

MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS

NPARC - The Radio Club for the Watchung Mountain Area

VOLUME 41

May 2006

NO. 4



N2XJ

Club Callsign

From: The Prez



“For the ‘Long’ Haul”

The trip to Dayton, the ARISS contact with the Salt Brook Statics, the Memorial Day Parade and the Hudson Division Presidents’ Cabinet meeting. Busy times and lots to talk about.

However, a comment after the Memorial Day Parade made at the Senior Center over a few hot dogs made me think a little. Someone asked about what ham radio will be like in 20 years. Everyone had their opinions. And everyone envisioned a downsized, different hobby.

In thinking about that, my thoughts turned to how my interest in ham radio was sustained and resurrected after being dormant for 25 years.

I was licensed in 1969 as a Novice. As most of us know, at that time the main mode of communication for Novices was CW on the Novice HF sub-bands. Most of my activity was on 40 and 80 meters and getting that Worked All States Award was quite a challenge and quite a thrill. It was “DX’ing” to me. I did not own an

HT (what was that?) and I had no real use for VHF.

Today, the Technician license is the entry license and the 2 meter HT is the first radio for new hams. Now we all know the value of 2 meters and HT’s for local communications and emergency communications. But can a new ham, especially a youngster, really experience the thrill of ham radio with an HT on 2 meters? I don’t think so.

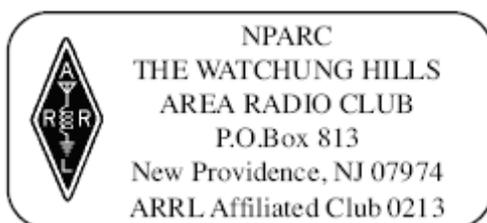
Of course we will be polite and talk to a new ham on 2 meters. And encourage them. But most likely we do not have enough in common with them to sustain a long conversation.

In my opinion, unless the thrill of making a contact is experienced with that scratchy signal on HF with a distant ham with something new and different to talk about, no seeds will be planted that can sprout later on. It was the memory of working DX late at night on 20 meters in my shack in the corner of my upstairs bedroom as a teenager that first came back to me in 1994 when I spotted that vertical antenna on K2PLL’s house and got me inspired to get back into ham radio.

So if the club decides to hold a license class or if we come across a newly licensed youngster at Field Day or at the Summer Ham Camps, let’s encourage them to find a way to get them to experience the thrill of safely talking to a stranger thousands of miles away for a minute or two with ham radio as that common thread.

It may just last a lifetime.

73 es 88 de Al, K2AL



Meeting Schedule

Regular Meeting: 7:30 - 10:00 PM
2nd Monday of each month at the
Salt Brook School Cafeteria
Springfield Ave. and Maple St.
New Providence, NJ

4th Monday each month: 7:30 - 9:00
Informal Project Meeting, at the
Salt Brook School Cafeteria
Springfield Ave. and Maple St.
New Providence, NJ

Everyone is Welcome

If a normal meeting night is a holiday
we usually meet the following night.
Call the contacts below.

Club Officers for 2006

President: Al Hanzl, K2AL
908-464-1323
Vice Pres: James Kern, KB2FCV
908-219-4016
Secretary: Ralph Milnes, KC2RLM
973-377-7061
Activities: Andy Stillinger, WA2DKJ
973-377-6992
Treasurer: Ralph Milnes, KC2RLM
973-377-7061

On the Air Activities

Club Operating Frequency

145.750 MHz FM Simplex

Sunday Night Phone Net

Whippany Repeater at 9:00 PM
Transmit on 147.63 MHz
Receive on 147.03 MHz
Net Control: KB2IKC

Club Internet Addresses

Website: <http://www.nparc.org>
<http://www.qsl.net/nparc>

Reflector: nparc@mailman.qth.net

Webmaster: Ralph, KC2RLM

MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS

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Climatological Data for the Watchung Mountain Area Provided by WB2QOQ, Month of May

The following information is provided by WB2QOQ, who has been recording daily weather events at his station for the past 24 years.

Maximum temperature for this May, 90° F (May 29)
Last May (2005) maximum was 83° F.

Minimum temperature for this May, 42° F (May 7)
Last May (2005) minimum was 37° F.

Average temperature this May, 63.1° F
Average temperature last May, 58.8° F

Total precipitation this May – 3.37" rain
Total precipitation last May – 1.31" rain

Greatest precipitation day this May – May 12 = 1.05" rain

Calendar of Coming Events for 2006

- June 17: Raritan Valley RC Hamfest, Piscataway, NJ. Piscataway High School at Hoes Lane and Behmer Road, 7 am to 2 pm \$5 admission
- June 24 & 25: ARRL Field Day, NPARC will probably be at Governor Livingston High School again this year and a Class F station at another local QTH.
- July 9: Sussex County ARC Hamfest, Sussex County Fairgrounds in Augusta, NJ. 8 am start time. \$5 admission.
- August 20: Ramapo Mountain ARC Ham and Computerfest, American Legion Hall, 65 Oak Street, Oakland, NJ, 8 am to Noon, \$4 admission.

Note: The following Pocono Hamfest has not been confirmed for 2006

- September 10: Pocono Area Hamfest and Electronics Expo, Stroudsburg Junior High School, Chipperfield Drive, Stroudsburg, PA 8 am start, \$5 admission.

Report on Hudson Division Cabinet Meeting

Every six months, there is a cabinet meeting of the Hudson Division. Twenty nine club officers and section managers attended the June 3 meeting hosted by Hudson Division Assistant Director Joyce Birmingham, KA2ANF. It was a good way to meet officers of other clubs to talk about their activities and newsletters and to discuss ways to invigorate our clubs. Several nice comments by Joyce and Bill, W2UDT, were made about our club, specifically being commended for our



efforts at Salt Brook School.

There was also discussion about BPL, the Mentoring

Program for new hams and an update on the success the "Hello Campaign" (PSA is on our website). Also discussed was the Hudson Division Awards Dinner on November 11, 2006. All division members are urged to attend. We will have details on our club website. It looks like a nice affair. Also presented with a Powerpoint presentation made by Joyce were all the services offered to clubs by the ARRL in order to improve our operations. We will post it on our website.

Al
K2AL 6/5/06

"Dayton 2006"

K2JV, KC2IZK, KC2OWG and K2AL made the trip this year to that "Ham Mecca", Dayton Hamvention. After a relatively uneventful 585 miles and 10 1/2 hours on the road, we arrived in Fairborn at 5:30 PM on Thursday.

After we had a great meal of ribs and beer at the Rib Inn we settled in for a great weekend.

The weather could not have been much better. Cool and clear conditions made for great flea market hunting on Friday and Saturday. I bought the usual: LED flashlights, antenna connectors



and various small tools at good prices. There were a lot of classic radios and amplifiers for sale this year. And I saw hams from Japan, Taiwan, Germany and Canada among the crowd.



Inside the Hara Arena were all the usual vendors. There was not anything spectacularly new being offered. Although Elecraft displayed a 1500 watt HF amplifier kit they will be offering in the fall. I think I heard that it will be selling for over \$4500! Maybe it would be a nice kit for our Project Meetings!

But anyway, it was great to walk around and talk to the vendors. I invested in a new mobile dual bander for the car and a few HT accessories.

I would say that attendance was down from previous years. Probably due to high gas prices, although gas was 2.52 per gallon there. (Needless to say, we filled the tank before we left for Jersey!).

I would guess the attendance was about 26,000. Although busy, the moderate crowd made for nice

maneuvering around the arena without getting stampeded.



As has become somewhat of a tradition, we stayed until the bitter end for the prize drawings. And I won a Kenwood TH7 dual band HT! Amazing.

After a wet and cold Sunday morning, we came out of the Arena at 2 PM to a beautiful cobalt blue sky, temp in the 60's, which made for a pleasant ride home. We stopped for dinner at Melman's (great home cooked meal for about \$7.00!) and arrived home around 1 AM Monday morning.



We all had a great trip and our reservations are in for next year. Every ham should make this trip.

Al K2AL 06/05/06

NPARC PARTICIPATES IN MEMORIAL DAY PARADE 2006

Memorial Day this year, turned out to be such a nice day, with great weather. As in numerous prior years, our club participated in parade activities, both in the parade line up, as well as providing communications assistance. This year, it was a treat to have 8 Saltbrook Elementary School students, members of the school Statics

Radio Club, join in the parade. There were a total of 13 of us in the club parade unit, which was a decent number. The students carried the club banner, while communicating with each other via 2 meter handie talkies; along the parade route. Some of them were also very occupied at tossing hard candy to young viewers along the parade route. All in all, it was a very successful club activity. Thanks to the following who participated in the parade unit: Chris Aman, Lotta Blumberg, Brian Charatan, David Coby, Michael Detlet, Alexandra Esposito, Gabriela Estupinan, Terry Skibik, Andy, WA2DKJ, Steve, K0LBY, Jim, N2TSJ, Rick, WB2QOQ, Harry, W2YEZ.

SALT BROOK STATICS HAVE SUCCESSFUL CONTACT WITH ARISS

The Salt Brook Statics had a successful contact with ARISS on 6/5/06. The students, with Nick Esposito, KC2ONP, acting as control operator, were able to talk to Jeff Williams on ARISS. Additional details were posted to the club email reflector.