



PARTicles

The newsletter of PART of Westford, MA – WB1GOF

November 2010

President's Column

I've spent a lot of time over the past decade honing my skills at pumpkin carving. I've been teaching this skill to the kids and they enjoy the results. We put our lit pumpkins along the edge of the driveway and took some pictures after dark. Afterwards, all of the kids went Trick or Treating and had a great time. Later in the evening, I visited Drew Farms and saw all of their jack o' lanterns and really enjoyed myself.

Other folks give their time to the PART Pumpkin Patrol to help insure that everybody has a safe, fun time on Halloween. I'd like to thank the PART Pumpkin Patrollers for their time and effort this year. Your efforts are appreciated!

My son Geoffrey (KB1USE) and I have been working together on a project that he will explain during the next PART meeting. This meeting will be our "Show and Tell" meeting, so feel free to bring along a project

that you've constructed and show it to the rest of the club. There are always a bunch of really good projects to see, so even if you don't bring a project of your own, come to the meeting to see what other are doing. It may give you an idea for a future project of your own. If your project is partly completed and you're stuck, bring it along, since another ham might have suggestions to help you.

It is my pleasure to announce that Hugh (N1QGE) is our new PART Membership chairman. Congratulations, Hugh, and thank you for your willingness to assume this responsibility.

The annual PART Christmas Party is coming very soon. If you are interested in attending, please see Hugh (N1QGE).

73 de Andy KB1OIQ

Club Meeting – November 16th – Westford Police station – Public Meeting Room

53 Main Street, Westford, MA 01886

7:30 PM

**Mark your calendars for *December 21st* for the
annual
*PART Holiday Dinner***

Upcoming PART Meetings/Events

Nov. 16, 2010

- Show and Tell Night, bring in your latest project or new gear and share

Dec. 4, 2010

- PART Monthly breakfast 8:00 AM – Westford Regency

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. Club dues are due in January

Treasurer's Report

PART Treasury 17-Aug-10 thru 20-Sep-10

	General Fund	Repeater Fund	Checking Total
Old Balance	2831.93	1717.19	4549.92
Income	45.00	11.00	56.00
Expenses	63.63	1349.95	1413.58
New Balance	2813.30	379.04	3192.34

PART Membership Demographics as of 11-Oct-10

	Households (New + Renew)	Individuals (New + Renew)
Full	38 (11 + 27)	38 (11 + 27)
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	69 (124+ 55)	77 (15 + 62)

Upcoming Events

- Spring 2011 NEAR-Fest April 29th & 30th 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

Local Amateur Radio News

Fall Freeze 2010

Charles Suprin – AA1VS writes:

For the past few years, PART has supported the Lowell Youth Soccer Fall Freeze Tournament. The 2010 Fall Freeze is suspended as the Lowell Youth Soccer Association celebrates their 30th anniversary. Congratulations to them on their anniversary.

The Fall Freeze will return in 2011 and we expect to be invited back.

Public Safety/Public Service

Emergency Management for PART members

By Hugh Maguire, NIQGE

During 2011 PART members will hear a presentation that outlines the areas of local emergency management that members can get involved in. Starting with this issue of PARTICLES I will present some introductory material. Call it homework.



Go to: <http://www.citizencorps.gov/> for more information

Citizen Corps is a nationwide grass roots movement to actively involve everyone in America in making our communities and our nation safer, stronger, and better prepared for emergencies of all kinds. We all have a role in hometown security and Citizen Corps provides local opportunities for everyone to prepare, train, and volunteer. Citizen Corps was launched in 2002 as part of Pres. Bush's USA Freedom Corps initiative and is coordinated nationally by the Department of Homeland Security

The Citizen Corps Program is comprised of five different but equally important programs:

- Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)
- Neighborhood Watch
- Volunteers in Police Service
- Fire Corps
- Medical Reserve Corps

The CERT and the MRC programs are active in the upper Merrimack valley area. In following Issues I will outline the programs and how PART members can participate.

More Public Service

Go Kits

By Steve, NIBDA

Go-kit lists abound and most say something like “Appropriate clothing, headgear, sturdy shoes/boots, ‘kerchief or scarf. “ or “Extra clothes as appropriate“. So, what does this mean in practical terms for us in New England as winter fast approaches?

I am limiting this discussion to clothing, not toiletries, medications, sleeping bags, radio gear, food, protective gear (hard hats, N95 masks), flashlights, and all the other items that may be necessary. Assume that you may be out at overnight in cold, windy, snowy conditions. You may also rotate into a sheltered and warm command post.

Let me get the ball rolling with some suggestions:

Outdoor and Core Clothing

Long underwear, preferably wicking

Sturdy pants, preferably windproof and at least water-resistant. Ski –ATV-snowmobile overalls may work well. They should not be too tight. A suitable alternative may be lined pants plus a water/wind-proof shell.

Wool or fleece shirt.

Wool sweater or heavier fleece shirt

Waterproof and windproof jacket/parka large enough to be comfortable over layers and long enough to cover your posterior. A double zipper, pockets with zippered flaps, and zippered side vents can be useful. A suitable alternative may be a warm jacket plus a water/wind-proof shell.

Fleece/GoreTex balaclava

Goggles, ski-ATV-snow mobile

Wool or synthetic wind-proof watch cap

Ball cap with brim to fit under watch cap

Rain hat large enough to fit over hats. It should have ties to keep it on your head.

Thin synthetic wicking socks as first layer.

Wool socks, one thick or two thin pair. Some new synthetics that remain warm when wet are available.

Boots. Sturdy, insulated, waterproof, good ankle support, good traction soles.

Wool fingerless mitten liners.

Gloves, preferably water/wind-proof.

Mittens, preferably water/wind-proof.

Indoor Clothing

Comfortable pants, possibly sweat suit pants

Fleece vest or light sweater

Lighter weight socks

Comfortable shoes or sneakers

Okay, the stake's in the ground. Let's get a discussion going. - Steve

Member Contributions

Another Advantage of Being a CW Op

By Bob Glorioso, WIIS

CW seems to be holding its own and even growing since the code requirement was dropped. The CW portions of the band have plenty of activity and are totally occupied during contests. I hear more folks trying to get started on CW these days and enjoy listening to the slow CW nets and working these new to CW ops whenever I can. I got hooked on CW back in the "dark ages" as a young Novice, WN1EBW, who was recruited to log at my first Field Day for a crusty old commercial CW operator Walt, W1VB, long since a Silent Key. The magnificent way he handled contacts quickly and efficiently really impressed me. He not only got the message through but his code had a magical rhythm, it was music.

Shortly after that first Field Day I met and dated Dee Dasher who would not only become my wife but also became W1MGA, another CW op. Through the years we had stations set up

wherever we were, in family's attics and in my fraternity house basement when I was away at school, in our apartment in graduate school, in our home while in the Army, in our "permanent" homes, our summer place, and even a little condo we have in Florida where we load up the drain pipe and run QRP on 40, 20 and 15 meters.

As our parents aged we were faced with a problem that only a ham radio CW op could solve. Dee's father, Wayne, contracted ALS, **Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis**, also called Lou Gehrig's disease. As the disease progressed he began to lose control of some of his faculties. He had trouble walking but could still play his banjo. But the worst thing that happened was he lost his ability to speak. Being the proud independent person he was, he refused to move from Connecticut to Massachusetts and live with us and was adamant about not leaving his home. The problem we had was communications as

Dee spoke with her Dad on the phone every day. Ah, a computer would do it but he would have none of that either. The solution was right in front of us. Wayne was a musician and had a great sense of rhythm and was familiar with our Ham Radio antics so MORSE CODE was the answer. I pulled out an old code practice oscillator I had been saving for the day that our son became interested in Ham Radio (much wishful thinking there but more later) and an antique J-38 key. I printed the code in BIG letters on a sheet and encapsulated it in plastic for him.

Every night from then on the phone would ring and we would pick it up to hear – dit dit dit dit - dit dit. Dee and her Dad would carry on for an hour or so with Wayne pecking out the code and

Dee talking back. It worked great and he loved it. As time went by he became quite a good CW op.

However, as ALS goes, Wayne passed away on April 20, 2002.

Epilogue –

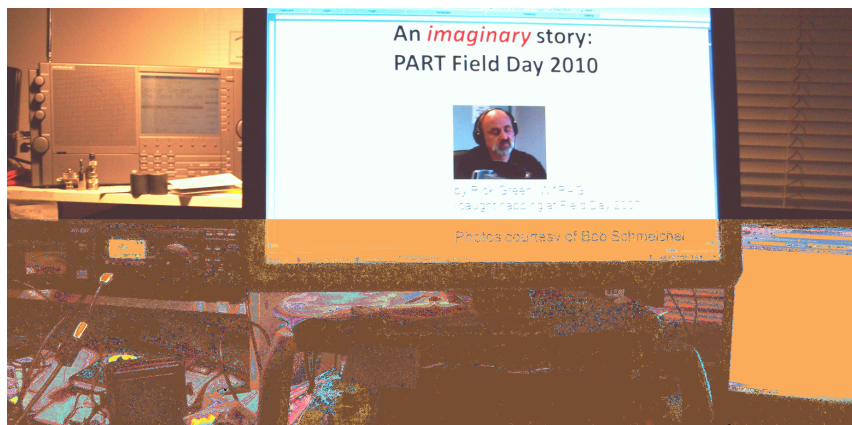
In 2000 our Son, Scott, decided to get a license and became a Ham, K1SRG. His wife Lesley saw how much fun the rest of the family was having and got her license shortly afterward, K1LTG. Scott worked on his code and just before the code requirement was dropped he got his Extra. We are saving that code 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.

Wayne Dasher using “Phone CW”



Shack Photos

Would you like to guess whose shack photo this is? Subdued lighting, a mellow ham maybe? Don't let the screen display mislead you!



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

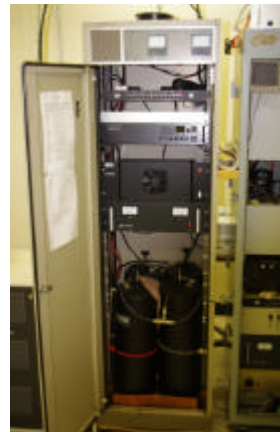
Sector 1C RACES Net – this net occurs the 1st Monday or every month (except when it is a holiday).

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

Repeater News

Repeater site gets a facelift

On the morning of November 6th, 4 of us (K1ZA, KB1JKG, N1AEW and KA8SCP) made a trip to the repeater site with the intentions of re-packaging the existing 3 repeaters in to a set of matching data center cabinets to spiff up the site. We have been adding on components over the years, especially with the new D-Star add-ons. It was looking pretty scruffy! Here are some before shots.



We took all three repeaters down around 10:00 AM and starting tearing out all the pieces. We then followed the new layout diagram Ernie had drawn with a few corrections. The biggest challenge was trying to put both sets of 2 meter duplexers in to one cabinet so the whole assembly was within the cabinets. With a lot of tape measuring and some mechanical acrobatics, we were able to get them in the one cabinet.



After a quick lunch break and wiring up the AC and DC as well as all the coax, the finish product is shown below. In these photos, the D-Star components are in the left cabinet including the 440 MHz duplexers. In the right-hand cabinet is the 2 meter D-Star duplexer as well as the 955 duplexer in the bottom. The complete 955 repeater is in the right cabinet which includes the power amp, the repeater itself and the controller.



Around 1600 all three repeaters were back online and the overhaul was considered a great success! Thanks to Dave and Kim for the extra hands, it was a great way to spend a Saturday and lot of satisfaction in a job well done!

146.955 Repeater audio available online

This feed now allows anyone anywhere to monitor the repeater from your computer or mobile device via the internet. You can be at an Airport, hotel, at work or sitting in a coffee shop with Wi-Fi. If you're just monitoring and want to join in on a QSO, you can just switch over to the Echolink connection and join in. Or if you're just driving along and you're out of the repeaters range, you can still listen to the repeater with your mobile device with internet access. The other times you would want to access the live feed would be during bad weather that is reported in this area and you are at work and you may get to hear the latest driving conditions before you leaving work.

This also frees up the Echolink connection that is used now to access the repeater to hear if anyone is on the repeater. The Echolink IDs your call sign and will disconnect if idle or it will time out. You can now leave this live audio connection on 24/7 if you would like.

This link below is from the Radio Reference MA Middlesex County live audio feeds.

<http://www.radioreference.com/apps/audio/?ctid=1221>

D-Star update

We have seen a lot of new "faces" on the D-Star repeaters. Many of these new users have indicated they'll be joining PART and attending meetings. We received some very nice donations from the users of the repeaters, you know who you are and we all thank you very much for helping us maintain and add new capabilities to our repeaters!



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.

ARRL News

- New Section Manager Appointed in Western New York
- Indonesian Hams Continue to Support Communications as Volcano Stays Active
- The Amateur Amateur: The Manual -- and Why We Don't Read It
- Hurricane Watch Net Activated for Hurricane Tomas
- The K7RA Solar Update

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



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