



FEEDBACK



Warminster Amateur Radio Club Web Page www.k3dn.org

August 1998

President's Message

As reported at the last Board and General Meetings, the Executive Board met in late August to discuss the club's activities for WARC's July '98 / June '99 fiscal year. We took a hard look at our club activities- including our meetings, programs, committees, operating events, classes, VE license testing sessions and public service endeavors. We feel the majority of the priorities the general membership has set (see the club Mission Statement / Goals posted on our WEB site) are being met, and targeted some areas where we thought the club should place more emphasis during the next year. In addition, we made some decisions in response to feedback we received from the membership from our recent survey (survey results will be discussed in detail at our October 29 Board Meeting and distributed at the November 5 General Meeting).

Here's a summary of what your Executive Board discussed:

1. **PLANNING SCHEDULE-** we updated WARC's general calendar which includes meeting programs, club activities and likely public service events. It identifies critical dates for follow up to insure that we have sufficient lead time to organize and gather the resources necessary for the many activities that WARC supports. Copies are available on our "resource table" at general club meetings.
2. **MEETING MINUTES-** we supported a six month trial period of publishing general meeting minutes in FEEDBACK (no detailed financial information), asking for additions / corrections and waiving reading. This recommendation was adopted unanimously by the club membership at the September 10 general meeting.
3. **REPORTS TO MEMBERSHIP AT BOARD MEETINGS-** we scheduled the following topics for "on depth" discussion at upcoming Board meetings:
October 29, 1998- Membership Survey (Bill Gorodetzer, K3MFI)
November 19, 1998- Financial Review (AL Folsom, KY3T)
December 17, 1998- Constitution Review Committee (Tom Michaud, WA3TQJ)
4. **MORE EMPHASIS THIS YEAR ON HF-** recent club survey information (including suggested meeting topics) indicates that our membership wants broad information on HF- equipment, mobile/portable operation, commercial and homebrew antenna options, DX'ing, propagation, QSL'ing, certificate chasing, digital modes, operating procedures, computerized logging programs, etc. Club Vice President Rocky Pistilli (N3FKR) will put together a number of appropriate programs (with assistance from club members and outside speakers) for this year.
5. **DEVELOP HANDOUT FOR CLUB MEMBERS-** in addition to club membership list, a list of meeting programs, public service events, and other major dates for members to "reserve" for club activities. We will initially distribute the club planning calendar (see #1 above) and will try to refine format for January '99 membership roster distribution.
6. **MEMBERSHIP GOAL-** to insure financial stability (hamfest profits have diminished in all clubs) and broaden club leadership / expertise, we want to be at 200 current members by the end of June, 1999.
7. **ELMERING-** we need to discuss with club Board and general membership alternatives for insuring club members

have access to the expertise and support required to participate fully in the hobby.

We also discussed how our various committees are functioning and identified the need to provide both direction from the Board and broader involvement from general club membership to insure WARC's objectives are being met and, most importantly, make sure we're not "burning out" our most active members.

I hope that this information will provide the general membership with a better understanding of the role of the club's Executive Board and also generate interest in having more of our members run for club office (directors are elected in January, officers in May). An Executive Board that includes the continuity of experience ("old timers") and fresh, new ideas ("new comers") will insure the long term viability of the Warminster Amateur Radio Club.

de Bill , K3MFI

UPCOMING PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

Craven Hall 5 K Run (Warminster)

Saturday October 17, 1998 @ 9am-12 noon (12 operators needed)- contact George Brechman (N3HBT) at 443-5656

Warminster WREC "Hole-in-one" Golf Outing (Five Ponds Golf Course, Warminster)

Saturday October 17, 1998 @ 8am-5pm (12 operators needed fo 3 hour shifts)- contact George Brechman (N3HBT) at 443-5656

Thanksgiving Day 5 Mile Run (Newtown)- benefits Bucks/Montgomery Counties Women's Shelter (bring non-perishable food item) Thursday November 26, 1998 @ 9am-12 noon (20 operators needed)- contact Doc Whitticar (W3GAD) at 968-0641

THE FOX IS ALIVE (AND WELL) !!!

In anticipation of WARC's next Fox Hunt (scheduled for Sunday, November 8- details to follow), here's some information to get you started.

Fox Hunting

People have been asking me what is the best kind if equipment for radio fox hunting. Here are the most popular types of direction finding equipment.

- 1) Directional antenna
- 2) Handy Finder
- 3) Tinfoil tube
- 4) Paper clip

Directional Antenna

The directional antenna is the most useful peace of equipment. It can be any type of beam antenna. To use it you just point. A three or four element beam would be the best for direction finding. Anything bigger gets to hard to carry around. You connect it to your HT (hand held transceiver) and use the "S" meter to work out the direction of the incoming signal. By pointing in one direction then slowly turning the beam around, your "S" meter will move up and down. At the "S" meters highest reading, the antenna will be pointing in the direction of the incoming signal. The biggest drawback you'll have when using a beam is that the closer you get to the transmitter the stronger the signal gets. At some point your "S" meter will max out. This is where you will have to use some kind of attenuation to reduce the signal strength so you can see it on you meter. I'll get into attenuators later. The beam antenna is a long to medium range peace of equipment. The closer you get to the transmitter, the harder it is to get a bearing.

Handy Finder

The Handy Finder is a good medium to close piece of equipment. It will work at a long range as long as the transmitter is sending a strong signal. It uses two antennas to receive the signal and adds a tone to the incoming signal. By rotating the antennas the tone comes and goes. The idea is to rotate the antennas until the tone is gone. At this point both antennas are at the same distance from the transmitter. You get your heading by looking perpendicular to a line from one antenna to the other. The biggest problem with this is that the transmitter can be in front or in back of you. You'll have to take readings from at least two places some distance apart. A good feature is that it gives off a tone. You don't have to have an "S" meter on your radio.

Tinfoil Tube

The tinfoil tube is a short range-tracking device. By lowering your HT (with a rubber duck antenna) into it you block the signal. This is a form of attenuation. By moving the HT up and down inside of the tube, you can weaken the signal. Then you turn around in a circle. When the signal goes away, the transmitter is behind you. What you are doing is weakening the signal enough so that when you turn around, your body blocks the rest of the signal. This is a short to mid range tracking device and takes a lot of practice to make it work.

Paper Clip

You may wonder how a paper clip can be used to find a transmitter. Well, it's an antenna and attenuator at the same time. It works best a short range. By taking off your HT antenna and sticking a straightened out paper clip in its place you have an antenna that has no gain at all. Then you turn around in a circle. When the signal goes away, the transmitter is behind you. By bending the paper clip in odd ways, you can get a little directional antenna. Add this and body blocking and you'll get in closer than you may want to.

As I mention above, attenuation is most important thing in tracking the transmitter. If you are using a beam antenna, you may want to invest in a line attenuator. This is a box the goes into the line from your antenna to your HT. It has several switches on it. As you flip the switches you are shorting some of signal to ground. The more switches you turn on the weaker the signal gets.

There are other more elaborate pieces of equipment you can get. But the cost is high and they may or may not work in all the hunts you go out on. It has been my observation that the cheapest equipment works very well. And it only take a little more practice to make it work.

Bob KA3VKU

WARC "For Sale Table" Returns

Members are encouraged to bring in their ham, computer and electronic treasures and place them on the For Sale Table at our general membership meetings. Items will be available for sale between 7:00 and 7:30 pm (when the meeting starts) and during our refreshment break (usually about 8:15 pm). It's a great opportunity for club members to recycle unneeded items and a welcomed return of a "WARC tradition" (from the "good old days").

1998 MID-ATLANTIC STATES VHF CONFERENCE

On Saturday October 3, from 9:00 AM until 9:00 PM, THE MT. AIRY VHF RADIO CLUB ("PACKRATS") will present THE 1998 MID-ATLANTIC STATES VHF CONFERENCE at the Hampton Inn (for room reservation call (215) 659-3535), 1500 Easton Road (Rt. 611 one quarter mile below the Willow Grove Exit #27 of the Pennsylvania Turnpike). Registration is \$24 per person at the door, which includes an admission ticket for HAMARAMA being held the following day. For additional information contact: John Sortor, KB3XG, 1214 N Trooper Road, Norristown, PA 19403 or e-mail at johnkb3xg@aol.com or call (610) 878-5674.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

October 1st: What's new in HF equipment. We are planning to have a representative from Ham Radio Outlet show and discuss some of the latest in HF rigs and equipment. We'll try to have a couple of stations set up so you can try them out.

November 5th: Our annual ARRL night. Come out here the latest goings on with the league! We are planning to have Kay Craigie, WT3P, Director of ARRL Atlantic Division here to fill us in and answer your questions. This should be a very interesting night!

December 3rd: Our annual holiday dinner. Program to be announced.

Warminster Amateur Radio Club Picnic 1998

The 1998 Warminster picnic was held on August 9, 1998 at Core Creek Park in Middletown. Attendance was a little light this year most likely due to summer vacations. However about 45 people attended the picnic. The club supplied the hamburgers, hotdogs, rolls and condiments. While each family brought one or two dishes for all to try with their meals. It seems that everyone who did come brought their appetite. Almost all of the hamburgers and half of the hotdogs were gobbled up as well as almost all of the family dishes.

I would like to extend a special thank-you to Tony N3YNH, Hugh N3SOQ and Al KA3YCG for picking up supplies for the picnic. Their assistance helped make the planning and execution go extremely smoothly.

To better accommodate more of the club's families next year, we will hold the picnic after Labor Day as we have done the past two years. During upcoming meetings and nets I will be looking for suggestions of where we can hold next year's picnic. Some people have suggested returning to Peace Valley Park north of Doylestown.

Mark Kempisty - N3GNW

K3DN
Warminster Amateur Radio Club
Homepage <http://www.voicenet.com/~k3dn>

PA QSO Party

Once again it is time for the best QSO party in the country... The PA QSO party. This is your chance to have everyone in the world looking for you. Every wonder what it would be like to operate one of those stations that make 200 contacts an hour? Well I can't promise you that will happen but maybe you can make 200 contacts in one weekend. If you work just 100 contacts you can get a free coffee mug. What's great about this contest is you don't have to lose sleep and maybe get some Honey-Dos finished. The party starts at Noon on October 10 and goes until 1 AM October 11. Time for some sleep and then the party resumes at 9 AM until 9PM. You could even take a break and watch the Eagles. If you want more information the place to point your web browser is <http://members.aol.com/doughdh/paqsoparty/paqs.htm>.

You may wonder what kind of antenna do I need? A long wire, dipole or vertical will all work fine. All you need to put up an antenna is a few trees, string, a sling shot (bow and arrow if you're brave) and coax. A dipole is just two equal lengths of wire strung between two supports (the trees) and coax connected at the center. A long wire is just as simple to make. The length of wire don't have to be equal. The other items that you will need are an antenna tuner and a radio. The tuner is necessary because an antenna is only good (resonant) at one frequency and the party is on several different bands. Just make the antenna long enough for the lowest frequency you have space for and use the tuner for the rest.

As an incentive I will give away one PVC center connector at the next meeting. For everyone else I'll show you how easy it is to make your own. I will collect all the scores and do all the paper work so the only thing you have to do is work the Party.

Warminster Amateur Radio Club
General Meeting
September 10, 1998

Meeting called to order at 7:39 PM by Bill K3MFI.

Several guests introduced themselves.

Round of member introductions.

President's Report - Bill K3MFI
Preliminary Membership Survey Information

A full report on the member survey will be made at the October board meeting and presented to the club membership at the November meeting. The executive board reviewed some of this information at its August meeting. Some highlights are:

- An overwhelming desire for more information on HF related items.
- Club and ham radio calendar of events.
- Executive board has set a membership goal of 200 members.
- Reestablish the elmering program.

Financial review will be conducted at the November board meeting. Constitution Review Committee to report at the December board meeting.

Don KA3N will continue as our membership chairman. Bert N3YVH will assist by handling the tasks during the club meeting to ease the pressure on Don of attending the meetings early..

Vice President's Report - Rocky N3FKR

Upcoming Meeting Topics

- October 1, 1998 - HF radios and operating
- November 5, 1998 - Annual ARRL Night with Kay Craige
- December 3, 1998 - Annual Holiday Dinner

Suggestions for club programs are welcome and may be given to Rocky N3FKR.

Treasurer's Report - Bill K3MFI for AL KY3T

Our treasurer Al KY3T was not present this evening. In his place Bill K3MFI summarized our income and expenses over the past year; positive cash flow of about \$2,000.

Secretary's Report - Mark N3GNW

Motion to publish minutes in the club newsletter - Feedback -- for a six month trial period to allow members to review it, correct as necessary and move to approve it at the next meeting. Seconded. No discussion Passed unanimously.

Corrections to August Meeting Minutes as Published in September Feedback

Web sight must be spelled WEB SITE ; Doc's callsign is W3GAD not N3GAD. Motion to approve minutes published in September Feedback as corrected. Seconded. No discussion. Passed unanimously.

Membership - Don KA3N

120 paid-up members; 25 lapsed members; 25 inactive members

Grange Fair - Frank N3UQP

Our booth at the fair went well.; Round of applause for Frank's efforts.

Picnic 1998 Report - Mark N3GNW

9/9 Core Creek Park. Light attendance due to vacations. Thanks to all who helped. Next year's picnic will move back to the fall. Looking for site suggestions. Mark N3GNW will organize it again for next year.

Classes - Rocky N3FKR and Steve KA3ZLY; George KA3WXV

SUMMER- Four passed element 2 and one new technician. Thanks to those who helped with the classes.

FALL- classes start September 15. Handouts available announcing the next class. Assistant instructors are also needed.

CW classes will be available by prior request.

Club Station - George N3HBT

Station is operational. R7 has had refit kit installed. The club station is open monthly with HF, VHF and internet abilities.

Hamfest 1999 - Tony N3YNH

Hamfest will be on May 2, 1999. Flyers are available and may be taken to other area hamfests as advertisement. Tony is looking for a co-chair to help him for 1999 and assume full responsibility the next year.

Constitutional Review Committee - Tom WA3TQJ

Tom is looking for three to five people to review the constitution and make suggestions on improving or modifying it.

Hamwear - Bob K3SRO

Shirts and hats are available for order.

PA QSO Party - Bill K3MFI for Marty NR3Z

October 10 and 11. Information kits will be available at the next meeting. A Windows95 logging program is available from the club's web site. More info in October FEEDBACK.

PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

Stu K2QBU

· Mass trauma drill has been cancelled. RACES has been asked to standby to support a "Woodstock" style event in Newtown if necessary.

George N3HBT

· Craven Hall 5K Run Saturday October 17 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM. 12 operators will be needed.

· Five Ponds Golf Course Hole in One Competition. October 17 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM. 9 operators to act as hole marshals. Three hour shifts.

· Thanksgiving Day 5 Mile Run Thursday November 26 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM. Please bring one non-perishable food item to donate. 20-22 operators needed.

MS 150 Bike Tour September 26 and 27. Contact W3PS to volunteer.

OLD BUSINESS- none

NEW BUSINESS

Motion Passed at August 26 board meeting- Bill K3MFI

To purchase a VCR as "early" holiday gift for Wilson Senior Center

Fox Hunt - Bob KA3VKU

November 8. You may start from any location to search for the fox. It promises to be well disguised. Clues will be given at 9:00 AM on the repeater.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Don KA3N is recovering from an operation

Lavern Taylor is still in the nursing home. If you have time to stop by and visit, he would appreciate it. Homestead Nursing Home. Fitzwatertown and Easton roads.

SPEAKER- Rocky N3FQR

Keith Sporul will be talking about Automatic Position Reporting System (APRS). This promises to be a great program.

Motion to adjourn at 8:22 PM. Seconded. No discussion. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Kempisty - N3GNW
WARC Secretary

GRANGE FAIR 98 REPORT

The grange country fair ran from August 12th to the 16th. As you all know this is the clubs opportunity to make the community aware of the contributions of Amateur Radio and to entice new hams into the hobby. (it also fulfills the annual requirement for funnel cake, chicken dinners and flies!)

The range of interest ran the ages, as an example I had an eleven year old start out with an interest to send a message, let him watch me input the message and come back two hours later with his mother and aunt in tow to get George KA3WXV's class information. Then there was the 73 year old WWII Vet who hadn't touched a key in 30 years, who was "amazed" how quickly the code came back to him. It gave his two teenage grandsons an interest too! It makes you wonder if the entire debate over Internet superseding Amateur Radio is out of proportion. Technology is what the kids seem to like; the difference is all modern technology is out of the box with no real understanding of how it works. Perhaps this is an idea that we can exploit in future years. I would like to take the opportunity to thank Doc; W3GAD for set up, Tony, N3YNH, STU, K2QBU, JOHN, KA3WDY and BILL, KA3MFI as day captains. Mr. "B", N3HBT for the radio assists and the many members of the club who took time from their daily lives to take the messages (93 voice and 64 packet) Supplied equipment or gave a few hours at the clubs stall. Without you this Grange Fair Rookie couldn't have made it possible!

73's de Frank N3UQP

ARCHIVES NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Technology is a wonderful thing,
However, it's killing me! Ten years ago the majority of information was paper based and it was easy to get your notes, photographs and letters. Today, it's all electronic media and that can be lost in the click of a mouse. Please consider me for those disks, Inkjet photos, e-mail and what have you in addition to all the regular items I collect. Help; keep me off the unemployment line!

73's Frank N3UQP