

**Officers and
Contacts – 2005**

President

Chris Robson, KB3A
kb3a@verizon.net

Vice President

Neal Shea, N3ZNP
twosheas@velocity.net

Treasurer

Frank Graziano, KD3D
kd3dfrank@hotmail.com

Secretary/Newsletter

John Lis, N3NKV
john@jjlis.com

Chairman of the Board

Robert Fuller, N3LBI
n3lbi@adelphia.net

Board Members

Bob LaPlaca, KC2HVX
Ron Prindle, N3BXL
Joe McLain, KB3ALU
Bill Marshall, KB3JSN

Membership Chairmen

Kevin McKenna
kmc5300@yahoo.com

**Clubhouse & Repeater
Committee Chairman**

Steve LaJohn, N3SRD
slajohn@adelphia.net

**Volunteer Examiner
Coordinator**

Rob Jacobs, N3OCL
n3ocl@velocity.net

Webmaster

Bob LaPlaca, KC2HVX
rlaplaca@adelphia.net

ARES/RACES E.C.

Dave Wellman, WX3E
ucdavid@aol.com

SKYWARN E.C.

Steve Lajohn, N3SRD
slajohn@adelphia.net



UPCOMING EVENTS

Thurs. - July 7th

General Membership Meeting

Time: 7 pm

**Location: RAE Clubhouse on Wagner RD.
which is off of Bargain RD off RT 99**

Tues. - July 26th

Board of Directors Meeting

Time: 7 pm

Location: RAE Clubhouse



Doug finally got through the pile up.



RAE Field Day was seen on All 3 TV Stations..

General Membership Meeting Minutes

Radio Association of Erie
General Membership Meeting Minutes
June, 2005

Board Members Present: KB3A, N3ZNP,
N3NKV, KD3D, N3LBI, N3BXL.

Not Present: KC2HVX, KB3JSN, KB3ALU

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm
by KB3A.

N3LBI made a motion to accept the minutes
as printed in the QUARAE. Seconded by
KB3JZL. Motion Carried.

Silent Keys: None

Treasurer's Report: KD3D provided the
treasurer's report.

Board of Director's Report: N3LBI provided
an overview of the May Board of Directors
Meeting. Items Discussed included: VHF
Contest, public service, gutter installation,
window damage, and problems with well.

N3EOY mentioned that the PA State Police
should be contacted in regards to the vandal-
ism for documentation purposes.

Membership: KE3V mentioned that there are
presently 107 members.

ARES/RACES: WX3E mentioned that a he
and KB3JSN met with the NW PA Counter
Terrorism Task Force recently. The esti-
mated time for approval of the grant for the
communications trailer would be about 1
year. WX3E is also in the process of learn-
ing the RIOS system which the county will be
using for linking the county's emergency ser-
vices radio system.

QUARAE: N3NKV mentioned that he was in
need of articles for the QUARAE. He also
was working on updating the text on the web
page.

Public Service: AD4UL mentioned that the
Edinboro Triathlon was coming up on Satur-
day June 4th. and the MS Bike Race would
be held on June 12th. Doug also has for
sale the Emergency Communications signs
for \$15.00 per pair. Also he received a small
plaque for the FT-100 from Pat Haven to be
placed on the radio.

Repeater: KB3A mentioned that the 61/82
link is up and running.

Contesting: KB3A reported that the RAE took
first place club station in Erie County and 4th
place overall as a club in the PA QSO Party.
The 2005 PA QSO Party will be held October
8th and 9th. KB3A also mentioned that VHF/
UHF antennas have been acquired for the
VHF Contest from W3ZQS's tower. KD3D
and KB3A also worked the Mid Atlantic QSO
Party at the clubhouse

Clubhouse: N3ZNP mentioned that he re-
placed all of the glass in the windows with
plexiglass. Neil also found out that the relay
on the pump and furnace are corroded.

N3RKO memorial: KB3A mentioned that he
could create a plaque on his CNC machine .

VE: KB3A mentioned that he would like to
see a VE test session held at the clubhouse
every other month.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

50/50: \$21.00 Winner: KB3A

Winner of Drawing for Tickets to Lake Erie
Speedway KA3AUH

Motion to Adjourn: N3LBI, Seconded by
WB3DOM Carried

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm

Practical Packet Radio by

by Ron Prindle N3BXL

Standard AX.25 Packet Radio is still, not well understood by most Amateur Radio Operators and it's been with us since the early '80's, mostly since the advent of the Personal Computer as we know them today. It therefore yet, has survived the technical "adjustments" of most developing communications and enhanced operator demands. Being one of those operators who has been with Packet Radio, I still discuss it's potential with fellow operators, mostly from the practical aspects and nothing more.

"WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?" I often hear this as the one-on-one discussing proceed. I answer with the mindset, "... don't expect much and you won't be disappointed!" Furthermore, don't expect this to be your sole mode of operation and you'll understand its true "practical use" in all occasions, not just killing time, nor during a state of urgency. I do wish everyone would understand, like most everything we do, you need to "practice" whatever mode of operations you run in Amateur Radio, you just don't step into and reap the rewards the first couple of times you try it? I believe, you get out of it, what you basically put into it. An HF person does not talk around the world the first time he fires up his rig. It takes antenna and rig "training" to put all the pieces together and even a working knowledge of atmosphere characteristics and timing to make DX work for you! It's an art, a skill that needs to be practiced! Likewise, if you are a VHF/UHF operator, you are not going to talk to the International Space Station, without doing your homework. What you put into Packet Radio is what you'll get out of it!

In Erie County, even more so the RAE, Packet Radio has developed to a more practical method of operation than most communities. I wouldn't be writing you about this if there wasn't a benefit to dusting off and firing up your old Terminal Node Controller (TNC). The RAE has seen and even posted on their web site, information about their Packet Cluster (CLU) a low power digital repeater (digi) located at the 146.610 Voice-Repeater sites on Wagner Road. Yes, they co-exist just fine with one another! The second most asked question I get, "How do they operate next to each other, 2-Meters and 2-Meters... I don't want to interfere with what I'm already running?" Different modes on the same band, as most HF guys know, you can run CW on one fre-

quency and listen to voice on another, just KHz apart, why not 2-Meter FM? What makes VHF different than HF? What's the mystery, or rather concern?

You can even read my "Practical Use of Packet Radio" document using the CLU Cluster from the RAE web site, which explains just how to use that one service. The CLU application itself is noteworthy in that in any condition, but mostly in emergency situations, even during Skywarn ops, a hand full of operators can conduct "secondary" low power QSOs on 145.010 MHz FM as liaisons for background coordination for Net Controllers and not upset the needed observations!

CLU is a place where any and all Packet Radio Operators can come and have a "party-line" keyboard chat session exchanging information like storm warning period times and even location concerns without taking time away from the current activated net. For one practical example, if only the Net Control Operator alone, could talk to even his back-up net control, he could "post" the grid squares of each check in, once and both net controls would have a current list who checked in and where, basically on the fly! It (CLU) could even be used as an "Instant Messenger" platform as-is today, for local DX communications between Erie County operators all during the day, not just during a net or a single call-up discussion. A single packet connection to the Cluster can even post messages "in-the-blind" as I do if I hear something noteworthy for the area. Then, at the convenience of other operators who are presently not up on the Cluster, can come in and "see" what it was I heard and when. For you see, all messages are time stamped on the Cluster and marked who said it. A real-time clock (local time) keeps a record of entries and validates to anyone reading the (LA) Local Announcements for the readers judgment, is old too old? Furthermore, all "LA" messages are held for 60 days and erased from the CLU System at 2 AM of the 60th day! For any DX'er, or any Skywarn Emergency Coordinator, these records are valuable for a period of time only, making Packet Information timely but not the same as E-Mail! It is convenient yet perishable. It does go bad but at least the CLU function cleans itself up!

Continued on Page 5

Practical Packet Continued

How Do I get on 145.010 Packet?

Most everyone has at one time been a Packet Radio Operator that much I am sure of. Most everyone has a TNC, because try to find one! Try to buy one on Ebay? Try to buy one at AES? They simply don't exist which tells me everyone has one that ever did Ham Radio in the '80's. When I decided to make my share of the digital repeaters (digi's) in Erie County, I went looking for MFJ TNCs like that I already owned at my QTH. I found there were none to be had! I had to buy all new in order to move forward and make an effort to "link" end-users to each other, long before there was an RAE Cluster! I'm sure, if you've never done Packet Radio, laying out some cash for a new mode of operation will be a surprise to you. On that note, I assure you, there is nothing special with the Erie County AX.25, 1200 Baud system we built. No fancy IP stuff, no expensive terminal software or anything. The system we have in place was designed for the "end-user" not as part of any network connection linking New York City to Chicago! It was designed for you, not for others! All you need (if we did things right) is a 2-Meter HT, a radio modem and an old MS-DOS PC/Terminal and you have another Ham Radio Station in your existing station.

The idea is, you can be as portable as you like. I have an old MS-DOS 5.0, BayComm software LCD Terminal I give presentation with, running through a BayPac MultiMode radio Modem to a no frills Wilson 1 watt/2.5 watt HT on a rubber duck antenna. Talk about simple! The BayComm software came with the \$75.00 BayPac Interface. The rest I had sitting around the house. That's a simple a way as I came up with to be a portable packet station and if you see N3BXL-6 on the air, that's the station that's running. It has nothing what-so-ever to do with N3BXL/N3BXL-2 my QTH AX.25 Station, meaning I run more than one station at the same time! I have multiple stations on the air, my portable on a rubber duck running basically no power at all and my QTH station on a 2-Meter 1/4 wave ground plane antenna at 12 watts. I have a packet system right on my own property! When they are both on the air, they become digital repeaters for anyone to use, not just me, myself and I. Therefore, the most practical thing about Packet Radio is simply getting on the air!

Even if you are not at the terminal yourself, your station becomes a digital repeater for others just standing there! You become a piece of the network right away. Even at low power ops, you can "pick up fellow, nearby operators and link them to each other or the a device like the Cluster and not lose your capabilities,



even the BayPac application (split-screen) "end-user" function continues. Packet Radio is the truest sense of the word, "... radio relay..." which I preach everywhere I go. If you are a member of the ARRL... you know it stands for American Radio Relay League, yet how many of us has ever "relayed" a message in our years of operation? Myself? Well, I've had the ERIT digi on the air since 1997. I have been relaying messages for a lot of years and still I need to write articles like this to make these facilities known to even the local Hams.

OK, once you bring your Packet Station on the air, what do you do next? I hope you do the same thing every time you turn your station up! I hope you listen. The Packet Network we built "BEACONS" every ten minutes. Meaning, if you can hear any one element of the existing system on 145.010 MHz, more than likely you can use the whole thing! All you need is one nearby Packet Station and you can work messages to New York State or down into Meadville. Maybe all you want to do is have a private keyboard-to-keyboard connection across town. You don't need megawatts to make a direct connection but only a single station you can reach and "build" your way across town to your buddy. I hear so many operators say, "I have limited scope, access to your system is limited!" Not really. Even if you can't hear all the nodes we built doesn't mean you can't use the entire system. You can read in my Practical Use of Packet Radio document on the RAE web site, positional awareness is all that is needed to work your way around the system. You don't need to hear everyone, all you need is just one other station and you're on the system!

Continued on Page 8

Public Service Events

EDINBORO TRIATHLON/DUATHLON

The 20th annual event was held on June 4 at Edinboro Lake and there were approximately 350 participants. The weather was perfect and other than a bit of a scare when it was reported that two swimmers never came out of the lake (they were found on shore) everything went as planned.

Another thing mentioned at meetings of the event committee is this could be the last Triathlon held because of lack of volunteers and the Erie-Crawford County state police group may disband. Lets hope they can work things out.

I would like to THANK the following operators who helped out: Dave N3EOY, Ron N3BXL, Ron WB3DOM, Chris KB3A, Debi KB3B, Bob N3FAW, Sam KB3DAF, Cecil NM3L, John N3DBC, Jake N3MEC, Clif N3BZL, Dick NI3Q, Dianne K3LD, Neil N3ZNP, and Jim KB3AAX.

At a follow-up meeting Pat Davis extended a BIG THANK YOU and is looking forward to working with us at the Caring Place Triathlon on Presque Isle.

MS SOCIETY BIKE TOUR

The bike tour was held on Sunday June 12 starting in Mayville, NY coming down to North East, PA, over to Westfield, NY around Chautauqua Lake and back to Mayville. It looked like we may have some rain but the weather held and turned into a nice day for a 100 mile bike ride. There were 22 riders that did the 100 mile route that brought them to Northeast. I would like to thank the following operators who got the riders safely through the PA portion of the ride: Bob N3LBI, Matt KB3CAT (and Melissa), Ron N3BXL and Ron WB3DOM. I followed the last rider back to Mayville and other than one rider with a flat tire everyone made it safe and hopefully sound!

Pam Masi the event coordinator, and Duane Buchweitz N2LRG the Net Control in Mayville, extended there thanks for our help.

NEXT PUBLIC SERVICE EVENT

Caring Place Triathlon at Presque Isle

Saturday, September 10

THANKS AGAIN for your help.

73,

Doug AD4UL



Swap and Shop

For Sale: 6 element Cushcraft 6 meter Boomer, 19 element 2 meter Cushcraft Boomer. 99% intact-may need a nut or bolt or a chunk of aluminum here or there. Also several lengths of hardline & misc. aluminum antenna parts. \$100 takes all !! Brian K3USC 814-866-2585

From the Estate of KA3EZL Len Czajkowski

- *Kenwood TS-180S HF Transceiver w/SP-180 Speaker= \$150.00
- *Kenwood TS-7850 2M. Transceiver= \$50.00
- *Drake MN-2700 Antenna Tuner= \$100.00
- *Astatic D-104 Microphone= \$25.00
- *Heathkit SA-150 Micromatic Keyer= \$50.00
- *2- Icom 2AT 2m Handheld w/BP-5 Battery Packs= \$25.00 each
- *Icom BC-30 Battery Charger= \$10.00
- *Johnson Low Pass Filter= \$20.00
- *Heathkit HD-15 Phone Patch= \$5.00
- *Home Brew Field Strength Meter= \$3.00
- *2 Meter Mag Mount ¼ wave Antenna= \$5.00
- *Mini Quad HF Antenna-CDR Rotor and Tower With 100 feet RG-8 Cable and Rotor Control Wire. You take down= \$75.00

- *Hamden Model BPS-36/18 Volt Desktop Variable Power Supply= \$25.00
- *Vista XXR 15 Amp.-12 Volt Power Supply= \$30.00
- *Alinco 110 2 Meter Transceiver= \$40.00
- *4- 6LQ6 Sweep Tubes—Tested OK= \$20.00
- *Assorted cables, wires and misc. items

No Reasonable offer refused.

Call Bob -K3SBU at 814-899-2107 or E-mail—k3sbu-1@juno.com

Mini-Quad antenna in good shape complete with almost new Alliance rotator and digital control box, 5 foot tripod and RG-8 type coax., \$50. Bob N3FAW 866-3027, bohn3faw@verizon.net

Howard "Babe" Katzenberger N3ZAZ has donated to the RAE several items to the club to be sold with the proceeds to go to the club. He is moving from his home to the Mercy Apartments on East Grandview near the campus of Mercyhurst College. He will be active on 2 Meters but that is all for the near future. There are some items that would be of use to only those interested in the 11 meter band (CB) The main items of interest to hams are: (1) 2 Meter HT amplifier 30 watts output, (1) Heathkit HW-30 2 Meter AM transceiver, currently being repaired & aligned, (1) Lafayette HA-45, 6 Meter AM transceiver, currently being repaired & aligned, (1) Panasonic AM/FM RF-2200 Shortwave analog receiver which covers 3.0 mhz to 28 mhz. It receives AM, CW, SSB on the shortwave bands. It runs on 115 vac, or (4) D cells. There are also other items that will be set up in the garage at the club house. If your interested in a specific item, please contact Bob, N3LBI @ 814-898-1115 or email n3lbi@adelphia.net

Radio Association of Erie

P.O. Box 844

Erie, Pa 16512

Practical Packet Continued

One last thing, like all modes of Ham Radio, Packet Radio is volatile. In that, what worked today, may not be working tomorrow! So keep track, keep a record how you got to so and so. How you got to the CLU System one day and think how you could get there another way if certain elements dropped off the radar screen tomorrow. Basically be prepared! For example, let's say today you connected to the RAE Cluster "via" N3ZUD and then EDNB to RAE and then CLU. What if tomorrow EDNB quit or the amount of users was so high (I wish) that you got a BUSY message back from EDNB when you went to connect? What would you do tomorrow? Well if you had the PowerPoint diagrams in your hand, which are also on the RAE web site, you'd try to connect to the CLU tomorrow via N3ZUD and then ERIT then to RAE then CLU. Who needs EDNB anyway? There is always more than one way to run your way around the Erie County Packet Radio Node System. How many ways can you find your way around town? That's my challenge to you!



**Make sure to Check into the
Erie County ARES/RACES/Skywarn Net
each Sunday at 9pm
on the 146.610/146.82 and 146.70 repeaters.**

