



November,  
2021

# THE HARC SPARK



Editors: K3UJ

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>

## Prez Sez!

Welcome to our reborn newsletter and many thanks to Rich K3UJ for making it possible. I'll take this opportunity to tell you a bit about myself and what our club means to me. In later issues, I hope to address ideas for HARC's future.

For me, it all started in 1953 at age 10, when my older friend Alvin, whose paper route I was helping with, asked if I'd be interested in becoming a radio ham. I was keen on science then, so I agreed. We spent many an evening practicing Morse Code over the telephone by voice (dit-dah...) until we reached 5 wpm speed and took our Novice exams at the US Custom House at 2nd & Chestnut Sts. under the watchful eye of Joe Welsh. Alvin became WN3WHJ and I WN3WHK. We both upgraded to General Class licenses a few months later.

I enjoyed ham radio during my teenage years in the Mt. Airy section of Philly with my Heathkit AT-1 transmitter (25 watts, CW only) and Hallicrafters S-85 receiver. My terribly mismatched longwire antenna (I didn't know any better) did not allow me to work much DX, but I had fun ragchewing and participating in the traffic nets. At that time, there was a lot of radiogram traffic from military personnel to their homes, as there was no e-mail and phone calls were expensive. I was a member of the now defunct York Road Radio Club, which met in Elkins Park.

In the Sixties, I went away to Penn State, then the US Army, then grad school at Penn, and forsook ham radio. I did a little shortwave listening along the way with a small portable receiver from my Center City apartment, but there was no room for a decent transmitting antenna, and to buy radio gear, I would have had to get rid of my collection of Macintosh computers (heaven forbid). I did, however, always renew my ham license...I guess I always knew I'd be back.

When I left Center City to live in NE Philly, I was looking at the NE Times weekly newspaper and saw an announcement for a HARC meeting at the police station which was just up the street from me. Thus began my happy relationship with our club. I bought my first transceiver from the club, which HARC had inherited, got wonderful help setting up an antenna, and have been back on the air since 2014.

I have attended meetings of larger clubs, and although they have more resources than we do, both in manpower and finances, I will always value my association with HARC for its personal touch and for the friends I have made.

Saul - W3WHK

### November Trivia Question?

Where can you find NA1SS?

### Running the Holmesburg Amateur Radio Club Weekly Net

Ham radio has a sense of tradition. I appreciate this more as an adult. As a fourteen-year-old I just wanted to get on air. I had upgraded to my technician and general class license. This happened around 1991, before the restructuring. Upgrading to technician meant that I could finally go on 2 meters, the popular band with all the big local repeaters. .

I received a Kenwood TH-F6A for Christmas. It looked like a big walkie-talkie, with an odd rubber button for the push to talk. It provided the best accessibility for the blind at the time, providing audio feedback through different beeps. I loved it. I remember going on a local repeater on Christmas afternoon, W3UER if memory

serves. I could already talk to them through their 220 MHz link, but now I could get on 2 meters like one of the big guys.

A few months later I stumbled on the WM3PEN repeater. It sits atop a building at the University of Pennsylvania in the city. They had their weekly net going on, like a round table, and I tried checking in. I had trouble making the repeater from Swarthmore, a suburb of the city. *“Try standing on your bed.”* suggested a helpful ham. As a kid I thought nothing of it, and shamelessly jumped up on my bed. It may have helped. Either way, I remembered the frequency 146.685 MHz and the helpful people there. Some radio clubs did not treat me so kindly.

When I got back into the hobby in 2019, I found myself in a much different place. Now I lived in a condo in the city. This means no outdoor antennas. I began with the antenna which came with the radio, a coil of wire with rubber around it. We call this a *Rubber Duck*. I got the Diamond SRH320A, an upgraded rubber duck, and thought I'd try going on air.

To my delight I found a repeater on an old frequency I remembered, 146.685 MHz. They had a net going on, like a round table. A nice sounding man ran it. He gave his name as Charlye, K3CJ. The first week I felt too scared to check in. The second week I started to warm up. Finally I decided to give it a try. Charlye asked for check-ins a number of times, and after the regulars gave their call signs I decided to make my first transmission. I felt so scared.

*“Kilalphathreetangtango!”*  
*“You’re a bit quick on the trigger! Can you come back with your call a little more slowly?” K3CJ had heard me. No going back now!*  
*“This is kilo alpha three tango tango tango.”*

It went from there. Charlye advised me to upgrade to a better antenna, so I did, first to a J-pole and later to a vertical. I started checking in every week. I soon discovered the Elmer Net which preceded the main net at 07:15 PM. A cool guy named Steve ran it, W3AZT. As he drew to the one hundredth net he announced that he would stop after a hundred to attend to his Mom. The final net soon came, and we did not have a plan. I wondered if I should offer to run it. I felt a little hesitant because I have to deal with headaches, and don't know how I will feel on any given day. I needed a backup. As I thought this, my friend Cliff spoke up.

*“This is KC3PGT, and I can run the net, but I can only commit as a backup.”*

That did it. The net drew to a close. *“Well, we’re reaching the end of the net, and I don’t know what we will do next week.” said Steve. “I’ll do it.” I responded.* I ran the net up to #137, and Cliff thankfully filled in a few times. We had a great time. Little did I know what this would prepare me for.

A few weeks ago, we received the sad news that Charlye would retire from running the net at the end of the month. He ran it since 1998, 23 years. As the only remaining full time net control, it seemed logical that I should take over the main net. I didn't feel like doing any ham radio stuff for at least a week. My brain needed to process this. I felt good after a lot of thinking and a well-run board meeting. I plan to combine the best parts of the Elmer Net and the general net. I don't know exactly what I will do, but I hope you will join me. I will listen for you on the Holmesburg Amateur Radio Club Weekly Net.

It feels surreal to run the net that I remember checking into as a kid. The cycle continues in the world's greatest hobby. 73 (good luck and best regards) to Charlye, K3CJ. 73 to the Holmesburg Amateur Radio Club. And 73 to whoever told me to jump up on my bed.

Austin – KA3TTT

## On The Air

Special Event Station W3A 11/6-7/21  
from Fort Miles Historical Area at Cape Henlopen State Park, DE

This was the home of; Naval Facility Lewes (NAVFAC Lewes), a [Sound Surveillance System \(SOSUS\)](#) shore terminal.

### **OPERATION ABLE ARCHER '83**

1983 Brink of the Apocalypse

Able Archer 83 was a ten-day (NATO) communications exercise starting on November 2, 1983, that spanned Western Europe, centered on the Supreme Headquarters Allied Europe Headquarters, Able Archer exercises simulated a period of conflict escalation, culminating in a simulated [DEFCON 1](#) coordinated [nuclear attack](#) The exercise also introduced a new, unique format of coded communication, radio silences, and the participation of heads of government.

The realistic nature of the 1983 exercise, coupled with [deteriorating relations](#) between the United States and the Soviet Union and the anticipated arrival of [Pershing II](#)

nuclear missiles in Europe, led some members of the Soviet Politburo and military to believe that Able Archer 83 was a ruse of war, obscuring preparations for a genuine nuclear first strike. In response, the Soviets readied their nuclear forces and placed air units in East Germany and Poland on alert. This is known as the 1983 war scare.

The 1983 war scare is considered by many historians to be the closest the world has come to nuclear war since the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. The threat of nuclear war ended with the conclusion of the exercise on November 11.

To recognize the sacrifices of our military, signal corps, and members of the clandestine services during this critical time in the history of the cold war, we will host a special event station. Our special event will consist of operation from a Cold war era Nike Missile site using period style military radios and antennas to make the contacts.

Any questions please contact Walt Skavinsky (KB3SBC) [kb3sbc@arrl.net](mailto:kb3sbc@arrl.net)

[www.facebook.com/groups/AblerArcher83](https://www.facebook.com/groups/AblerArcher83)

[www.ablearcher83.com](http://www.ablearcher83.com)

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### ARRL, RSGB Announce Joint Events to Celebrate Centenary of Ham Radio Transatlantic Success

ARRL and RSGB will activate special event stations for 6 hours (0200 – 0800 UTC) on December 12 for the 160-Meter Transatlantic Centenary QSO Party. The RSGB will activate GB2ZE from Scotland, with a team of stations from the GMDX Group sharing operating duties. ARRL will activate W1AW. The stations will operate only on CW. If transatlantic propagation holds up, the stations may continue to operate beyond 0800 UTC.

The GMDX Group of Scotland will award a quaich — a traditional Scottish drinking cup representing friendship — to the first stations in North America and the UK to complete contacts with both W1AW and GB2ZE during the QSO Party. A commemorative certificate will be available for download.

<https://www.arrl.org/news/view/arrl-rsgeb-announce-joint-events-to-celebrate-centenary-of-ham-radio-transatlantic-success>

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### 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))

### SFTW Stamps For The Wounded

We are still collecting and sending packages of stamps in support of this very worthwhile program. Save what you can, especially those foreign QSL mailings, cut off the corner of the envelope, leaving at least a 1/4" around, and bring them to the meeting or mail to:

Rich Shivers  
9029 Eastview Rd.  
Philadelphia, PA 19152

### Stay Connected!

The HARC Club net meets every Wednesday night at 8 PM on the Club repeater. Check in and see what's going on. New net control, Austin – KA3ATT. Thank you Charlye – K3CJ for running the net for 23 years.

#### **The Elmer Net**

The "The Elmer Net" has now become part of the HARC weekly club net.

Are you a new ham, or an old hand with questions? Log into the HARC net and ask away!

Groups.io: [WM3PEN/Holmesburg Amateur Radio Club](https://www.groups.io/g/WM3PEN)

Facebook: [Holmesburg Amateur Radio Club](https://www.facebook.com/HolmesburgAmateurRadioClub)

## Associations

HARC just joined the SKCC – Straight Key Century Club #24642 under both WM3PEN and K3FI.

We are also members of;  
Ten-Ten International #71057  
PODXS 070 Club #1493 (PSK activity)  
ARRL Special Services Club

Let's take a look at these organizations so you know why we joined and maybe they could be of interest to you.

### SKCC – Straight Key Century Club

<https://www.skccgroup.com>

The SKCC is dedicated to the use of mechanical Morse code keys and their use on the air. These are; straight keys, side-swipers (cooties), and semi-automatic keys (bugs). None of them rely on electronics to form or space CW characters.

Membership is free and opened to all licensed amateur radio operators. They have club sponsored contests, special events and offer activity and achievement awards.

If you enjoy CW you should definitely look into joining.

### Ten-Ten International <https://www.ten-ten.org/>

“Ten-Ten International Net, or 10-10 for short, is an organization of amateur radio operators dedicated to maintaining high levels of amateur radio communications on the 10-meter amateur band.”

There is a yearly membership fee, you need to be a licensed amateur authorized to operate on the 10 meter band, and it is required that you contact 10 10-10 members (on 10 meters),

They have an awards program, and a daily net. (This is a good place to make the required 10-10 contacts.)

### PODXS 070 Club <http://www.podxs070.com>

The PODXS 070 Club promotes PSK31 via contests and mode specific awards.

Membership is free and open to all licensed amateur radio operators. There are some requirements to joining.

Work 50 different call signs using PSK31 on any band authorized for your license (6M->160M, including WARC & 60M). Submit a log extract of these QSOs in the standard ADIF log format, which nearly every logging program produces. One of those QSO's needs

confirmation. They will try to do this automatically by matching your log extract against our database of member QSOs. Otherwise we will ask for an image of a QSL card (paper or eQSL) or a LOTW confirmation.

### ARRL Special Service Club

“A club that exists to go above and beyond for their communities and for Amateur Radio is what defines a Special Service Club. They are the leaders in their Amateur Radio communities who provide active training classes, publicity programs and actively pursue technical projects and operating activities.”

In the past HARC was very involved in community service, providing communications support for the Mayfair Holmesburg Thanksgiving Parade, the NEPYA 5 Mile Run, and March of Dimes walks. Other activities why we're a SSC; Repeaters, Elmer net, meetings, newsletter, 13 Colonies Special Event, public service (pre-covid), testing, contacting new hams, Stamps for Wounded program, website, social media presence, and newsletter.

Being a SS Club allows us to have a Card Checker for ARRL awards. Bob – WA3PZO is our HF Awards Manager.

We recently renewed our status as SSC. Currently there is only one other club (Keystone VHF Club in York) in Eastern PA to be so recognized.

HARC became an ARRL Affiliated Club in 1978 and was first recognized as a Special Service Club in 2010.

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## Meetings

Club meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Philadelphia Protestant Home, 6401 Martins Mill Road, Philadelphia, PA 19111. Time is 8PM.

**Currently club meetings will be conducted online using Zoom.**

### Upcoming Topics

**Nov 18, 2021**

W6NBC - John on "Copper & Aluminum Self-Adhesive Tape Antennas"

**Dec 16, 2021**

WD9GCO – Paul on All about Amateur Radio Newslines.

## Membership

We would like to welcome recent new members of HARC:

Aaron Proctor - KM3FDM  
Kathleen Proctor - KC3DWV  
Abraham Shaw - KC3QPB

## PHILA ARES

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.

On Saturday October 23 Philadelphia ARES, in conjunction with the American Red Cross, performed a S.E.T. (Situational Emergency Test). These are held every October by ARES groups to help us develop emergency plans. In our test we identified 5 key locations of importance to the ARC. We stationed mobile operators at each location and ran a net on a series of repeaters. The idea was to test which repeaters have the best coverage in an emergency. It was a resounding success with 49 participants across the 5 county area and much information gathered. Thanks to all who checked in, everyone who assisted, and all the repeater owners for helping make this S.E.T. a success!

On our weekly net we have been working on WinLink and trying to demystify it. We'll be continuing with that in the beginning of November. As we move toward Thanksgiving, we will make decisions about the end of the month. We hope you'll join us Sunday at 9!

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.

HARC member, Cliff – KC3PGT, is the Philadelphia Emergency Coordinator, Section 1, EPA Region.

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.phlares.org/>

## Your Contributions

Please tell us what you are doing. Have you received any awards, upgraded your license, done any activations, (SOTA, IOTA, etc), built something special. Or if you would like to write an article. We would be happy to receive all material. Email Rich AB3EO@comcast.net

### **HARC Board of Directors**

President – Saul Broudy, W3WHK  
Vice President – Steve Miller, W3AZT  
Treasurer – Bob Josuweit, WA3PZO  
Secretary – Saul Broudy, W3WHK  
Technical - Ron Cardullo, K3RJC  
Member-at-Large – Rich Shivers, K3UJ  
Greg Malone, WA3GM  
Webmaster - Rich Shivers, K3UJ

**WM3PEN @ AOL.COM**

### **Trivia Question Answer.**

Orbiting the earth.

NA1SS is the call sign for the International Space Station. It's a club station.