

MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS



NPARC - The Radio Club for the Watchung Mountain Area

VOLUME 38

October 2003

NO. 9

N2XJ
Club Callsign

This Month - Two Important Meetings **Monday Oct. 13 - Steve Mendelsohn & Bill Hudzik** **Monday Oct. 27 - Frank Fallon, Hudson Div. Director**

From: The Prez

Keep Watching the Skies!



I am a big fan of science fiction flicks, especially from the 1950's. And in them it seems that there was always someone watching the skies for "flying saucers." Well, I keep looking up and although I haven't seen any flying saucers, I keep seeing a few interesting things.

For one, I keep eyeing my end-fed longwire antenna, trying to figure out how to make it more effective. Although I have made a few good QSO's, the SWR was high. After borrowing an antenna book from AB2CM and listening to advice from WA2DKJ, I added some counterpoise wires and better grounding. And although I am not quite there yet, it has made quite a difference. Antennas...always a challenge, always interesting and always good fodder for a club meeting talk! Any volunteers?

And if you look up at the right time you can see the Space Station orbiting overhead. The club had a great meeting in September with a bunch of very enthusiastic young students from Salt Brook School getting them ready for an ARISS contact with the Space Station. If you are not getting involved in this club project, you are really missing an opportunity to be a part of an exciting and satisfying undertaking.

Club Meeting on Oct. 13

At this meeting we will host Steve Mendelsohn W2ML and Bill Hudzik W2UDT who will tell us about the latest happenings at ARRL and in the Hudson Division.

This will be your "big chance" to cross examine Steve about his plans and platform as he runs for the office of Hudson Division Director.

Club Meeting on Oct. 27

The Club will host Frank Fallon N2FF who is our current Director for the Hudson Division of ARRL. Frank is coming to tell us about his activities as Director for the past 3 years, and about his platform and plans for the future.

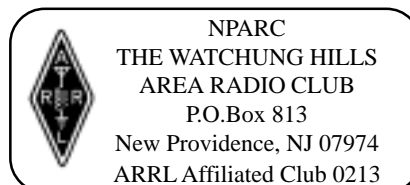
We have also invited Joyce Birmingham KA2ANF, our new Hudson Division Vice Director to be present.

And if you look even farther "up", some club members came over to look at Mars with my 5" refractor telescope during its very close encounter last month. The polar ice cap and dark plains were very evident.

Well, looking straight ahead, we have three great meetings in a row coming up. A little bit of everything for everyone. See you there.

73,
Al
K2AL

Continued in Next Column



Meeting Schedule

2nd and 4th Monday of each month
7:30 - 10:00 PM at the Salt Brook School Cafeteria Springfield Ave. and Maple St. New Providence.

2nd Monday meeting will generally be a program or Guest Speaker on a Ham Radio subject.

4th Monday meeting will be an Informal Project Meeting, and for ARISS Planning and Preparation.

Everyone is Welcome

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

Club Officers for 2003

President: K2AL Al Hanzl
908-464-1323

Vice Pres: KC2EAI Ryan Kelly
908-273-4143

Secretary: K2GLS Bob Willis
973-543-2454

Activities Mgr: KB2IRS Cameron Hall
908-756-3712

Past President: AB2CM Harry Schwill
908-322-8867

Treasurer: K2JV Barry Cohen
908-464-1730

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

RTTY Net

Sunday evenings 8:00 to 9:00 PM
60 WPM Baudot 145.75 MHz
Net Control: K2AGI

Club Internet Addresses

Website: <http://www.qls.net/nparc>
Reflector: nparc@mailman.qth.net
Webmaster: KC2RLM, Ralph

MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS

Published Monthly by NPARC, Inc.
The Watchung Mountain Area Radio Club
P.O. Box 813
New Providence, NJ 07974
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Climatological Data for the Watchung Mountain Area Provided by WB2QOQ, Month of September



	2003	2002
Maximum Temp.. °F:	79	86
Minimum Temp.. °F:	45	49
Average Temp.. °F:	65.0	66.2
Total Precip . Rain (in.):	6.57	5.76

The above information was provided by WB2QOQ, who has been recording daily weather events at his station for the past 22 years.

Calendar of Coming Events

Oct 13th : **REGULAR MEETING** at the Salt Brook School
Guest Speakers Steve Mendelsohn W2ML and Bill Hudzik W2UDT

Oct 27th : **SPECIAL MEETING** at the Salt Brook School
Guest speaker Frank Fallon N2FF Hudson Division Director

ARISS Project Kicks Off at Salt Brook

On Monday evening, 22 September we had our first ARISS meeting at the Salt Brook School. Many Club members, PTA parents and even the school Principal Ms. Meier was present. Unfortunately it was cloudy and the pass was not observable. But we all looked for it anyway. "Which way is it?"



Our three Control Ops (Emily KC2KMK, Lauryn WW2OLF and Halley KC2LYJ) worked with the many kids who were present. We are very lucky to have these three High School girls, all with Ham Tickets, interested in working with the kids to make for a successful QSO with the ISS at some time in the future.



And the Kids??? All the "Junior Astronauts" had a ball, reading the prewritten scripts and questioning our very own Astronaut Simulator in the form of Bob Barns (no photo, he was too far away) who deftly answered all questions.

And which question did I like best? Clearly the one from one of the kids who said to me "Are you an astronaut?"

Great! 73 de Barry K2JV

Eyeball Observation of the International Space Station

I'm trying to get this issue of Spark Gaps out to everyone before the first meeting of the month comes around. But about a half hour ago I broke away from this job and Norma and I went outside to look for the visible pass of the ISS as it "flew" overhead.

Tonight, Wednesday October 8th, was a beautiful clear evening, not very cold and very little wind. Standing on our front lawn and looking North at some gaps in the trees which surround our house, a few stars and the usual complement of aircraft were visible. The ISS was expected to be at an azimuth of 325 degrees, which is 35 degrees west of North and at an elevation of about 23 degrees above the horizon at 7:36PM.

I'm looking all around, not sure where or exactly when it might appear when Norma calls "There it is!" and sure enough, in the direction she was pointing and emerging from behind the tree branches was this bright white light moving up and in a northerly direction at a speed equivalent to a low flying aircraft. When you see it, there is no doubt what it is. The path is steady and uniform, the light is steady, and of course the location is just as predicted on the NASA website.

For those readers who are impressed with things like this, and considering the fact that a couple of guys are up there on the Station right now, this is really an exceptional event. For those who want to look for it, don't bother with binoculars or telescopes, you really can't see anything with binos, and it moves awfully fast for a high power telescope to track it.

Our "Chief of Astrophysics" at NPARC Bob Willis K2GLS, regularly calculates and tabulates the ISS Passes, and all visible passes for the month are given to the Salt Brook School for posting on the ARISS bulletin board. A few hours before a pass, it's worth accessing the NASA Human Spaceflight webpage and using their webbased program to calculate the exact parameters of the pass. If NASA says it will appear at a certain time and place, you can depend on them!!

For those who are interested I am going to start a special ARISS Mailing list. We'll periodically send out via e-mail all the ARISS pass and other information we have. We'll also give you the URL for the NASA program so you don't have to surf their huge website.

BUT unless you tell me that you want to be on this list, I won't bother you with this information.

73 es CUL de Barry K2JV

November is Election Month

Don't forget the first meeting of November which is scheduled on Monday, November 10th. At that meeting we will hold elections for Club officers.

You'll soon be hearing from the Nominating Committee about a slate of officers to lead the Club in 2004. If you are NOT interested in what activities the Club pursues, then you don't have to do anything. If you DO want a say in what goes on in 2004, then you've got to step up and be heard!!

Luncheon on December 13

We have arranged for our annual holiday luncheon to be held on Saturday December 13th at O'Connors Beef n' Ale House in Watchung. Except for the location, it will be like last year, starting at 11:30AM and the price will probably be \$21 per head for full members. Student members will be less. Watch for a flyer soon, which will include driving instructions.

Membership and Renewals

It's almost 2004, and time to renew membership in NPARC. The 2004 Membership Form is attached to this issue of Spark Gaps. Please fill it out and mail it to your Treasurer (address on form) with your check for \$20 per full member and \$10 for each Student member.

Please note the New Question asking for your birth date. The year is NOT REQUIRED, but we'd like a list of birthdays so we can celebrate with you in Spark Gaps and at meetings.

Articles, Articles Articles!!!

How about it guys. Do you read this far into Spark Gaps?? Surely -- somebody is doing something associated with Club Activities or Ham Radio in general. I'm absolutely prepared to put any articles submitted by members into this Newsletter with your byline, and even a photograph. I can't believe that the only persons in the Club with anything to say are K2AL and WB2QOQ. BUT a great "thank you" goes to them, de K2JV

Membership Registration
NPARC - The Watchung Area Amateur Radio Club
P.O. Box 813, New Providence, NJ 07974-0813

For the Calendar Year 2004

Full Name _____ Spouse Name _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

e-Mail Address _____

Home Telephone (_____) _____

Office Telephone (_____) _____

Call _____ Class _____ Expiration Date _____

Birthday (Month and Day are sufficient) _____

ARRL Member? _____ Life Member? _____

Can you operate 145.75 MHz FM? _____ Mobile? _____ HT? _____

Can you give a technical presentation at a Club Meeting?

Subject?? _____

Please return this entire form.

Dues are \$20.00 per year for Members, \$10.00 per year for Students.
Dues may be paid by cash or personal check made to NPARC and sent to:

Barry G. Cohen, Treasurer
39 Cromwell Court
Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922

Dues for 2004 are payable before the first meeting in January 2004.