

# **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 53 NO. 1 January 2020**

## **Regular Meetings**

**2/10 & 2/24 Monday 7:30  
Location to be Announced  
Probably NP Borough Hall**

## **Upcoming Events**

**Auction  
Saturday  
2/22/2020**

## 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  
973-635-8966

## —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  
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 K2UI, Jim

## MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS

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Editor: K2EZR Frank McAneny  
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WB2000 Rick Anderson  
W2PTP Paul Wolfmeyer  
K2UI Jim Stekas

## Climatological Data for New Providence for December 2019

The following information is provided by  
Rick, WB2000, who has been recording daily  
weather events at his station for the past  
38 years.

### TEMPERATURE -

Maximum temperature this December, 55 deg. F  
(December 10)

Last December (2018) maximum was 60 deg.  
F.

Average Maximum temperature this December,  
40.9 deg. F

Minimum temperature this December, 13 deg. F  
(December 19)

Last December (2018) minimum was 24 deg. F.  
Average Minimum temperature this December,  
28.4 deg. F

Minimum diurnal temperature range, 2 deg.  
(33-31 deg.) 12/2, 12/17

Maximum diurnal temperature range, 21 deg.  
(42-21 deg.) 12/22

Average temperature this December, 34.7 deg.  
F

Average temperature last December, 38.3 deg.

### PRECIPITATION -

Total precipitation this December - 6.09"  
rain/snow melt; 5.4" snow/sleet.

Total precipitation last December - 7.00"  
rain, Trace snow.

Maximum one day precip. event this December  
-

December 9, 1.47" rain; December 2, 5.0"  
snow.

Measurable rain fell on 10 days this Decem-  
ber, 10 days last December.

Measurable snow fell on 1 day this December.

YTD Precipitation - 64.17"

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Rick Anderson

1/12/2020

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 January 2020**

Unavailable.

## Radio Movie Stars

Jim Stekas - K2UI

Flipping through the channels on a recent Saturday I was stopped dead in my tracks by the scene at right.

The shot is from “*The Mysterious Mr. M*”, a 1946 crime serial. The “good guys” are using an undefined microwave device to track a get-away car. A small bright dot indicates the car's position on a wall map, which is then relayed to agents in pursuit via radio.

*But what is that radio?!* I just can't see a cool radio and not find out what it is.



Usually, if I can't identify the radio, I can identify the manufacturer. But not in this case. The layout looks very much like a National, with controls either side of the frequency display, but without the distinctive round HRO-style micrometer dial. The spoked tuning knob screams Hallicrafters, but the smaller chicken head knobs say otherwise. An hour flipping through on-line pix revealed nothing that even remotely looked like the rig in the movie. My guess is that it's a studio prop, with a front panel and empty case. Considering that a real SX-28 is a 75 lb black monster that is hard to light, it's easy to see the advantage of using a prop.

Radio's golden age spanned the 30's and 40's, and an association with radio could add a bit of excitement to the mundane. Hence a kid's toy wagon becomes the “Radio Flyer”. Below we see Bing and Bogie basking in the glow of their killer Zenith all-band radios. Bing certainly had radio to thank for his fame, in this scene he's returning the favor. Bogart was already a legend when “*Dead Reckoning*” came out in 1947, and the Zenith Transoceanic would become one as well.





“Cat-Women of the Moon” is a science-fiction film from 1953 and was considered influential in some circles. Perhaps it was due to the futuristic Hallicrafters SX-42 receiver in the wall of the rocket ship with the microphone plugged into it. Maybe Art Collins saw this and asked himself “Why not build a transmitter into a receiver??”

Wonder what they used the equipment in the desk console for?

Meanwhile, in Mayberry NC, the heavy lifting of police communications was provided by a crystal controlled Eico 720 CW transmitter. In this scene Opie is trying to convince Barnie to let him build a Heathkit HG-10 VFO to allow them to QSY out of the novice band. Barnie is worried that the VFO might result in chirp and a “greeting card” from an OO.



There are far more Hollywood movies about alien vampire zombies than movies that give ham radio even a casual mention. The exception is the thriller “Frequency”, where ham radio is front and center. The plot centers around a man who uses his late father's ham gear to speak with him in the past. The same rig connecting to itself 30-years distant in time! The rig used is a Heathkit SB-300 receiver with the top removed.<sup>1</sup> (Kinda like Charlton Heston with his shirt off.) Apparently, no transmitter is required to communicate with the past.



Despite wild violations of the laws of radio and physics, I give “Frequency” a strong thumbs up.

<sup>1</sup> I wonder where he plugged the microphone into the SB-300.

When my kids were young I cautioned them to be very skeptical of anything they see in the movies. Even when presenting an actual historic event, the urge to take artistic license (i.e. lie) is just too great to resist. Hence we get movies like "The Imitation Game" wherein Benedict Cumberbatch<sup>2</sup> single handedly cracks the Enigma code and designs a computer which he builds (with help from a few assistants), to automate the decoding process. If the movie was more faithful to the truth we would have seen a gaggle of radio operators glued to their HRO receivers copying 5-letter code groups. Well, there should have been at least a few.

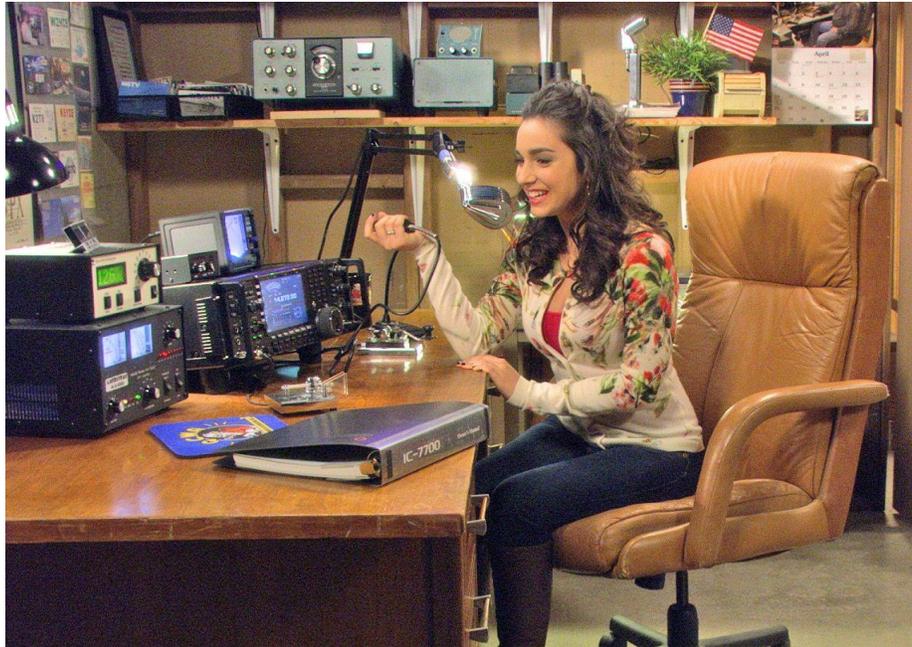


when he upgraded to general.

Never-the-less, occasionally the truth (or half-truth) leaks out of Hollywood. The station at left is from the Netflix show "Stranger Things", and it could actually be used to make QSOs. It is assembled from Heathkit's 1960's novice offerings and includes a DX-60 transmitter, HG-10 VFO, and HW-16 CW transceiver. Absent is an HR-10 receiver, the standard mate for the DX-60, but I could imagine a novice starting with the HW-16 and adding the DX-60 and Shure microphone to operate AM phone

<sup>2</sup> Alan Turing is the inspiration for this movie, but is otherwise blameless.

The shack below is from the set of the TV show “Last Man Standing”. Except for being excessively neat, it looks like an active ham's shack from the pages of QST. The main rig is an ICOM IC-7700 transceiver coupled to an Ameritron AL-80B 1kW amplifier. The predecessor of the ICOM was likely the Heathkit HW-101 on the shelf, now relegated to backup duty. To add to the realism, the wall behind the desk is full of QSL cards, including conformation from Long Island hams K2TV and W2HCB.



Not shown is the antenna system, but my guess is a stacked pair of 6-element, 20m, Yagis up 90ft. Heck, it's a TV show. Why not?