



St. Petersburg Amateur Radio Club
P.O. Box 2217 St. Petersburg, Fl. 333731
March – April 2011



A FEW WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Welcome to all the SPARC members and guests. This is a very busy part of the year for the club. The antenna crew just finished installing our Tennadyne T-8 Log Periodic at W4GAC and first results are very encouraging. Scotty, N4RI, using the club station, managed to work the VU4PB and S21YZ DXpeditions.

The HF bands have come alive lately with good DX available on 10 meters. Some record-breaking scores were reported in the WPX SSB contest. Radio wise we have the Florida QSO Party (FQP) coming up and there are plenty of good positions open at the club station for SSB and CW operators. The dates are April 30 and May 1. Let me know so a schedule can be worked out. This is a team effort with an operator and logger for 1-hour shifts. SPARC has done well in the past and with our present antennas we can again compete for Top Florida Club.

Lake Maggiore will be a challenge for SPARC this year, as it will be held on a Saturday instead of the usual Sunday. The St. Anthony's Triathlon brought all this about, which is the same weekend. On Sunday the bicycle portion of the race takes them down past the entrance of the park and we would have no way to get in or out. We need all the membership to help out with details. Just as we are wrapping up the free tailgate is the start of the FQP operation. Please help out when asked. Pete, WB2SUN, and his VE team will be there to give exams that start at 9 AM.

Field Day is right around the corner. A lot of new ideas have come forward and Dave, KR4U, our Field Day chairman, will be holding a meeting at the club station to discuss these ideas. If you would like to participate in this group let Dave know. Last year was our best effort to date and with the improving band conditions there should be more activity then ever.

The SPARC executive board will meet every other month at the club station. Check the Calendar on our web site for dates and times.

Be sure to try one of the SPARC dogs at Lake Maggiore.

73 Ron KP2N



We are on the Web!
www.spare-club.org

ORLANDO HAMCATION 2011 by TOM AI4QP

The weather was good this year for the 2011 Orlando Hamcation. The turnout looked pretty good but someone made the comment that they didn't see enough young people. Well that could be but I told him that was our fault, we have to peak their interest and get them involved. I told him about our experience with the Home School youngsters and that our club was trying to get them involved.

I did not have much on my list to look for except a battery for one of my hand held radios. The last battery I bought for it was at the Hamcation of 2007. Myself, King Arthur (KG4TGR) and Pete (WB2SUN) made the trip over and Pete also had a few things on his list but wasn't really happy about the pricey tags on the items. I guess the economy is showing up at all events.

I was also there to see friends that I haven't seen since last year and meet with a group of friends from the Milwaukee - Florida net that I get on Mon-Fri. On 14.290 from 8 - 9 AM. Some of these folks come down for the winter, some have moved here and some just came for the Hamcation. John (K9IAC) is one of the net control operators and at the spry age of 80 he was looking good and it was nice to put a face with a call. The group had rented a room at the Lake Pavilion for an hour and had coffee and donuts, what could be better.

All of the SPARC members that went gathered for a group picture around noon and found a perfect spot for it as you can see in the photo. We all had a great time there and after the photo we kind of broke up and went our way. My threesome was going to High Tide Harry's for a great seafood lunch, but when I went to the car I found it was blocked in at the entrance. It seems that the gate person left for a few minutes and some folks thought they found a good spot and blocked the exit. Lucky for us I went to the other end of the field and there was a small opening there we could get out. We went and had a great lunch and then came back to St. Pete. A wonderful trip with good company and looking forward to next year.

73'S TOM / AI4QP

**Happy
Easter**

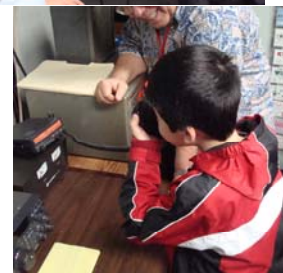


Home School Students at SPARC



Quote from Ron KP2N last Newsletter

As you read this, SPARC will have been paid a visit by 20 home school students under the leadership of Suzanne Butler. SPARC members got to show off our club station W4GAC and introduced these youngsters to ham radio. Hopefully a few may take the plunge and study for their license.



Interesting QSL Card



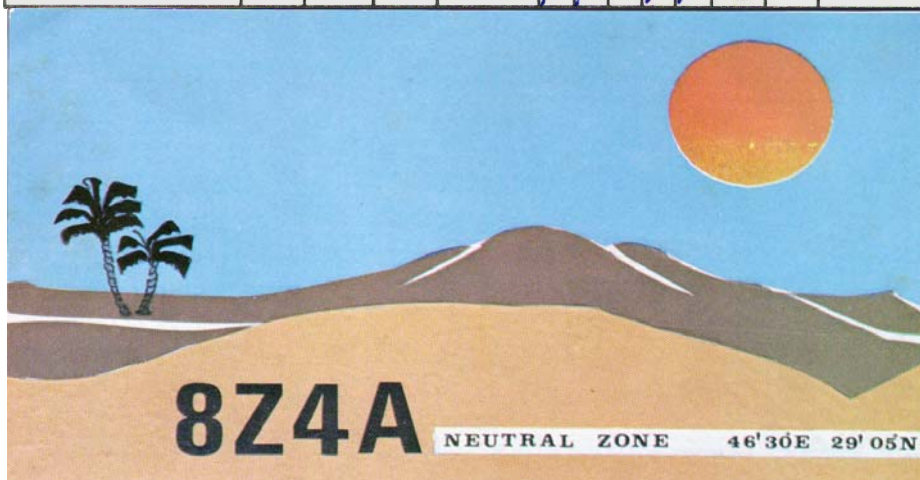
Neutral Zone Expedition was carried out by the Royal Jordanian Radio Amateur Society in celebration of HM JY1 44th Birthday 14.Nov.79 Operation was from 10-21.Nov 79. Total QSO 40,800 on Five bands ssb & cw. Special thanks to HH Prince Talal HZITA

JY Operators
JY4MB JY3ZH JY5US ✓ JY9BB
JY4NA JY4VJ JY5MK JY90D

Visiting Operators
J28AA HZ1TC
9K2DN 9K2CM

QSL Manager
WA3HUP
73 *May 6*

TO RADIO	DATE	UTC	M H z	2 X	R S T
N1XX	13 11 79	0038	5 7 14 21 28	ssb	59



The QSL card shown here is the confirmation of a contact made by our club secretary Bob Entwistle, N1XX during an expedition in November of 1979. If you look at the team operators you will see a call JY9BB, we here in SPARC know him as Blackie Blackburn Jr. W4TA. Blackie was a member of the Royal Jordanian Radio Amateur Society and a team member of this event. Thanks Bob for showing us this very special QSL card.

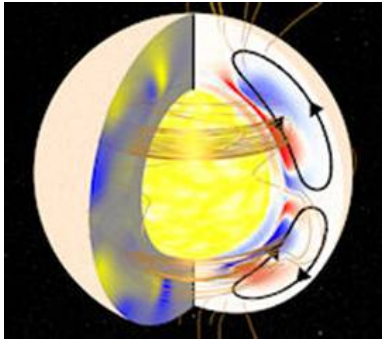
Dave KR4U

RESEARCHERS CRACK THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING SUNSPOTS

Submitted by Neil W4NHL

March 2, 2011: In 2008-2009, sunspots almost completely disappeared for two years. Solar activity dropped to hundred-year lows; Earth's upper atmosphere cooled and collapsed; the sun's magnetic field weakened, allowing cosmic rays to penetrate the Solar System in record numbers. It was a big event, and solar physicists openly wondered, *where have all the sunspots gone?*

Now they know. An answer is being published in the March 3rd edition of *Nature*.



In this artistic cutaway view of the sun, the Great Conveyor Belt appears as a set of black loops connecting the stellar surface to the interior. Credit: Andres Munoz-Jaramillo of the Harvard CfA.

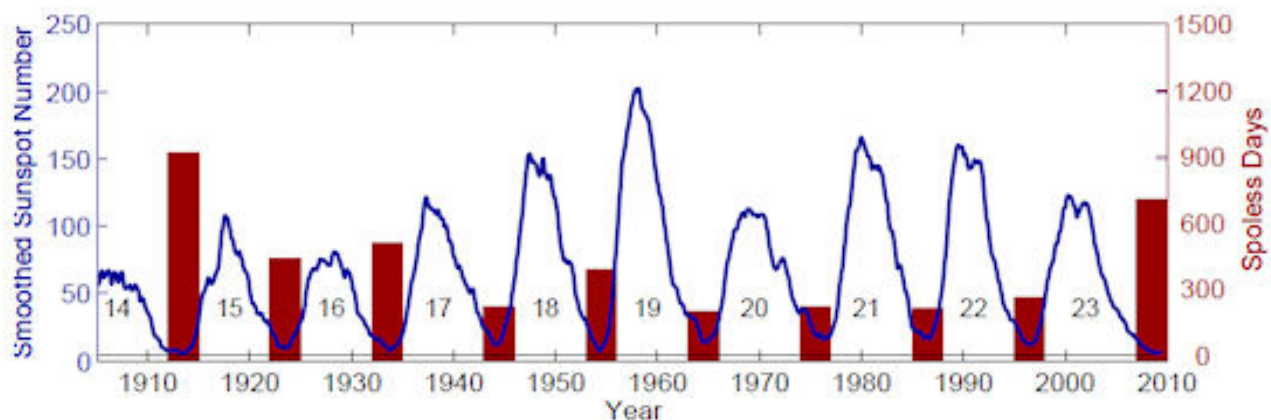
"Plasma currents deep inside the sun interfered with the formation of sunspots and prolonged solar minimum," says lead author Dibyendu Nandi of the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research in Kolkata. "Our conclusions are based on a new computer model of the sun's interior."

For years, solar physicists have recognized the importance of the sun's "Great Conveyor Belt." A vast system of plasma currents called 'meridional flows' (akin to ocean currents on Earth) travel along the sun's surface, plunge inward around the poles, and pop up again near the sun's equator. These looping currents play a key role in the 11-year solar cycle. When sunspots begin to decay, surface currents sweep up their magnetic remains and pull them down inside the star; 300,000 km below the surface, the sun's magnetic dynamo amplifies the decaying magnetic fields. Re-animated sunspots become buoyant and bob up to the surface like a cork in water -- voila! A new solar cycle is born.

For the first time, Nandi's team believes they have developed a computer model that gets the physics right for all three aspects of this process--the magnetic dynamo, the conveyor belt, and the buoyant evolution of sunspot magnetic fields.

"According to our model, the trouble with sunspots actually began in back in the late 1990s during the upswing of Solar Cycle 23," says co-author Andres Munoz-Jaramillo of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. "At that time, the conveyor belt sped up."

The fast-moving belt rapidly dragged sunspot corpses down to sun's inner dynamo for amplification. At first glance, this might seem to boost sunspot production, but no. When the remains of old sunspots reached the dynamo, they rode the belt through the amplification zone too hastily for full re-animation. Sunspot production was stunted.



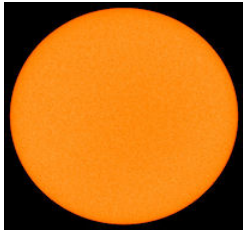
Sunspot cycles over the last century. The blue curve shows the cyclic variation in the number of sunspots. Red bars show the cumulative number of sunspot-less days. The minimum of sunspot cycle 23 was the longest in the space age with the largest number of spotless days. Credit: Dibyendu Nandi et al.

Later, in the 2000s, according to the model, the Conveyor Belt slowed down again, allowing magnetic fields to spend more time in the amplification zone, but the damage was already done. New sunspots were in short supply. Adding insult to injury, the slow moving belt did little to assist re-animated sunspots on their journey back to the surface, delaying the onset of Solar Cycle 24.

"The stage was set for the deepest solar minimum in a century," says co-author Petrus Martens of the Montana State University Department of Physics.

Colleagues and supporters of the team are calling the new model a significant advance.

"Understanding and predicting solar minimum is something we have never been able to do before---and it turns out to be very important," says Lika Guhathakurta of NASA's Heliophysics Division in Washington, DC.



Three years ago on March 2, 2008, the face of the sun was featureless--no sunspots. Credit: SOHO/MDI

While Solar Max is relatively brief, lasting a few years punctuated by episodes of violent flaring, over and done in days, Solar Minimum can grind on for many years. The famous Maunder Minimum of the 17th century lasted 70 years and coincided with the deepest part of Europe's Little Ice Age. Researchers are still struggling to understand the connection.

One thing is clear: During long minima, strange things happen. In 2008-2009, the sun's global magnetic field weakened and the solar wind subsided. Cosmic rays normally held at bay by the sun's windy magnetism surged into the inner solar system. During the deepest solar minimum in a century, ironically, space became a more dangerous place to travel. At the same time, the heating action of UV rays normally provided by sunspots was absent, so Earth's upper atmosphere began to cool and collapse. Space junk stopped decaying as rapidly as usual and started accumulating in Earth orbit. And so on!

Nandi notes that their new computer model explained not only the absence of sunspots but also the sun's weakened magnetic field in 08-09. "It's confirmation that we're on the right track."

Next step: NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory (SDO) can measure the motions of the sun's conveyor belt not just on the surface but deep inside, too. The technique is called helioseismology; it reveals the sun's interior in much the same way that an ultrasound works on a pregnant woman. By plugging SDO's high-quality data into the computer model, the researchers might be able to predict how future solar minima will unfold. SDO is just getting started, however, so forecasts will have to wait.

Indeed, much work remains to be done, but, says Guhathakurta, "finally, we may be cracking the mystery of the spotless sun."

Credits: This research was funded by NASA's Living With a Star Program and the Department of Science and Technology of the Government of India.

Of Interest

A group of hams have started "Parks On The Air" group to promote getting outdoors to operate from State, Provincial and National Parks.

The main goal is to activate them for those who maybe can't take part in IOTA, SOTA etc.....

The group can be found here: http://ca.groups.yahoo.com/group/p_o_t_a/

Fred VE3FAL - List Owner/Moderator

=====

I'm the keeper of the Florida log. Pass this info around and I hope some hams pick up on this.

Kyle N4NSS Licensed 1966 n4nss@yahoo.com

GORC #126, PB #117, SKCC #3595, P.O.T.A.

NAQCC #2019, FPQRP #1766, WARC-CC #567

Grid: EL87qu -82.645956W 27.848260N

My site: <http://www.qsl.net/n4nss/>

The W4GAC Log Periodic Antenna Back On The Air

After almost two years the W4GAC Log Periodic antenna is back in the air and working to perfection. The antenna is a Tennadyne model T-8 and was purchased new by the membership back around 2006 for \$675. The appeal of this antenna is that it has no traps and will work any frequency from 13 to 30 MHz and is rated for 1500 watts. The boom is 18' long and the total weight is 38 pounds.

The SPARC installation crew arrived early on Saturday, March 5th to transport all materials to the gym roof and begin assembly. Doug, K8TYS, has a friend Steve who has a 71-foot mobile crane. Steve arrived around 9:45 AM and the fun started. Within 30 minutes all material was transferred to the 26-foot high roof. Without the use of this crane the installation would have taken much, much longer.

John, KI4UIP, and his crew assembled the tower frame and placed it on the rubber mats. While they strung the Phillystran guy cables Ron, KP2N, and Clayton, KJ4RUS, re-assembled the T-8 antenna. When the tower was complete Johnnie, W4TSP, and Bob, N2ESP, lifted the antenna and slid it over the tower mast. Clayton did the final clamping of the antenna mount to the mast. Dave, KR4U, came topside and looked at the SWR via his antenna analyzer and we were good to go.

Our special thanks to our fearless crew: Dave, KR4U, John, KI4UIP, Bob, N2ESP, Bob, KC4SXO, Doug, K8TYS, Johnnie, W4TSP, Tom, NY4I, Donn, N4KII, Chuck, W4NHQ, and walk in guest Tim, N4KOF. I hope I didn't miss anyone.

Chuck and Bob, KC4SXO did a great job keeping the topside crew supplied with beverages and small parts. Dave and John spent 6 hours taking the better of two Tail Twister rotors and making one good one. Thanks to Jim, N2AAC, for the donation of the second rotor and control boxes. Doug, it is sure nice to have a friend Steve who just happens to have a 71-foot crane.

The main prize goes to John, KI4UIP, who designed and built the tower frame thus saving the club's pot full of money. And finally to the membership who voted to fund the project. This was truly a club effort.

Ron KP2N



Pictures taken by KP2N



ONE HALF INCH THICK RUBBER MATS TO PROTECT THE



SUPPORT FRAME CENTERED ON THE MATS



MOBILE 71' CRANE



GLEN MARTIN TOWER LIFTED TO THE ROOF



TOWER & FRAME LOADED WITH 26 CONCRETE BLOCKS



CLAYTON, KJ4RUS, NAILS IT DOWN TO STAY



MOUNTING ANTENNA TO THE MAST

GREAT JOB WELL DONE!

W4GAC ANTENNAS GROUND VIEW

Photo by AI4QP



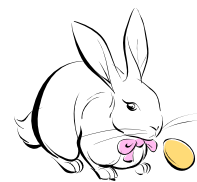
Upcoming Contests

TARA SKIRMISH DIGITAL CONTEST APRIL 16

1010 INTERNATIONAL SPRING DIGITAL CONTEST APRIL 23/24

SP DX RTTY CONTEST APRIL 23/24

FLORIDA QSO PARTY APRIL30/MAY1



This poem was written in 1944, during the Battle of the Bulge, by the father of Robert A. Wallace

Oh, I'm winning the war with a telegraph key,
Thought I as I finished a "stack".

I hope this is not all the action I see
Just wearing my pants out in back.
I idly shuffle the blanks in my hand
And glance at the five letter groups.

I think of my brother in far foreign land
Fighting up front with the troops.
I check with my watch - where the heck's my R.J.?
I'm getting as hungry as sin.
An eight hour trick is enough for the day,
And I'm practically deaf from the din.

The "trick chief" gets up from the teletype chair
And says that he has one for me.
"Get your key oiled up, get that rig on the air,
Here's a honey - a long one O.P."
My relief gets a curse on his unknowing head
For his tardiness costs me my chow.
And this is a hell of a time for a sked,
The net's QJZ about now.

But I slip on the cans and I rattle the key
And the rig is again on the air.
I give with the dits and the dahs just to see
If the station I'm calling is there.
A couple of calls and he sends "QRU?"
So I tell him I have an "O.P."
He sends me a "K" and I start a tattoo -
Pounding brass on my telegraph key!

I pass the first fifty, then wait for an sec,
While he starts the next block on the sheet.
I've found if you don't make an op break his neck
You get fewer requests to repeat.
A hundred, and fifty, and then fifty more.
She's long, I've a thousand to go.
My head's getting tired, my wrist's getting sore.
Can't use "bug" for this guy is too slow.

I'm passing a thousand, my fist is near beat,
Do I want an R.J. from T.C.?
Not a chance, Chief, you know once my sign's on the sheet
No one's sending that message but me.
We finally clear and I send him "AR"
And get one from him with his "ack".
The look that I give my relief leaves a scar
As I grab for my hat on the rack.

Later:
I read how a shipment of arms saved a corps
Because it arrived there in time.
The corps that it saved was my brother's. What's more,
The message that sent it was mine!
Oh, I'm fighting the war with a telegraph key
But as long as they want me I'll stay.
It may not be combat but now I can see
How a message can help save the day.

Copyright © 2006 Robert Alexander Wallace W1MQV / W1HH.

A guide to shorthand used above will be in next issue

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

Some Members meet for Breakfast

Every Saturday, 7:00 am at the

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

**contact Pete WB2SUN at 727-343-4183*



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 Elmers	Ed Kline	N4NHO	n4nho@yahoo.com
	Kyle Jeske	N4NSS	n4nss@arrl.net



See what others have to say about
HamTestOnline™

Welcome To Our New Members

Scott Boake AK4FJ

Andy Miller KJ4FEC

**Happy
Easter**



Club Officers for 2011

President

Ron Hall KP2N

president@sparc-club.org

Vice President

Tom Schaefer NY4I

vice-president@sparc-club.org

Secretary

Bob Entwistle N1XX

secretary@sparc-club.org

Treasurer

Tom Wedding AI4QP

treasurer@sparc-club.org

Repeater Trustee

Ron Hall KP2N

trustee@sparc-club.org

Net Manager

Johnnie Popwell W4TSP

netmanager@sparc-club.org

Club Station Trustee

David Trewin KR4U

trustee@sparc-club.org

Web Master

Dee Turner N4GD

webmaster@sparc-club.org

Newsletter Editors

Veronika Trewin KC4YAW

David Trewin KR4U

newsletter@sparc-club.org

Past President

Grace Harris KG4CTG

pastpresident@sparc-club.org

Board Members

Bob Douglas AG4DY PHONE 727-541-2491

Tom Villanova KI4RVU boardmember2@sparc-club.org

John Toth KI4UIP boardmember3@sparc-club.org