



SPARC GAP



St. Petersburg Amateur Radio Club

January, February, March 2005

Logging On To The World!



By **PHIL KG4IGX**
President

The old three-element antenna that stood above the SPARC radio room for more than 30 years came down Saturday, Jan. 15, 2005, replaced by a new Tennadyne T-8, eight-element log periodic.

The old antenna's traps gave up the ghost about two months ago and the need was great to service the variety of rigs in the radio room. Ron KP2N, Dee N4GD and Richard KG4MRH lobbied for a replacement during the November and December club meetings.

"We've searched almost everywhere to find replacement parts for the old beam, but they are just not around," Ron noted. "We have only

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Out with the old ... in with the new!

Freddie KF4FCW and Richard KG4MRH (top) scale the SPARC tower to install the new Tennadyne T-8 log periodic antenna on Jan. 15.

The same climbers (right) struggled for nearly an hour to loosen the rusted nuts and bolts on the old antenna.

Others working on the assembly of the new antenna were Scotty K4RI, Ron KP2N, John KU4BT and Dee N4GD.

After the new antenna was bolted down and all connections made, John KU4BT and Freddie loaded it up for the first time with good signal reports..

Photos by Bob KC4SXO





*Rick K4BNE
(left & below)
was a hit at the
Great
American
Teach-In*

Photos by Dee N4GD

Rick & Dee enchant North Shore kids at Teach-In

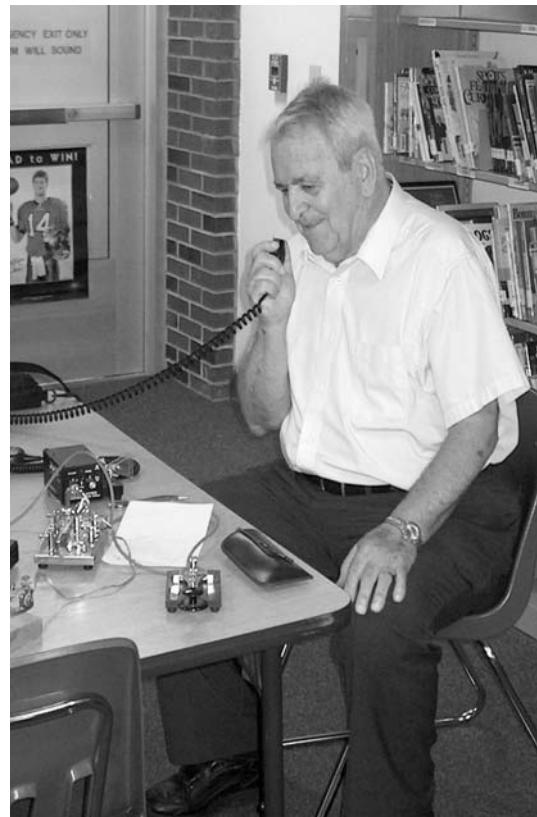
Rick Rutan K4BNE and Dee Turner N4GD set up a ham radio at North Shore Elementary School in St. Petersburg on Nov. 17, 2004, for the third year for the Great American Teach-In.

They were given space in the multi-media room. Their equipment was a Kenwood 2-meter and an Icom HF radio using battery power. They installed a J-pole and a HF vertical in the school yard.

Rick, Dee and the youngsters talked to Tony IZ6BXV in Italy, Martin G0CAK in England and Mike N1DSR on 15-meters.

They also talked to several hams on SPARC's 2-meter repeater. Classes present were Mrs. Rutan's and Mrs. Denman's fourth-graders from 9 to 10 a. m., Mr. Tipton's third-graders 10-10:30 a. m. and Mrs. VanWormer's fifth-graders 10:30 to 11 a. m.

The children were thrilled by the adventure and perhaps Rick and Dee opened up a new world for them.



Update your membership data: call Phil at 727-392-3481

Hamfest was not a dog and pony show!

Tampa Bay Hamfest 2004 fills the house

CGA Enterprises, Hudson, Fl., was among vendors at the 29th annual Tampa Bay Hamfest 2004 at the Manatee Civic Center last December. Jessica manned the CGA booth and brought along her pooch, Rio (above right) to oversee operations.

Among other vendors were Tower Electronics, Green Bay, Wisc.; VIS Amateur Supply, Coffeeville, Ala., and MFJ Enterprises. Dozens of small vendors made the hamfest a rousing success. SPARC and other Tampa Bay area radio clubs manned booths.

The Florida Gulf Coast Amateur Radio Council, composed of about 20 Tampa Bay area clubs, sponsored the event. SPARC's vice-president, Peter W4GTO, cooked for about 150 hams and their families and guests all three nights.

Photo by Phil KG4IGX



LP means great signal acquisition

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one option, and that is to replace it.”

Phil KG4IGX, in one of his first acts as new SPARC president, authorized the expenditure of \$670 for the Tennadyne from club funds at the December meeting.

Ron ordered the LP from its factory in Alto, Mich. When it arrived, John KU4BT, Scotty K4RI, Ron, Dee and Richard assembled part of the monster the first weekend of January. Part was assembled in the Red Cross Headquarters parking lot, then moved to the building's roof to compete assembly.

On Saturday, Jan. 15, Freddie KF4FCW and Richard climbed the tower to remove the old antenna, which took nearly two hours because the hardware was rusted and frozen. “Thought I’d have to use a hacksaw, but we managed,” said Richard.

Saturday afternoon, with Bob KC4SXO and Ron on the lines, the climbers hoisted the LP up and bolted it in place, the job completed in cool, breezy, cloudy conditions. The pigtail was connect to the feeder coax and the climbers retreated to warmer climes in the radio room. Bob man-

aged to click off a bank of good photos for posterity.

The LP covers 13 to 32 MHz with a 5.8dbd gain. Boom is eight feet, the longest element is 38 feet and it is rated to withstand 100-mph winds. A 4-1 balun and RG8 coax cable competed the assembly.

“Looks like it’s working well on all bands, except 17-meters is showing a higher SWR,” Ron said. “I’ll check with Tennadyne on that.”

Well, when Ron did check with Tennadyne and, after reviewing the assembly plans, it was discovered that the crew assembled the LP incorrectly. Ron apologized, saying it was his fault as crew chief, but those things happen in the best of circumstances.

So, the LP had to come down again, reassembled and hoisted back up the tower. Ron recalled the crew and the antenna was repaired and remounted on Jan. 29.

While the antenna crew was busy, Leslie WA4EEZ, her husband, Roger K4SHI: Richard’s wife, Tracy KG4MRG and John spent the day cleaning up the radio room. Much was trashed and much gear was moved to the storage room.



*Neither
Cold Nor
Wind
Shall
Deny
SPARC
Picnickers...*

*...Who Take
Their
Festivities
Indoors*

For the second straight year, cold weather plagued the annual SPARC picnic, slated at Lake Seminole Park in Pinellas County.

After evaluating the circumstances, SPARC president and newsletter editor, Phil KG4IGX, decided to move the annual affair to his place on Magnolia Dr.

And, being in the communications business, SPARC members responded to the call by alerting other members of the switch.

It turned out to be a warm, friendly gathering of about 25 SPARC members, guests and friends.

Photos by Phil KG4IGX



Chester's, draws eager sellers, buyers, browsers



Crowd gathers at Chester's for a rainy day session in November, 2004

2005 Hamfest Sked (Some dates approximate)

February 5-6 Miami, FL SFL Section Convention
 February 11-13 Orlando, FL NFL Section Convention
 February 19 Sebring, FL
 February 19 Brooksville, FL
 February 26 Dalton, GA
 March 5 Englewood, FL
 March 19 Kennehoochee, GA
 March 19 Fort Walton Beach, FL
 March 19 Stuart, FL
 March 26 New Port Richey, FL
 April 2 Malbis, AL (Baldwin County)
 April 9 Floridatown, FL (Pace)
 April 16 Tampa, FL (TARC)
 April 23 Calhoun, GA
 April 23 Gainesville, FL
 May 1 St. Petersburg, FL (SPARC)
 May 7-8 Birmingham, AL
 May 13-15 Dayton, OH
 August 20-21 Huntsville, AL SE Division Convention



Bill McCarty W8GM and gear

Chester's 2005 Sked

Metro—March 12
 CARS—July 9
 SPARC—Sept. 10
 Wormhole—Nov. 12

Bargains to be found, friends to greet and lively tech talk abound

Every now and then, Chester Electronic Supply Company in Largo stages its very popular ham swap. Buyers, sellers and just plain browsers flock to the electronics retail store looking for bargains, for that piece of equipment that will fill out their radio shacks, or to just shoot the breeze.

The past two gatherings have seen terrible weather, one in November when it rained all day (*"the weather, it was fine!"*) and more recently, when off-and-on showers were complimented by gray skies and cold winds.

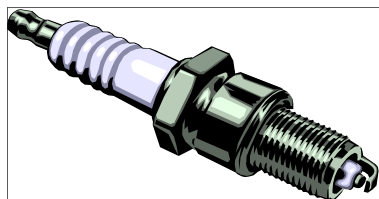
Still, Chester's is within easy traveling distance and a very desirable place to pick up bargains, greet old friends and meet new ones.

Chester's is located at 311 Missouri Ave. N., right across the street from Largo High School.



Vendor Mike Clark W4MJC

Photos by Phil KG4IGX



**SPARC GAP
ST. PETERSBURG
AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
PO BOX 10183
LARGO, FL 33773**

Mailing
Address
Goes
Here

Inside—Teach-in, Picnic, Hamfest, Chester's

DATE LOG - 2005

SPARC meetings - First Friday every month, 7:30 p. m., Red Cross Bldg. 818 4th St. N, St. Petersburg.

SPARC breakfast, every Saturday, 7 a. m. The Egg Platter, 6767 34th St. N.

Testing sessions - Third Tuesday every month, 6:30 p. m., Red Cross Bldg., 818 Fourth St. N., St. Petersburg.

Chester's—Metro, March 12.

Lake Maggiore Swap Meet—May 1.

SPARC Web page—www.qsl.net/w4gac/

AREA REPEATERS & WEB SITE

SPARC repeater: Nightly, 6:30 p. m., 147.06+, 224.66-, 444.475+.

Web site: www.qsl.net/W4GAC - Webmaster Dee Turner N4GD

CARS repeater: Wednesdays, 8 p. m., 146.970- PL103.5, 224.940-no pl, 444.150+.

Metro repeater: Mon-Wed-Fri, 7:30 p. m., 147.360+, 127.3.

WCF Section Net: Sun 7:30 p. m., Wed, 9 p. m., 145.430+ & 442.950+ (100Hz).

**NEW SPARC
MEMBERS 2004**

Emory Brown Jr. KD2DN

Lovis Frontiera KG4ZQO

Jennifer Paterson WA4CVV

Sally Otto KB1KEY

Charles Sedgwick KA1OVV

Robert Swain KE4NTW

Teri Bach-Charlot KG4YKS

Chuck Forester KG4KXK

Kenneth S. Hunt KI4EUV

George "Bob" Campbell

N4IMI

Richard Collamer KE4LFM

Chuck Dean W4NHQ

Gil Wegad N3FDO

Dr. David P. Johnson

W2AAZ

Myron Gilcher KI4HDP

Rane Koehler KI4GFT

Michael Koehler KI4BSQ

Jeff Partington KI4FSZ

Christine Dyer (no call)

Alton Dyer WA1WIJ

Donald Deverell N2ZVA

Joe Mustion KG4WLG

SPARC'S 2005 BOARD

President - Phil Gulick KG4IGX 392-3481

Vice-president - Peter Goldhammer W4GTO 866-7889

Secretary - Cedric Harris KF4ZCG 894-1447

Treasurer - Susan Dillon KD4FEZ 302-0611

Events Co-ordinator—Ken Hopkins WA9WCP 525-8411

PIO & Newsletter editor, Gulick KG4IGX@msn.com

Directors - Bill Zulas WZ4GW 725-4020

Bob Burke KC4SXO 541-2216

Leslie Johnson WA4EEZ 347-7422

President Emeritus—Donn Davis N4KII