

MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS

NPARC - The Radio Club for the Watchung Mountain Area



N2XJ

Club Callsign

VOLUME 42

April 2007

NO. 4

MEETING LOCATION For April 09 To Be Determined ! See information below

President's Column by James Kern, KB2FCV



Thanks to Al for 'Pinch Hitting' for me for last month's article. The decision to change daylight savings created a large amount of work for me here that kept me busy almost around the clock as we were servicing thousands of servers at work. Thankfully the workload has lightened up a little.

There is something I am glad to see on the NPARC calendar once again, the Digital Net. The Digital Net has been revived by Dave Barr K2YG and Scott Alexander AB2WF. I'm glad to see that it was decided to put the net on 10 meters. This gives the chance for any licensed ham to join in the fun on HF, not to mention the ground wave propagation should allow most of us to hear each other pretty well. This is a nice way to ease people into HF who have not yet tried it out. The first net is scheduled for April 8 at 8pm on 28.085. The nice thing I like about any digital mode is that it takes far less power to get the message through. Aside from all the help available on the internet, it's nice to know we have plenty of helpful club members who are willing to help get you on the air. I hope to see many of you there on the net.

Speaking of HF, I have finally gotten around to ordering some new QSL cards. I haven't had updated cards in quite some time. I recently went through a weekend of going through the logbooks and filling out my new QSL cards. I renewed my credits in the NJ DX bureau. Some call sending QSLs through snail mail is an outdated courtesy with E-QSL, Logbook of the World, E-mail and other methods of acknowledging a QSO around. Well, I still don't think any of those matches up to the little daily 'rush' I get from opening up the mailbox wondering if a new QSL card is coming in the mail for me. What is also nice is having the cards up on the wall around your shack. Every card is different. Some have beautiful prints of cities and landscapes, others have detailed maps, and some have friendly photographs of someone in their 'shack'. Each card tells a little bit about the person or where they are from. I hope that it's a practice that continues for years to come.

73 de James, KB2FCV

Meeting Location for April 09 up in the air

The Salt Brook School is closed for Easter so the plan was to meet in the New Providence Municipal Building. Unfortunately, new carpeting is being installed in the Municipal Building so.....

Check your NPARC e-mail reflector and/or the NPARC frequency (145.750 MHz fm) for information about where the meeting will take place. 7:30 pm is the standard start time.

Meeting Topics for April 9th and 23rd

Assuming we're not out on the street, our meeting topic for April 9th will be a presentation and demonstration of various digital modes of operation. Scott AB2WF, Dave K2YG, and James KB2FCV will set up portable stations and run QSOs between them using modes such as RTTY, PSK 31, SSTV, etc. With the resurgence of the digital net (Sundays, 8 pm), some information about the hardware and software used these days seemed to be a good idea for a meeting.

For the meeting on the 23rd, we *may* have a short explanation of a software program called DX Toolbox. It's a handy program for understanding many aspects of propagation such as MUF/LUF, greyline, sunspots, skip, etc. See the following url to get started:

<http://www.blackcatsystems.com/software/dxtoolbox.html>

In addition, the delayed demonstration of club members' Software Defined Radio kits may actually happen. Speaking of which....

The North Jersey DX Association is having a meeting on April 20th, 8 pm in Morris Township and the presentation will be on SDR.

For further information, see the NJDXA website: <http://www.njdx.org>

Ruby Felt 100th Birthday, April 09, 2007



Ruby Felt, xyl of Carl, N2XJ, has her 100th birthday on our meeting day. Several Club members attended her party on Saturday, 07 April. Among the fifty-or-so guests at her home in Chatham Borough were Al K2SKV, Bill N2DQC, Bill W2ZKE and his wife Helena, Joe K2JAO, and Andy WA2DKJ. Ruby attended our club Holiday luncheon in December where she received a beautiful bouquet of flowers. Ruby's husband, Carl, was a great asset to our club until his passing several years ago. He helped many prospective hams get their licenses as well as relate much about the early history of amateur radio: He was self-licensed while growing up in China in the 1920's when there was no such thing as the Chinese equivalent to the FCC or ARRL.

Climatological Data for New Providence for March 2007

The following information is provided by WB2QOQ, who has been recording daily weather events at his station for the past 25 years.

Maximum temp. for this March, 76 deg. F (March 14), Last March (2006) 74 deg. F.

Minimum temperature for this March, 10 deg. F (March 6,7), Last March (2006) 21 deg. F.

Average temperature this March, 40.4 deg. F, Last March, 41.5 deg. F

Total precipitation this March – .462" rain; 5.0" snow/sleet, Last March – .28" rain; 0.5" snow

Maximum daily temperature was below freezing for 2 days this March.

Greatest precipitation days this March – March 2, 2.2" rain; March 17, 3" sleet/snow.

Snow/sleet fell on 5 days this March.

=====

Rick, WB2QOQ

Extra Class Upgrade Course is Coming Soon

We're expecting the General upgrade class to finish later this month. That means that we should be starting the Extra upgrade class in early to mid May. In order to gauge the size room that we'll need, I'd like to get a list of those who plan to attend. To make my life easy, please send me a note even if you've previously told me that you would be interested.

73, Scott, AB2WF

Dayton Hamvention - 18, 19, & 20 May 2007 - "The Big One"

Same bat time and same bat channel as previous years. Despite all sorts of unfounded rumors, it's still in Hara Arena in Trotwood, Ohio. Several club members will be there. See the following Uniform Resource Locator (also known as: url, website, web address, internet address) for more information:

<http://www.hamvention.org/>

Repeater Test for Sunday Night Phone Net

On Sunday, April 8th, the participants in the regular Sunday night phone net tested the coverage and quality of the Murray Hill repeater on 147.255 MHz. Our net has been meeting on the Whippany Repeater, 147.030 MHz, for many years, but as our membership has changed, so has their locations. As a result, the Murray Hill repeater may have a more desirable coverage for our net participants.

The test went well with all of the check-ins from the Whippany repeater similarly making it over to the Murray Hill machine as well as a few additional check-ins. Although the test repeater has a sub-audible tone of 141.3 Hz required for access, no one reported difficulty or lack of tone capability. We will continue our discussion of the net repeater at the upcoming club meetings.

New Jersey Marathon Needs Communicators

On April 29th the New Jersey Marathon will be run starting at 6 AM and ending in the early afternoon.

For the first time, Amateur Radio operators have been asked to help out with logistics communications for the event.

The event will be held in Long Branch, NJ, on a 13 mile circular course. Hams are needed at each of the water stations, several fixed points at the start/finish and in two vehicles.

Breakfast and Lunch will be provided and the only things the hams will need is proper clothing, in layers, and a chair to sit on.

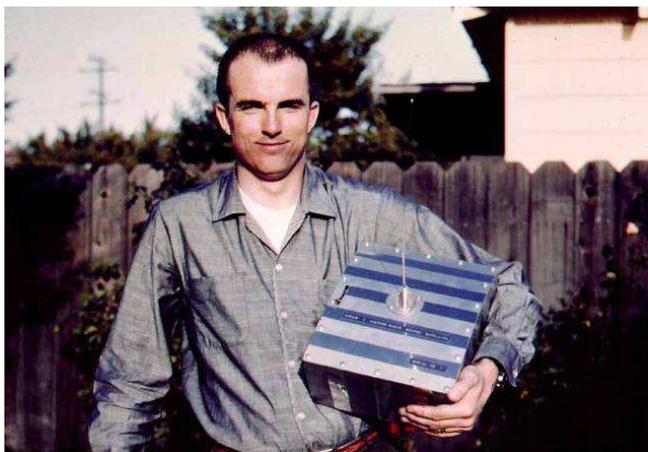
If anyone is interested, and willing to arise and get to Long Branch by 6 AM, let me know and I'll follow up.

73 es CUL de Barry K2JV

Dr. Barry G. Cohen
39 Cromwell Court
Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922
TEL: 908-464-1730
bgcohenusa@verizon.net

Principal Developer, Lance Ginner, K6GSJ, and OSCAR 1

(Text below grabbed from the web)



The first Oscar Phase I amateur satellite was launched piggyback with Discover 36. A group of enthusiasts in California formed Project OSCAR and persuaded the United States Air Force to replace ballast on the Agena upper stage with the 4.5 kg OSCAR I package. The satellite was box shaped with a single monopole antenna and battery powered. The 140 mW transmitter onboard discharged its batteries after three weeks. 570 Amateurs in 28 countries reported receiving its simple 'HI-HI' morse code signals on the VHF 2 meter band (144.983 MHz) until January 1, 1962. The speed of the HI-HI message was controlled by a temperature sensor inside the spacecraft. OSCAR I re-entered the

atmosphere January 31, 1962 after 312 revolutions.

The observations provided important information on radio propagation through the ionosphere, the spacecraft's orbit and thermal satellite design. The OSCAR I mission clearly demonstrated that amateurs are capable of (1) designing and constructing reliable spacecraft, (2) tracking satellites and (3) collecting and processing related scientific and engineering information. OSCAR I led to the creation of The Amateur Satellite Corporation (AMSAT) in 1969.