

# **MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS**

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



**Website: <http://www.nparc.org>  
Club Calls: N2XJ, W2FMI  
Facebook: New Providence Amateur Radio Club  
(NPARC)**

**VOLUME 54 NO. 2 February 2021**

## **Regular Meetings**

**Second & Fourth Mondays  
“ZOOM” until we can all  
get together again**

## **Upcoming Events**

**Digital Net Mondays at 9:00 PM  
PSK on 80 or 10 meters  
CW training Net, Thursday at 9:00 PM  
Watch for Email announcements.**

## Meeting Schedule

**Regular Meeting: 7:30—9:00 PM  
2nd & 4th Monday  
of each month** at the  
New Providence Hall  
Elkwood Ave. NP

**Everyone is Welcome**

If a normal meeting night is a holiday,  
we usually meet the following night.  
Call one of the contacts below  
or check the web site

## Club Officers for 2018

President: W2PTP Paul Wolfmeyer  
201-406-6914  
Vice President: K2GLS Bob Willis  
973-543-2454  
Secretary: K2AL: Al Hanzl  
908-872-5021  
Treasurer: K2YG Dave Barr  
908-277-4283  
Activities: KC2OSR: Sam Sealy  
973-462-2014

## —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

Mondays 9 PM  
28,084 — 28,086  
Will be using PSK and RTTY  
Net control K2YG

## Club Internet Address

Website: <http://www.nparc.org>  
Webmaster KC2WUF David Bean  
Reflector: [nparc@mailman.qth.net](mailto:nparc@mailman.qth.net)  
Contact K2JV, Barry

## MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS

Published Monthly by NPARC, Inc.  
The Watchung Mountain Area Radio Club  
P.O. Box 813

New Providence, NJ 07974  
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Editor: K2EZR Frank McAneny

Contributing Editors:  
WB2OOO Rick Anderson  
W2PTP Paul Wolfmeyer  
K2UI Jim Stekas

## Climatological Data for New Providence for January 2021

The following information is provided by  
Rick, WB2OOO, who has been recording daily  
weather events at his station for the past  
39 years.

### TEMPERATURE -

Maximum temperature this January, 47 deg. F  
(January 14)

Last January (2020) maximum was 65 deg.  
F.

Average Maximum temperature this January,  
37.4 deg. F

Minimum temperature this January, 15 deg. F  
(January 19)

Last January (2020) minimum was 17 deg. F.

Average Minimum temperature this January,  
26.6 deg. F

Minimum diurnal temperature range, 4 deg.  
(35-31 deg.) 1/3; (34-30) 1/26

Maximum diurnal temperature range, 17 deg.  
(39-22 deg.) 1/21

Average temperature this January, 32.0 deg.  
F

Average temperature last January, 35.6 deg. F

### PRECIPITATION -

Total precipitation this January- 2.87"  
rain/snow melt; 3.8" snow.

Total precipitation last January- 2.37"  
rain/snow melt; 2.2" snow.

Maximum one day precip. event this January-  
January 31, 2.5" snow.

Measurable rain fell on 7 days this January,  
7 days last January.

YTD Precipitation - 2.87"

=====  
Rick Anderson

2/15/2021

243 Mountain Ave.

New Providence, NJ

(908) 464-8911

[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

## President's Column February 2021

Well, I'm still in the "winter doldrums" with stay-at-home and cold weather and this month snow, snow, snow....

We had two neat programs this month at our ZOOM meetings. First was Andrea Slack K2EZ talking about "roving". She is on about the fifth iteration of her rover vehicle, a 2002 Ford Explorer. What great things she does on so many bands from HF up.... As a "vehicle" person, I love to see her vehicle with all its gear and antennas at events and to think of her contacts from it. There are just so many things one can do with ham radio.

And our second meeting featured Elixander Valladares W7HU. Alex records his contacts on his youtube channel, giving the person he is in contact with a chance to see and hear his/her signal. That's immediate and direct feedback! He also shared a youtube segment of his contact with Bob Heil K9EID—good Alex uses a Heil mike.

Thanks to Sam KC2OSR for arranging these excellent programs  
We were also pleased to have Heather Speas, a potential new ham join us at the second ZOOM of the month.

On a very sad note, we learned this past week of the death of Andy Stillinger WA2DKJ. Andy was a past member of NPARC and a regular supporter of the club and close friend to many in the club. (We have used his food canopy at all the Field Days I've coordinated.) I like to think of him as "Mr Antarctica" for his work sojourns to the South Pole, including ham operations from there. We will miss him very much in the ham community.

Join us on the NPARC nets—phone on Sunday, digital on Monday (it's hitting 7 or 8 attendees regularly) and CW on Thursday (break out that key and dive in)...

73

Wolf W2PTP

201-404-6914

[W2ptp@arrl.net](mailto:W2ptp@arrl.net)

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Contesting

### Jim Stekas - K2UI

Having recently worked the ARRL-DX-CW contest I checked out my old logs to see when I worked my first contest. (Fittingly, my log was a home brew job with manually ruled columns on landscape three hole paper.) The log shows my Advanced ticket, WA2IAA, arriving on 4-Oct-1969. The log shows the sudden appearance of 500W SSB QSOs on 19-Oct thanks to the loan of a Swan 350 from my friend and elmer Stu. On 29-Oct the notes "-- CQ-DX Contest--" and "Stu in shack" appear followed by a page of casual DX contacts on 15m.

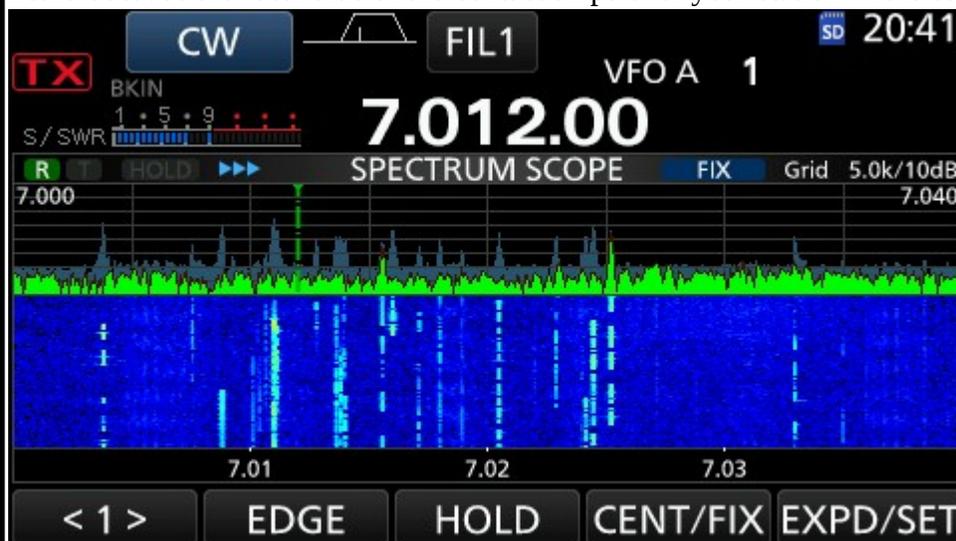
On 8-Nov-1969 I worked my first ARRL Phone Sweepstakes on SSB. Contact #11 was K2USA in Ft. Monmouth followed by #12, W4KFC who gave me #522B from VA. Vic Clark, W4KFC, was a perennial high finisher in DX and Sweepstakes contests. Contact #46 was W4ZM from VA. His check shows he was first licensed in 1915, the year the first issue of QST came out! The log shows a total of 92 contacts on 40m over 4 hours and I didn't bother to tally my score.

Following is my log for the 1969 ARRL CW Sweepstakes on the following weekend. The log has no band indication, but it must have been 40m since I almost never worked any other band. I made 52 contacts in 23 sections for a total score of 2392. My rig was my novice station + VFO running 75 watts, which put me in the under 150 watt QRP class for the SS. I used a WW2 bug (now owned by KC2WUF) and operated full QSK using a Bell System relay and separate Rx (random wire) and Tx (40m dipole) antennas.

I have operated many contests over the years, mostly casually. My most serious effort was 4hr operating the SS with my K1 with both kids in college. It was fun, but operationally it was pretty much the way I operated 50 years ago: slowly tune across the band, identify signals, and pounce.

Has modern technology significantly changed contesting?

This ARRL-DX-CW contest I operated with 21st century equipment and things were very different. I used my IC-7300 which has a beautiful waterfall and adjustable DSP filtering. This made a huge difference in hunt-and-pounce. On 20m, it is very often the case that only the DX station can be heard because the local side of the contact skips over your station. It is easy to tune right by a DX



station while the stateside station is transmitting. But the waterfall display lets you see everything that going on +/- 5 kHz from where you are tuned. You can see the pile-ups and the empty spectrum between them, which makes hunting and pouncing feel almost like cheating.

I also had *fldigi* running which gave me a high resolution waterfall around my receive frequency. It allowed me to resolve the various calling stations in a pile-up and identify the frequency of the station that worked the DX station. I could make my call on the exact frequency the DX stations was listening on.

Another useful feature of *fldigi* is its ability to decode CW. It's not good enough to replace what's between your ears, but is good enough to provide useful info as a text recording to confirm what you hear. It's like having a logger working with you who can ask, "Are you sure that's KH6T and not N6THT?" I worked one DX station that came back to "K3UI", so I responded with "K2UI K2UI" and he worked me again as "K2UI". Even the top operators aren't perfect.

In two hours of casual operation I managed to work every station I called except for two: total score 1425 for 26 QSOs and 16 countries. I attribute my good luck to choosing to operate the last two hours of the contest when I was one of the few stateside stations who wasn't a dup in the logs of the big guns. The super-stations were happy to do the heavy lifting and put me in the log. I doubt my efforts would have been as productive in the first two hours.

Modern rigs and PC logging SW have certainly made contest operating much more fun by assuming much of the drudge work of contesting. I wonder how long before we have an AI operator class of contesting, where you can turn on your rig and get a text message 24 hours later with your score. Doesn't seem like much fun, but if it can be done it will be done.

### References

1. The waterfall figure is from <http://www.m0pzt.com/ic7300-screengrab.png>