

QRZ NEWS

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF
SOUTHERN PENNSYLVANIA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC
PO BOX 1033 - LANCASTER, PA 17608-1033

(Founded June 1960)

AN AFFILIATED SPECIAL SERVICE CLUB OF THE ARRL, INC.

"Public Service through Communication"

Website: www.K3IR.org

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Repeaters: 145.230 - 146.715 - 449.975 - Packet 145.030 - ATV 902.145

January 2007

Membership Meetings

Minutes of the December 2006 Meeting of the Southern Pennsylvania Amateur Radio Club (SPARC)

Held Wednesday, December 20, 2006 at 7 PM at the Rapho Township Municipal Building

Present:

Dave Payne N3LOM

Paul Herr KD8WY

Rick Watson N3SWJ

Jim Silvius KE4SUR

Ted Freedman K3KSA

Mike Warner N3XPD

Roger Colvin W3PWH

George Gadbois W3FEY

Harry Bauder WA3FFK

Gerald Wilson KB3GNB

Max Peters KI6NJ

The meeting was called to order by President Dave Payne at 19:00.

Dave asked Rick Watson to serve as secretary for the meeting since Dave Sarraf was unable to attend.

We did a round robin of introductions.

Minutes of the December Board of Directors meeting were read.

The November club meeting minutes were unavailable.

Ted Freedman moved to approve the minutes with corrections.

George Gadbois seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

There was no official treasurer's report. Dave reiterated the treasury information contained in the December BoD minutes. A \$5,000 check to reimburse the club for the costs associated with the fence was received and deposited.

\$5,000 from the checking account was applied to the principal of the mortgage, which brought the outstanding balance down to about \$40,000.

We received around \$2900 from the Armstrong bankruptcy settlement. This money was paid to the person who sold the gray truck to the club.

The truck is now fully paid. Ted Freedman moved to approve the treasurer's report pending the annual audit. Harry Bauder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

We did not receive any new requests for membership since the last meeting.

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Old Business

Rick Watson and Harry Bauder will do highway clean up on Brenaman Road on Saturday, 12/20/06, starting at 8 AM. Other club members were invited to participate.

Dave Payne reported that recycling at Rapho Township has been very successful.

Harry Bauder reported that Randy Gockley approved the use the communications van for Field Day 2007. Randy is checking with the County's insurance carrier to see if we can pull the van with the club's truck since the engine in the County's truck died.

Tomorrow evening is VE testing at the Lancaster County Emergency Training Center.

New Business:

Election of club officers was held. After much discussion (and some arm twisting!) the following slate was adopted:

President – Mike Warner

Vice President – Rick Watson

Secretary – Dave Sarraf

Treasurer – Ted Freedman

On motion by George Gadbois with second by Max Peters, the members present voted unanimously to direct the Secretary to cast a unanimous vote for these persons.

Mike Warner suggested, and the members present agreed, to have the club purchase a current copy of the Quicken financial program for use by the club treasurer.

Rick Watson asked the members present if they would like to have a chicken BBQ fund raiser at Stauffers of Kissel Hill next summer. The members agreed. Rick will make the arrangements.

Upcoming Events:

There will be a RACES meeting in March in preparation for the TMI drill which will be held April 17 and 18. More information will follow.

Rick Watson moved to adjourn the meeting at 20:35. Ted Freedman seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Following the official meeting, Max Peters presented ideas for programs for the coming year. These included use of the video projector and development of Powerpoint presentations, message handling, and digital communications.

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ARES/RACES

RACES Nets



Lancaster County Net is held on the first Tuesday of the month at 2030 hours local time. Presently being held on the 147.015 MHz repeater with minus offset and 118.8 PL.

Pennsylvania RACES HF Nets are held at 3993.5 kHz LSB on all Sundays except holidays. The statewide net is on the first Sunday of the month at 0800 hours local time. The Central Area (including Lancaster County) net is at 08:30 local time.

- There will be a RACES meeting in March in preparation for the TMI drill which will be held April 17 and 18. More information will follow.
- The following news from the ARRL could probably apply to both this part of the newsletter or in the digital section.
Anyway this below was clipped from an ARRL-EPA emailing.

To All,

Thanks to the outstanding efforts of Lor Kutchins, W3QA and Bob Wiseman, WB3W the EPA Section now has ARES Digital Communications Guidelines. The Guidelines are available for download in PDF format at: <http://www.epa-arrl.org>. (about 95kb in size) The Guidelines and other topics are also available for view at; <http://epaaresdigital.pbwiki.com/Guidelines>.

Many Thanks to Lor and Bob for this outstanding effort.

73,

Eric, WB3FPL

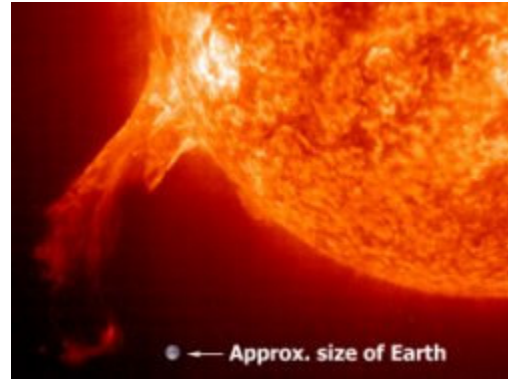
ARRL Eastern Pennsylvania Section
Section Manager: Eric D. Olena, WB3FPL
wb3fpl@arrl.org

Tech Section:

The info below is from NASA's science WebPages.

Dec. 21, 2006: Evidence is mounting: the next solar cycle is going to be a big one.

Solar cycle 24, due to peak in 2010 or 2011 "looks like its going to be one of the most intense cycles since record-keeping began almost 400 years ago," says solar physicist David Hathaway of the Marshall Space Flight Center. He and colleague Robert Wilson presented this conclusion last week at the American Geophysical Union meeting in San Francisco.



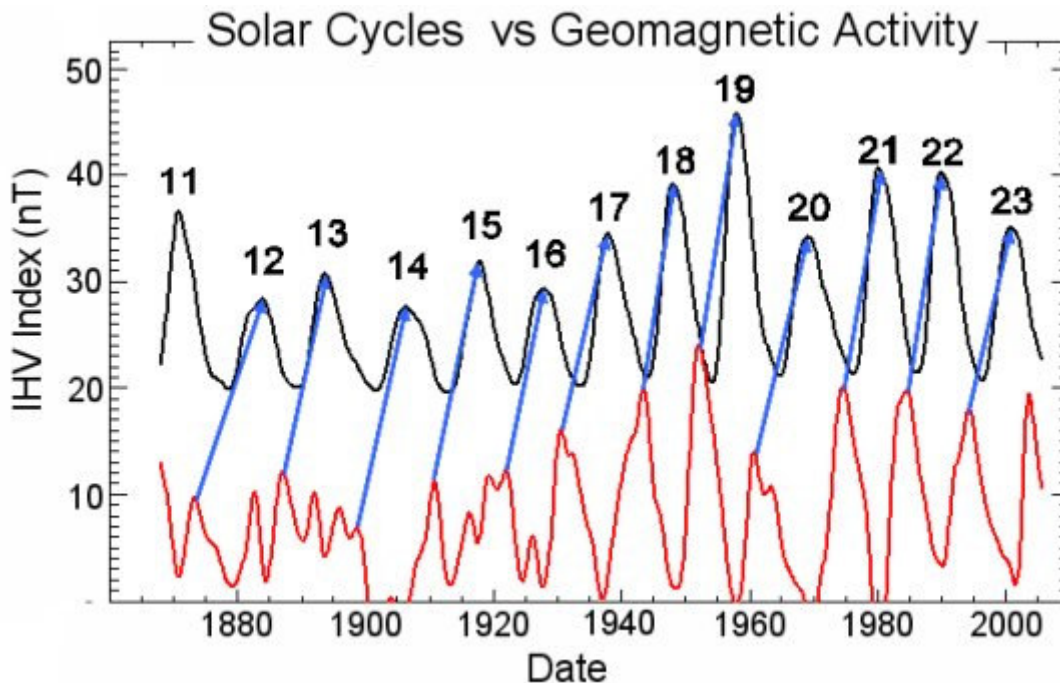
Right: An erupting solar prominence photographed by the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO).

[\[More\]](#)

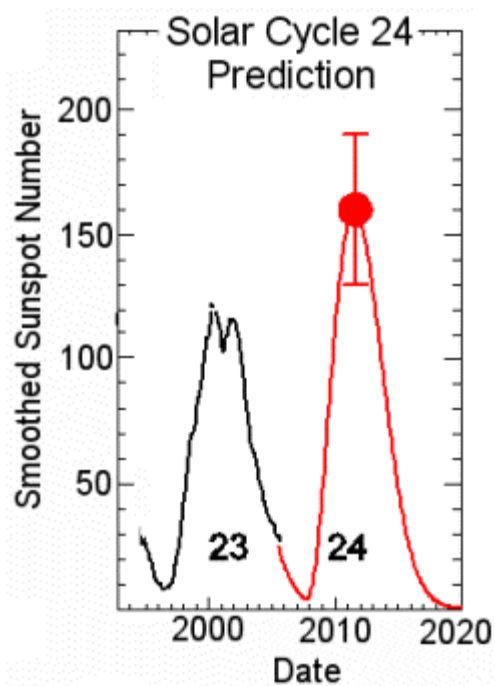
Their forecast is based on historical records of geomagnetic storms.

Hathaway explains: "When a gust of solar wind hits Earth's magnetic field, the impact causes the magnetic field to shake. If it shakes hard enough, we call it a geomagnetic storm." In the extreme, these storms cause power outages and make compass needles swing in the wrong direction. Auroras are a beautiful side-effect.

Hathaway and Wilson looked at records of geomagnetic activity stretching back almost 150 years and noticed something useful: "The amount of geomagnetic activity now tells us what the solar cycle is going to be like 6 to 8 years in the future," says Hathaway. A picture is worth a thousand words:



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Above: Peaks in geomagnetic activity (red) foretell solar maxima (black) more than six years in advance. [\[More\]](#)

In the plot, above, black curves are solar cycles; the amplitude is the sunspot number. Red curves are geomagnetic indices, specifically the Inter-hour Variability Index or IHV. "These indices are derived from magnetometer data recorded at two points on opposite sides of Earth: one in England and another in Australia. IHV data have been taken every day since 1868," says Hathaway.

Cross correlating sunspot number vs. IHV, they found that the IHV predicts the amplitude of the solar cycle 6-plus years in advance with a 94% correlation coefficient.

"We don't know why this works," says Hathaway. The underlying physics is a mystery. "But it does work."

According to their analysis, the next Solar Maximum should peak around 2010 with a sunspot number of 160 plus or minus 25. This would make it one of the strongest solar cycles of the past fifty years—which is to say, one of the strongest in recorded history.

Left: Hathaway and Wilson's prediction for the amplitude of Solar Cycle 24. [\[More\]](#)

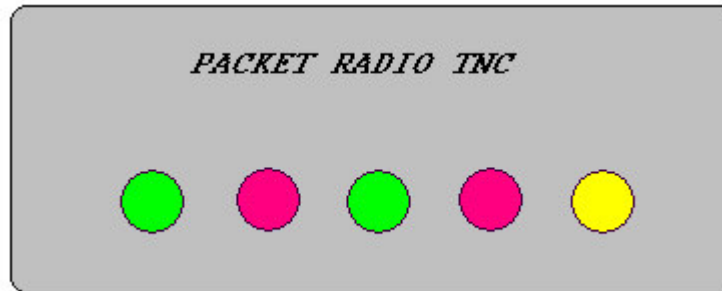
Astronomers have been counting sunspots since the days of Galileo, watching solar activity rise and fall every 11 years. Curiously, four of the five biggest cycles on record have come in the past 50 years. "Cycle 24 should fit right into that pattern," says Hathaway.

These results are just the latest signs pointing to a big Cycle 24. Most compelling of all, believes Hathaway, is the work of Mausumi Dikpati and colleagues at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in Boulder, Colorado. "They have combined observations of the sun's 'Great Conveyor Belt' with a sophisticated computer model of the sun's inner dynamo to produce a physics-based prediction of the next solar cycle." In short, it's going to be intense. Details may be found in the Science@NASA story [Solar Storm Warning](#).

"It all hangs together," says Hathaway. Stay tuned for solar activity.

Digital Modes:

A "bit" about Digital Radio



- The SPARC packet radio sysop continues to work on configuration of the updated club packet BBS system. When implemented this system will give a much larger message storage capacity and will eventually add multi frequency capability.
- A new hard drive has been installed in the club's packet radio PC after the old one failed.

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General News:

- VE TESTING 1900 HRS LANCO EMGC TRAIN CENTER.
NEXT SCHEDULED EXAM IS FEBRUARY 15, 2007.
EXAMS ARE ON EVEN NUMBERED MONTHS THIRD THURSDAY AT 7 PM 1900 HRS.

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- Below is from the ARRL

==>FCC ELIMINATES MORSE CODE AS EXAM REQUIREMENT!

Early next year, the US will join the growing list of countries that no longer require Amateur Radio applicants to pass a Morse code test as the entry ticket to HF. Announcement of the pending historic rule change arrived with no fanfare December 15 in an FCC public notice. A full-blown Report and Order (R&O) in the proceeding, WT Docket 05-235, followed December 19. The best estimate of when the Morse code requirement will go away officially is sometime in February -- 30 days after the R&O appears in the Federal Register.

"We . . . believe that the public interest is not served by requiring facility in Morse code when the trend in amateur communications is to use voice and digital technologies for exchanging messages," the FCC said in its R&O. "Rather, we believe that because the international requirement for telegraphy proficiency has been eliminated, we should treat Morse code telegraphy no differently from other Amateur Service communications techniques."

The FCC says it deems the current regime of written examinations "sufficient to determine whether a person is qualified to be issued an Amateur Radio operator license."

The FCC cast aside arguments that Morse ability is advantageous in emergencies, concluding that most emergency communication is handled using voice, data, or video techniques. The Commission also turned away assertions that retaining a Morse requirement would help keep out the bad apples.

"The record is devoid of a demonstrated nexus between Morse code proficiency and on-the-air conduct," the FCC observed. It concurred with one commenter's observation that "maintaining the code requirement does not purge Amateur Radio of bad operators. Education and self-policing does."

The FCC also ordered that all Technician licensees present and future -- whether or not they've passed a Morse code test, will get privileges on 80, 40, 15 and 10 meters identical to those of Novice licensees. "In eliminating this disparity between Technician and Technician Plus licenses, we are simplifying the Amateur Service licensing structure and promoting regulatory parity," the FCC said.

The FCC took advantage of the occasion to act on the League's Petition for Partial Reconsideration in the "omnibus" proceeding, WT Docket 04-140, calling on the Commission to retain 3620 to 3635 kHz for automatically controlled digital stations by moving the Extra class phone band edge to 3635 kHz. The FCC decided instead to authorize 3585 to 3600 kHz for such

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operations, and leave the newly expanded phone band intact.

The Commission further amended Part 97 "to authorize Amateur Extra class privileges to all individuals who have been issued a CEPT radio-amateur license by their country of citizenship, and who satisfy other requirements in the Commission's rules."

Although the FCC's Morse code decision came as no surprise, it nonetheless revived debate on the issue. The FCC had proposed more than a year ago to drop the Morse code requirement for all license classes. The record in the proceeding, the FCC said, "reflects a division of views in the Amateur Radio community." After reviewing the more than 3500 comments and counter-proposals radio amateurs had filed, the Commission stuck with its initial proposal.

ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, had this reaction: "While the Commission's decision to delete the Morse code requirement for an Amateur Extra Class license departs from the ARRL's recommendation, it is helpful to have the matter resolved so we can move forward."

ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, expressed a similar viewpoint. "Now that the debate is over, we can focus on learning Morse code simply for its own sake," he said. Sumner pledged that the League would maintain its traditional support of Morse code as an operating mode and would continue to offer Morse training materials as well as such incentives as bonus credit for CW contacts in ARRL-sponsored operating events. ARRL's Hiram Percy Maxim Memorial Station W1AW will keep its schedule of Morse code practice and bulletin transmissions.

Since World Radiocommunication Conference 2003, the UK, Canada, Germany and other countries have dropped their Morse requirements. Sumner said other countries have successfully made the transition to a codeless testing regime, and he doesn't anticipate problems in the US.

The pending disappearance of the Morse code requirement seems to have rejuvenated the urge to upgrade. ARRL Sales and Marketing Manager Bob Inderbitzen, NQ1R, says distribution of General Class license training materials have skyrocketed in the week after the FCC announcement.

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The ARRL has posted information relevant to the FCC action in WT Docket 05-235, including an FAQ, on its Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/fcc/morse/>>.

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- Note here is that the SPARC operating building is available to all club members for use. While it is still a work in progress, the building does have several operating positions with power supplies and a pretty good antenna farm.

You will however have to supply your own radios.

If you don't have a radio or other equipment for a particular use maybe you can work with another club member that does and make a team effort of it. A membership meeting would be a good place to make these types of arrangements.

Key to access the building will be available at club membership meetings.

There is a \$5.00 donation to SPARC to cover the cost of the key making required.

The club is providing this as a benefit to its members in the hopes that it will encourage some to get on the air.

It may even help some to proceed in the amateur radio license upgrade process.

So anyone who would like to work some DX or just get on the bands to rag chew, practice a mode, participate in a contest or whatever, here is a place you can operate without concern for antenna restrictions, space limitations or other obstacles to operating.

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Hamfests this month:

28th

Maryland Mobileers

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

31st

Baltimore Amateur Radio Club

Free Minifest

Maryland State Fairground Timonium, MD

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2007 OFFICERS

President: Mike Warner, N3XPD
Vice President: Rick Watson, N3SWJ
Secretary: Dave Sarraf, N3NDJ
Treasurer: Ted Freedman, K3KSA
Past President: Dave Payne, N3LOM
Directors: Harry Bauder, WA3FFK

APPOINTMENTS

Web site

Dave Sarraf N3NDJ; Rick Watson, N3SWJ; Mike Warner, N3XPD

Training Committee

Max Peters, KI6NJ; Dave Payne, N3LOM; Jim Ibaugh, AA3C.

Tech Committee

Harry Bauder, WA3FFK; Dave Payne, N3LOM; Mike Warner, N3XPD

Newsletter:

Mike Warner, N3XPD

Email: n3xpd@comcast.net

SPARC Nets

SPARC holds nets on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Tuesday (every Tuesday except the first) at 2030 local time on 145.230 MHz minus offset and a PL of 118.8.

Comments are most welcome.

I would also like to make note that if anyone has information that they would like to have added to the newsletter, all are welcome to make submissions to the editor.

This can include just about anything that could be related to club activities or about amateur radio, electronics or science in general.

So any of you would be authors out there can use this forum to get your word out!

That's all for now,

Hope to hear you all on the air and see you at a meeting or club event.

73,

Mike Warner, N3XPD