

# MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS

**NPARC—The Radio Club for the  
Watchung Mountain Area**



**Website: <http://www.nparc.org>  
Club Calls: N2XJ, W2FMI**

VOLUME 48 NO. 2 February 2013

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Regular Meetings

**Mon. 3/11 & 3/25 7:30 PM  
Salt Brook School Cafeteria**

## Meeting Schedule

**Regular Meeting:** 7:30—9:00 PM  
**2nd Monday of each month** at the  
Salt Brook School Cafeteria  
Springfield Ave. and Maple St.  
New Providence

**Informal Project Meeting:** 7:30—9:00 PM  
**4th Monday of each month** at the  
Salt Brook School Cafeteria  
Springfield Ave. and Maple St.  
New Providence

### Everyone is Welcome

If a normal meeting night is a holiday,  
we usually meet the following night.  
Call the contacts below.  
When Schools are closed,  
Meetings are held in the Recreation  
Department Meeting Room in Borough Hall

## Club Officers for 2013

President: K2MUN David Berkley  
908-500-9740  
Vice President: K2WUF David Bean  
973-747-6116  
Secretary: K2HLA Hillary Zaenchik  
908-244-6202  
Treasurer: K2YG Dave Barr  
908-277-4283  
Activities: W2PTP Paul Wolfmeyer  
201-404-6914

## On the Air Activities

Club Operating Frequency  
145.750 MHz FM Simplex

Sunday Night Phone Net  
Murray Hill Repeater (W2LI) at 9:00 PM  
Transmit on 147.855 MHz  
With PL tone of 141.3 Hz  
Receive on 147.255 MHz  
Net Control K2AL

Digital Net  
First & Third Mondays 9 PM  
Details as announced.

## Club Internet Address

Website: <http://www.nparc.org>  
Webmaster K2MUN David Berkley  
Reflector: [nparc@mailman.qth.net](mailto:nparc@mailman.qth.net)  
Contact K2UI, Jim

## MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS

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Contributing Editors:  
WB2QOO Rick Anderson  
WB2EDO Jim Brown

Climatological Data for New Providence for  
January 2013

The following information is provided by  
Rick, WB2QOO, who has been recording  
daily weather events at his station for the  
past 31 years.

### TEMPERATURE -

Maximum temperature this January, 63 deg. F  
(January 30)

Last January (2012) maximum was 59 deg.  
F.

Average Maximum temperature this January,  
41.2 deg. F

Minimum temperature for this January, +6  
deg. F (January 24)

Last January (2012) minimum was +9 deg. F.  
Average Minimum temperature this January,  
25.4 deg. F

Minimum diurnal temperature range, 4 deg.  
(48-44 deg.) 1/13

Maximum diurnal temperature range, 33 deg.  
(59-26 deg.) 1/31

Average temperature this January, 33.3 deg.  
Average temperature last January, 34.5 deg.

Number of days this January with daily  
minimum temperatures of

20 deg. or lower - 7; last January - 7.

Six consecutive days this January (beginning  
on 22<sup>nd</sup>) saw minimum temperatures between  
+14 and +6 degs.; with maximum daily temps.  
between 23 and 34 degs.

### PRECIPITATION -

Total precipitation this January - 1.0"  
snow/sleet; 2.38" rain/melted snow.

Total precipitation last January - 2.75"  
snow; 2.99" rain/melted snow.

Maximum one day precip. event this January;  
January 31, 0.94" rain.

Measurable rain fell on 9 days this Janu-  
ary, 9 days last January.

Measurable snow/sleet fell on 3 days this  
January.

=====

Rick Anderson 2/7/13

243 Mountain Ave.

New Providence, NJ

(908) 464-8912

[rick243@comcast.net](mailto:rick243@comcast.net)

**Lat = 40 degrees, 41.7 minutes North**

**Long = 74 degrees, 23.4 minutes West**

Elevation: 380 ft.

CoCoRaHS Network Station #NJ-UN-10



## PRESIDENTS COLUMN

By K2MUN



This is my second column for Mountain Spark Gaps as President of our radio club. I look forward to writing a column each month that, in some small way, adds to your enjoyment of our shared hobby and our shared club.

I'm open to suggestions on topics but over the next few months I'd like to continue to use this space to introduce you to our Executive Committee. Most of you have met the four other members but, like me, probably know little about them. Also, as in the past, the Executive Committee has added Ex-Officio (non-voting) members to the official committee. These are Paul, N2KDK, as our past President; Barry, K2JV, our past secretary; Al, K2AL, our club license trustee and Frank, K2EZR, the stalwart editor and publisher of Mountain Spark Gaps. So far the Executive Committee has met several times informally (and once formally). It is a pleasure to be working with this talented group of NPARC Members.

However, for this column I will focus on Paul Wolfmeyer, W2PTP, our Activities Manager. It is hard to single out one person who is the most critical member of our Executive Committee but, if I have to, it would be Paul. He has taken on the responsibility of making sure that we have challenging, interesting, meetings that will draw each of you to attend and will entice new members to join. Each Activities Manager has approached their jobs in an individual manner taking from their own backgrounds and experiences to forge the year's presentations. In doing this Paul will need the support and encouragement of every member both in attending but, also, in contributing. Make sure you step up to help when he asks and provide input as needed.

Paul is a relatively new member of NPARC (joined 2011 Jan.), has been licensed since 1968 and is a life member, and strong supporter, of the ARRL. He was fairly inactive between 1994 and 2010 coming back to a ham radio transformed by digital modes and heavy integration with computers which he is enjoying exploring. Paul enjoys 'gentle' contesting, collecting states, countries, special events, etc. He comes by these interests honestly since his father was also a ham, W0KH (SK). Some background: Paul was born in Waterloo, IA, and grew up mainly in Omaha, NE. He has a BSEE from Iowa State University and an MBA from Fairleigh Dickinson. Paul has been married to Helen for 45 years and has 3 grown children (2 married) and 3 grandchildren. He has had a lifelong career with AT&T, mainly in operations, ending up working with the national network and continuing on to mobility until he retired in 2011. A strong technical experience for amateur radio!

Paul has certainly not rested since his retirement. He continues, after 29 years, as organist at his church and transports Mendham seniors to Morris County destinations for Mendham Area Senior Housing (MASH) one day a week. In addition, he has another big (really big) hobby collecting cars of which he now has 7! Currently he is restoring a 1949 DeSoto while enjoying driving a recently acquired 1932 Plymouth, in good weather only.

Paul begins his period as Activities Manager, not only working on month-to-month scheduling of presentations but also with our annual Auction. He has approached these tasks with enthusiasm and great organization. If all of you participate as planned I think we can expect an excellent result. When you read these words, the Auction should be in the books and we will be looking forward to Field Day, as our next big event. Join in the planning and execution with Paul and we should have a great time!

Next month I will say some words about another Executive Committee member. For now, I again want to encourage each and every one of you to attend our meetings; join the Sunday Night Net and contribute your expertise; express your interests and involve yourself in our club in a way that enhances your, and the rest of our, satisfaction and excitement in amateur radio.

Bet you didn't know this!

In the heyday of sailing ships, all war ships and many freighters carried iron cannons. Those cannons fired round iron cannon balls. It was necessary to keep a good supply near the cannon. However, how to prevent them from rolling about the deck? The best storage method devised was a square-based pyramid with one ball on top, resting on four resting on nine, which rested on sixteen. Thus, a supply of 30 cannon balls could be stacked in a small area right next to the cannon. There was only one problem....how to prevent the bottom layer from sliding or rolling from under the others. The solution was a metal plate called a 'Monkey' with 16 round indentations. However, if this plate were made of iron, the iron balls would quickly rust to it. The solution to the rusting problem was to make 'Brass Monkeys.' Few landlubbers realize that brass contracts much more and much faster than iron when chilled. Consequently, when the temperature dropped too far, the brass indentations would shrink so much that the iron cannonballs would come right off the monkey; Thus, it was quite literally, 'Cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey.' (All this time, you thought that was an improper expression, didn't you?)

# AUCTION 2013



**Ready to bid.**



**The Auctioneers**



**A happy Buyer KC2PNZ**

## SCIENTIFIC TIDBITS

### ENERGY FROM WATER

A new polymer film can generate electricity when exposed to water vapor. The material, created by MIT engineers, changes shape when absorbing tiny amounts of vapor already present in most environments. The moisture causes the film to curl up and down as it absorbs and then releases water. Researchers can harness the motion to drive robotic limbs, or convert it to electrical energy to power small micro and nanoelectric devices such as environmental sensors. That could eliminate batteries, which limit sensors' usefulness. It is truly amazing how many ways there seem to be to create electrical potential. Benjamin Franklin would be truly proud.

### “INVISIBILITY” CLOAK MAY BE NEAR

A Canadian company says it has developed a material that makes things completely invisible by bending light waves around the object. Startup company Hyperstealth has developed a material called Quantum Stealth. This is advancement on earlier work by the company, which sells camouflage patterns to the military for use on uniforms, vehicles and installations. The company has demonstrated its invisibility material to the U.S. and Canadian military. It says it uses nanotech technology, but isn't saying exactly how it works for obvious reasons.

“.....the Shadow knows!”

### AN OLD COMPUTER RIDES AGAIN

The world's oldest working computer, The Harwell Dekatron, was built in the early 1950's for the U.K. Atomic Energy agency but fell into disuse due to obsolescence. It has been restored using 95% original parts. As it did originally, it operates long periods without human intervention, but only has as much power as a small pocket calculator. Nostalgia is a wonderful thing as it shows how far we have progressed in computer science.

### COMPUTER PROGRAM ADVANCEMENT

Spaun, a computer program built by the University of Waterloo researchers, consists of 2.5 million simulated neurons and is seen as a step toward smarter artificial intelligence. It has virtual eye, robotic arm and, unlike most computers, it's organized to resemble brain regions like the prefrontal cortex. They seem to be getting close to building in personality and that is truly frightening.

Jim WB2EDO