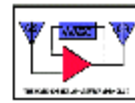




# FEEDBACK



Warminster Amateur Radio Club Web Page [www.k3dn.org](http://www.k3dn.org)

## May 1999

### President's Message

Two of the most difficult issues I have to deal with as WARC's President is broadening our leadership base and making sure there is an appropriate level of participation by the general membership in all our endeavors. We all recognize that WARC is a part time activity and has to be worked into our commitments to family, career and other outside interests. The more we spread responsibilities through the membership base, the more the club can do and the less likelihood of "burnout" from our most active members.

So what is expected from any of us who is a member of WARC? I checked the newly updated club constitution, and except for paying annual dues (and having to be a licensed ham to vote), there are no written requirements. Well, here's my thoughts after being in the club over the past 12 years and serving as President for the last three.

For those who seek (and have the time) the highest level of involvement, I suggest that you consider serving as a Board member- even just for one year. The majority of club business is handled at the Board level, so it is this group, on behalf of the membership, that has the responsibility to set goals, make decisions, and commit the club's financial resources (up to \$300 for each expenditure without general membership approval). Board members include our officers elected at the May general meeting, two directors elected at the January general meeting, the immediate past club President, and up to two additional directors appointed by the Board. Plan on about two hours per week (for most positions) for club business, in addition to attending most of the monthly board and general membership meetings.

The next level of commitment is chairing or co-chairing one of the club's 35+ committees. They are diverse (see listing in FEEDBACK) and responsibilities range from time intensive every month (e.g. Feedback, Membership), to hectic preparing for an event (e.g. Hamfest, Field Day, Grange Fair) to doing it at your own pace (e.g. Publicity, Archives) and doing it when needed (e.g. Classes, Net Manager, Interference, Notary). The vast majority of these positions can be done effectively by anyone who has the desire and time to devote, but not necessarily experience- for which the club will gladly supply a sufficient level of "elmering" (coaching) and support. If you don't want to chair a committee, think about joining one and helping to spread the workload (and bringing in new ideas) throughout the membership?

What about those who "just want to be members"? How about each year trying to achieve the following: Attending at least half the club's monthly general meetings (let us know what you think of the refreshments or anything else that goes on) and one board meeting (see how the majority of club business is transacted and also help prepare FEEDBACK for its monthly mail out). Helping out in some way for our Hamfest (the annual fund raiser that provides over half the money the club needs to operate). Coming out to one major club sponsored activity (e.g. Field Day, Grange Fair). Participating in one public service event (there's plenty to choose from). Visiting the club station on a Thursday evening 7-9 PM (say hello to Bruna, K9ARF, and give George a pat on the

head). And, try checking into either the two meter or ten meter net at least once a month.

So what's the "minimum"? Pay your dues and for extra credit, get on the repeater from time to time (with a control op if you don't have license privileges) to let everyone know you're alive and well!

Remember, being a member of WARC is (a) supposed to be fun (b) be a way of furthering our amateur radio hobby (c) increase your knowledge about amateur radio (d) help the club participate community activities. As a general purpose amateur radio club, maybe we only satisfy your individual goals 50-75% of the time- but the club has a large membership with diverse interests and we can't hit the mark 100% of the time for every member! Please take a moment to tell a Board member how we can make our club even better than it already is.

I look forward to seeing you at our 25th annual Hamfest on Sunday, May 2 (try to help out at set up on Saturday if you can't make it on Sunday) and our Second Annual Pizza Night Social General Meeting on Thursday, May 6 where everyone can enjoy a well deserved relaxing evening.

de Bill , K3MFI

IT'S A BOY (a new Rocky)!

Congratulations go out to club Vice President Rocky Pistilli and Tina Schaubel-Pistilli on the birth of there first child, Rocco Charles Pistilli. Rocky was born on 4/17/99 @ 12:15 AM, weighed in at 8 pounds 4 oz. and measured 21". Mother and Son (and Dad) are doing very well.



## NEW WARC ALUMNI MEMBERSHIP

Attention all former WARC members. At the March 4 General Meeting, revisions to our club's constitution were approved that among other things, establishes a new Alumni membership category for former WARC members who are unable to attend meeting and Club activities on a regular basis due to health considerations or travel impediments. Dues for the Alumni membership were established at \$8.00 annually to cover the costs of printing and mailing our monthly FEEDBACK newsletter. Contact Alumni Coordinator Randy Gehman (N3LJE) or Membership Chairperson Don McCunney (KA3N) for more information.

## SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP COMMITTEE FORMING

Ron Wenig (NY3J) has formed a committee which includes club members who have an interest in a particular aspect of amateur radio who will make their expertise available for the benefit of those who have questions about our broad hobby. The current listing appears in this month's FEEDBACK listing of club committees, and Ron is interested in expanding the groups as needed. If we get enough response, these Special Interest Groups might meet on their own to discuss the part of ham radio they find most interesting. In addition, Club WEB master Al Konschak (WI3Z) said he can create a link from our homepage and list information, questions and answers for each group. Please contact Ron if you're interested in joining him and helping "the rest of us" participate more fully in ham radio; direct any questions you have to the appropriate committee co-chair.

## KIT BUILDING NIGHT RETURNS

To encourage more "homebrew" equipment construction, WARC is again sponsoring organized sessions starting on 7:30 PM on the second Thursday of the month at the Ben Wilson Senior Center. So bring those (aged) TenTec 6 meter transverter kits in or anything else (amateur radio related) you want to build or get working. Looking for something simple- how about putting together an antenna? Lots of help and expertise will be available- past building experience is not a criteria for joining the group.

## CLUB ELECTIONS

WARC members will elect officers (all positions) at the May 6 General Meeting. Ballots with a slate of candidates are included in this month's FEEDBACK; as always, nominations from the floor will also be accepted at the May General Meeting. New officers assume their responsibilities July 1, 1999 and serve for one year.

## UPCOMING PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

Warminster Memorial Day Parade  
Monday May 31 , 8:30AM-2:00PM ; 10 operators needed  
Contact George (N3HBT) Brechmann at (215) 443-5656

30th Annual "Vintage" Ford Show (Johnsville)  
Sunday, June 13, 8:00AM-3:30PM ; 12 operators; George (N3HBT)

Elmer Coordinator becomes :

Special Interest Groups Ron Wenig NY3J 638-9257  
CW/QRP co-chair Marty Squicciarini NR3Z 393-1492

Digital/APRS co-chair Ron Wenig NY3J 638-9257  
FM/Repeater co-chair Mark Hinkel WA3QVU 659-4449  
HF co-chair Dennis Shegda N3KRE 657-7283  
Satellite co-chair Joe Bagnick N3EMA 997-2539  
VHF/UHF/MW co-chair Al Sheppard N3ITT 610-847-5490

## WARC Alumni

Hello WARC, I now live in Illinois about 3.5 Miles SW of Chicago's O'hare International Airport. I live in a town called Bensenville. I still have the Saturn with the Screwdriver antenna on the back, I have also replaced the HTX-202 in it with a Kenwood TM-742A, with 2 Meters, 222, and 440 MHz! I added a TenTec TT Kit Model 1208 6 meter transverter also. I worked Brian, N3EXA with it back on 15AUG98 with it. My home station is a Kenwood TS-940S, another TenTec 1208, and a Yaesu FT-736R (with 144-148, 222-225, 430-450, and 1240-1300 MHz). I am a member of the Schaumburg ARC, some of you may remember working me the last two years during Field Day. I was the "voice". We came in 10th overall last year, we ran 2A. This year I am going to try it with one other guy, not with the club, so please look for us, either AA9QE or KY0Q! O.K., what have I been doing since leaving the Delaware Valley to make a buck! I was hired by MobileComm one month after leaving the Navy, on 21 December 1995. I work for them as a systems technician, working on the paging terminal and many paging transmitters in and around the Chicago Land area. Christine, my wife, is still a travel consultant. I still love CW and ran into Flav, K3JA back on 13 August 1997 on forty CW. I do my best to keep in touch with you all. I still listen on Sunday nights at 8P.M. local time on 28.440 MHz, so far propagation has not lended itself to that venture though. 73 all, and hope to hear from all of you soon. Mike / AA9QE formerly N3OJA  
Email is AA9QE@ARRL.NET or AA9QE@MediaOne.Net

Hi, WARC Friends,

Chris (N8PHU) & Georga Hackworth (KC8DTT formerly KB3AYS) checking in with a personal update. Chris is out of the Navy now, and working for GE Americom at the Goddard Space Flight Center (NASA) in Greenbelt, Maryland in Satellite Communications. I am a homemaker and our sixth child is due in December (the first five are all girls!).  
We can be contacted at: The Hackworth@worldnet.att.net or 3110 Kingtree St., Silver Spring, MD 20902

Georga

Warminster Amateur Radio Club  
General Meeting  
April 1, 1999

Meeting called to order at 7:42 PM by Rocky N3FKR

Round of introductions by those present.

Introduction of visitors.

President's Report - Rocky N3FKR for Bill K3MFI  
Results of the executive board meeting will be discussed at the May meeting.

Frank N3UQP will organize the WARC presence at the Grange Fair this year. We will look at

holding an event to commemorate the club's 35th anniversary at the fair.

Don KA3N is resigning as membership chairman. Tina (Rocky N3FKR's wife), Burt N3YNH and Tony N3YVH will take over as co-chairs.

Due to the light turn-out of homebrew projects we will have an APRS demo by Al WI3Z and Ron NY3J.

Vice-President's Report - Rocky N3FKR

May 6 - Pizza Social. No real program will be presented.

June 3 - Antenna construction night.

Treasure's Report - Al KY3T

The club's March finances were presented to the membership.

Budgets by the various committees are due to the Treasurer at the May club meeting.

Secretary's Report - Mark N3GNW

Motion to approve March general meeting minutes as published in April Feedback. Seconded. No discussion. Passed unanimously.

Membership - Don KA3N

134 members

Several old members have returned and joined again.

Classes - George KA3WXV

Classes are going well. Considering a summer class.

Nominating - Marty NR3Z

Bill, N3RAF, Frank N3UQP, Bert N3YNH and Randy will make up the nominating committee for spring elections.

Hamfest - Tony N3YVH

Organization is going well. May 2 is the hamfest. Set-up will be Saturday May 1. The Trenton Computer Festival is the same weekend but is located in Metuchen, NJ and should not pose a threat to us.

Elmering Committee - Ron NY3J

The elmering topics have been broken down into separate groups and topics. Several members have volunteered their expertise. They will meet ½ hour before next month's meeting to facilitate special interest groups.

Public Service

MS Walk-a-Thon:

Upper Bucks KA3VKU 10 operators are needed. April 24

Central Bucks W3GAD 20 operators are needed. April 25

Lower Bucks AA3A 30 operators are needed. April 25

Tyler State Park Ellen AA3AI needs a number of operators for April 18, 1999, 7:30 am to 2:00 PM. She can be reached on the 145.525 MHz repeater.

Warminster Memorial Day Parade. George N3HBT, May 31, 1999. 8:30 AM to 2:00 PM.

Vintage Car Show. George N3HBT, June 13, 1999. 8:00 AM to 3:30PM at the old Naval Air Development Center in Warminster.

### Special Event Station - Rocky N3FKR

This has been rescheduled for the fall.

### Kitbuilding - Rocky N3FKR

Second Thursday of the month (April 8) at the senior center. Rocky will likely not be there. He is looking for a volunteer to run it.

### Hamfest Slogan and Button - Rocky N3FKR

"Look what I got for the kids" beat out "I support KNOW code." 22-19 votes.

### Repeaters - George N3HBT

George updated us on the condition of the two repeaters and the township's plans for a new tower. The 440 MHz repeater will stay in Hilltown but we will likely have a remote input for it at the new 144 MHz repeater site.

### Field Day 1999 - Doc W3GAD

Last weekend of June. There is no air show this year to compete for the club's attention. Doc is looking for band captains. Set-up will be Friday afternoon. We will hold Field Day at the Shrine of Cheztchowa.

Motion to adjourn at 8:35. Seconded. No discussion. Passed unanimously.

### APRS MIC-E

I would like to continue the discussion on APRS by talking about different system configurations. The first setup you can use is called Mic-E. The Mic-Encoder (Mic-E) installs between your radio mic and radio and allows your GPS unit to transmit APRS AX.25 frames at designated intervals without needing a TNC.

The unit is a semi-kit which can be acquired from TAPR. This means that the board has been partially assembled, with interface wires, box, and other items still required to be configured and assembled for proper use. Most of this information is from the TAPR web site. The price is \$134.00 for members of TAPR + s/h (this is the TAPR 10% discount) or \$149 US for non-members +s/h and includes TAPR APRS Mic-Encoder with parts, cabinet, and documents. There is enough room inside to mount just a Garmin GPS engine such as the Garmin GPS-20 which is also available from TAPR. This allows you to build a portable tracker station by just adding an ht. Following is part of a discussion by Bob Bruninga WA4APR who is the inventor of APRS.

"As mobile GPS/APRS continues to grow, we can eliminate the need for every mobile to have a TNC, digital radio, and second antenna by simply integrating the position report into a very brief tone burst at the end of a voice transmission over any two-way radio. The APRS Mic-E is this solution. With the Mic-E, no additional hardware is required in the vehicle, other than a GPS unit. The system not only reports position and vehicle type, but also one of 7 canned messages and 4 analog telemetry values.

Your APRS Mic-E Encoder Unit will provide you a quick, easy means of tracking your mobile operations when properly interfaced with your existing voice radio. Before operating your Mic-E on the air, you should inquire about APRS operations in your immediate area. By contacting APRS users in your local area you may find particular voice repeaters that already support Mic-E operations with a cross-band link to the local APRS network.

In order to make the APRS LOCATOR SYSTEM practical, the Mic-ENCODER has been designed with several design concepts:

Interfaces to UNMODIFIED radios via the MIC connector  
Uses standard AX.25 for compatibility with existing TNCs  
Compresses position report into about 0.3 seconds  
Uses low enough in power to be powered from the MIC jack  
Accepts the readily available NMEA output from GPS receivers  
Optionally provides 4 analog channels for telemetry  
The result is a 1200 baud position report compressed to 32 bytes including beginning and ending FLAGS. This equates to about 320ms, including CALLSIGN, DIGIPEATER PATHS, and a minimum message capability. Plus, the

packets are still receivable on ANY AX.25 TNC.

The Mic-E (Mic-Encoder) installs between your radio mic and radio and allows your GPS unit to transmit APRS AX.25 frames at designated intervals without needing a TNC! Very useful in many settings.

The heart of the Mic-E is a PIC chip processor that is now sold commercially by Clements Eng. In 1996, Gwyn Reedy, WIBEL, President of PacComm approached TAPR about handling the amateur version in a semi-kit solution. A semi-kit means that the board has already been built, but interface wires, box, and other items will still need to be configured and assembled for proper use by the owner of the kit". (End of Bob's discussion).

So you can see Mic-E has a couple of different setups you can use. As a stand-alone tracker that you can use with a single radio that you use for repeater operation. With the approval of the repeater owner you could send a burst of a packet that would be transparent by repeater users. If your APRS receiving station heard the packet it could track the mobile station. If the repeater was a true APRS digipeater it could send that APRS packet via another radio to the APRS frequency. This could be done while the tracker was transmitting on voice or automatically with proper settings on the mic-e device.

You can use the mic-e with a GPS and second radio as a tracker set at the standard APRS frequency. As I said there are controls on the mic-e which will allow you to set frequency of position reports, canned messages, or emergency alert messages which I will talk about later. Finally you can use the mic-e with GPS and radio attached to a portable computer which you can use to track your movements as well as sending text messages via the APRS system. This is accomplished using one of the APRS programs available.

What is APRS good for you may ask. Well following is the text from a true account of an accident that an APRS user came across on his travels. This excerpt is from a recent ARRL Newsletter.

APRS EMERGENCY CALL BRINGS HELP (ARRL Letter Vol. 18, No. 12 March 19,1999)

When Scott Ratchford, KC5JGV, witnessed a bad accident during a snowstorm on Pennsylvania's I-76 recently, he immediately grabbed his cell phone and called 911. When that-and several other possible combinations-failed, he tried an emergency call on 2-meters. Again, no luck. Two people were trapped inside an overturned vehicle, and Ratchford was getting desperate. "Here I am in the middle of who knows where, a huge snowstorm, a serious accident, folks needing help, no one answering on .52!" he said in a March 8 posting about the incident on the APRS Special Interest Group. "So, I switch the MIC-E to 7, and hit the button." This sent an emergency mike-encoder signal out over the Automatic Position Reporting System.

Ratchford's emergency beacon was spotted by several stations who immediately contacted the Pennsylvania State Police. But the cops "don't do latitude and longitude," said Dan Velez, W4DJV, in Virginia, one of the stations monitoring the call. Clay Owen, AA3JY, in Pennsylvania, had better luck. He also called the state police and was able to give them references to exits and route numbers, thanks to APRS+ and the Delorme Street Atlas. "I also gave them the name of the individual to be contacted, thanks to QRZ built into this program," he reported.

APRS developer Bob Bruninga, WB4APR, was among those noting the emergency call in the Pennsylvania-Maryland-New Jersey area. Bruninga notes that APRS-DOS will display the nearest mile marker on interstates but "apparently I missed I-76 in the database."

Unknown to Ratchford, the message was received and understood. "Little did I know that the APRS message was received, as a trooper had arrived within minutes of my transmission," he said. Only when the trooper asked for him by name as he was about to leave did Ratchford learn that APRS had delivered the message and that someone had called the police. "I left the scene feeling very happy about our hobby and especially our interest in APRS," he said. (End of ARRL newsletter article).

So as you can see APRS does have a practical application. Helping with such as the "Turkey Trot Race" or emergency situations while mobile.

Ron, NY3J

[BACK](#)

