

Club Repeaters:
Erie: 146.610-
Waterford: 146.82-
PL 127.3

QUARAE



Volume 3, Issue 6

July 2004

TORNADO TOUCHDOWN!

A HAM'S PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF THE MEADVILLE TORNADO MAY 2004

On May 25, 2004 a thunderstorm cell was being tracked in Crawford County by the National Weather Service and a Tornado Watch was in effect. As the day progressed a Tornado Warning was issued for an area near Cochranton, and RT 285 as sightings of funnel clouds were reported. Sky Warn was activated for Meadville Area and spotters and ham operators were on the road ready to relay important weather phenomena observed to the weather service and EOC (emergency operations command).

Don Stichick of East Springfield W3HLM was working that day at the PPG plant near Cochranton on RT 19 inspecting cranes, which he performs all over the tristate area. Don, W3HLM, always carries his HT 2 meter radio with him, and he had just logged into the Sky Warn Net and listening to weather reports. PPG plant is a sprawling complex of buildings and glass works encompassing many acres.

At about 4:00 pm that afternoon, he was in one of the buildings where the cranes were located, along with several other workers. He had been talking to one of the supervisors and informing him of the recent weather warnings, and was told to notify him if there were any reports of tornados in the area. They had a special siren they would activate for the employees to go to the basement shelter.

Around 4:30 they were standing near the entrance by the large bay door and looking up at the sky when they noticed unusual, dark clouds forming and developing telltale patterns of funnel formations and heading in their direction. Moments later they all spotted a tornado forming and descending out of the sky and coming towards them. Don said that it

was very unusual due to the fact that there was no thunderstorm, or rain, or hail or increase in wind that usually precedes a violent storm. In fact the sky was blue everywhere else. Immediately, he communicated the tornado sighting to the emergency Net on 2 meters that the tornado has touched down and the direction of travel. He and the other workers didn't stick around, to say the least, as the siren was activated and they all hightailed it for nearest stairs to the basement shelter. It all happened so fast that in second's visibility became zero inside his building. The sudden change in air pressure caused all the debris and dust to become airborne and he became separated from the rest and unable to find his way to the stairway. The thought flashed through his mind whether he was going to survive. He was concerned about all the glass and recycle materials becoming deadly missiles.

Don eventually made his way to a small enclosed reinforced room in the building where he felt someone grab hold of him and yelled to follow him. Luckily the stairs were right there in the same room. They went down to the basement and rode out the tornado. He said that he could hear very loud banging and crashing overhead as the tornado hit nearby structures and blew apart the building adjacent to the one he was in. His building actually was not struck directly, except by flying materials. While he was in the shelter he was able to contact sky warn on his ham radio, relay to them what was happening, and requested emergency crews respond to their location. **Continued on PG. 7**

RAE CLUB MEETING
Thurs July 1st –7 pm at the Clubhouse

Officers and Contacts – 2004

President

Chris Robson, KB3A

Vice President

Jack Haven, N3RKO

Treasurer

Frank Graziano, KD3D

Secretary

Dianne Miller, K3LD

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Bob LaPlaca, KC2HVX

Ron Prindle, N3BXL

Joe McLain, KB3ALU

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John Lis, N3NKV

john@jjlis.com

From the President's Desk

I would like to thank those who participated and helped out with Field Day 2004. The event was quite a tremendous success. There was a lot of great operating and visitors stopping by. I invite everyone to come to the next RAE Meeting to find out about a new project that the club will be involved in. A presentation on the Lighthouse Special Event Station will take place.

73

Chris

KB3A



Chris Robson

News in A Minute

The Next **Board of Directors Meeting** will be held on Tuesday, **July 22nd, 2004** at 7:00 PM at the clubhouse on Wagner Rd which is off of Bargain RD.

Watch your speed when you are coming to the clubhouse! The area is posted for 20 mph.

The **Northwest PA Ham-fest** will be held on **July 11** at the Greene Township Mu-

ARISS Contact with Erie Planetarium Successful

Mike Fincke KE5AIT on board the ISS had a very successful contact with the Erie Planetarium this afternoon at approximately 2004-05-25 18:01 UTC.

There were 18 questions asked before Mike went over the horizon from telebridge station VK5ZAI. As you may be aware, Mike is a pretty new ham and did an outstanding job with the students at Erie. At Erie, Jim Gavio (Planetarium Director) was assisted by Ron Prindle N3BXL, Paul Semrau N3UMM, Jim Tolbert WW3S of Meadville, and Jim Tolbert III W3ST (former KB3IXG) of Meadville.

The ARISS program also wishes to thank Mary and the rest of the MCI crew for their hard work in providing the telebridge connection. Thanks also to Will KC6ROL who was the moderator and to Tony VK5ZAI their telebridge station.

General Membership Meeting Minutes May 6, 2004

Board Members Present: KB3A, N3LBI, N3RKO, KD3D, KC2HVX, N3FAW, and K3LD
 Not present: KB3ALU, and N3BXL

Meeting brought to order by President KB3A at 7:01, General Membership Meeting at the E.O.C

Secretary's report- K3LD: motion to accept the minutes that were printed in the QUARAE for May. Motion: N3LBI Second: KC3LV

Treasurer's report- KD3D given

Board of Directors report- N3LBI- Emergency board meeting was held 5-13-04. Discussed an option to purchase a tower, rotors, and antenna decided to not to purchase, controller, weed whacker for RAE clubhouse, plumbing and HF station for RAE clubhouse.

KB3A: During the general meetings, the board decided to do a quick overview on what has happened during the month and have the major discussions at the board meetings. It was decided to have more activities during the general meetings instead of all business.

Membership: N3FAW: 120 members

ARES/RACES: Dave (WX3E): June 13 Union City will be having an amateur radio demonstration and Dave would like a list of upcoming classes. July 10 is the Northwest PA Hamfest

Website: KC2HVX: updating contact pages, public service new chairman AD4UL and N3LBI, new editor for QUARAE N3NKV, and will resolve the Netscape and other provider problems, and database.

QUARAE: John (N3NKV) The deadline for QUARAE will be the 23rd of the month, need articles. John presented Jack (N3RKO) with an official code copying pen courtesy of the FISTS Club.

RAE Clubhouse: AD4UL- drain in sink replaced, guts in toilet replaced, G5RV down again, antenna rotor rheostat is shot and weed whacker works great.

Public Service: N3RKO- Jack presented the club from the March of Dimes a check for \$50.00 and a plaque for our wall "Thank you for your ongoing support from the March of Dimes" And a thank you

from Diane Sickles. Paddle Erie has been cancelled this year. Jack is passing Public Service on to Doug (AD4UL) and Bob (N3LBI) Edinboro Triathlon June 5, MS Bike on June 13 are coming up quick. We need the help, please contact Doug (AD4UL) phone 814-453-2915 or email ad4ul@arrl.net for any or all that you are interested in. It is good training and fun and good public service.

Contest: KB3A: Field Day June 26 and 27 at the RAE Clubhouse. Will have stations up and would like to do something for 2 meters.

VE: K3LD- Had a VE sessions at the RAE clubhouse on Saturday May 29 with Thomas Gagsden passing his no code tech. If anyone is interested to test, you have to contact Rob (N3OCL) cell phone # 814-881-5238 or email at N3OCL@verizon.net so that we can make sure to have the test at the RAE clubhouse.

Skywarn: Steve (N3SRD) Thanks for all those who have helped with all the nets even in the early hours of the morning.

Old business: N3LBI- testing 220 for .61 and .82. With a proper antenna and height it should work.

Good of the Order: KB3A: KD3D and KB3A are looking into a HF station for a contest capable station.

50/50: KC2HVX

Tickets for Northwest PA Hamfest winner: Dave KA3AUH

Motion to adjourn: N3BZL Second: N3LBI

Meeting adjourned at 7:25

Submitted by K3LD

Activity:

Repeater: Steve (N3SRD) Discussed the new PC based controller software, it can have meetings, contest, events etc put on the repeater. Still looking for 440 equipment. Right now the auto patch is inoperable including 911. Thanks to Steve, Rich and Lee for all their help on the controller.

Win A LCD Monitor!

COME TO THE JULY 1st MEETING!!

A limited number of chances will be offered so that a lucky person will be blessed with a beautiful new light weight flat (Thin!) screen Liquid Crystal Display monitor. Plugs in to your computer with the same type standard 15 pin cable as your present color monitor. You will be amazed at the clarity, brilliance and bright colors. Consumes far less power and lasts many times longer than CRT monitors.



The Drawing for the Monitor will take place at the September 2nd club meeting.

ASK FOR TICKETS (\$2 or 3/\$5)

AT THE JULY MEETING OR

ORDER BY MAIL TO P O BOX 844, ERIE, PA 16512

Phone: 814-866-3027

*The monitor shown is used for illustrative purposes only.

Tornado Continued from Page 1

Some spotters had converged near their location just as the tornado struck and witnessed the damage as it went through the plant. After the tornado passed, he came out of his shelter and walked outside to survey the damage. One warehouse nearby was completely destroyed. There were 3 semi trailers which had previously been parked together and had just been loaded with glass ready to depart. These trucks now were now jumbled together on top of each other and upside down when they were lifted up by the tornado.

Thankfully and miraculously, neither Don nor anyone else was injured at the PPG plant or at the other sites where the tornado struck... Another nearby plant that manufactures PVC pipe was also in the path and many pipe were scattered about and many for long distances. One pipe was sticking out of the windshield of a pickup truck that was in the parking lot. This is one experience that I think will be etched in Dons memory.

Editors Note: This article was written by Bill Yochim an EMT-P from Emergycare.

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Public Service News

On Sunday June 5th 14 RAE members and 2 non-members from East Springfield helped out with communications for the Hamot Sports Medicine Edinboro Triathlon/Duathlon. I would like to thank the following operators for their assistance: N3 LBI Bob Fuller, K3LD Dianne Miller, N3FAW Bob Schwimmer, KB3A Chris Robson, KB3B Debi Robson, N3EOY Dave Henderson, KB3CAT Matt Fuller, KB3DAF Sam Simpson, AD4UL Doug Sweet, N3BZL Clif Craft, WW3JC Lee Robinson, KB3JSN Bill Marshall, NI3Q Dick Waldinger, KB3ITJ Jerry Graves, KB3IVT Bill Barton and N3RKO Jack Haven. A special THANKS to Jack, we were concerned about the possibility of thunderstorms so Jack was my remote weather radar watcher, he kept us informed of any storm activity in the area. We utilized the RAE 146.82 repeater and it performed perfectly so we had a good event with no problems.

On Sunday June 13th 5 RAE members helped with communications for the Multiple Sclerosis Society Bike Ride starting and finishing in Mayville, NY. We covered the PA portion of the 100 mile route, so we helped 20 riders get from near Findley Lake, through the Northeast, PA rest

stop to Route 5 and on to Westfield, NY. Thanks to the following operators: AD4UL Doug Sweet, N3FAW Bob Schwimmer, KB3CAT Matt Fuller, KB3JSN Bill Marshall and N3LBI. No problems were encountered during this portion of the ride but up along RT 394 in New York there were multiple flat tires due to the road construction, but no injuries for the approximately 200 bikers.

I would also like to take this opportunity to give a "Special THANKS" to N3RKO Jack Haven for his contributions to making the public service events we have done for the past few years very successful. We will miss his smiling voice asking for volunteers(although I think he will still lend me his voice) for the events we do in the future. In the events I have done so far the organizing folks ask about Jack and thank him for his help. THANKS JACK!

The next event will be the Caring Place Triathlon at Presque Isle on Saturday Sept. 11. If you would like to help please let me know at 453-2915 or E-mail at ad4ul@arrl.net. I will have a sign up sheet at future meetings as well.

73,

Doug AD4UL



Starting the Morning off Right with a McDonald's Breakfast and helping the community!



Bill KB3JSN checking out the Bike Route

Repeater Update

Hi Folks... Just a quick update. The ACC 850 controller that has been on the 146.610 repeater for over 20 years now has finally been retired. Still in pretty good working order, it will be prepared over the next 2 weeks or so to be placed on the market for a price of \$500.00 or the best offer (\$2,700.00 new). Many of these controllers with fewer bells and whistles have been going for \$600.00 or better on Ebay. So if your interested, before we list it...contact myself at 774-0363 or slajohn@adelphia.net.

After better than a month of preparation, the TCX-150 is now up and running and is in place. The TCX 150 controller is a PC based unit using today's technology. If you like a bit of chatter, you will love the new personality of the RAE's 146.610 Machine... But Heck !!! Don't take my word for it. Jump on the repeater and take a listen. Now maybe your wondering why if the old controller works ok, why did we get a new one. Simple: Reliability! Although the 850 still works, parts are almost impossible to find and when

you find them the cost is outrageous. Plus, we had some problems with it running on battery back up. The 61 repeater is the primary repeater used for ARES and Skywarn. With our ongoing commitment to Erie County EMA to be there when we are needed. The change in my opinion was again, a necessity. In addition, the work has been completed to establish a link between the 61 and 82 repeaters.

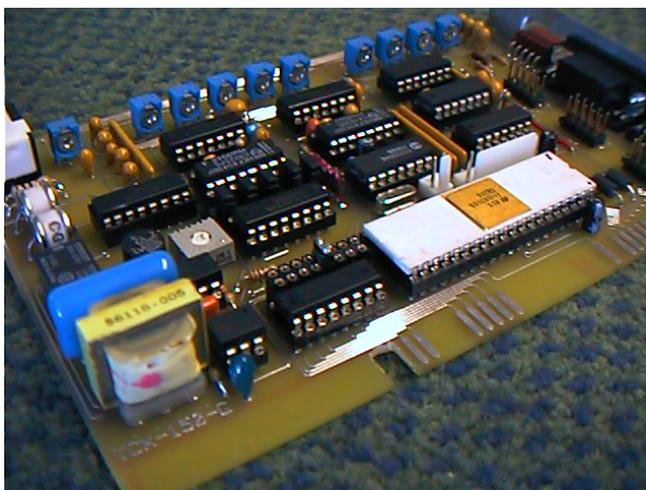
What's next:

-Several Control operators will have received a formal training class to orient them to the new controller.

As repeater chairman, I will have accomplished 3 of the 5 goals I set for myself this year. YIPPY!!!!!!!!!!!!

Talk to ya next time

Steve
N3SRD



The TCX 150G Repeater Controller runs on a 486 PC in DOS and supports five ports, voice id's, announcements, weather status, cw id's, rotatable id's and announcements, 40 tail tones, 4 kinds of autopatch with tone regeneration. All sounds are easily modified wav files so you can record your own files .

If you have a submission for the QUARAE , you can e-mail it to

John Lis at john@jjlis.com

Or

Contact John

via phone/fax at 825-5565

Field Day 2004

Whiskey 3 Golf Victor — 4 Alpha — Western Pennsylvania



Radio Association of Erie
P.O. Box 844
Erie, Pa 16512

Swap and Shop

Towers, Antennas, and Coax For Sale

2- Rohn 60' self supporting towers. (3-20' sections each) 1- Tennadyne T10 log periodic antenna on 1 tower and Cushcraft 6m & 2m Boomer antennas on the other tower.
HyGain TailTwister rotors on each tower. 1/2" hardline feed on each antenna.
Must take down and remove these by July 1. Ridiculous offers considered.
Contact Brian K3USC at 814-866-2585 Home or 814-450-2585 Cell

For Sale...

Heathkit SB-1000(1000 watt) linear amplifier with manuals—\$ 500.00 or Best Offer
Contact Joe Ponchak KA3CPV at 814-836-2585 via e-mail ka3cpvgmpap@velocity.net

Your Swap and Shop Ad Could Be Here! Space is First Come First Serve!

If you have something for swap and shop,
please contact John Lis via phone or fax at 825-5565 or e-mail at john@jjlis.com