

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. 6 June 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

ZOOM until further notice

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 2021

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
Contact K2JV, Barry

MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS

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WB2OOQ Rick Anderson
W2PTP Paul Wolfmeyer
K2UI Jim Stekas

Climatological Data for New Providence for May 2021

The following information is provided by
Rick, WB2OOQ, who has been recording daily
weather events at his station for the past
39 years.

TEMPERATURE -

Maximum temperature this May, 91 deg. F (May
26)

Last May(2020) maximum was 83 deg. F.

Average Maximum temperature this May, 71.1
deg. F

Minimum temperature this May, 41 deg. F (May
1)

Last May(2020) minimum was 32 deg. F.

Average Minimum temperature this May, 51.5
deg. F

Minimum diurnal temperature range, 4 deg.
(49 - 45 deg.) 5/29

Maximum diurnal temperature range, 28 deg.
(91 - 63 deg.) 5/26

Average temperature this May, 61.3 deg. F

Average temperature last May, 59.7 deg. F

PRECIPITATION -

Total precipitation this May- 4.79" rain.

Total precipitation last May- 2.21" rain.

Maximum one day precip. event this May-

May 28, 1.4" rain.

Measurable rain fell on 12 days this May, 13
days last May.

YTD Precipitation - 18.49"

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Rick Anderson

6/16/2021

243 Mountain Ave.

New Providence, NJ

(908)464-8911

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 June 2021

A good club business meeting on June 14, progress on club IRS status, and quite good Field Day participation (under the extended pandemic rules). That's June in a nutshell.

At the business meeting, we approved the amendments to the Constitution Bylaws that were introduced, moved, and seconded at the May business meeting. The updated Bylaws will be posted on the website. Here are the links:

Constitution <http://www.nparc.org/constitution.html>

Bylaws <http://www.nparc.org/bylaws.html>

The updated bylaws permit us to have video and hybrid (combined video and inperson) meetings, both as a club and the Executive Committee, and addresses our membership bylaw to be sure it is inclusive and consistent with our practice. (These amendments were also detailed in my May column.)

We also had discussion about creation of a "dissolution" constitution article or bylaw. This is something we need to do or state law would have the state distribute any remaining funds, were we to dissolve, to organizations of the state's choice. The comments and discussion, at our Zoom meeting, seemed to favor a clause (bylaw) that would cause distribution of the funds to amateur radio organizations. The Executive Committee plans to introduce such a clause at the September or October business meeting.

The Executive Committee has also studied the rules and sought advice for filing with the IRS for 501c3 status. If an organization has annual receipts less than \$5000 (and meets the specified test, which we do), it is not necessary to file. If that status should change in the future, we could file at that time (paying the \$275 fee, etc). So we do not plan to file at this time.

On to Field Day—we had reports at our June 28th ZOOM meeting of NPARC Field Day activity by K2YG, K2AL, K2GLS, W2PTP, KC2WUF, KC2OSR (who involved KD2VZA and KD2SND), W2IOC, K2UI and N6JIV. Kudos to Sam for involving Heather and Brian because involving new hams and getting them on the air is an important value of Field Day. Gene, N6JIV, went to the greatest effort per contact arguably—but he got involved! Qs in the 300 plus range were completed by K2YG, K2AL and KC2WUF. (I'm sure there were other club members active in Field Day who couldn't make Monday's meeting—like KB2FCV and W2EMC.)

After hearing from Eric KD2ONY and Hillary KC2HLA on South Plainfield and Billie KD2JRI on Tri-County, we all agreed (and long for) the "group" Field Day experience again. Next month we have ZOOM meetings planned for July 12 and 26th. Sussex hamfest is Sunday July 18.

[And don't forget the nets, Sunday phone, Monday digital, and Thursday CW!](#)

73, Wolf W2PTP, 201-404-6914, W2ptp@arrl.net

Fiasco Day - 2021

Jim Stekas - K2UI

Field Day is unlike all the other ham radio “contests” because it requires more than plopping down in the shack and flipping on the power. One *can* operate FD this way (class 1D) but it is not in the true spirit of FD.

NPARC, in non-Covid times, runs a classic FD – in a field – with tents, towers, antennas, grills, tables, chairs, rigs, laptops, WiFi, and generators set up on the day of the event. After setup, tired members dig into the 4 ft sandwiches, down some cold soda, and chit-chat until 1800 UTC when FD stations go on the air. Magically, a few “almost-but-not-quite-members” make their yearly appearance around this time. But 2021 would not be a classic FD because our normal FD site was still unavailable due to Covid. NPARC members were forced to make their own FD plans.

After a careful reading of the FD rules and making an inventory of available equipment I was determined to operate class 1B QRP on batteries to qualify for a 5X power multiplier. My understanding is that the FD rules require a 1B station to use no equipment or antennas that are part of the fixed home station. So I planned to operate my K1¹ from the back porch using a 6-pack of gel cells discarded from work. Erecting an antenna was an issue, but I figured I would try the Buddipole from AE2JP’s estate that’s been packed away waiting for hamfests to resume. No sooner had I completed a quick parts inventory when a light rain reminded me of the weather forecast. Waiting for the rain to stop I actually read the Buddipole users manual which specified bandwidths as low as 30 Khz. Readjusting the Buddipole for resonance after every band change or QSY would be a huge pain. So the Buddipole was a no go and FD would be starting in less than an hour.

Fortunately, I was overcome by a bit of common sense. Why chase the 5X QRP/battery multiplier? There are already enough obstacles to prevent me from operating, so why make things any more difficult than they have to be? Chasing power multipliers was just going to make operating that much more more complicated. I made the decision to operate class 1D using the home station on commercial power so I could focus on making QSOs. Forget the score.

One way to uncomplicate my FD operations was to give up on paper logging and move to N1MM. Simple, I thought, just reboot from Linux into Windows 10. Piece of cake ... well, not so much.

The first hiccup was that Windows insisted on doing an update as soon as it came up. It gave me the option to update immediately, or to wait an hour and have the update occur at an even worse time. I picked the do-it-now option, and Windows responded with honesty: "This will take a long time and your PC will reboot multiple times." Boy, Windows wasn't kidding.

It took about an hour before the update was complete and I could start downloading N1MM, but Windows refused to download it because N1MM got flagged as contraband by Windows security. My solution was to download and install Google Chrome (which Windows was too intimidated to prevent) and use that to download N1MM. A few hiccups and button clicks later and N1MM was alive and I entered my info station info.

Finally. Time to get K2UI on the air!

1 A tiny QRP CW transceiver sold by Elecraft. A good thing in a small package.

I started with CW on 10m but the band looked pretty dead with nothing visible on the waterfall. I moved to 15m only to find the noise level was S9+. I grabbed my tinySA² thinking it was the perfect tool to track down the noise source, but it wasn't sensitive enough. I switched to my trusty Radio Shack DX-398 portable SW receiver. Walking around the house, I found that noise peaked whenever the antenna was near the AC house wiring. I followed the noise to an old Toshiba CRT TV that was powered off but still plugged in. (Evidently, TVs have lots to do even when we aren't watching them.) Pulling the plug silenced the noise pouring out of the DX-398 speaker, but the noise level into my rig was still S9. More sniffing along the AC wiring led me to a ceiling light in the laundry room that I installed not too long ago. It's an LED light that looks like a fluorescent and generates more noise than my dad's electric shaver used to. My brain was replaying K2LR's admonition, "No LEDs anywhere." Turning off the light brought the noise level at my rig down to S1-S2. After about 4 hours of being "almost ready" I was finally prepared to make some contacts.

I spent about 3 hours on the air and worked just about everyone CW station I heard on 10-40m. I recognized a couple of well known calls and worked them both: K2AL and W1FM. I wasn't quite sure about W1FM, so I figured I'd look up the call on line. Oops! Windows lost my WiFi connection and was unable to troubleshoot the problem. My usual fix for that is to reboot into Linux, but I still needed N1MM, so W1FM³ would have to wait.

I wasted a lot of time thanks to Murphy and failure to prepare ahead of time. But FD was saved by timely application of the "Keep it simple stupid." (KISS) principle.

Until FD 2022, I will be keeping my batteries charged and putting together a Go Kit which I plan to be complete 48 hours before the start of FD.

2 A small spectrum analyzer that fits in a shirt pocket.

3 Later I learned that W1FM has no connection with W1FB.