

# MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS

NPARC—The Radio Club for the  
Watchung Mountain area



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

VOLUME 46 March 2011 NO. 3

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Regular Meetings

Monday April 11 & 25  
7:30 PM  
Salt Brook School

### Special Event

May 30  
New Providence  
Memorial Day Parade  
Information inside

## Meeting Schedule

**Regular Meeting:** 7:30—10:30 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.

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### Club Officers for 2011

President: N2KDK, Paul Campano  
908-508-9595  
Vice Pres.: K2MUN, David Berkley  
908-500-9740  
Secretary: K2JV Barry Cohen  
908-464-1730  
Treasure: K2YG Dave Barr  
908-277-4283  
Activities: KC2OSR, Sam Sealy  
973-635-8966

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### On the Air Activities

Club Operating Frequency  
145.750 MHz FM Simplex

Sunday Night Phone Net  
Murray Hill Repeater (W2LJ) at 9:00 PM  
Transmit on 147.855 MHz  
With PL tone of 141.3 Hz  
Receive on 147.255 MHz  
Net Control K2AL

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### 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

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### 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:  
WB2QOO Rick Anderson  
WB2EDO Jim Brown

Climatological Data for New Providence for  
February 2011

The following information is provided by  
Rick, WB2QOO, who has been recording  
daily weather events at his station for the  
past 29 years.

#### TEMPERATURE -

Maximum temperature this February, 63 deg. F  
(February 18)  
Last February (2010) maximum was 46 deg.  
F.

Average Maximum temperature this February,  
41.8 deg. F

Minimum temperature for this February, 9  
deg. F (February 11)

Last February (2009) minimum was 13 deg. F.  
Average Minimum temperature this February,  
23.2 deg. F

Minimum diurnal temperature range, 7 deg.  
(30 - 23 deg.) 2/1.

Maximum diurnal temperature range, 36 deg.  
(57 - 21 deg.) 2/19.

Average temperature this February, 32.5 deg.  
F

Average temperature last February, 31.3 deg.  
F

#### PRECIPITATION -

Total precipitation this February - 2.64"  
rain/melted snow; 3.5" snow

Total precipitation last February - 5.38"  
rain/melted snow; 32.25" snow

Maximum one day precip. event this February;  
February 21; 3.0" snow.

Measurable snow fell on 2 days this Febru-  
ary, 9 days last February.

=====  
Rick Anderson  
3/23/11

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

## MISCELLANEA

### PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

*Not available at press time.*  
(Hint, Hint)

NPARC members are invited to participate in this years Memorial Day Parade, taking place on Monday, May 30. Yea, I know; it may seem a bit premature to be talking about the parade, but it will be here before we know it. Our club has annually participated in this town event, for as long as I can recall; and a decent attendance in this club activity is requested. This is the one public event where hundreds of town's people get to see the club members, and a good attendance is most welcomed. Last year we had 10 members participate in our parade unit, which was a fairly decent number, but it would be great to have a better showing. Our unit will walk the parade route, down Springfield Ave., between Central Ave. and Academy St. Please consider taking part in this community event. Please contact Rick, WB2QOQ, if you are interested in participating in the



**2010 Marchers**

**In addition, the NPARC Emergency Response Team will provide communications assistance to the parade organizers and borough officials.**

## PUBLIC SERVICE



This picture was taken at the Ridgewood Chapter of the Red Cross. Present ( L - R ) are Barb Flynn KC2YJB, the Response Director of the Summit Red Cross, Tony Izzo K2AMI acting NCS for the K2BAR Headquarters Station, and in back, Barry Cohen K2JV and David Berkley K2MUN from NPARC, who had just completed a tour of Damage Assessment in flooded areas. Also working at the Red Cross during this emergency event were Hillary KC2HLA and Vince KC2IZK who were not available for the photograph.

The NPARC Emergency Response Team was asked to help with communications between the Ridgewood Chapter House and flood locations in Bergen, Essex, Passaic and Morris Counties.

To the ERT members who made time and equipment available to assist in this relief effort -  
**"Well Done."**

**A Remarkable Talk -- WJ1B's Key Collection**  
by  
**David Berkley, K2MUN**

On March, 2011, Harold Kramer (COO of the ARRL) WJ1B visited the New Providence Amateur Radio Club. When Harold was initially invited we expected that he would want to discuss the ARRL. Instead, he said he'd like to talk about, and show us, his key and sounder collection.

When the day arrived, Harold laid out an amazing group of devices; some familiar (like a classic J38 key) and others (like a fully automatic, mechanical, dual action Melehan Valiant) that none of us had ever seen. He then gave a talk, illustrated by the keys and less familiar items, tracing the history of CW from the origins of the telegraph, through modern day. Did you know that a young Theodore Vail was deeply involved with Samuel Morse and Morse did not create the 'Morse' code by himself – I didn't? He even had a rare replica of the first Morse Code Key invented by Vail.

He traced the design of keys from initial creation, when keys were very tiring to use, through generations of improvement including the 'camelback' key.

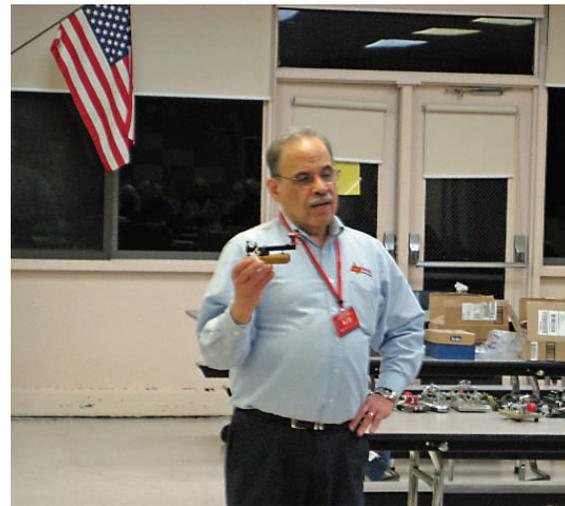
He explained that in early railroad telegraphy the sounding devices were used to print out the incoming code. But when the printers failed (which apparently was common) the telegraphers found that they could 'read' the incoming messages by just listening to the clatter of the sounders. So began human code reception.

He went on to explain why there were shorting bars on early keys (to provide a continuous circuit through the whole telegraphy system, when the key was not in use) and followed this with the story of Bill Brown who made keys by hand from 1964 to 1979. Harold also talked about another key maker, Ted McElroy, who set the world's record for Morse code telegraphy (over 70 wpm, in 1939), a record that stands to this day.

As part of this fascinating history lesson, Harold talked about collecting telegraphic apparatus. His collection includes early professional keys and sounders as well as some wonderful amateur radio keys. He has a great website, at [www.wj1b.com](http://www.wj1b.com), that includes photos of prizes from the collection.

At the end of his talk, as he showed some of the more 'modern' keys in his collection, Harold (possibly somewhat nervously) let the audience, including some younger members present, play with these amazing pieces of history.

I know I never thought about collecting keys. My shack only has my day-to-day paddles and a Bulgarian Army straight key I use when the spirit (or 'straight key day') moves me. Now I won't key up without thinking of Harold and his historic collection!



# SCIENTIFIC TIDBITS

## They Say We Are Happier

It came to our attention that the average age of the New Providence Radio Club membership was on the north side of 50. That being the case the following article, although having nothing to do with amateur radio, was apropos and would provide our readership with some introspection.

They don't call them the golden years for nothing. A recent study by researchers at the Stony Brook University found that after the age of 50, people felt consistently happier, less stressed, and less worried than their counterparts in the bull bloom of youth, says Scientific America. That finding emerged from a Gallup survey of 350,000 Americans from all parts of the country. The results showed that happiness and enjoyment declined between ages 20 and 50, but increased steadily after 50. Worry and stress start rising in the 20s but fall off sharply after age 50. The patterns were similar for men and women, and held regardless of whether a person was employed, married or had children in the house. Older people may be "more effective at regulating their emotions than younger adults," says psychiatrist and study author Arthur Stone, or they may simply forget negative experiences more quickly (I interject the thought this may be true because of Alzheimer's). Whatever the reason, says Stone, "If you were to do a survey and say, 'How many of you would like to be 25 again?' you don't get a lot of takers."

This last statement may be true, but I find it hard to believe that people in their 70s and 80s wouldn't want to be 25 again knowing what we know now. This reminds me of a little ditty that seems to sum up my thought on the "Golden Years". It is entitled "The Cat In The Hat on Aging"

I cannot see  
I cannot pee  
I cannot chew  
I cannot screw  
Oh, my God, what can I do?  
My memory shrinks  
My hearing stinks  
No sense of smell  
I look like hell  
My mood is bad – can you tell?  
My body's drooping  
Have trouble pooping  
The Golden Years have come at last  
The Golden Years can kiss my ass!

Jim WB2EDO