

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. 3 March 2019

**Regular Meetings
4/8 & 4/22 Monday 7:30
DeCorso Community Center**

Upcoming Events

New Providence Memorial Day Parade

More information to follow as the date approaches

Meeting Schedule

Regular Meeting: 7:30—9:00 PM
2nd Monday of each month at the
NP Senior & Adult Center
15 East Forth Street
New Providence

Informal Meeting: 7:30—9:00 PM
4th Monday of each month
Same location

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: KA2MPG Brian Lynch
973-738-7322

—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
Contact K2UI, Jim

MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS

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WB2QOO Rick Anderson
W2PTP Paul Wolfmeyer
K2UI Jim Stekas

Climatological Data for New Providence for February 2019

The following information is provided by Rick, WB2QOO, who has been recording daily weather events at his station for the past 38 years.

TEMPERATURE -

Maximum temperature this February, 60 deg. F
(February 5)

Last February (2018) maximum was 74 deg. F.

Average Maximum temperature this February, 40.8 deg. F

Minimum temperature this February, 12 deg. F
(February 1)

Last February (2018) minimum was 12 deg. F.
Average Minimum temperature this February, 28.2 deg. F

Minimum diurnal temperature range, 4 deg. (32-28 deg.) 2/20

Maximum diurnal temperature range, 22 deg. (55-33 deg.) 2/4; (51-29) 2/8

Average temperature this February, 34.5 deg. F

Average temperature last February, 38.7 deg. F

PRECIPITATION -

Total precipitation this February - 3.6" rain/melted snow; 3.7" snow.

Total precipitation last February - 6.6" snow; 5.45" rain/melted snow

Maximum one day precip. event this February -

February 20, 2.5" snow

Measurable rain fell on 8 days this February, 17 days last February.

Measurable snow fell on 3 days this February, 2 days last February.

YTD Precipitation - 7.53"

Season to Date Snowfall - 23.3" (11/15/18-3/17/19)

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Rick Anderson
3/16/19

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New Providence, NJ
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rick243@comcast.net

President's Column March 2019

March featured a nice NPARC Makers Day exhibit/demonstration at the New Providence Library. Club member participation was good, I counted about fifteen present at some time during the afternoon. A highlight for me was Kevin N2TO's enthusiastic effective non-stop CW coaching of attendees. I also gratefully acknowledge Barry K2JV for planning and "surveillance", Rick WB2QOQ for antenna work, Brian W2EMC for steady VHF tutoring and coaching, Sam KC2OSR for card and certificate displays, Bob K2GLS for FT8 demos, and K2UI for projects and equipment that "makers" could get involved with! Thanks to all involved! I noted about 30 attendees....

Besides our scheduled meeting, plan on participating in the New Providence Memorial Day Parade. Rick WB2QOQ will be coordinating again—let him know you can participate...

And then—on to Field Day—June 22 and 23!

73 for now

Wolf

W2PTP

201-404-6914 or W2PTP@arrl.net

You Can't Go Home Again

Jim Stekas - K2UI

I spent the first ten years of my life in Flushing Queens in a neighborhood of attached homes and garden apartments. Every morning the kids in the neighborhood walked to P.S. 130 under a canopy of monstrous elm trees. Today, the houses and buildings are largely as they were 60 years ago, but the elm trees are gone and Hangul characters dominate the signage. Although I don't know where one might find a chocolate egg cream today, the old neighborhood has become a mecca for foodies looking for kimchi and bibimbap¹. I had no idea I was growing up in KTown!

The neighborhood where I spent a memorable 1969 was the 40m novice band, a narrow slice of spectrum between 7150 kHz and 7200 kHz. The band came alive around 4pm when all the novices got home from school and fired up their rigs. My call WN2IAA, the first call allocated in the block of WN2I__ that included the bulk of the the afternoon denizens of the 40m band. My log shows contacts with WN2IAJ and WA2IAC (who had already upgraded) in March. New novices flowed in steadily and in May, I worked WN2JBA, my first WN2J__ .

In the evening the WNs from zones 1,3,4,8 and 9 started rattling the phones, but so did the big bullies of the night. Foremost among them was the Soviet Union who could be counted on to knock out a 15 kHz swathe of our precious 50 kHz. The World Radio and TV Handbook contained a list of SW stations by frequency and power. The USSR was listed as operating every 5 KHz across the band with no power designation – they basically did whatever they wanted, whenever they wanted and wherever they wanted.

After upgrading to Advanced in September I moved downtown to the General portion of the CW band. The frequencies below 7100 kHz were exclusively allocated to amateur radio making it the perfect place for Radio Tirana (Albania) to set up shop with their 500 kW broadcast station. Their musical theme, a two trumpet dirge, is burned into the memory of every amateur who worked 40m CW during the cold war years.

College years brought a change in both geographic and radio neighborhoods. I traded my Eico-720 for a Hallicrafters S-85 and I migrated from the 40m CW band to the SW broadcast bands. My favorite hangout was the 49m band where many foreign stations broadcast in English to North America. My favorites included:

- the BBC, 6175 kHz, with news and features,
- Radio Netherlands, 6165 kHz, with news and SWL related news and technical info, and
- Radio Canada International (RCI), 5965 kHz carrying news and CBC programs.

RCI was my NPR before there was NPR. Every night at 6PM EST they aired “The World at 6” and “As it Happens”, two domestic CBC shows. RCI provided excellent coverage of the Iranian hostage crisis, often featuring interviews with Iranian officials. Just after some American hostages escaped with the help of Canadian passports² there was a memorable interview with Iranian Foreign Minister Ghotbzadeh who had accused Canada of "flagrantly violating international law." During the interview Ghotbzadeh remarked “So, I guess you're proud about what yourselves.” to which the

1 김치 and 비빔밥

2 The hstage escape was the subject of the movie “Argo.”

interviewer responded “Well, yes ... we are.” Mr. Ghotbzadeh was tortured into confessing treason and executed two years later.

Every night at 11pm RCI broadcast the news to “Canadians abroad”. The news was broadcast three 20min segments alternating English-French-English one night, and French-English-French the next. I listened religiously every night to practice French. The news was read by Francoise Borel, who spoke English and French with perfect fluency. I became such fan that I visited the RCI studios in Montreal and met all the folks I listened to on SW. They sent me off with autographs, schedules, buttons and bumper stickers.

The shortwave bands will never be as they were 40 years ago again. The big international SWL broadcasters like the BBC and RCI have almost completely replaced their over-the-air broadcasts with Internet streams and down-loadable podcasts. No longer do I need to tune to 6175 kHz to get the news from the BBC. I can watch BBC news broadcasts and TV shows on cable television! TV programming from Latin American, France, Germany, Japan, India and China are all available on basic cable.

We really haven't lost anything due to the decline in SW broadcasts. What used to come in on SW is now available via more accessible technologies. (All of the SWL spectrum represents only about 2% of your broadband Internet connection.) For amateurs, a side benefit of that migration is that our ham bands are far less contaminated by SW broadcasters than they used to be.

As nostalgic as I am at the idea of SWL-ing with my SX28, if it meant giving up the internet, my smartphone, and laptop it's no deal. But it would be nice to have those elms back ...

References

1. 70 Years of RCI - www.rcinet.ca/rci70-en/