

# **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)**

**January 2025**

Volume 58 No. 1

## **Regular Meetings**

**Second & Fourth Mondays  
at New Providence Municipal Center**

January 13 - Power Supplies

January 27 - TBD

## **Upcoming Events**

Digital Net Mondays at 9 PM – 28.085 MHz (+/-)  
CW Training Net, 9PM Thurs – 28.050 or 7.030 MHz

*Check announcements in the Reflector for details.*

## Meeting Schedule

**Regular Meeting:** 7:30—9:00 PM  
**2nd & 4th Monday  
of each month**  
Watch for Emails

**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

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### Club Officers for 2025

President: K2AL, Al Hanzl  
908-872-5021  
Vice President: W2EMC Brian DeLuca  
973-543-2454  
Secretary: K2AL, Al Hanzl  
908-872-5021  
Treasurer: K2YG, Dave Barr  
908-277-4283  
Activities: N2TO, Kevin Glynn  
917-885-4424

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### 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 MHz  
Will be using PSK and RTTY  
Net control KC2WUF

CW Training Net  
Thursdays 9 PM  
28.050 or 7.050 MHz  
Net control K2YG

### Club Internet Address

Website: [www.nparc.org](http://www.nparc.org)  
Webmaster KC2WUF David Bean  
Reflector: [nparc@mailman.qth.net](mailto:nparc@mailman.qth.net)  
Contact K2AL, Al

### MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS

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Editor: K2UI Jim Stekas  
Contributing Editors:  
WB2QOQ Rick Anderson

## Climatological Data for New Providence - November 2024

The following information is provided by Rick, WB2QOQ,  
who has been recording daily weather events at his station  
for the past 43 years.

### TEMPERATURE -

Maximum temp. this November, 77 F (November 6)  
Last November(2023) maximum was 64 F.  
Average Maximum temp this November, 55.7 F

Minimum temp this November, 25 F (November 30)  
Last November(2023) minimum was 22 F.  
Average Minimum temp this November, 39.2 F

Minimum diurnal temp range, 5 F (39 – 34 F)11/22  
Maximum diurnal temp range, 24 F(66 - 42 F)11/8

Average temp this November, 47.5 F  
Average temp last November, 43.0 F

### PRECIPITATION -

Total precipitation this November– 3.59” rain, trace snow  
Total precipitation last November– 3.43” rain

Maximum one day precip. event- November 21, 1.70’ rain.  
Measurable rain fell on 9 days this November  
6 days last November.

YTD Precipitation – 40.78”

=====  
Rick Anderson 12/23/2024  
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

## President's Column

The new year is upon us and that means the NPARC Annual Auction is not far behind. It is scheduled for Saturday February 22 at the Salt Brook School. Details to follow in the weeks ahead. So, mark the date. And we will need volunteers.

Our next regular meeting is on Monday January 13 at the Salt Brook School cafeteria. Roy, KD2CMS, will give a talk on "Power Supplies".

As mentioned in last month's Spark Gaps, the club purchased two new Yaesu FT710 radios. KB2FCV and I have been putting them through their paces. I have been impressed with the performance and we will bring to a club meeting to train and familiarize members on how to use them so we will be able to operate them on Field Day and other club events.

I am looking forward to a great 2025 for the Club! Some events we are thinking about in 2025 are an NPARC Winter Field Day and an NPARC special operating event like our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary operation to celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

And don't forget the NPARC Nets....Sunday Night Phone Net on the W2LI repeater at 9PM, the Digital Net on most Mondays and the CW Net on Thursdays. Check the NPARC Reflector for schedule and details. The Digital and CW nets were initially formed as training nets, so newcomers and slow speed CW ops are welcome.

Finally, wishing all NPARC members and their families a prosperous and healthy New Year! CU on the nets and at the meetings!

Al, K2AL  
President and Secretary  
**NPARC**

## Annual Luncheon

### Al Hanzl, K2AL

Thanks to the efforts of James, KB2FCV, and Dave, K2YG, our annual Holiday Luncheon at the Vintage Tavern in Gillette was a success with good times and great food. And thanks to Sam, KC2OSR, for ordering the ice cream cake from Zita's for dessert.

As is our tradition at the luncheon, our annual NPARC awards were presented in recognition of outstanding contributions to the Club throughout 2024. Congratulations to all the award winners!

The "NPARC 2024 Ham of the Year" award was presented to Sam, KC2OSR. Sam was recognized for the outstanding job as Activities Chairperson and his leading the effort to donate ham gear to a Malawi ham youth club. Sam is also a very active "DXer" and works tirelessly as a QSL card sorter for the incoming W2 QSL Bureau.



KD2ZRO, Jay, was the "NPARC 2024 Rookie of the Year". Jay is a regular check-in on the Sunday Night Net and attendee of club meetings and gave an excellent talk on using the Raspberry PI computer with ham radio applications.

The prestigious "NPARC Honorary Life Membership" was awarded to Rick, WB2QOQ. Rick has been a loyal club member since June 6, 1986, and was recognized for his steadfast contributions to the club over the years. Rick has been a club officer, a major part of our Field Day efforts, coordinator of our marches in the Memorial Day parades, our Spark Gaps weather reporter and has always been available for a member in need of assistance.





Hillary, KC2HLA, was recognized for her outstanding performance as NPARC auctioneer at our annual auctions.

The “2024 Wouff Hong Award” was given to Gene, N6JIV, for his continued support of NPARC and for his contributions to the Malawi donation efforts.



In addition to presenting award, we introduced the NPARC officers for 2025. Below are (left to right) W2EMC (Vice President), K2AL (President and Secretary), K2YG (Treasurer) and N2TO (Activities Chair).



## Popular Contests in January 2025

*Dave Barr – K2YG*

Contest Name*	Dates (EDT)	Modes	Exchange	Notes & Websites**
ARRL RTTY Roundup	Sat 1/4 1pm to Sun 1/5 7pm	RTTY (No FT)	W/VE: RST+State or Prov DX: RST + Serial	80-10 meters** QRP/LP/HP More at <a href="http://www.arrl.org">www.arrl.org</a>
Kids Day	Sat 1/4 1pm to 7pm	SSB	Name, Age and QTH plus Favorite Color.	80-2 meters** 2 mtr repeaters OK. Not a contest. No scores or logs. More at <a href="http://www.arrl.org">www.arrl.org</a>
NA QSO Party CW	Sat 1/11 1pm to 1am (Sun)	CW	Name + State or Province Non NA: Name	160-10 meters** QRP & LP Only KH6, KL7 and DC in state list. Info at: <a href="http://ncjweb.com">ncjweb.com</a>
NA QSO Party SSB	Sat 1/18 1pm to 1am (Sun)	SSB		
ARRL Jan VHF Contest	Sat 1/18 2pm to Sun 1/19 11pm	ALL	Four Character Grid Square	Bands: 50mhz & above More info at: <a href="http://www.arrl.org">www.arrl.org</a>
CQ 160 M CW Contest	Fri 1/24 5pm to Sun 1/26 5pm	CW	RST + State/Prov DX: RST-CQ zone	160 m only QRP/LP/HP Rules at: <a href="http://www.cq160.com">www.cq160.com</a>
BARTG RTTY Sprint	Sat 1/25 7am to Sun 1/26 7am	RTTY	Serial # only. (No RST)	80-10 meter** QRP/LP/HP More at: <a href="http://bartg.org.uk">bartg.org.uk</a>
Winter Field Day	Sat 1/25 2pm to Sun 1/26 2pm	ALL	Category (#TX & <u>I</u> ndoor/ <u>O</u> utdoor/ <u>H</u> ome or <u>M</u> obile) + ARRL/RAC Sec	All Bands** QRP & LP only See rules at: <a href="http://winterfieldday.org">winterfieldday.org</a>

\* State QSO Parties allow out-of-state stations to contact only in-state stations for that specific contest. In-state stations may contact all contest stations. See websites for county abbreviation lists. State qso parties begin again in February.

\*\* No WARC bands in any contest.

There are many more contests every month including weekly and monthly repeating contests with a variety of abilities required, such as slow speed cw contests. Check [www.contestcalendar.com](http://www.contestcalendar.com) or [contest specific](#) websites for more information.

## Yaesu FT-710 AESS Review

*Al Hanzl, K2AL*

The club purchased two new Yaesu FT-710 radios for Field Day and other club operating events. It came with a hand mic, power cable, and operating manual. This FT-710 AESS version came with an external SP-40 speaker. The AESS stands for “Acoustic Enhanced Speaker System” and enables balancing the audio between the top built-in speaker and the optional side speaker.



The FT-710 covers 160-6 meters transmit, and 30KHz-75MHz receive. Power output is 5-100 watts on SSB and CW. Power supply requirements are 2.2A receive, 21A @ 100 watts. (25W AM)

Some high points:

1. Two available virtual com ports, one “ENHANCED” port for *CAT/Rig Control* which allows you to control/tune the radio via your computer and one “STANDARD” port for *PTT (Push-To-Talk)* which allows you to key the radio to send CW, PSK, FT8, RTTY tones etc. Two ports makes it convenient to interface to logging and digital programs without having to add a virtual com port emulator. (I love my Icom-7300, but it has only one built in com port and I had to load a utility to add a com port). Only one USB cable between radio and computer is required.
2. Easy WSJT interface/set-up with a PRESET function that loads optimal settings for FT modes. I was operating FT8 in a matter of minutes.
3. Multi-function ANALOG style S-meter.
4. Touch screen display with real time spectrum scope so you can see and find what signals are on the band. Touch the signal on the screen and the radio will tune to that frequency.
5. SD memory card slot for saving settings. So, if an operator accidentally changes settings in the heat of Field Day, you can easily reload the saved menu settings with a push of a few buttons. The Club has purchased several SD cards.
6. Compact size, light weight.
7. Ability to connect a large external display monitor that emulates the display on the radio and the use of a mouse for point and click.
8. Built in antennas tuner but it can only handle, as most radios, a maximum 3:1 SWR. I can tune my Mosley mini beam on 10-15-20 but it could not tune my doublet on 80 or 40. So we would need an external tuner for Field Day.
9. The cooling fan is very quiet.
10. Analog style S-meter, easily switched to other functions like power, ALC and SWR.

## CONTROLS

1. The radio menu is accessed by pushing the “Function” knob and scrolling through the menus by turning the FUNC knob. Settings such as power level, screen colors and brightness, CW speed, spectrum scope settings, etc., and advanced radio settings are then accessible. Once you click on a particular function, turn the knob to change the setting within that function.



2. Other quick functions are available as push-buttons above the main tuning knob are:
  - BAND - 160 through 6 meters
  - MODE - SSB, CW, AM, FM, Data.
  - CLAR - Also known as RIT/XIT
  - NB - Adjustable narrow filter.
  - NB - Noise Blanker
  - DNR- Digital Noise Reduction

Other buttons deal with split mode settings, memory channels etc.

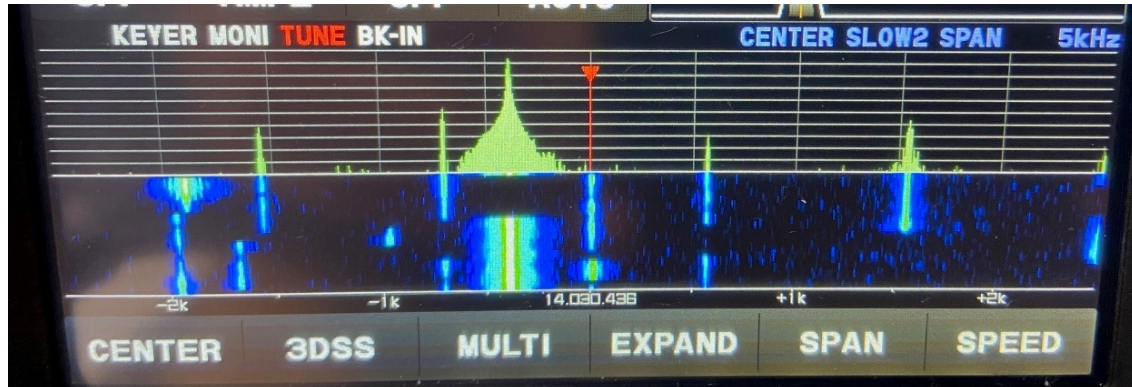


## OBSERVATIONS/PREFERENCES

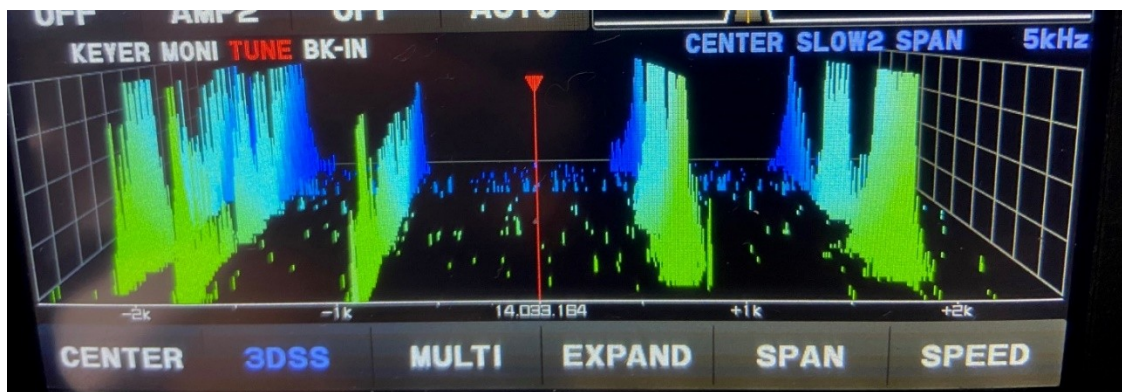
The radio is an SDR radio and has an excellent receiver rating<sup>1</sup>. I operated the radio in several CW and Phone contests, and I have had fun using it. I have gotten familiar with some of the basic operations but still learning advanced settings such as optimal audio and CW settings. Some YouTube videos have been helpful. I was able to configure and integrate N3FJP, N1MM, FLDGI and WSJT to function with the FT-710. I had an issue with the sound of the RTTY tones on the radio but apparently it was a bug with the firmware and when I loaded the latest firmware update, it fixed the problem.

1 - See [www.sherweng.com/table.html](http://www.sherweng.com/table.html)

The FT-710 has a nice Spectrum Scope with enough adjustable settings to satisfy any operator. I prefer the “2D” Spectrum Scope mode with a SCAN set to “5k” and Speed set to “SLOW2” on CW and set to 20k or 50khz bandwidth for phone. The figure below shows the real time Spectrum Scope with my preferred settings. The signal peaks are CW signals, where the height correspond to signal strength.



The Spectrum Scope also has a “3D” display mode (see below). Instead of a waterfall showing signal strength versus time, the 3D display presents the signal strength evolution in perspective.



I found the 3D view of the Spectrum Scope a bit too busy for my taste.

In conclusion, I have been more of an Icom and Kenwood guy in the past, but the FT-710 performs very well and is fun to operate. Once we have some training sessions, it will serve us well at Field Day and other operating events. We purchased two Nifty Mini-Manuals as an operating guide.

K2AL  
12-28-24