



75+
SPARC
Years



GAP



**St. Petersburg Amateur Radio Club
P.O. Box 2217 St. Petersburg, Fl. 333731
July — September 2012**



A FEW WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Just like everyone else I eagerly await the fall season in Florida. There is much to look forward to. Cooler weather, end of hurricane season, the start of the radio contesting calendar and the elections, national and local. At SPARC we are about to elect the leadership to lead us through the coming year. If you have thoughts about the future of the club what could be better than running for a position. Now is the time to standup and be counted.

When I was hospitalized back in March of this year I realized that continuing as your President was not in my future. I let the members of the board know that they should start looking for new leadership when elections came time. The nominating committee has been hard at work to come up with a full slate and that will be presented at the October meeting.

Many things have come and gone in the two short years that I have served as your President. We have seen the first SPARCFest in November and it was well received. The attendance at our monthly meetings has averaged 44 for the year and part of that is due to the excellent programs presented by Vice-President Tom Schaefer, NY4I. Field Day was revised so we now operate from a central location and erect antennas on Friday. Only the weather kept us from operating the full 24 hours. Veronika Trewin, KC4YAW, has done an outstanding job of publishing the SPARC GAP newsletter. Her Field Day DVD is always a highlight and well received. Dee Turner, N4GD, our ARRL West Central Florida Section Manager, finds time from his busy schedule to keep our web site up to date. Johnnie Popwell, W4TSP, has done an excellent job as Net Manager. Our nightly nets always go on and his record keeping is top notch. Johnnie also does our membership and Field Day books.

The thing I am most proud of is the growth of our club station W4GAC. We now have two full stations setup and running for special events and contests. Under the leadership of trustee Dave Trewin, KR4U, and station engineer John Toth, KI4UIP, and the SPARC antenna crew, many improvements have been made and brought on line. Many newcomers have come forward to participate in contests and make W4GAC one of the best in the State. The Florida Contest Group (FCG) has honored us by presenting the Top Florida Club plaque to W4GAC 5 times.

I would like to thank all the committee chairmen that serve the club. Without your efforts none of this would be possible. Finally, I had the good fortune to have an outstanding Executive and regular board to guide me when decisions had to be made. It has been my honor to serve as your President. Looking forward to helping out as needed in future years.

73 Ron Hall, Sr KP2N



A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY AT W4GAC By Ron Hall, Sr KP2N

SPARC and W4GAC have been honored to be given a complete Heathkit SB-104 HF transceiver and accessories. This gift was made possible through the generosity of long time SPARC member Bruce "Blackie" Blackburn, W4TA. What makes this transceiver special is it once belonged to King Hussein of Jordan. The king's ham call of JY1 is displayed on the front panel when the transceiver is powered up.

Blackie worked for the US Government and was stationed in Jordan, along with his family, and was a good friend of the King. Through his efforts he got the King into ham radio, which was a big plus for the hobby. The call JY1 was recognized world wide and the King was very good at handing out contacts.

The SB-104 was introduced by Heathkit in 1974. It was their first HF all solid-state 100 watt transceiver. It features a Beckman digital display readout and works on both SSB and CW. Included with the transceiver is the matching SB-604 speaker, HP-1144 DC power supply and SB-640 external VFO. To make the package complete Pete Secrist, WB2SUN, has donated a Heathkit HD-1410 keyer and paddle. SPARC thanks you Pete for the gift.

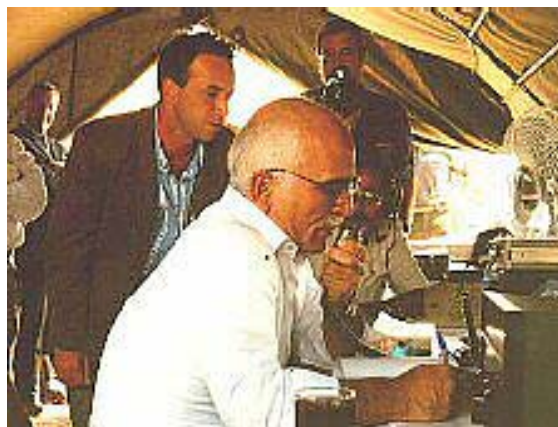
Blackie assembled the kits but let the King do some of the soldering. The King became very good at operating and could handle a "pileup" like a pro. Some of us at SPARC can proudly display their JY1 QSL card. If you were real lucky you also have a card from JY9BB, Blackie's call in Jordan.

The SB-104 is in good condition. Now in the process of changing all the 35 plus years old electrolytic capacitors and checking the alignment. You are welcome to listen to the transceiver. While "spinning the knobs" just remember that King Hussein was also sitting at the same rig talking to the world.

The SB-104 was designed by Chief Engineer Mike Elliott, K8KRR. Mike came to Heath from Collins radio. He later left Heath and joined R.L. Drake as their Chief Engineer. He was the engineer on the TR-7 and other ham products. I knew Mike from his days at Heath and the open houses the area hams attended at the Heath factory. Mike suffered a stroke and passed away at the early age of 66. His design of the broad-band RF power amplifier set the standard for all the other transceivers that followed.



His majesty working a pileup.



King Hussein of Jordan, JY1



W4GAC Club Station Report by David KR4U Station Trustee

The winter contest season is coming up fast and I hope many of our members will take part and put our station to good use. All of our equipment is working very well and we are ready to put W4GAC in many logs worldwide. Our latest improvement is the installation of our 40 meter quarter wave vertical. Ron, KP2N and I built this antenna and it was originally installed over our meeting room at the Red Cross and worked out very well. With the excellent efforts of our Station Engineer, John KI4UIP, a new mounting base was fabricated out of angle aluminum stock similar to the base used for our beam antenna mounting. In addition we added a second vertical element which is parallel to the main 40 meter element for operation on 30 meters. The antenna is fed with a single coaxial feed line as the two elements are connected in parallel. I would like to THANK the installation crew consisting of John KI4UIP, Bob N2ESP, Donn N4KII and Ron KP2N, great job guys. We made some recent on the air tests and it works very well. With the combination of our beam, vertical and multiband dipole we have the HF bands covered very well. The new bandpass filters have been fitted to our tri-plexer and the "borrowed" filters returned to Roger, K4SHI, thanks from all of us.

The radio room is a bit cramped right now due to the influx of equipment for sale and work being done on some repeater equipment but we have two hamfests coming up and hope to make a few dollars for the club at those events. We should be somewhat cleared out after the hamfests. Checkout the upcoming events and let us know if you would like to take part, we sure hope so.

73 de David KR4U



WHERE WERE YOU ? SEPT. 11, 2001

It was time to do my Tuesday night Net and the date was September 11, 2012. The 11th Anniversary of that terrible day in 2001. I started the Net and asked for a few moments of silence to honor those who lost their lives that day. Those trapped in the Twin Towers and those trying to save them and the crew and passengers of the aircraft, and those in the Pentagon.

Ron (KP2N) was the first to check in with a reminder about the Board meeting that evening and he said to me that it might be interesting to see where each check-in was that fateful day. That sounded like a great idea to me so we proceeded with the Net. Ron was in St. Thomas at that time working for a TV Station as Engineer on the Island keeping the stations coming in to St. Thomas, so he was right there when the news broke. The next check-in was Pete (KB9LXM) and he was job hunting and in a restaurant where the news broke over a TV. Dee (N4GD) was listening to the radio when the news broke and I guess the airwaves were alive now. Ed (N4NHO) said a neighbor came to him with the news then they went to the TV. Pete was next (WB2SUN) He was returning from vacation and heard it on the radio. The media was all on top of this and the technology of TV and Radio was amazing. He just couldn't believe what he was hearing. Donn was next (N4KII) and he was doing some work in Gulfport and heard it on the radio. Next was Bernie (KB3SMQ) Now Bernie was in Washington DC., in traffic going to New York and this was a nightmare with the news on radio and traffic snarled up wondering what was happening. N4OJ Terry the next to check in was at work and was in shock at what was coming across the radio at the work place. Next check-in was Bob (KC4SXO) and he was also at work in Tampa, the other side of the Gandy bridge and they had it on TV there. On a better note, he said 11 years earlier on Nov. 11th 1990 he got his Novice license. Our next check-in Joe (AK4OO) was visiting in Chicago and saw it on TV. Next was Ron (KK4KRC) who was at work and heard it on the radio and then saw it on TV. C. Michael was next (KG4PMC) and could not recall just where he was but thought what a terrible wake up call this was for the security of America. Things would definitely change from this day forward. The next check-in was Bernie (WB9BZL) He was bridge tending as usual and saw the breaking news on a small TV at his station, he also had a friend (Bill Ruth) who lost their life in the Pentagon. Johnnie (W4TSP) was checking in last and was working down at the TV station so you know it was going crazy down there. Those were some interesting check-ins and as for myself, King Arthur and I were at a friends house having coffee and donuts and the news was coming over his TV.

I guess no matter where you were it was a shocking thing to see and the New Yorkers thought War had broken out in their city. They were in disbelief to what was happening. May we never have to go through this again and always remember the lives lost on that day..September 11, 2001.

Tom / AI4QP



FIRST TWO LICENSED HAM OPERATORS in the REPUBLIC of SOUTH SUDAN by Tom AI4QP

It's official all, the first two amateur radio operators in The Republic of South Sudan are James Pratt (K7QI) and now (Z81A) and Diya Al Sadi (YI1DZ) and now (Z81D). A good friend of mine Frank Remington out in Lake Stevens Washington has a neighbor that has gone to Southern Sudan to start a Security business. Jim is a ham operator and had a tough time getting a license over there because they did not know much about amateur radio. He actually had to work with them from the ground up. (long story--ask me sometime)

These are permanent call signs given by the Ministry of Telecommunications and Postal Services. At present time, Diya is already set up and ready to go on the air, and thanks to Diya's kindness, Jim and Diya will both be using his station, so stand by for Z81A and Z81D. I have attached some pictures including the signing with the Director General of Telecommunications. (Eng. Meshack Madol Yol) Get ready for the pile ups !



BPSK31 an easy newer mode by Ed N4NHO

In the last few months, since about late May of this year, I have learned a new HF mode and activity. It is very easy to do once you have the rig, computer and digital interface all set up. Since June the 1st, I have approximately 40 Countries and over 500 QSO's logged and documented between my station and others. Most of them have been confirmed via www.eQSL.cc website.

If you can two finger type, the level of skill to this fun Ham mode is no more difficult than internet relay chat or AOL messenger, and the likes, except it is the HF bands and not the world wide web.

Dave Trewin, KR4U is listed as the Elmer for this mode on the www.sparc-club.org , Elmer list. Dave helped me setup the rig, software and the digital interface.. He also had the special equipment needed to properly maximize the output signal without over driving and causing splatter.

20 Meters is the most active of the frequencies on the entire HF band. The reference frequency starts at 14.070 MHz through 14075 MHz. The rig is set to 14.069.50 MHz and all the signals on the 20 meter band are displayed on your computer screen's "Waterfall".

I don't know every detail of the technical end of it, but would suggest the article on Wikipedia describing the mode. This web page is <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PSK31> . It is a good all around description of this Ham mode.

As for my antenna set up, I have reached 40 entities and over 500 QSO's on a simple dipole . If you have a gain antenna perhaps you would do much better for yourself over the same time as I did. My DX entities have really been straight, "Luck of the Draw" as to wherever the bands are open to, at any given time. Keeping in mind that the width of the signal is only 31 Hz. which is very narrow and you are feeding about 50 to 60 watts continuous as a side band signal (USB on all frequencies). YOU ARE GETTING A LOT OF MILEAGE FOR THE WATT ON THIS MODE. No amplifier needed.

Yes, it is very simple to use and no, I didn't set up the rig and the equipment all by myself. However, there are other Hams in SPARC who could also Elmer you on getting on board with this mode. You may well need some help with setting up the rig and equipment, as well as the software and digital interface from computer to transceiver.

One of the keys to success is properly setting up what are called Macros. Macros make up about 80% of the content of your transmissions. Therefore, your QSO's are somewhat automatic. You can use the Macros to establish the contact and pass the basics such as call sign, QTH..., then go into direct key entry for rag chewing, if you like.

Software: God knows I am no Computer genius (did I spell Genius correctly?), however, the software for BPSK31 is Free Ware. I am using the earlier simpler software known as Digipan 2.0. I was told that Ham Radio Deluxe is a bit more sophisticated. I downloaded Ham Radio Deluxe, installed it, but never learned how to set it up for BPSK31.

Digipan 2.0 was installed. The only trick was setting up the Macros. Dave, KR4U made up a set of Macros. That Macro file was uploaded. I could set up Macros personalized for anyone (with their call sign, etc.), then e-mail the Macro file attachment. That attachment could be downloaded and imported into the Digipan setup on someone else's computer within less than 5 minutes.

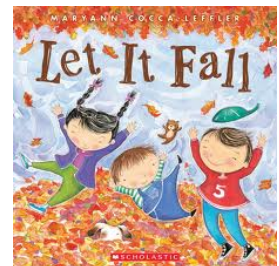
So you could be up and running with Digipan in a short time after receiving the Macros as an e-mail attachment.

There are BPSK31 contests however I have not yet participated in one. For contesting you make up a special Macro set for the contest with the exchange information. There are many awards available through the Pennsylvania Ohio "070" Club. I have applied for membership but not received my membership certificate yet. It appears I have earned the "Aloha" award. I worked a Station in Hawaii that will qualify me for an Aloha Sticker. There are many other awards available as a member of the club.

So finally with BPSK31 there is something for any Ham who works this mode.

RARA Field Day

73 de Ed N4NHO,



Some light, non-technical radio reading...by Bob N2ESP

For those who remember the Tom Swift series of books or the adventures of Carl & Jerry from Popular Electronics magazine, Bert Wilson, *Wireless Operator* will bring you back to the days when radio glowed in the dark. Written in 1924 by J.W. Duffield, follow the exploits of Bert as the wireless operator on the good ship Fearless.

<http://archive.org/stream/bertwilsonwirele00duff#page/2/mode/2up>

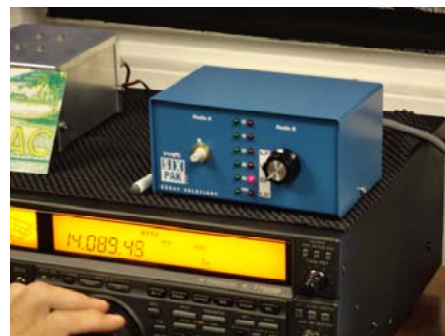


A more modern read is the account by 3rd Class Radioman, Petty Officer Jeffrey Herman of his stint at the U.S. Coast Guard, US Coast Guard Radio Station Honolulu, callsign: NMO.

http://www.radiomarine.org/gallery/show?keyword=pt1&panel=pab1_8#pab1_8



Pictures during NAQP RTTY Contest taken by Tom AI4QP



Upcoming Contests

TARA PSK RUMBLE CONTEST 10/6

MAKROTHEN RTTY CONTEST 10/13-14

ARRL SWEEPSTAKES CONTEST CW..... 11/3-5

ARRL SWEEPSTAKES CONTEST SSB.....11/17-19

CQ WW DX CONTEST CW..... 11/24-25

Also see <http://www.eham.net/> then go to Operating on left side ...choose Contesting.
The calendar is at the bottom.

Upcoming Events

SPARC FEST11/10 AT FREEDOM LAKE PARK

TAMPA BAY HAMFEST....12/1-2 MANATEE CIVIC CENTER

Welcome Recent New Members

KK4KRC....RONALD GRAHAM, JR
KK4KQZ....JOHN J CERNY, JR



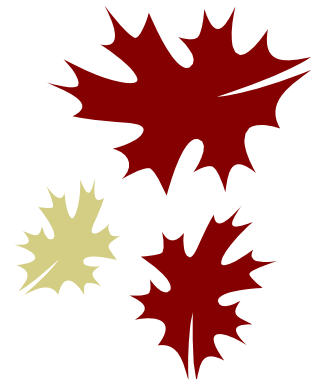
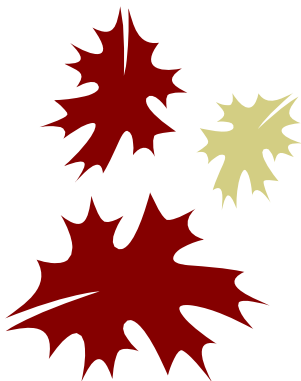
Ralph's Hobbies and Amateur Radio Supply

Invites you to come to the areas only
Amateur Radio Equipment Retail Store
at

5208 66th Street N.,#D
St Petersburg Fl 33709

Monday- Saturday 10 AM to 6 PM
727-547-8607

Thanks 73 Ralph KI4SMI



SPARC Meetings

First Friday every month, 7:30 pm

**Testing: Third Wednesday every month 6:30 pm*

at the Salvation Army

3800 Ninth Avenue North St. Petersburg

**contact Mike Scott K4ZPE at 727-492-6454*

Some Members meet for Breakfast

Every Saturday, 7:00 am at the

Biff Burger 49th St. & 38th Ave. N. St. Pete



SPARC Purpose:

1. To further and promote the social benefits and technical advancement of the radio arts.
2. To acquire, organize, establish and maintain facilities for social and emergency communication, both mobile and stationary.
3. To assist and cooperate with authorized agencies in any emergency of local, state or national scope.
4. To further fellowship among radio amateurs, potential radio amateurs and other parties interested in amateur radio.

ELMERS

<u>Specialty</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Contact Information</u>
Digital, CW, and Antennas	Dave Trewin	KR4U	trewins@aol.com
PSK	Dave Trewin	KR4U	trewins@aol.com
RTTY, Repeaters	Ron Hall	KP2N	kp2n@arrl.net
HF, 10-10	Leslie Johnson	WA4EEZ	wa4eez@verizon.net
Classic Radio Operation	Dick Keller	KF4NS	kf4nsradio@verizon.net
New Ham Elmer	Kyle Jeske	N4NSS	n4nss@arrl.net



Happy Fall You ALL!!



Club Officers for 2012

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David Trewin KR4U

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Mike Scott K4ZPE boardmember2@sparc-club.org

Steve Hampshire KK4CUM boardmember3@sparc-club.org