



PARTicles

The newsletter of PART of Westford, MA – WB1GOF

January 2012

President's Column

- *Andy Stewart (KB1OIQ)*



We had quite a crowd at the PART Christmas and Holiday party in December at the Yangtze River Restaurant in Littleton. I was pleased to see so many people attending, and everybody seemed to have a good time. Hugh (N1QGE) put an extraordinary amount of effort into this event purchasing the raffle prizes, booking our reservation with the restaurant, and recruiting the two young people who drew out the tickets and called the names (Geoffrey KB1USE and Jennifer). There were enough prizes that almost everybody was able to take something home.

So far, we have enjoyed a relatively mild winter, and I took advantage of that time to get some antennas erected. Now I can enjoy the relative warmth of my shack to make some great QSOs on those antennas. I owe a great deal of thanks to Scott (NE1RD), Rick (W1RAG), Rich (AB1HD), Steve (WA1KBE), and Allison (KB1GMX) for their help and advice during this project. I now have 3 vertical dipoles (20m, 17m, and 10m), and a G5RV connected to an Ameritron RCS-4 antenna switch. The most distant DX I've worked so far is Alaska (QRP) and Hawaii, and everything is working great.

The SKCC (Straight Key Century Club) is having its annual K3Y event during the month of January. This is a fun event for novice as well as more seasoned CW

operators. SKCC operators are particularly willing to slow down if necessary. I heartily recommend this event for people who are learning CW. More information can be found on the SKCC website, or ask at the upcoming PART meeting, as there are several PART members who actively participate in SKCC events.

Be sure and take a look at the PART website! Rich (AB1HD) has done a great job updating and maintaining the website, and I think it really looks great! Bob (N1RXV) continues to take a lot of photos at our club events, and these photos are posted on the website soon after an event. Thanks, guys!

Annual dues will be collected at the January meeting. Full member dues are \$25, family membership is \$30, and student/senior membership dues are \$15. Please check with the treasurer (Alan W1AHM) and the membership chairman (Hugh N1QGE) to insure that your dues are paid in full, and that we have correct information.

Scott (NE1RD) will be our speaker at the January PART meeting, which will be held on January 17th at 7:30 PM. He will give us a talk about everything he thinks he knows about antennas. This will be a great talk, and I hope all of you can make it. We had a great deal of snow during the January 2010 and January 2011 meetings, so let's hope we can break that tradition so that the Westford people can make it to the meeting. :-)

Have a lot of fun, and 73 de Andy

***Next PART Meeting – January 17th 7:30 PM-
NE1RD, Guest Speaker- “What I think I know about
Antennas.”
– Westford Police Station***

Upcoming PART Meetings/Events

January 17th, 2012

- PART Meeting. 7:30 -9 p.m. Westford Police station - "What I think I know about Antennas." – Scott-NEIRD

February 4th, 2012

- PART monthly breakfast. Westford Regency. 8-10 AM (\$14/\$9; kids: \$8 – see article below)

February 4th, 2012

- PART Kit Building event. Westford United Methodist Church, 10 Church St., Westford - 10 AM

February 21st, 2012

- PART Meeting. 7:30 -9 p.m. Westford Police station

March 3rd, 2012

- PART monthly breakfast. Westford Regency. 8-10 AM (\$14/\$9; kids: \$8 – see article below)

Treasurer's Report

PART Treasury 15-November-2011 thru 19-December-2011

	General Fund	Repeater Fund	Checking Total
Old Balance	\$2,908.82	\$605.82	\$3,514.64
Income	\$185.00	\$19.00	\$204.00
Expenses	(\$151.07)	(\$0.00)	(\$151.07)
Net	\$33.93	\$19.00	\$52.93
New Balance	\$2,942.75	\$624.82	\$3,567.57

PART Membership Demographics as of 7-January-2012

	Households (= New for 2012 + Renew for 2012)	Individuals (= New for 2012 + Renew for 2012)
Full (\$25)	6 (= 3 + 3)	6 (= 3 + 3)
Senior (\$15)	7 (= 1 + 6)	7 (= 1 + 6)
Family (\$30)	1 (= 0 + 1)	2 (= 0 + 2)
Student (\$15)	0 (= 0 + 0)	0 (= 0 + 0)
Associate (\$10)	0 (= 0 + 0)	0 (= 0 + 0)
Grand Total	14 (= 4 + 10)	15 (= 4 + 11)

* To pay dues *

PART, P.O. Box 503, Westford, MA 01886-0015

-or-

Club Meeting, Westford P.D., 7:30PM, 3rd Tuesday

Monthly PART Events

- Every Sunday, 8 PM – PART Net on 146.955 repeater
- Every 3rd Tuesday, 7:30 PM – PART Meetings at Westford Police station
- Every Wednesday, 6 AM, Owl Diner Lowell – Breakfast
- Every 1st Saturday, 8 AM, Regency Inn Westford – PART Monthly Breakfast

Repeater Nets

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

- Sunday night at 2000/8:00 PM Sunday Night PART Net – every
- Sector 1C RACES Net – this net occurs the 1st Monday or every month (except when it is a holiday). Skywarn and ARES Nets – these nets are spontaneous when local conditions warranted.

NOTE: You can LISTEN ONLY to this repeater audio by linking to this URL:

<http://www.radioreference.com/apps/audio/?feedId=6253>

442.450 D-Star Nets – There are a number of nets that are regularly scheduled.

- Sunday 8:00 PM [Ozark Mtn D-STAR Net](#) – Reflector 001C
- Tuesday 8:00 PM [New England Amateur D-STAR Net](#) – Reflector 010C

NOTE: The Port B node (442.450) is connected to [REF010C](#) Mon – Fri from 10:00 am until 3:30 pm. The Port C node (145.330) is connected to [XRF019B](#) usually 7x24 unless changed by users.

Users can LISTEN ONLY to D-Star Reflector 10C by linking to this URL:

<http://www.radioreference.com/apps/audio/?feedId=5031>

Monthly PART Breakfast

Don't forget the monthly PART breakfast the 1st Saturday of each month at the Westford Regency Inn at 8 AM. The full hot & cold buffet breakfast costs about \$14 (includes tip) per person, a cheaper, lighter fare is available for adults and children. **NOTE: PLEASE let the folks who are settling the bill with the staff know whether you had a full or continental breakfast!**

Monthly Breakfast Pricing

- *Andy Stewart (KB1OIQ)*

The full breakfast is $\$10.95 + 18\% + 6.25\% = \14.00 (rounded up slightly). This price is unchanged. I'm showing the math for completeness and full disclosure.

Summary:

Continental breakfast: \$9.00 (new price)

Full breakfast: \$14.00 (same price)

Kid's breakfast: \$8.00



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Robert Schmeichel
2011

Member Contributions

Echolink Reflections

- *Jon McCombie (N1ILZ)*



First and foremost, a huge thank-you to Terry (KA8SCP) for adding and hosting EchoLink® technology on the WB1GOF 955 repeater! EchoLink® software allows licensed Amateur Radio stations to communicate with one another over the Internet, using streaming-audio technology. The program allows worldwide connections to be made between stations or from computer to station, greatly enhancing Amateur Radio's communications capabilities. There are more than 200,000 validated users worldwide — in 162 of the world's 193 nations — with about 5,000 online at any given time. I have QSOed through the 'GOF repeater to hams all over the US, and even a fellow in Manchester, England. I have even QSOed with a ham who had not yet installed his 2m rig in his car, so he was using his iPhone and Echolink to keep in touch. Cool! Echolink is available as a free download for just about every computer O/S in current use, including Windows, Macintosh, and Linux; devices like iPhone, iPad and Android. A ton of information, including how to get started, downloads links and instructions, FAQs, etc. can be found at <http://www.echolink.org>.

The other day, I discovered a quirk in Echolink that others should be aware of. Echolink users simply click a push-to-talk button on their computer screens, and then start talking. My discovery: if a QSO is ongoing, the Echolink software for an iPhone and iPad will not reliably allow the user to PTT until the repeater drops carrier completely, a few seconds after the "courtesy beep." If you're in a direct QSO with an Echolink user on an iPhone or iPad, he will have to let the carrier drop after your transmission and before he starts talking. If you're in a roundtable with an Echolink user, please let the carrier drop from time to time, so he has the chance to jump in. If you are net control and are calling for Echolink users, please be sure to let the carrier drop completely for ~1 second before starting up again, so that iPhone and iPad users can jump in. This "must wait for squelch tail" issue exists for Echolink on iPhone and iPad, and DOES NOT exist for Echolink on Windows and Macintosh. I have not experimented with Linux or Android.

Please DO use this additional mode to keep connected! Just remember to let the carrier drop between transmissions from time to time. It's not a bad idea even if everyone is using traditional radios -- it lets hams who are slower on the PTT key to be included. I hope to hear you on the air!

Note: Echolink is different from D-Star. D-Star is another very cool amateur radio technology that uses the internet to link repeaters around the world. D-Star technology has many more features, but requires a D-Star radio. I'll leave the D-Star discussion to a separate article.

(Editor's Note: The audio from the WB1GOF 146.955 repeater is found at the following link: <http://www.radioreference.com/apps/audio/?feedId=6253>. Please use this link to monitor the repeater when you are not near a radio. There are numerous smartphone apps that will tune this in too!)



The Granite State Amateur Radio Association in Bedford, NH will be holding a Skywarn Training course on Friday, evening Feb 10th at Saint Elizabeth Church on Meetinghouse Road in Bedford. Additional information and start time will announced to those interested sometime next week. Anyone interested should contact: klrhm@comcast.net as soon as possible so that they can secure you a seat.

Greater Boston Net Directory

Daily 5:30 pm	Eastern Mass/Rhode Island Phone Net (NTS)	3.918
Daily 7 and 10 pm	Eastern Mass/Rhode Island CW Net (NTS)	3.658
Daily 8 pm	Eastern Mass 2M Traffic Net (NTS)	145.230 (PL 88.5)
Daily 8 pm	Slow Speed CW Net	28.160
Daily 10:00 pm	Heavy Hitters Traffic Net (NTS)	MMRA-linked repeaters: 146.610, 146.670, 146.715, 146.820, and all 222 and 440 repeaters
First Mon 8:30 pm	EMA Section ARES Net	146.610 and all MMRA links
Mon 9 pm	BARC Club Net	145.230 (PL 88.5)
Tue 8 pm	MMRA Club Net	146.610 and all MMRA links
Wed 8 pm	Wellesley Amateur Radio Society Net	147.030; 444.600 (PL 88.5)
Wed 9 pm	HTTN Swap Net	146.640
Thu 8:30 pm	AMSAT Net	146.640
Sat 9 am	Northeast SATERN Net	7.265
Sun 9:30 am	Yankee SSB Net	50.275
Sun 8 pm	Algonquin Amateur Radio Club Net	446.675 (PL 88.5)
Sun 8 pm	Westford PART Net	146.955 (PL 74.4)
Sun 8:30 pm	NSRA Net (with Newsline)	145.470

Member Spotlight

Congratulations to PART member's Bill/K1NS and Scott/NE1RD – for making this month's (January 2012) ARRL issue. Look for Bill's article in Hints & Kinks, page 64. Scott can be seen on page 158.

<http://www.arrl.org/this-month-in-qst>



PART Holiday Dinner



More photos at:

[PART Holiday Party 2011](http://www.wb1gof.org/files/part1112_w/Page.html)

(http://www.wb1gof.org/files/part1112_w/Page.html)

[Yaesu's Amateur Radio Division Breaks with Motorola, Changes Name to Yaesu Musen](#)

Sunday, January 01, 2012, 9:11:00 PM

After four years under the Motorola umbrella, Yaesu has split from that company. According to Vertex Standard President and Chief Executive Officer Jun Hasegawa, effective January 1, 2012, Motorola will keep the Vertex Standard Land-Mobile Division, while the amateur, marine and air-band will be under the Yaesu Musen banner. The new company will be known as Yaesu USA here in the US.

[FCC Lets Users Create their Own Custom Page with Beta Launch](#)

Sunday, January 01, 2012, 9:10:57 PM

In an effort to improve the "FCC online experience," the Federal Communications Commission launched its public beta domain last week, where users can choose widgets and create a customized page.

[Kids dial into ham radio at Rochester Museum & Science Center](#)

Sunday, January 01, 2012, 9:10:57 PM

At first, the idea of talking on a ham radio seems almost primitive. Yet there on Tuesday afternoon was Steve Smith, fiddling with the radio dial while volunteering at the Rochester DX Association's display table at the Rochester Museum & Science Center.

[FCC Seeks EHF Comments](#)

Sunday, January 01, 2012, 9:10:57 PM

Radar operations operate in what's called EHF or the extremely high frequency band. Radars that work in the 78-81 GHz bandwidth have come to the interest of the FCC and the agency is seeking comments about approving devices using that range. Currently radio astronomers have a primary allocation across most of the band, according to law firm Fletcher Heald & Hildreth.

[Mock drill to raise awareness on earthquake management \(India\)](#)

Sunday, January 01, 2012, 9:10:57 PM

People from surrounding areas of Geetanagar High School in the city on Tuesday rushed to watch a post-quake mock drill conducted to create awareness on what should be done during such an emergency.

[Amateur radios serves as Jackson County's backup in disasters \(Oregon\)](#)

Sunday, January 01, 2012, 9:10:56 PM

When disaster strikes, sometimes it comes down to old-school radio technology to save the day. The planners of the state-of-the-art Jackson County emergency dispatch center off Biddle Road recognized this and made space where volunteer amateur radio operators could provide the last line of defense in case of catastrophe.

Repeater Information

Repeater Interference

The 146.955 repeater continues to see interference to existing conversations as well as at random quiet times throughout the day and night. The repeater interference committee needs your help in collecting data. 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. NEVER EVER reply or direct any thing to the sick person causing the interference. Because some of us have answered this person, he knows we are aware of him and that is what keeps him doing it. Also since you are communicating with a non IDing station you are operating just as illegally as he is. YOU ARE BROADCASTING! NEVER TALK ABOUT INTERFERENCE on air. NEVER

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

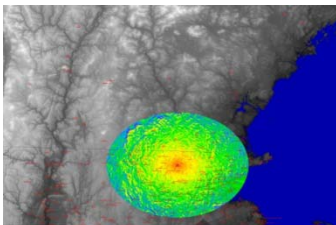
EmComm events and repeater use

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 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 QSY 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.



New additional repeater info is now available on the PART [website](#). Check out the links to the summit information as well as coverage and plot plans maps for the WB1GOF repeaters.

PART Gear

The PART Quartermaster has lots of great PART-ware for sale including 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>) PLEASE NOTE: There is a new PART badge available if you'd like to order one. Price for badge is \$15 which includes shipping and handling.



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 loose power in the region, an HT with a supply of batteries will reconnect you to other local hams.



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This month's editor: Terry Stader – KA8SCP

PART official mailing address is:
PART, PO Box 503, Westford, MA 01886

Our website is: <http://wb1gof.org>

Our forum is: <http://wb1gof.net/forums/>

Contact us at: info@wb1gof.org

