



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

Email address: k3ir@arrl.net

Repeaters: 145.230 - 449.975 - Packet 145.030 - ATV 902.145

September 2008

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE AUGUST 2008 MEETING OF THE SOUTHERN PENNSYLVANIA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB (SPARC)

Held Wednesday August 20, 2008 at the
Rapho Township Municipal Building

We received a membership renewal for
Grant Beauchamp

Ted Freedman is still looking for
someone to take over as net
coordinator.

George Gadbois is always looking for
articles to put in the club newsletter.

The port-a-john will be removed from
the site in the near future.

Paul Herr and Ross Kauffman reported
on the August 16 hospital drill. Eighteen
hospitals and 48 operators participated.
Tactical call signs were used as were
the hospital's message form which
operators didn't find as easy to use as
the ARRL's form. Two of the hospitals
had great difficulty communicating with
the others. Ross noted that back-up
operators are needed. The number of
messages was too great for a single
operator to handle. There were 7
messages from net control plus those

originated by the hospitals. Paul and
Ross felt it was a very good drill. Some
flaws were uncovered and they will be
resolved.

There was a discussion about restarting
the beginning Amateur Radio classes.
Consensus was that we would like to
get them started by the spring of 2009.

Upcoming Events:

- Wednesday, August 20 – SPARC membership meeting and equipment auction starting at 7 PM.
- Wednesday, September 17 – SPARC membership meeting starting at 7 PM.
- **The mini-hamfest scheduled for Saturday, September 20 has been postponed until spring, 2009.**
- Saturday, October 4 – Heart Walk starting at 8:30 AM at the F&M Sports Complex. Contact is Rick Watson, N3SWJ.
- Thursday, October 16 to Saturday, October 18 – Regional hospital drill – Hams will be needed on the 18th.
- October ?? – Winter weather emergency drill – details will be announced when they are available.
- Thursday, October 23 – Columbia Halloween Parade. Rain date Monday, October 27.

The meeting adjourned to the repeater site for the equipment auction which was enjoyed by all who participated.

Editors Notes

Data collection on digital TV reception is continuing. Please report your experiences, good, bad, or indifferent. Include pertinent information on your equipment installation to help evaluate your results.

See the August issue of QRZ News for a WGAL supplied list of local stations and their present DTV status. There is also a data sheet at the end of the August issue with technical data on local TV stations provided by Ross Kaufman, W3ZKU. If you did not receive the August issue, send me an Email at gadboisg@dejazzd.com. There is no budget for snail mail distribution of the newsletter.

So far, most reporters are finding digital signals produce a large improvement in reception. Most reports of poor or no reception can be attributed to weak signals. In general, the digital signal is perfect or not at all. The era of snowy pictures is nearly over. A few reports of depressed reception are inexplicable at this time.

The government sponsored \$40 coupons are still available, limit two per household. Dealers have good stocks of converter boxes, but you can be sure they want to be sold out before next February.

So far the only contact we have is with WGAL. If anyone has contacts in other broadcast stations let me know.

EMCOMM & Digital

In many emergency communications situations, it is necessary to transmit longer documents than the typical limit of 25 words for voice traffic. For example, HEARS (Hospital Emergency Amateur Radio System) must transmit form documents, which contain medical terms that must not be misspelled. These documents may often exceed 25 words in length. This is very difficult via voice messaging.

Anyone who listened to the August 16th HEARS drill knows that the larger documents that were addressed to all stations did not go through efficiently. We must move to digital data transmission ASAP. For anyone interested in packet radio, a meeting is being planned at the County Training Center sometime in early October. This will be announced on the nets when a date is set.

See the SPARC BBS status report by Mike, N3XPD in this issue of QRZ News for more discussion on packet radio and links to information on forms handling via packet.

George, W3FEY

SPARC BBS Status

The SPARC 145.030 packet system is basically operational but with very limited functionality. It is not a full service BBS as back in the packet radio heyday.

It is currently only intended as a message relay drop box. By this I mean that it will only hold a limited amount of data (128 K-bytes, I believe). So it is best used as a place to drop and pick up messages not as a place of long term

storage. This is due to the limitations of the Kantronics KPC-3+ TNC, which is the only packet hardware running at present, other than the transceiver. It will also function as a relay point with use of the KA-node in the TNC.

Some reasons for the current set up are:

- * The area Flexnet system fell apart from lack of use and consequently the system operators stopped maintaining it.
- * Without a network and its message storage requirements, there is no need to have a computer running 24/7 consuming power at the club site.
- * Lack of interest.
- * Sysop time constraints.
- * \$\$\$\$

I will attempt to get the PC based BBS operational; most of the basic core of this is already on-site but needs some configuring. Rebuilding the packet radio system has been on my to-do wish list for a long time and maybe it's time to move it up in priority.

From what I read and have experimented with, it seems that some of the most recent and useful interest and work around packet radio is happening in California.

If you like, check out the Outpost program at:

<http://www.outpostpm.org/>
<http://www.google.com/search?q=outpost+packet+radio>

I use Outpost regularly and like it a lot.

Most recently I've been playing around with a very interesting Outpost add on utility called PacForms: <http://www.scc-ares-races.org/pfpublic/pacforms.html>

If I can be of any help in getting more packet interest going please let me know.

Mike, N3XPD

ARES/RACES



As part of the clubs commitment to emergency communications, the SPARC repeater system is maintained as available for linking with other area repeaters.

Lancaster County VHF Net is held on the first Tuesday of the month at 2030 hours local time. Presently being held on the 145.230 and 147.015 MHz repeaters 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.

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.

Club Officers

President: Mike Warner - [N3XPD](http://www.scc-ares-races.org/pfpublic/pacforms.html)

Vice-President: Rick Watson - [N3SWJ](http://www.scc-ares-races.org/pfpublic/pacforms.html)

- Secretary: Position Open, VP Rick Watson, N3SWJ is presently acting as secretary.
- Treasurer: Ted Freedman - [K3KSA](#)
- Repeater Trustees: Dave Payne - [N3LOM](#)
- Past President: Dave Payne - [N3LOM](#)

Dave K2DH

Lancaster Examiner-New Era

June 9, 1922



RADIO ASSOCIATION HEARS TALK ON 3XW

The Community Radio association, of New Holland, held a very interesting meeting Monday evening at the home of Levi Zook, Jr., Bareville. President Townsley presided.

The main feature of the meeting was an instructive lecture on "[Station 3XW of Parkesburg](#)", by H. Edgar Good, which was enjoyed by all.

District Manager J. Robert Ziegler, of the [Lancaster Radio Association](#), was present and appointed J. Howard Rutter reporter to "The Tickler", official organ of the L.R.A. According to Mr. Ziegler, a radio trunk line will be established in the near future from Lancaster to New Holland and Blue Ball, which will handle any messages between those two points.

H. Edgar Good was appointed Traffic Manger and John Sensenig, Jr. Assistant manager. The next meeting of the Association will be held on June 20, at the home of Mr. Good, Bareville. The main feature will be a talk on the "Construction and Operation of Amplifiers", by Levi Zook, Jr.

This is the beginning of the ARRL National Traffic System in Lancaster County. The Lancaster Radio Association charter request

New 1296 MHz Beacon

The [Rochester VHF Group](#) (RVHFG) has just put a 1296 beacon on the air from a hilltop in FN12fs. It runs the club call in honor of our founder Hank Blodgett W2UTH. It's on 1296.262, +/- 200Hz as the oven cycles. It starts with 20 seconds of carrier, then 10 seconds of quiet, then 20 more seconds of carrier, followed by the ID: DE W2UTH/B FN12FS, at about 13wpm. This effort is the first of a series of beacons which will operate from the same location on all bands 50MHz-10GHz (or possibly 24, not sure about that one yet).

The beacon is constructed as follows: an ovenized crystal oscillator runs at 108.022 MHz and is multiplied up via a DEMI WSS1296 board with extra MMICs on the output to get the level up a bit. It then goes into an 8 pole bandpass filter to clean up the output, then into a Mini-Circuits amplifier module to get the level back up to about +2dBm to drive the PA. That level drives a 2W PA made from a Mitsubishi M67715 module. The antenna is a 1296 Halo on the top of a short tower, fed with about 30 feet of 1/2" Andrew Superflex cable.

Reception reports are appreciated either to me, [K2DH](#), or to the [club email address](#). Please feel free to pass this info along to anyone you feel is interested. Thanks!

Good listening!

was probably pending at ARRL headquarters at the time of this publication.

Does anyone know anything about the individuals mentioned in this report?

Thanks to Lloyd Jury for doing the newspaper file research for this report.