WXQ), and he will

be speaking about HF propagation and related computer software (IonoProbe, HamCap, and DX Atlas). Frank is an amateur extra with interests in DX, Contesting, Awards, and Radio History. He is a member of the ARRL and the Antique Wireless Association.

Personally, I haven't had a lot of time to be on the air lately, but I have spent some time working on my Elecraft K1 kit. I have all of the receive circuitry built and it appears to work well! Over Christmas break, I plan to spend more time and see if I can finish the transmit circuitry. Stay tuned.

I hope everybody has a safe and enjoyable holiday season!

73 de Andy KB1OIQ

NO Club Meeting in December!

Next meeting at the police station will be January 18th, 2011

PART Holiday Dinner is December 21st

Did you RSVP to Hugh-N1QGE?



Upcoming PART Meetings/Events

Dec. 21, 2010

- PART Holiday Dinner 6:30 PM – Yangtze River, Littleton, RSVP Hugh-N1QGE (hulin127@verizon.net)

Jan. 8, 2011

- PART Monthly breakfast 8:00 AM – Westford Regency (NOTE: NOT the 1st Saturday)

Jan. 18, 2011

- January club meeting night. Guest speaker is Frank Etzler (N8WXQ), Club dues are due in January

Treasurer's Report

PART Treasury 19-Oct-10 thru 16-Nov-10

	General Fund	Repeater Fund	Checking Total
Old Balance	2813.30	379.04	3192.34
Income	50.00	17.00	67.00
Expenses	181.88	0.00	181.88
New Balance	2681.42	396.04	3077.46

PART Membership Demographics as of 3-Dec-10

	Households (New + Renew)	Individuals (New + Renew)
Full	40 (12 + 28)	40 (12 + 28)
Senior	23 (3 + 20)	23 (3 + 20)
Family	7 (0 + 7)	15 (1 + 14)
Student	0 (0 + 0)	0 (0 + 0)
Associate	1 (0 + 1)	1 (0 + 1)
Grand Total	71 (15+ 56)	79 (16 + 63)

Upcoming Events

- Feb. 19, 2011 Marlboro Flea (<http://www.qsl.net/n1em/2011flier.pdf>)
- Feb. 20, 2011 GBARC RadioXLII @ Westford Regency (http://www.antiqueradio.com/Radio_XLII_Full_Page_ad.pdf)
- Apr.3, 2011 FARA/Framingham Flea (<http://www.fara.org/flea/>)
- Apr. 29 & 30, 2011 NEAR-Fest Deerfield Fairgrounds, NH (<http://www.near-fest.com>)
- Every Wednesday, 6 AM, Owl Diner Lowell – Breakfast
- Every 1st Saturday, 8 AM, Regency Inn Westford – PART Monthly Breakfast

ARRL News

- The K7RA Solar Update
- Surfin': A New "Old" User Interface for SDR
- US Rep Greg Walden, W7EQI, Tweets News of his New Subcommittee Chairmanship
- ARRL Receives \$1 Million Gift to the ARRL Endowment
- 2010 a Banner Year for DXCC, Incoming/Outgoing QSL Bureaus

Member Contributions

By Johan Sorvari – K1ARG

As a high-school sophomore I got to take Murray Singer's course in electronics—perhaps my first real enthusiasm for school. At the next gift holiday, my father hit on the idea of giving me a Hallicrafters...well, I don't remember the number, but I sure remember that radio. How did he know? For senior year I was assigned to Mr. Singer's physics class. I was thrilled until he announced that we would have to build a physics-related project. Paralysis! How about a transmitter to go with my Hallicrafters? Of course! And an appropriate Heathkit was chosen.

But now I had to get a license. This would mean remembering my electronics course from TWO YEARS ago; and learning code. Well, it seemed pretty daunting. But late in '58, I managed to pass the tests for Novice and Technician. Back then the operation was more formal and much slower, but at last the pair of licenses arrived: WV2AJO and WA2AJO. I had a couple of QSOs with classmates, but it was time to leave for college, then an all-expense-paid vacation with Uncle Sam, then more college, a Family and a career, and finally retirement. And oh, a few moves, the last in 1983, innocently, to Boxboro.

Jump to late summer 2008, the kids have moved away and I'm down to only occasional consulting for the Lab. What next? Wait, what was that sign I saw at the Holiday Inn? Maybe I should think about getting my ticket(s) back. All I have to do is prove I was licensed before 19?? But who has those records? No body. So grab a Tech manual, study, and head off to find a VE. “OK, do you want to take the General test next?” And with a couple of answers to spare I'm a General, or will be when I learn my new call: KB1RNK. Hey! What happened to the 1x3 calls Generals were supposed to get?

HT in hand, I look for a club to join and get interested in emcomm. Close by is this oddly-named club PART. It's a lot less grey and male than most, and many of the members seem pretty copacetic. So go for it. Now it's time to address that call thing. Grab the Extra manual, study, and pretty soon I'm AB1KF. Can you believe it? I was trying to time the test hoping to get the call AB1KG to tease my friend and motivator KD1KG. I know! The vanity call program. But all the calls I really wanted are in use—arg! So be it: K1ARG.

But wasn't I interested in HF and home brew and QRP? So I build some shack accessories and a couple of QRP radios. Most of all, build a ham shack. By now it's late summer 2010, I've had my General almost two years, and I haven't made a single HF contact! Down to the almost completed shack. Um, how do you do this anyway? Listen. Lots of strange noise on 10. Nothing on 12, 15, 17. Nothing on 20 or 30 slow enough to copy. Ah, a nice slow CQ on 40 but it's from 8-land from a 1x2 call. He probably has a big radio; no way he'll answer my 10 Watts. But he does! Uh oh, here comes the adrenaline. He's 599; I'm 559. I'm afraid I'll short out the key with my sweaty hand. I sign off rather abruptly—I have to run up to the house to tell KB1SRW that I just made my first HF QSO in over 50 years!

What a hobby! It got this old retiree's pulse racing. Thank you Murray. And thanks Dad—I guess you knew me before I knew myself having and got her license shortly afterward, K1LTG. Scott worked on his code and just before the code requirement was dropped he got his Extra. We are saving that code practice oscillator and the old J-38 key for the day our grandsons Dan and Tom get interested in Ham Radio and, of course, Morse Code.

Local Nets

146.955 Nets – There are a number of nets that are regularly scheduled on the 955 repeater.

Sunday Night PART Net – every Sunday night at 2000/8:00 PM

Sector 1C RACES Net – this net occurs the 1st Monday of every month (except when it is a holiday).

Skywarn and ARES Nets – these nets are spontaneous when local conditions warranted.

Repeater Information

Repeater Interference

The 146.955 repeater continues to see interference to existing conversations as well as at random quite times throughout the day and night. The repeater interference committee needs your help in collecting information about this interference.

If you hear any type of interference, please report the following info to **"repeater"** at **"wb1gof.org"**:

- Time: When did the event happen?
- Observing location: Where were you? Were you mobile?
- Frequency: Input only (146.355 MHz)
- What you heard: Voices, tones, kerchunking or whatever.
- Signal strength: Either by ear (noisy, quiet or full quiet) or S meter
- Radio: To get an idea of the reporter's radio situation.

* Most important - what direction: How did you determine direction? This is the most essential piece of information. Even if it's an estimate as in "Roughly east" or "from the Northeast" it's useful.

If you are interested in assisting in helping us identify the sources of interference, contact Terry-KA8SCP.

EmComm events and repeater use

Most everyone knows that the 146.955 repeater is used during times of emergency situations, drills and exercises. Skywarn and the monthly RACES drills are the normal events.

So what does this mean to those that are just looking for regular QSOs with other users?

It means that if you are in a regular QSO and there is a significant weather situation that has been getting press/air-time lately, you can expect that if severe weather develops in our area, the folks from Taunton-WX1BOX may interrupt a QSO and ask anyone on frequency what may be happening weather wise. The BOX operator will probably ask for specific information, hail, wind damage, property damage from lightning or wind, etc. Please give him the information he needs or tell him that you've not heard of any such activity. You don't need to tell him it is sunny in Nashua!

There may come a time when an unexpected emergency situation arises. These will be significant events that may affect life and property. This is where ARES/RACES activity may step in. Usually an NCS will interrupt a QSO and announce the situation and ask for a QSO to cease or to be "aware" of the possibility of priority calls/traffic. Please make sure you leave breaks between transmissions so stations with traffic can get in between QSOs. If there is enough traffic, it may be necessary for your existing/interrupted QSO to move to another frequency. You should use your best judgment or check with the NCS on what he feels is best.

If you have any questions, please feel free to correspond with either Hugh-N1QGE (Westford RACES Officer and Skywarn NCS) or Terry-KA8SCP (regional RACES Officer and Skywarn NCS). They will be more than happy to talk about these programs with you.

PART Gear

The PART Quartermaster has lots of great PART-ware for sale including hats, mugs, and shirts. You can get information how you can obtain your PART-ware at the monthly club meetings.



Club members are also encouraged to obtain an official PART badge from [The Sign Man](http://thesignman.com/clubs/part.html) (<http://thesignman.com/clubs/part.html>)

EmComm

RACES – The WB1GOF 146.955 repeater is used on the first Monday of every month (except federal/state holidays) for RACES starting at 1930 local time. If you are interested in being part of the local emergency communications team in your community, feel free to contact any of the following folks:

Terry Stader – KA8SCP, MEMA Region 1 RACES Officer
Hugh Maguire – N1QGE, RACES Officer, Town of Westford
Bill Ohm – W1OHM, RACES Officer, Town of Chelmsford

- We need radio operators that can pass messages on to the local emergency management directors in several towns in northern Middlesex County.

Skywarn – The WB1GOF 146.955 repeater is also used for reporting significant weather events to the National Weather Service from our local spotters. We expect to have a local Skywarn training class in 2010, more information as it becomes available. You can provide valuable information even if you have not attended one of the training sessions. Listen to the Skywarn Net Control Station for reporting criteria, when you have information that qualifies, please advise him with your report.

Situational Awareness – Recently, the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency has asked the Amateur Radio community to provide situational awareness and disaster intelligence information within your local community via RACES, ARES and/or Skywarn stations. Significant events such as widespread power outages can be reported and by agencies such as MEMA to evaluate the scope of a blackout for example. Initially, you should try and contact RACES or ARES operators on the Westford 146.955 repeater to pass this information. More on this new program will be forthcoming.

PART Sunday Night Net – The PART Net each Sunday night is an IMPORTANT part of our regional EmComm function. With each station that checks in from the surrounding communities, we test our ability to communicate vital information to the ham radio community. Sure we announce club info but we can also communicate regional disaster news and serve as a “hub” for news of situations in our communities. The repeater is on a generator, so even if we lose power in the region, an ht with a supply of batteries will reconnect you to other local hams.



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