



May 2012

# The HARC Spark

The Official Newsletter of the  
Holmesburg Amateur Radio Club  
WM3PEN 146.685 Mhz Repeater  
K3RJC 444.9 Mhz Repeater  
K3FI CLUB CALLS WM3PEN  
Web Site <http://www.harcnet.org>



## HARC Meeting May 24th 8 PM

### Special Event Stations

### What are they? What's involved?

### 8<sup>th</sup> District Police Station

### Academy & Red Lion Rds

If you chase DX you are probably use to jumping into a pileup to work that rare call. You finally make contact and then you fill out a qsl card and get it ready for the mail.

But what goes on at the other end. How does the rare station promote where he will be and get ready to handle all of the qsl cards being sent to him?

This month we'll take a look at what goes into planning a special event station. We'll talk about different special events where you can get a special QSL card or certificate.

We'll also talk about the upcoming 13 Colonies Special Event, June 30 – July 5 and how you can get involved.

**Show and Tell: Bring your special event QSL cards and certificates and show off your collection!**

## FIELD DAY

June 23 -24

### Alverthorpe Park

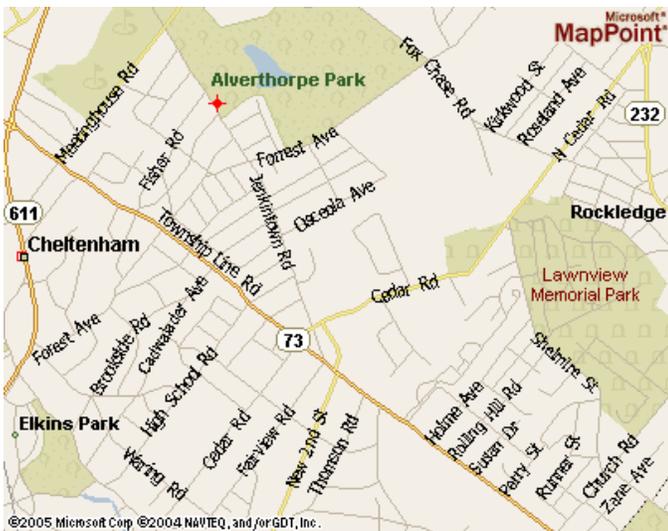
Field Day is a picnic, a campout, practice for emergencies, an informal contest and, most of all, FUN! ARRL Field Day is the single most popular on-the-air event held annually in the US and Canada. On the fourth weekend of June of each year, more than 35,000 radio amateurs gather with their clubs, groups or simply with friends to operate from remote locations.

It is a time where many aspects of Amateur Radio come together to highlight our many roles. While some will treat it as a contest, other groups use the opportunity to practice their emergency response capabilities. It is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate Amateur Radio to the organizations that Amateur Radio might serve in an emergency, as well as the general public. For many clubs, ARRL Field Day is one of the highlights of their annual calendar.

The contest part is simply to contact as many other stations as possible and to learn to operate our radio gear in abnormal situations and less than optimal conditions.

We use these same skills when we help with events such as marathons and bike-a-thons; fund-raisers such as walk-a-thons; celebrations such as parades; and exhibits at fairs, malls and museums — these are all large, preplanned, non-emergency activities. But despite the development of very complex, modern communications systems — or maybe because they ARE so complex — ham radio has been called into action again and again to provide communications in crises when it really matters. Amateur Radio people (also called “hams”) are well known for our communications support in real disaster and post-disaster situations.

## HARC FIELD DAY LOCATION Alverthorpe Park off of Jenkintown Rd.



[www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org)

## HARC Board of Directors

President - Mike Wurgley, N3LXN  
Treasurer - Bob Josuweit, WA3PZO  
Membership - Charley Johnson, K3CJ  
Technical - Ron Cardullo, K3RJC  
Member-at-Large - Sol Volen, N3UBY  
Webmaster - Rich Shivers, AB3EO  
UPARC Rep - Mike Feeley, KB3NDC  
Newsletter Editor - Bob Josuweit, WA3PZO  
WM3PEN @ AOL.COM

H.A.R.C. Monthly Meetings - The Board of Directors meets on the 2nd Thursday @ 7:30 PM (Odd number months). General meetings are held the 4<sup>th</sup>. Thursday @8:00 PM. 8<sup>th</sup> District Police Station, Red Lion & Academy Rd. Phila PA. No meeting in August.

## HARC MEETING LOCATION 8<sup>TH</sup> District Police Station



H.A.R.C maintains the 146.685 repeater located @ Univ. of PA., Phila PA with inputs in Abington, N.E. Phila, and Cherry Hill, NJ; More Club Information & Member Applications can be had by contacting any of the Directors via E-mail. [WM3PEN@arrl.net](mailto:WM3PEN@arrl.net), the web page <http://www.harcnet.org> or writing to HARC 3341 Sheffield Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19136.

## PHILA ARES INFORMATION

All amateurs interested in participating should check into the Phila ARES Net, Sunday's at 9:00 PM, hosted on the Phil-Mont Repeater System; 147.030 MHz (+offset 91.5 PL) ;444.80 MHz (+offset 186.2 PL) When control operators are available, Echolink node 29742, WU3I-L, is on the repeater. Backup link is KB3IV-L.

All interested amateurs are welcomed and encouraged to check in for more information. There is always a different topic of interest to the amateur community discussed with an informal round table of comments and suggestions.

Look forward to having all check in on Sunday nights @ 9:00 pm. See web site for more information.

- Visit the Philadelphia ARES web site <http://www.harcnet.org/aresindex.html>



## VE SESSIONS

PhilMont Mobile Radio Club has testing in Ambler, PA on the 4th Thursday of every month. Exams , 1414 E. Butler Pike in Ambler, PA.

Registration begins at 7pm.

Warminster Amateur Radio Club has testing the last Wednesday evening of each month except August and December. The sessions are at the Warminster Recreational and Educational Center on Little Lane, and start promptly at 7:00 PM (registration 6:45 PM).

Bryn Mawr - quarterly on a Saturday. Contact Bob Lees, W3ZQN, [rjlees@aol.com](mailto:rjlees@aol.com)

## HF AWARDS MANAGER

Are you getting close to having all 50 states confirmed for the Worked All States award or working enough grid squares for to qualify for the VUCC Award? As a HARC service you can now have your QSL cards verified by Bob, WA3PZO, and not have to ship the cards to ARRL Headquarters. You must be an ARRL member to qualify for the awards. Additional information and links can be found on the HARC website ([www.harcnet.org](http://www.harcnet.org))

## Pennsylvania "67" Challenge Award

Amateur Radio operators around the world have the opportunity to participate in the Pennsylvania "67" Challenge. The Challenge, sponsored by the Holmesburg Amateur Radio Club, is to make contact with all 67 Pennsylvania Counties.

The Challenge is open to all amateur radio operators regardless of individual station capabilities. All contacts must be 2-way communications made in real time. These contacts may be on any Amateur Radio band/mode.

Contacts made using repeating devices such as FM repeaters, Amateur satellites, moon-bounce, and keyboard-to-keyboard contacts through digipeaters/nodes are valid, because these QSOs are made in real or near-real time. Contacts using IRLP, Echolink, or D-Star are valid as long as a radio is being used by both operators. All contacts must be made from the same county.

As an incentive Pennsylvania "67" Challenge certificates may be earned by working stations in 20, 40, 60, or all 67 Counties. Paper or electronic QSLs are acceptable. The contacts can be verified by a local club officer or mailed to the Holmesburg Amateur Radio Club.

HARC Award Manager Bob Josuweit, WA3PZO said there was a need to have a County Challenge in Pennsylvania that was within the reach of most hams in Pennsylvania. When other state awards lost their sponsorship it was an opportunity for the Holmesburg Amateur Radio Club to fill the void.

Complete rules will be posted on the HARC website. Questions on the Award can be directed to HARC at [WM3PEN@ARRL.NET](mailto:WM3PEN@ARRL.NET).

## 2012 Meeting Topics

**June** – Field Day Recap/13 Colonies update

**July** – No meeting. 13 Colonies S/E 6/30 – 7/5

**August** – HARC Picnic

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## Poor Man's Paddle



Have you ever wanted to try your hand at kit building? Maybe you wanted to try cw without spending a lot of money. HARC has a limited number of kits available. Cost is \$2 each which includes the Altoids can. The kit is from a July, 1999 article in QST by N9JXY. The paddle can be built in a few hours. Just plug it into a keyer or directly into your radio if it has a keyer built in.

We're looking at having a building party so we can all learn from the experts on hand. If interested contact Bob, WA3PZO

### DUES ARE DUE

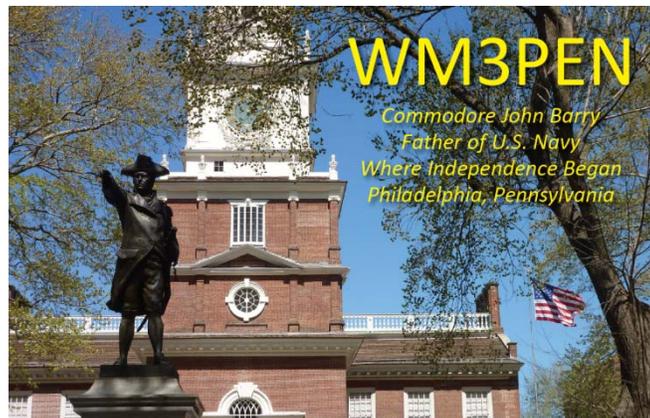
The HARC membership year began in April. Dues are just \$20 per year and help support the Club's many activities including the repeater system, repeater telephone control, liability and equipment insurance, newsletter, special event operations, club meetings, Field Day, website, group email list, QSL card services, and others.

Use the form on the last page of the newsletter and send your dues to HARC, 3341 Sheffield Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19136

## HARC Makes Plans for 13 Colonies Special Event

The 2012, 13 Colonies Special Event is fast approaching. Saturday June 30 9 AM until 11:59 PM Thursday, July 5 EDT. HARC members are already signed up to operate and we need more. Last year we made over 1200 contacts and with an extra day we should make even more. Activity will be primarily on HF, but there are also opportunities to operate on VHF as well. If there is interest in operating on V/UHF then we need some lead time to get the word out to the local clubs.

The theme for the 2012 event is Colonial Era US Naval Ships. WM3PEN will again be a bonus station honoring Commodore John Barry, Father of the U.S. Navy. Barry was born in Ireland. He resided and died in Philadelphia. He wrote a Signal Book which established a set of signals used for effective communication between ships. Special Event QSL cards were ordered this month. WA3PZO has worked with the event manager on updating information. In addition WA3PZO submitted an article on special event stations to CQ Magazine.



## Where Did “Ham” REALLY Come From? By Gary Pearce, KN4AQ

So, where did the term **Ham** really come from? Many tell a story that is often repeated as fact, about the little “Hyman-Almy-Murray” station at Harvard University that saved Amateur Radio from hostile legislators in 1911. That story is told and debunked on today’s Harvard Wireless Club’s web site:  
[www.hcs.harvard.edu/~w1af/hamorigin.html](http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~w1af/hamorigin.html) .

The real truth is... nobody really knows. But the search is fascinating. There’s lots of information on the web, and if there’s a “smoking gun” that reveals all, it’s probably hiding in an article or letter from an old telegrapher back in the 19th century.



*QST's first mention of the word "Ham" appears in this edition.*

**But there are some clues.** The first-ever mention of the word “Ham” in **QST** comes in the November, 1916 issue, in an article titled Rottenest Luck Ever, by an author using the pseudonym “El Amateur.” **QST** was less than a year old at this point, and it was a fairly stuffy magazine, except for a popular series of articles under the theme Rotten this and Rotten that.

The initial articles were written by ARRL founder Hiram Maxim W1AW, disguised under the name “The Old Man.” He used the articles to complain about bad operating, bad conditions, and bad luck in general. Soon the style and the “Rotten” thread were picked up by several other anonymous authors. El Amateur told a story of woe about trying to keep an antenna up and working, and concluded with the phrase “Say fellow “Hams”, doesn’t this beat ‘em all?”

The term “Ham” pops up here and there over the next few years of **QST**, becoming increasingly common, until in November of 1923, the Classified Advertisements section, a **QST** staple since the first issue, took the name Ham-Ads. Interesting, but it really doesn’t shed much light on the origin of the term. It does show that “Ham” was in popular use, at least informally, from **QST**’s inception, if not before. But it wasn’t a big enough deal to write about. In October 1926, a **QST** article simply titled Ham, by C.E. Tamm (no callsign listed) of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, finally tells the story. He wrote, “Long before Marconi and DeForest had produced anything that would transmit characters without the aid of wires there were ‘hams’. To the railroads goes the honor of producing the real dyed-in-the-wool ‘ham.’” Tamm says the term “ham” was a common one for 19th



The **ORIGINAL**  
"Social Network"

**Ham Radio!**

[www.Hello-Radio.org](http://www.Hello-Radio.org)

century wireline telegraphers. It referred to new operators on the wire, usually youngsters who had been working around the telegraph office doing difficult, odd jobs for some time, looking to work their way up to the coveted job operating the key. At midnight, when the office was closed, the kids took over the wire and practiced, until one day they were good enough to take their exam. If they passed, they got the job and became telegraph operators.



*"Classifieds" changed to "Ham-Ads" in 1923, and remains that way today*

"Then he became, in the parlance of the commercial and railroad operators in the relay office, any number of dashed and blanked kinds

of a 'HAM!'" Mr. Tamm doesn't know why the telegraphers, an old and legendary species even back in 1926, called their newcomers *Hams*. The origin was already lost to time. But he explains that "it is generally conceded that the term 'Ham' was applied to the plodding student because his Morse characters sounded a great deal as if they were being formed by a huge ham instead of a hand, on the sending key." His theory is that the term simply transferred from wire to ether when radio came along. But that leaves the term as an insult, if sometimes an affectionate one. The transformation to a term of endearment remains a missing link.

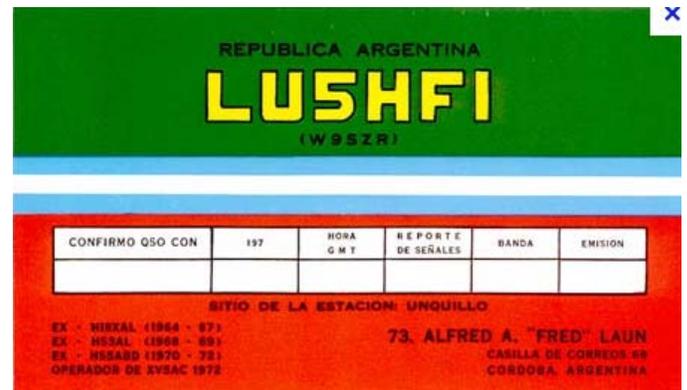
An article in the 1969 **ARRL Operating Manual** confirms the notion that Ham came from the wired telegraph operators. Louise Ramsey Moreau W3WRE found this definition in G.M. Dodge's **The Telegraph Instructor**, a book that predated radio: "Ham: a poor operator. A 'plug'" Louise adds that in the early days of radio, when a single broad spark signal occupied essentially the whole usable spectrum, and two amateurs chatting across town blocked all signals from commercial and military stations, the wire telegraphers-turned-radio operators would signal each other "SRI OM THOSE #&\$!@ HAMS ARE JAMMING YOU." She speculates that "Amateurs, possibly unfamiliar with the real meaning of the term, picked it up and applied it to themselves in true "Yankee Doodle" fashion and wore it with pride. As the years advanced, the original meaning has completely disappeared." Perhaps. Probably. Sounds good to me. But evidently as it happened, nobody wrote it down. We may never know for sure.

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## Hams Behind the Mic



*While sorting through some old qsl cards, WA3PZO, found one from LU5HFI. His qso with LU5HFI was in 1973, just months before Laun's kidnapping.*

## Radio hobbyist or CIA Spy: The 1974 kidnapping of USIA officer Alfred Laun

**On Good Friday 1974**, members of a Marxist guerrilla group in Córdoba, Argentina barged into the home of a US amateur radio operator and DXer in a botched attempt to kidnap and hold him for ransom. Alfred Laun, a US information officer, was shot and critically wounded after struggling with his captors. The entire episode set off a behind-the-scenes offensive in Washington, with US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger ordering his diplomats to refute reports pinning Laun as a suspected CIA operative, based on the fact that he owned a large amount of expensive radio equipment.

A host of once-classified cablegrams that are now part of a collection on file at the National Archives in Washington DC show how US officials both in Washington and Buenos Aires scrambled to downplay spy speculations.

### **Dangerous terrain**

In the early 1970s, Argentina was on the threshold of its darkest period in modern history. Legendary caudillo Juan Domingo Perón returned from exile in Spain in early 1973 with his third wife, María Estela (Isabel) Martínez de Perón, who as vice president would assumed the presidency following his death in July 1974.

With escalating violence fueled by a mismanaged economy, soaring inflation and the polarization of the ruling Peronist party, Argentina was bitterly divided. Leftwing and rightwing factions went for each other's throats, and leftist guerrilla groups, such as the Montoneros and the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP), unleashed a wave of terror with a string of assassinations, kidnappings and bombings across the country. Unstoppable violence mixed with the government's inept economic policies, instability, and the loss of public confidence would eventually contribute to the overthrow of Isabel Perón's government in March 1976. It also paved the way for a hideous "Dirty War" period, in which as many as 30,000 Argentines were tortured and forcibly "disappeared" by the military regime that ruled between 1976-83.

While the Perón government was still in power, urban guerrillas, helping to create more instability, saw foreign diplomats and businessmen as prime targets. In December 1973 the ERP kidnapped Exxon executive Victor Samuelson but released him more than four months after a \$12 million ransom was paid. Weeks before Samuelson was freed, on Good Friday morning April 12, 1974, nine men and a woman brandishing machine guns broke into the Córdoba home of Alfred Laun, a 36-year-old USIA officer from Wisconsin who had served in posts in the Dominican Republic, Vietnam and Thailand before coming to Argentina.

Laun tried to resist his kidnappers and was shot in the abdomen. The bullet entered through his stomach and exited his backside grazing the vertebral column. An ERP guerrilla, apparently a physician, operated on him at a safehouse and, some 14 hours later, he was dumped outside Córdoba where police found him alive "wrapped in a blanket and connected to an IV," according to an account given at the time in Spain's *ABC* newspaper. He told authorities that he had been given a hallucinogenic drug. When word of the kidnapping got back to Washington, Secretary of State Kissinger embarked on his damage-control strategy.

"Implication is clear he is to be tagged as a CIA agent. We also understand that discovery of radio equipment in Laun's house has produced speculation on that score,"

Kissinger wrote in a cable dated the same day of the kidnapping, which ordered his team to "deny categorically" that Laun was connected to the CIA.

"We will point out that he has been a HAM radio operator for many years, which explains the radio equipment. It would be helpful if embassy could confirm that Laun is registered and/or licensed in Argentina as an amateur radio operator. Did he belong to an Argentine HAM radio club?"

### **Questions abound**

The following day Kissinger wrote: "We expect press interest to diminish. Although there is temptation to deplore publicly this barbaric action against one of our officials, we believe that it is best to be circumspect. We must bear in mind possibility that such public denunciation at this time could complicate efforts to secure release of Samuelson (Exxon) and might provoke ERP into additional initiatives."

Kissinger's wish for publicity to die out didn't come true. Pedro Massa, the Buenos Aires correspondent for the Madrid conservative daily *ABC* wrote on April 16: "[Laun] is an amateur radio operator and he had inside his home various transmitters and radio receivers of top quality and latest technology, which allowed him to cover the whole world. The ERP took the best one when they kidnapped Laun."

On April 17, Laun was secretly airlifted from Argentina to Panama where he was hospitalized and debriefed. As Laun was recovering, lawmakers in the Argentinean congress demanded an official inquiry as to why Laun had so much radio equipment. The communist bloc presented a resolution which expressed serious concerns over the "discovery of a powerful radio transmitter installed in his house" and called on the Argentinean government to prohibit foreign diplomats in Argentina "from the use of shortwave radios and radio telephones."

"Unfortunately Laun's radio equipment has raised some suspicions even among friendly circles," the US embassy in Buenos Aires cabled Kissinger. "Normally, friendly *Mayoria* [a newspaper] carried article on April 22, which implied that Laun might have been doing more than cultural / informational work in Córdoba. Even some US newsmen have expressed opinion that there must have been more than met the eye, else Laun would not have had such sophisticated radio equipment."

Before releasing him, the ERP said it planned on trying Laun in a "people's court" on charges of belonging to the CIA, claiming that he played "an important part" in the overthrow of Marxist President Salvador Allende the previous September "by assisting the right-wing Chilean military in their communications," the Associated Press reported.

It wasn't exactly known what type of equipment Laun had in his shack -- neither the inventory nor the make of the transceiver the ERP stole were made public -- but US officials were quick to prove that Laun belonged to a local radio hobby club. After the Laun case and other similar kidnappings, the US government quietly began reassigning non-essential personnel and moving families away from Argentina.

### Search for the kidnappers

On April 23, the US Embassy in Buenos Aires quoted an AP report that Argentinean police arrested suspected ERP member Ana María Liendo in connection with the kidnapping. Authorities apparently released Liendo, or she may have escaped sometime afterwards. Her name was among the 100 guerrillas who died during an armed confrontation between the ERP and military on December 23, 1975 in Monte Chingolo, south of Buenos Aires. Liendo was 25.

It isn't clear if any of the other kidnappers were ever identified. Charles Russell, a US Defense Department analyst, wrote in a 1976 article entitled *Transnational Terrorism* that a member of the Basque terrorist group ETA, who trained and operated with the ERP, may have possibly been involved in the Laun kidnapping before returning to Spain.

In a November 9, 2003 interview with *La Capital*, a daily in Rosario, Argentina, ERP founder Enrique Gorriarán Merlo admitted that he "was directly involved" in Laun's abduction.

He explained that the ERP decided to release him immediately because the victim had been wounded and the movement didn't want any other hostage deaths on their hands. Gorriarán Merlo (left) was a controversial figure who is credited for leading the 1980 soldier-of-fortune mission that assassinated ousted Nicaraguan President Anastasio Somoza in Asuncion, Paraguay. He and other guerrillas had made a spectacular prison escape in 1971 and went into hiding, traveling throughout Latin America, even fighting on the Sandinista side during the Nicaraguan Civil War. After Mexico deported him, he was arrested by Argentina in May 1995 and, seven years later, pardoned by then-Argentinean President Eduardo Duhalde. Gorriarán Merlo died from a heart attack in 2006 at age 64.

### Aftermath

Laun survived his ordeal and went on to serve in other US diplomatic missions before retiring. In Nicaragua, he was the US Embassy spokesman during the height of US involvement with Contra rebels, and his radio activities again evoked suspicion while he was in Managua. On August 20, 1987, the Nicaraguan Journalists Union (UPN) charged that Laun was trying to organize support for anti-Sandinista broadcasters, "contrary to his diplomatic status," by attending a Nicaraguan HAM radio meeting. Specifically, UPN chair

Lily Soto said Laun had instructed Honduran radio journalist and VOA stringer Conrado Godoy to recruit Nicaraguan broadcasters for Radio Impacto, the pro-Contra shortwave broadcaster based in Costa Rica.

Efforts to contact Laun for this article have been fruitless; he never answered any emails requesting an interview.

On September 12, 2000, Laun left a condolence message on a qsl.net board in memory of Pero Simundza, a 29-year-old HAM who worked for UNHCR and was killed days before with two others in West Timor when his office was ambushed by a militia mob. "Amateur Radio is a wonderful hobby but it can be dangerous because people misinterpret what it is. I myself was kidnapped and shot in Argentina but fortunately I have lived to tell about it."

(<http://shortwavescatter.blogspot.com/2010/03/radio-hobbyist-or-cia-spy-1974.html>)

## WA3PZO Retires from ARRL Leadership

After almost 40 years of service to amateur radio and the EPA ARRL Section, Bob Josuweit, WA3PZO, has stepped down as an EPA Assistant Section Manager. Bob joined the EPA Section Staff in the mid-1970s as Phone Activities Manager and net manager of the Eastern PA Emergency Phone and Traffic Net. He moved up through the NTS ranks serving on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Region Net staff. In EPA he became Section Emergency Coordinator. He helped coordinate response to 3 major disasters, including Three Mile Island, Hurricane Agnes, and the relocation of Vietnamese refugees at Ft. Indiantown Gap. He also developed the original District Emergency Coordinator plan for the Section.

Bob went on to serve ARRL at the national level by serving on the Emergency Communications Advisory Committee. He chaired the ECAC for 2 years. Following the ECAC he served on the Public Service Advisory Committee. Later he joined the ARRL Public Relations Committee where he served for 10 years. While not ARRL related Bob wrote reported on amateur radio emergency communications for CQ and other magazines around the world for over 10 years.

EPA Section Manager K3RF said, "We thank Bob for his long service to the amateur radio community and we are sure we will see more of Bob through his radio club activities in the years to come."

After a rough transition between section managers, Bob felt it was time to step down. He said that he doesn't need an ARRL Section appointment to serve the local amateur community. He also felt he wanted to enjoy the hobby rather than take on another leadership position.



HOLMESBURG AMATEUR RADIO CLUB  
3341 Sheffield Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19136  
"Serving the Community Through Ham Radio"

Club Meeting – May 24 - Special Event Stations



## HOLMESBURG AMATEUR RADIO CLUB MEMBERSHIP FORM

HARC, 3341 Sheffield Ave, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19136  
<http://www.harcnet.org>  
WM3PEN/K3FI



All members in good standing are eligible to vote and hold a board office. Dues are \$20.00/year.  
Make checks payable to H.A.R.C. and mail to 3341 Sheffield Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19136.

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