



75+  
**SPARC**  
Years



**GAP**



**St. Petersburg Amateur Radio Club**  
**P.O. Box 2217 St. Petersburg, FL. 333731**  
**September — December 2011**



## **A FEW WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT**

A lot has happened at SPARC since Field Day. We have seen a large influx of new members and I welcome you to enjoy what SPARC has to offer.

New officers were elected. C. Michael, KG4PMC, is replacing Bob, N1XX, as Secretary. I wish to commend Bob for his 5 years of service. Hopefully, we can count on you for some contest operations. New to the board

of directors we welcome Mike, K4ZPE, and Steve, KK4CUM. We thank Tom, KI4RVU, and Bob, AG4DY, for your service to SPARC.

Would, at this time, commend our V-President Tom Schaefer, NY4I. His programs have been to notch. The one that stands out to me was the visit by Jim, AA4MD. Using his laptop and the Internet he operated his home station in Tampa. The highlight was working T32C on CW.

For the first time we presented SPARCFest on November 12<sup>th</sup>. The free tailgate at Freedom Lake Park was attended by over 250 hams. We had perfect weather, in the 60's at dawn warming up to 78 by noon. Mike, K4ZPE, did a great job setting up and running a VE session. Food and beverage sales were brisk and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.

The Tampa Bay Hamfest is this weekend. Besides all the tailgating there are several forums of interest. For more information check their website.

Speaking of websites please check the SPARC site often as information is updated all the time.

I wish all the SPARC nation a wonderful holiday season.

73 Ron Hall, Sr  
KP2N



We are on the Web!  
[www.sparc-club.org](http://www.sparc-club.org)

## SPARCFEST 2011 by Tom / AI4QP

The First Annual SPARCFEST has taken place and I have to say it was a success. It was held at Freedom Lake Park off 49<sup>th</sup> Street and I think it was enjoyed by all. It started around 6:30 AM with the gate to the Park opening and letting people in to set up just before dawn. It was a little cool, around 50 degrees, but it warmed up as the sun came up. We want to thank all who came to help set up as well as those who were around to help tear down. Special thanks to Mike (K4ZPE) for the use of his tents for shelter and running the ARRL test session where two applicants passed their exams. One was for Technician and one for Extra. Congratulations to those two gentlemen. We want to thank Ron (KP2N) for running the SPARCFEST GRILL. Those Sparcdogs and Burgers hit the spot and we got a lot of comments on the good Coffee he got up early to brew, and there was a group waiting for the donuts Roger and Leslie brought and Ron did a good job keeping me away from them. Thanks to Bob (KC4SXO) for running the talk-in with his portable set up and copper J-pole antenna.

I don't know how many vendors we had there but they circled our end of the Park. In view of the fact it was all tailgate, there was a good crowd. It is always good to see other Hams that you don't get to see except at these kind of events. I hope everyone bought or sold that certain item that was on their list.

Now we have the Tampa Bay Hamfest coming up December 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> at the Manatee Civic and Convention Center in Bradenton. It is always a good one and we are looking forward to it. Thanks again to all who helped with the First Annual SPARCFEST and we hope to see all next year.

Tom / AI4QP





## Pictures of the SPARCFEST 2011





## NAQP SSB REPORT by Ed Kline, N4NHO

Well, I've been on the job now for about three months, my new position with the SPARC club is membership chairman. Somehow I needed to be a conduit between people coming to the VE sessions then coming out to the meetings to see the SPARC club in action. We don't get everybody to join, but we are seeing numbers here that would not be there without some interaction with new and new-to-us amateurs via the VE sessions.

When someone comes out to the club from a VE session and is interested in joining the club I will take their membership application and introduce them for a quorum vote. To go a little further than that I decided to make this little situation a reality, as many new people haven't had any experience with high frequency operation or any type of operating event. With these days of internet learning and ham tickets, it is possible to run into an Extra Class amateur who has never been on high frequency at all.

One of the goals we have in our club is to provide the opportunity for members to learn about different modes of operation and provide hands on training in the use of equipment through the use of our excellent club station. One way to accomplish this is by inviting members to participate in a contest or operating event along with experienced folks who can teach them the basics.

The opportunity for an operating event came up the weekend of October 20/21, 2011. It was the North American QSO Party using single side band, SSB mode. This was a good opportunity for new people to operate our club station and learn more about the hobby. I discussed this topic with Ron KP2N our club President and Dave KR4U the Station Trustee. Dave said he would sponsor the event to provide technical assistance and building security. The New Ham participants were: Gina Lovisolo KK4CMD, Debbie Shirley KK4CUN and Stephen Hampshire KK4CUM. C. Michael Ritchey KG4PMC, another member of SPARC also came by to do some operating. We were able to man the contest for 7 hours and 39 minutes out of a possible length of 12 hours. We had 89 contacts which gave us a total of 4,500 points. As Ron KP2N said, it was a priceless experience for the new people and a good feeling from just getting it accomplished.

A special thanks to Gina Lovisolo for the great homemade Brownies. They were great and disappeared so much quicker than Krispy Cremes do. Thanks for your personal touch.

To the newcomer hams, from all of us "WELCOME TO SPARC".



73 de Ed N4NHO

## Upcoming Contests

ARRL 160 METER CONTEST DEC. 2/4

TARA RTTY MELEE DEC. 3

10 METER RTTY CONTEST DEC. 4

ARRL 10 METER CONTEST DEC. 10/11

ARRL RTTY ROUNDUP CONTEST JAN. 7/8

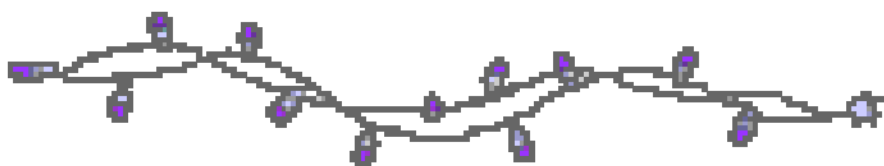
NAQP CW CONTEST JAN. 14/15

## Contest/Operating /W4GAC Station Activities

By David KR4U W4GAC Trustee

All of our equipment is working very well and we recently put it to good use in two recent events. The only recent change was the addition of a remote antenna switch on station 1. This allows the operator to select different antennas without the need to manually turn a coax switch on the antenna selection board mounted on the wall. The ARRL CW and SSB November Sweepstakes are held on the first and third weekends each year. This is the oldest ARRL contest and it also has the longest exchange of information required between stations. This event has two primary goals. The first is to work all 80 of the official ARRL sections (called a clean sweep) and the second is to make as many contacts as possible in the allotted time period. Our SPARC group participated on both weekends and achieved a "clean sweep" on both CW and SSB what a great job..WELL DONE. I would like to express my THANKS to our teams that took the time and came out to make the effort such a success. On CW we had W4CU, N4RI, K4OB, NY4I, N2ESP, W4TSP, KP2N, and KR4U. On SSB we had N2ESP, N4GD, N4NHO, KK4CMD, KK4CUM, WA4EEZ and KR4U. John KK4AXF, gave us moral support and also learned about operating events and computer logging by watching our actions. We were very happy to see two of our new operators, Gina KK4CMD and Steve KK4CUM doing such a good job and having such a fun time. A special THANKS to Gina for the Pizza, Sandwiches, and Fruit for a Saturday night snack. We are very fortunate to have such a fine club station, please consider learning to operate W4GAC in one of our future events..no experience necessary..we will help you.

73 de David KR4U



## THE W4GAC TRI-PLEXER PROJECT

(With A Bit Of Electronics History Attached)

By David KR4U, W4GAC Trustee

Earlier this year I constructed the high frequency tri-plexer featured in the June 2010 issue of QST magazine for use at W4GAC. Our station Engineer John, KI4UIP, fabricated the coil forms from 1 inch nylon round stock and wound the coils with the wire size as specified in the article. This device allows three radios to be transmitting at the same time feeding one tri band antenna, such as a beam, without interaction with each other. The unit covers 10,15 and 20 meters. We used it at Field Day and it worked very well on single side band. The next time we used it was the NAQP RTTY contest at our club station. We started the event at 2pm on Saturday running 100 watts on 15 and 20 meters into our beam on the roof. At 6 pm we decided to switch to 40 meters for night time contacts. I noticed the enclosure was very hot after 4 hours of 100% duty cycle rtty use. I removed the cover and smoke poured out of the enclosure and the 20 meter coil was burned and the coil form was melted as shown in the picture. The unit did not fail but a couple of more hours of use would have probably burned the 20 meter coil open. RTTY is a severe mode on equipment due to its duty cycle.

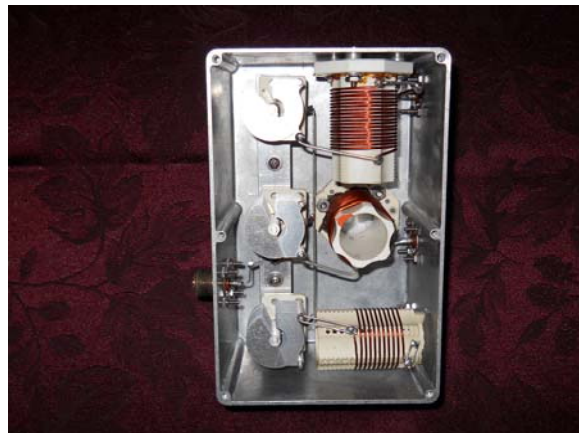
At this point I decided I needed to redesign the coils to handle the higher duty cycle of rtty. Over a period of a few weeks I tried several wire sizes and different coil forms and finally came up with a workable solution using #16 wire and ceramic forms as shown in the pictures. My electronic "junk box" is quite extensive as I have been at this hobby since 1958. Among my stuff are several ARC-5 transmitters and receivers and assorted parts from these units. The ARC-5's also known as "Command Sets" were used in all of the WW2 bombers and several fighter aircraft of that era. The very well made ceramic forms in our tri-plexer were actually oscillator coil forms used in these WW2 transmitters. I stripped the original wire off, removed excess terminals, and cleaned the forms with a tooth brush and sink powder. As a result they looked like new and fit my application perfectly. Ron, KP2N, and I did extensive testing at W4GAC with the re-worked unit and we have a winner thanks to a "Bit Of WW2 Electronic History".

I sent pictures of the reworked unit to the author of the QST article Gary Gordon, K6KV, and he was amazed at the use of the antique forms and how well it all went together and performed.

73 de David KR4U



## OF INTEREST



INSIDE OF THE TRIPLEXER

### Cross Town QSO?

I had just finished a 40M QSO with T32C on East Kiribati (Christmas Island) for my sixth band contact with them. I decided to look for more DX. Ten meters was a hotbed of activity that morning, so I tuned around the band listening for another station to chat with. Passing through 29.514MHz, I caught the words "St. Petersburg" in a definite foreign accent. Backing up a bit with the big knob, I had found Max, RA1AL, putting out a 59 signal from the other St. Pete, over 5,300 miles away! Thinking it would be fun for a St. Pete to St. Pete QSO, I threw out my call sign, and Max came right back with a "59 in St. Petersburg." I replied likewise. Our brief conversation indicated it was a lot cooler on his side of town (5 degrees C) than in the Coquina Key section of SPARC country.

RA1AL is now in my log. With the sunspots going crazy, 10M is wide open. Anyone can easily make similar worldwide contacts with simple wire antennas and minimal power. Give it a try. And don't forget ARRL's Logbook of The World makes QSLing easy.

73, Bob - N2ESP



### Cornbread Road by KE9V

This work was born out of a desire to craft an interesting bit of fiction with ham radio smack in the middle of it. It's a radio mystery delivered in 13 individual episodes - be sure to listen in order beginning with episode one.

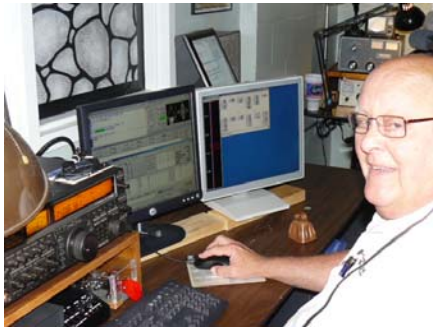
<http://ke9v.net/cornbreadroad.html>

Download the audio (mp3) files for each program directly from the links.  
73, Bob - N2ESP





## Pictures of ARRL Sweepstakes CW Contest taken by N2ESP



## New Officers sworn in by Leslie WA4EEZ



From left to right

STEVE KK4CUM, MIKE K4ZPE, C.MICHAEL KG4PMC, RON KP2N, TOM NY4I, JOHN KI4UIP, TOM AI4QP



## 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*

*\*contact Mike Scott K4ZPE at 727-492-6454*

*Some Members meet for Breakfast*

*Every Saturday, 7:00 am at the*

### 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>
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HF, 10-10	Leslie Johnson	WA4EEZ	wa4eez@verizon.net
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New Ham Elmers	Ed Kline	N4NHO	n4nho@yahoo.com
	Kyle Jeske	N4NSS	n4nss@arrl.net



## Welcome To Our New Members

Richard Corsale KB2DZ  
Robert Swain W5APO  
Earl Ray W4TCE  
Ralph Waespe KI4SMI



## Club Officers for 2012

President Ron Hall KP2N

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Vice President Tom Schaefer NY4I

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