

# WEARC WIRELESS

West Essex Amateur Radio Club  
An ARRL Affiliated Club

Volume I

January 1995

## Welcome WEARC

During the past year, a group of local hams had come together and through much thought had come to the conclusion that there is a need for another radio club to support the many Hams in the West Essex area. It was recognized by this group that the Amateur Radio contains many facets and any one ham may only be interested in a narrow area of the hobby. The need for an amateur radio club which does not focus on any one area but supports the enjoyment of all the facets of the hobby exists. As a result, the group joined together and sought out a location which was large enough and would be supported by the local community to house a radio club. The town of Essex Fells offered the use of a meeting hall with a large working fireplace on the second floor of their Service Building. This hall will support a meeting of over 80 members and has an area which provides a secure place for the club's radio equipment.

As a result of finding a suitable location to conduct club meetings, the initial group of hams convened at the location and wrote the club Constitution and By-Laws which in turn created a new radio club named the West Essex Amateur Radio Club (WEARC). The WEARC membership is currently 15 members who live in the Northern New Jersey area. During the summer of 1994 the Charter Members, with

the approval of the town, conducted work sessions to paint the meeting hall, decorate the bathroom, and build a radio room. The support of the town was enthusiastic and they provided all the materials as well as installing carpeting, lighting and new fixtures for the bathroom. The site is now complete and looks terrific. On December 10, 1994 WEARC held their first Holiday party and every one had a fantastic time. Essex Fells has also provided the club a public Field Day site to conduct the June event.

Radio equipment consisting of a Drake TR4C transceiver, an RV4C external VFO, a Heathkit HM-102 SWR Bridge, a RHON Tower with a Mosely Tri-band Beam antenna, and an antenna rotor was donated to the club by Mrs. George Schultz, who's husband W2EJB recently became a Silent Key. The R3 vertical antenna, Drake MS-4 matching speaker, and

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10 meter crystals were donated to the club by fellow charter member Mark Manderski WA2KYE. We thank both Mrs. Schultz and Mark for their donations. The equipment has been installed into the radio room and has been used to make our first QSOs both on CW and SSB. The confirmation QSL cards have been mounted into the radio room.

We at WEARC are very excited about our new club and welcome all hams to stop by and look us over. If you are interested in joining us, we meet every Wednesday at 7:30 PM with business meetings held the third Wednesday of each month at 8:00 PM from September through June. We look forward to meeting you and sharing your ham experiences.

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## My Visit to Radio Club DK0IW

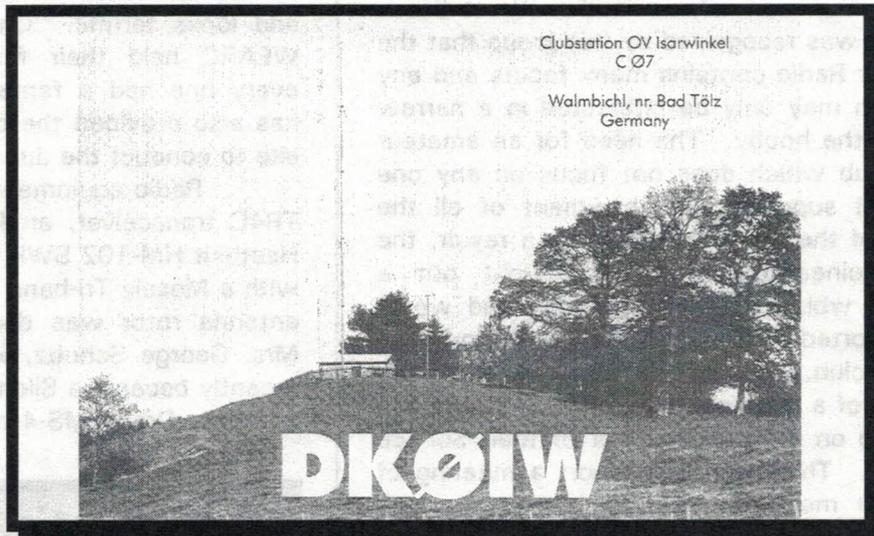
My wife, Louise, has an aunt in a small town south of Munich in Germany named Reichisbeurn which we visit every couple of years. Two years ago, knowing that I was interested in HAM Radio, my wife's aunt had told me of an old radio facility in her town which is now the operating site of a local Ham Radio Club. I had dragged my wife up to the station several times hoping to meet some of the local Hams, but to no avail.

On 8 January 1994, I had made contact with two hams in Germany, Bert DJ9WH and Paul DJ2CE. During our QSO I had told them of our trips to Reichisbeurn. Much to my surprise, they were from the area and belonged to the Radio Club in the town. We had a very nice QSO and had exchanged QSL cards. They had sent me a QSL card from their Club Station, DK0IW, along with their telephone numbers so I could call them when next time we were in the area.

Our recent visit to Germany in early October 1994, I went prepared with the

telephone numbers of both Paul and so I could set up a tour of their Radio Station. I called Paul, DF2CE, on Sunday morning after our arrival to set up a visit with him. Monday, October 3d, was a holiday in Germany and would be convenient for a quick visit. Paul's parents drove him to our arranged meeting place, a small restaurant in Reichisbeurn, which is also the meeting place the last Friday of each month of their Radio Club. Paul had contacted Bert DJ9WH, and he also was able to meet us there.

Paul had arrived with his parents, who are also hams and club members. His father is Alfred DK4MG and his mother is Christel DK4MHM. Bert arrived with his new wife of three weeks who is also a ham, Mieko DD5KJ. Bert had told us that he and Mieko had met though their radio hobby (an eyeball QSO). My wife and I followed them up to the Radio Station and once there they showed us around the facility. The club no longer keeps radios stored in the building due to vandalism which had



### DK0IW CLUB STATION

occurred prior, so we were not able to get on the air to make contacts. They explained the history of the location. The building had been used for a radio navigation beacon which had become out of date and was no longer needed. The facility was put up for bids. Their club was the only one to make a bid on the facility and was therefore able to rent the facility for 100 marks a year. They had fixed the inside of the station up very nicely and use it mainly for a

contests and picnics. The antennas on the site are very interesting. The most interesting was the 160 meter vertical which stands about 40 meters tall and is made out of what appeared to be about 8 inch diameter pipe. They also had a 40 meter sloper and a multi band beam on a tower. The station did not have any heat except for electric space heaters, therefore operating contests in the winter required warm clothes, hat, gloves, and what ever else you needed to keep warm. Bert told me they use more electricity on the space heaters than they do on the transmitters.

Bert and his wife had to leave so she could drive up to Stuttgart to be back at work the next day. My wife and I went back to the restaurant with Paul and his family to continue our conversation and have some refreshments. We discussed the different tests that one has to take to get their radio operators license in both Germany and the United States. The code tests for Germany given are some what different than by us although the code speed for each test is about the same for each level of license. One must be able to demonstrate the ability to copy groups of letters, Q codes, and then word groupings. Multiple choice or fill in the blank answers are not used in Germany. The written tests are very similar, in Germany it appears to be more written answers rather than multiple choice, although the subject matter is very similar.

The day was very interesting and I was glad that I was able to meet some fellow hams in Germany. We set up a schedule on Sundays at 14:00Z on 17 meters to keep in touch on a regular basis. Unfortunately, the band conditions are not cooperative with a reliable regular contacts.

*73 Bob, N2NYR*

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## More Tower to 'Ya

It was WEARC's first tower project, and you couldn't have asked for better weather. The crew assembled slowly, on this beautiful autumn morning in October, at the Essex Fells Service Building, and were ready to go by 9:30 in the morning. **Rule #1:**

***always tell the crew to arrive at least one half hour before you really need them.*** Within a few minutes, the crew had caravan up to the tower site and were ready to play on the tower. WEARC President Dan Tapper, WA2BTR, took no time in announcing that Ray Linke, WB2JGZ, and myself were in charge of the operation. **Rule #2: *Always assign someone to be in charge. This will eliminate any confusion as to blame if anything goes wrong.***

First up the tower was myself to remove a funky looking dipole that turned out to be two dipoles sharing the same balun. Not a bad idea. It was during this operation that Dan looked up to see me in all my steeple jack splendor, hard hat, climbing belt, tools and a contrail along with the moon backed by a clear blue sky above. The command "PHOTO OPPORTUNITY!" was given by Dan to Joe Valley, WO2X, who volunteered to document this event. **Rule #3: *When someone volunteers to document an event as significant as this, be sure to remind***



**Stan, KB2NQL, unbolting the boom**

***that person to bring a camera.*** Joe forgot the camera! Oh well, I'm sure QST will find

someone else to put on the cover of the June issue.

With the dipole on the ground and my dreams of QST fame crushed, I relinquished the tower to Ray who would be installing the pulley system and securing the gin pole in position. The wooden gin pole was crafted by Bob Lange, N2NYR, with on-site modifications by Jim Plant, KB2LJG. Ray had quite a time getting the gin pole to fit just right. **Rule #4: Always dry fit your home made gin pole on the ground before sending it up to the tower man.** After about an hour of "custom fitting" the gin pole, Ray decided to return to the ground to rest his feet. Besides, he had dropped two of the nuts into the grass. They were recovered by Stan Przybylski, KB2NQI, with his eagle vision. Coincidentally, Dan had just returned from a one hour hunt for the freshest coffee and donuts in Essex County. He also brought a camera back with him. **Rule #5: Don't ever let Dan go anywhere alone if you want him to come right back.**

**Especially after he's just come off a 12 hour shift.**

Thanks for the donuts, Dan.

It was decided the best way to separate the tower sections would be by using a small hydraulic jack placed on 2x4s laid across the tower rungs. Bob Marsh, KB2SGM, produced a jack from his pick up truck, but nobody had any wood. Dan volunteered to run home to get some wood. Bob Lange accompanied him, see Rule #4. Meanwhile, Stan suggested it was time to begin taking the antenna down. More importantly, Stan volunteered to go up and take the antenna down! A surprise to us all, including Stan. Stan completed securing the gin pole and without any hesitation began

undoing the mounting hardware for the boom. After some knot tying coaching from Ray and myself, he was able to tie off the rope and start the antenna on it's way down. This operation required all hands with Ray, Joe and Bob Lange working the rope from the ground and me half way up the tower guiding the antenna to Bob Marsh and Jim below. It was an almost flawless operation. Stan then lowered the mast and rotor before retiring to the ground. Nice work, Stan.

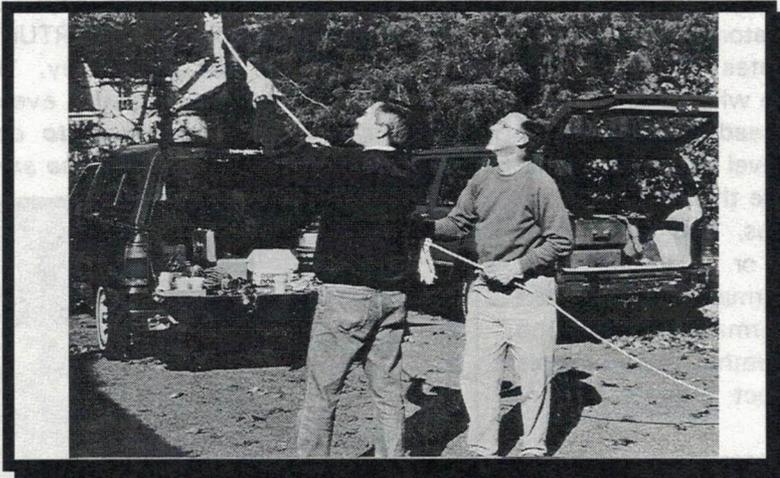
Now it was time to relocate the gin pole for removing the top section. Jim was on the tower climbing deck. Jim had twice the struggle as Ray did with the gin pole. After all, taking it off and putting it on was twice the work. While this was going on, Ray was working his way up the tower

removing some of the bolts! We never did ask Jim what he did to deserve that. Nice guy, Ray! Gin pole secured, Jim and Ray switched places so Ray could begin the separation process. After

tying off the top section Ray attempted to

separate it by hand. Fat chance! It was obvious he would need the heavy hardware. With a bit of coaxing, he was able to split the two sections apart and send the top to the ground. The same applied for the next section. After that it was determined that we could tilt the remaining sections "safely" to the ground. HA!

Ray placed a pulley on the house bracket and tied the rope to a leg while tow of the base bolts were removed. With both Bobs and Jim on the rope, Stan and Ray freed the tower from it's bracket and helped guide it down to me who was waiting underneath with lay up sticks. My plan was to place the



**Dan, WB2BTR, and Bob, N2NYR lowering the rotor**

hooked end onto one of the rungs and help take some of the weight off the rope. Of course the rope had a different plan. Just as I was getting the hook into place, the knot began to slip. The sudden drop cause the tower to wedge the stick into the ground. We were stuck. We couldn't use the rope to pull and the sticks, bending under the weight, were not designed to hold that much weight. The landscaping did not allow us to grab the tower by hand to ease it down. I kept hold of the sticks because I feared they would snap from the force that was placed upon them. The knot came apart and slipped out of the pulley. I blamed Ray, see Rule #2.

We had no ladder to reach the pulley, so 2 of the tower sections were put together and leaned against the garage so Ray could retread the pulley with the rope. Stan used the extra set of lay up sticks to drop the end of the rope through the tower sections and back sot we could tie a REAL knot in it. In no time, the remaining sections were apart and in the bed of Bob Marsh's Pick Up. The partially disassembled antenna was died to the roof rack on my Jeep and we were history.

The entire operation took a few more hours than any of us anticipated. With a different bunch of guys, it would have taken much longer and certainly involved more difficulties. What impressed me the most, aside from Stan going up the tower, was the team work. We never sat down together to plan this thing. We never talked about who should bring what tools. Yet we had just about everything we needed to do the job except for the wood and a camera. There was no bickering. When we needed to discuss something it was done calmly and intelligently. A decision would be made and we'd do it. While I was standing under that stuck tower waiting to become fertilizer in Mrs. Schultz's garden, I was confident a solution would be found to our problem. And it was. Nice Job!

Our efforts netted us a Rohn model 25G tower, a Mosely Classic 33 HF beam antenna and a Ham V rotor. Not bad for a half day's work. Thanks to all who participated. It was truly a pleasure working

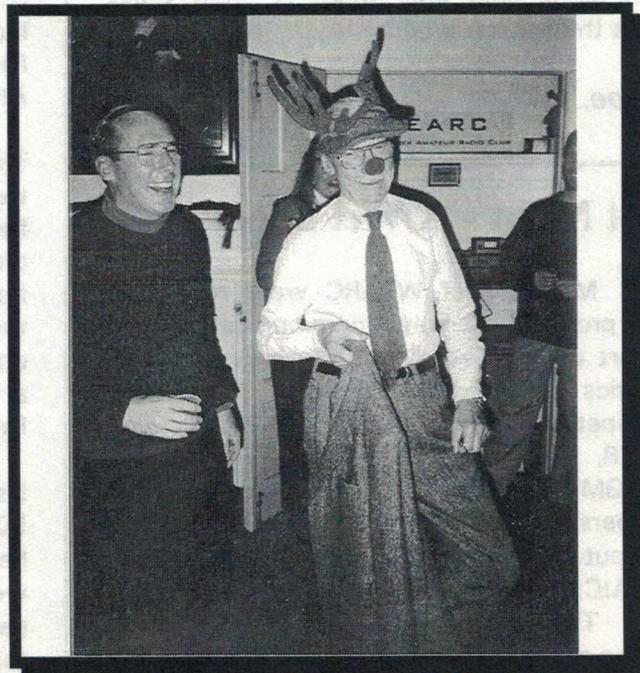
with you all. I hope in the future we will have similar projects with similar results. Until then, keep in shape. You never know who'll be next to climb the WEARC tower.

*73 Brian, KF2HC*

## **WEARC Holiday Party**

WEARC held its first annual Holiday Party on December 10, 1994. We have been looking forward to this event since August. Even as we painted the room on a hot and rainy Saturday someone would start singing "Chestnuts roasting on an open fire" and the rest would join in. Maybe because it would be our first gathering as the West Essex Amateur Radio Club, or perhaps we're just a little crazy, but we wanted it to turn out great.

Thanks to everyone who helped with the Christmas tree and other decorations, and special thanks to all the wives who brought those delicious appetizers and deserts. The



**Dave The Red Nose Raindeer, N2JJK**

catered dishes were very good and everyone had plenty to eat. There was so much food left over that next year we may eliminate the

catering altogether and supply all the food ourselves.

The turn out was great with twenty-five adults and little A.J. Kaletski attending. A.J. is well on his way to becoming a Ham radio operator. when ever Adam brings him to the club he seems very happy to be there.

As the official photographer for the party, it was my choice of which picture to put in the newsletter. After looking through all the possible choices, it did not take long to decide on which one to pick. I'm sure you will agree that the sight of Dave Whitehead with his red nose and Reindeer hat is the hands down winner.

Our club may not be the biggest , or the best equipped, but what we lack in size we make up for in quality and commitment. It is my hope for the new year that we continue to grow and prosper so that next year's party will be even better than this one.

Yes, the food and drinks were great. The Yule log burning in the fireplace, and all the festive decorations were super. But best of all were the friends to share it with, which when all is said and done, is what really makes the season bright.

*73 Joe, WO2X*

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## **First Night - A Wet Success!**

Members of WEARC were requested and provided 2-way communications in support of the First Night West Essex 1995 activities on New Year's Eve. Those who participated include Dan WA2BTR, Bob N2NYR, Ray WB2JGZ, Brian KF2HC, Bob KB2SGM, and John WF2Z. A few non members also volunteered and pitched in to help out. They were Steve N2MNN, Mike WA2AIC, Paul N2RFC, and Steve N2RBK.

The operation began with a short briefing at the WEARC club room at 6:15 PM. Net frequencies and post assignments were confirmed as were operational procedures. Brian KF2HC acted as Net Control from his home shack. In addition to the net frequencies he also had the responsibility of

monitoring the "Green Dot" frequency that was being used by the event organizers and site managers. This added quite a strain on Net Control operations due to other traffic on the "Green Dot" channel. Apparently a Spanish speaking business has established their communications system on that frequency and they go on ALL NIGHT LONG! Fortunately, there were no calls for emergency assistance. Dan WA2BTR spent much of the evening visiting the various activity sites with event organizer Fred Urban. at one point, early in the evening, Dan was called to assist at the Caldwell College Theater where show personnel found themselves locked out of the sound room. Later he would wind up acting as a campus maintenance man spreading sand on icy walkways reported by Steve N2RBK. Because of the ice and rain, Steve spent a good portion of the night stationed at the front door of the Mt. St. Dominic Academy building warning people to be careful of the slippery walks. Dan said at one point he pulled up to the Academy and there was Steve out in the rain, umbrella in hand, looking like the door man form the NY Hilton. Nice job Steve. Thanks for the extra effort. All tips get split with the club, right?

Over all it was a fairly quite night. That is to say there was very little radio traffic that was directly related to our primary function, to coordinate requests for emergency and police help. Reports from the field indicated that the Bluegrass band and the Polynesian dancers were the biggest crowd drawers. Steve N2MNN said he made a few new friends at the Polynesian Review. Hmmm!

The Net closed officially at 11:00 PM. Dan stayed on a while longer to check out the 50's band at the college. Thanks to all who helped out especially the non members who we consider our friends. First Night was a perfect example of a group of Hams getting together to do what they wanted to do. Play radio, have some fun and serve the community. No walls, no BS! THAT'S what Amateur Radio is about! Happy New Year!

*73 Brian, KF2HC*

## Even at the Solar Minimum, DX is!

Here we are at the bottom of another solar cycle. Some of us have seen quite a few solar minima; for others this is the first.

We see long faces at club meetings and hear discouraging comments on HF propagation. And nature conspires against even the best efforts of the Palos Verdes Sun Dancers.

Not only is the solar flux low, the A-index shows big numbers. And just when the faithful see a slight drop in the A-index, the darn thing jumps way up again! What's a Dixer to do?

Well, one unnecessary thing that works against us is the "Dead Band Syndrome." We remember too well, as young DX pups, Old Timers telling us not to call CQ DX. That was sound advice when conditions were good. How often have you heard someone calling CQ DX right on a DX station's frequency?

But when band conditions are poor, it's another story. With all those listeners and no senders, there is nothing to hear. Gol-I-ly!

The DX Packet Spotting Network aggravates the Dead Band Syndrome. The Dixer takes one glance at the packet screen, notes the long hours with no DX announcements, and concludes the bands are dead. And hearing nothing in a quick band-scan confirms it.

But there *are* DX openings. It's just that you can't detect them when there is no one transmitting.

Breaking this impasse couldn't be simpler; just call CQ DX. Don't be afraid to transmit. If anyone complains, tell 'em I said it was okay!

Here's another idea. When the bands truly are blotto, work stateside DXers -- all those guys who are, under good conditions, your competition. You can even invent games.

For example, work 100 DXers who have DXCC, or 300 who have 300 or more confirmed. This is a great way to combat the DX brain death lousy conditions can cause. My suggested procedure: call "CQ DXers."

I am starting the CQ DXers game right away. If you are interested, keep in touch. 73 and Go-o-o-d Dxing (or DXering).

*By Ted Davis, W6BJH, reprinted from the August '94 Northern California DX Club "Dxer" - Garry Shapiro, N16T, Editor via the October '94 issue of the ARNS.*

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## From the Editor

This is the first edition of the **WEARC Wireless**. The club is a young one but thus far, we have been very busy and extremely active as can be seen from the fine articles in this newsletter. We have established our club to allow the interaction of all the hams and their individual interests in the hobby. We have an established club HF station and are in the process of adding Packet to the station. The club already has two computers donated by both Stan, KB2NQL, and Jeff, N2MZH. Jim, KB2LJG, is building us a 2 meter J-Pole, while Brian, KF2HC, is getting ready to install a 2 meter rig for Packet. Once the FCC starts issuing Club Calls, we will apply for one. In the meantime, we will continue to use the members calls for contacts from the club and in various contests which we will participate.

We meet every Wednesday at 7:30 with business meetings held on the third Wednesday of the month. Some members of WEARC are also members of other radio clubs, which is not a problem to us. All we ask is that any politics of the other clubs is not brought into the WEARC meetings and get-togethers.

We plan to conduct a Fox Hunt in the Spring of this year, and are already preparing for the June Field Day event. We have a public location available to us, and we have been given commitments for the equipment needed to conduct the Field Day event. All in all, everything has come together smoothly, and we look forward to increasing our active membership.

73 Bob, N2NYR

**HAPPY 1995 TO ALL**

**West Essex Amateur Radio Club**  
**An ARRL Affiliated Club**  
**WEARC**

**WEARC meets on the second floor of the Essex Fells Service Building every Wednesday night at 7:30 PM September through June. Business meetings are conducted on the third wednesday of each month starting at 8:00 PM. The Essex Fells Service Building is located across the street from the Essex County Grover Cleveland Park and next door to the Essex Fells Post Office. All hams and prospective hams are welcome.**

**CLUB OFFICERS**

**President** Dan Tapper, WA2BTR  
**Vice President** Bob Lange, N2NYR  
**Treasurer** Joe Valley, WO2X  
**Secretary** Stan Przybylski, KB2NQI  
**Chopper** Brian Keegan, KF2HC  
**Newsletter Editor** Bob Lange, N2NYR

**Trustees:** Dave Whithead, N2JJK  
Jim Plant, KB2LJG  
John Weinfeldt, WF2Z

**The West Essex Amateur Radio Club (WEARC) is a new club which supports all the amateur radio interests as well as supporting the local communities. All hams or would be hams are welcome.**

**WEARC WIRELESS**

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HAPPY 1995 TO ALL  
73 Bob, N2NYR