
SPARC GAP

St. Petersburg Amateur Radio Club

October, November, December 2002

Turner loses WCF vote

SPARC retains humorous status-quo



SPARC board members pose at November's election meeting. All were re-elected on a unanimous vote. From left, Susan Dillon, KD4FEZ, treasurer; Dee Turner, N2MNC, vice-president; Donn Davis, N4KII, president; Grace Harris, KG4CTG, secretary; Mark Farr N9MIU and Bill Zulas KG4HPM, board members. Board member Norm Martin AG4BI was absent.

Photo by Phil Gulick

Turner loses WCF by 2 votes

By PHIL GULICK KG4IGX
Editor

There are two-meter rigs.
There can be too much interference
on a band.

Then, there are two votes.
Two Votes!

That was the margin of victory incumbent West Central Florida Section manager Dave Armbrust AE4MR managed over aspiring WCF manager Dee Turner N2MNC in the recent

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Dee Turner N2MNC

By PHIL GULICK KG4IGX
Editor

The 2003 SPARC board of directors was unanimously re-elected at the club meeting Nov. 1, 2002.

The nominating board of Al and Ann Shaver, NH2Z, WH2E, respectively, submitted the names of the 2002 board members, en toto, for unchallenged re-election. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it," said Al Shaver.

The Shavers' decision was announced at the October meeting, during which one nomination was made from the floor for a new board member at-large, that of Jim Schilling KG4JSZ.

A hand vote of members at the November meeting re-installed the three former board members: Mark Farr N9MIU, Norm Martin AG4BI and Bill Zulas KG4HPM.

The vote was a repeat of the 2001 election almost to a "T." So, the current board will continue to serve the club in its jolly, free-loving fun..

"I would like to say the club is open to all people interested in ham radio," Davis noted. "We like to call ourselves a universal club, open to all, with no rancor toward any member or any other club.

"We are here to have fun, play radio and expand the possibilities our members have in furthering their ham radio hobby.

"We try to keep peace with any and every person and the club," Davis concluded.

Paul Knupke, Jr. N4PK — Silent Key — 1971-2002



One of our Shining Stars Is gone

Paul Knupke, Jr., N4PK, ARRL assistant section manager and Webmaster for the West Central Florida Section, became a Silent Key Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2002. Mr. Knupke was 31.

Mr. Knupke was the Webmaster for many amateur radio sites in Florida. He was also president of the Tampa Bay Hamfest and Division 4 director for the Florida Repeater Council. He was past president of the Clearwater Amateur Radio Society (CARS) and was serving as its secretary and newsletter editor. Mr. Knupke was a founding member of the West Central Florida Group, Inc., foundation and one of its board members.

Mr. Knupke exemplified the very best in Amateur Radio, as a leader, an operator, a contester, a repeater owner and a VE. He did it all and all he could to help Amateur Radio be the best it can be. He always had a kind word for everyone and was truly one of our shining stars. His passing leaves a huge void in Florida.

In Memory of Paul Knupke, Jr., N4PK

You were always a friend first. You always had a kind word. I admired your common sense. Your sense of fair play was second to none. Thank you for the years of friendship and great memories that I will never forget. I will miss you, bud...

Dan Johnson (W4BNC)

This news brings great sadness that such an awesome person and a great mind has been lost. I have known Paul since the days pre-dating BBS's and even before the C64 was the bomb. Although we were never in constant contact, he never hesitated to help when he could and no matter what he was always there for you. He has contributed so much to Ham Radio, no matter what, we should honor those contributions and continue in his memory. He will be greatly missed.

Jeremy Sibert - N4EEZ

Paul had many things going for him. He was truly a good human being. His analytical mind would completely examine problems and projects that he tackled. He held malice to no one and was a friend to all. He will be missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Donn N4KII

The news of N4PK--Paul's passing saddens all of us. I first got to know Paul through APRS back in 1995 which later expanded to include IRLP. He was always the gentleman and a man of integrity -- just an all-around, first-class guy. He was someone I am proud to call a friend. My condolences to his family. He will be surely missed.

**Aaron Morrison
AE4KO**

Paul Knupke, Jr., N4PK Scholarship Fund

The Paul Knupke, Jr., memorial scholarship fund has been established with the West Central Florida Group, Inc. Foundation and Paul's family.

The family asks that donations be made to the fund and may be sent to:

Paul Knupke, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund
% Alan J. Pickering
720 North Shore Blvd. NE
St. Petersburg, FL 33701-2623

WCF Field Day test scores stack up to the country

By **DAVE ARMBRUST AE4MR**
WCF Section Manager

Field Day scores are out and once again WCF Field Day results from last June rocked the nation. Included in this year's results were 20 entries from WCF.

Begun as a test of the creativity and ingenuity of the amateur community back in 1933, Field Day has evolved into a wonderful display of Amateur Radio at its best. This year's entries reflected the participation of 34,498 which reflects an increase of over nine percent from 2001. This year marked the first time that stations in IARU Region 2 were invited to participate in the ARRL Field Day. An single entry from the dimension of "outer space" also was received from the International Space Station, which reported 136 QSOs.

Once again FCG/Sarasota Emergency RC Field Day results topped Florida and the WCF Section with an impressive score of 13,188 points. The group had 4,344 QSOs and 40 participants. They came through as the second highest score in the 3A category and were only 64 points away from taking top 3A honors from Sussex County ARC in New Jersey! This is an increase of 1,992 points from last years 2A score of 11,196.

Also worth noting is WCF's second highest score by the Tampa ARC, which finished third in the 2A category with 11,670 points and 3,689 contacts.

This year Tampa ARC trailed Sarasota by only 1,518 total points. This is a big increase of 3,689 from last year's 2A score of 7,958. Those Force 12 beams really did help and their generator was second to none.

In third place in WCF was Brandon ARS with a 2A score of 6,508 and 1,678 contacts. Brandon ARS increased its score by 1,578 from last year's 2A score of 5,230. It also increased its total participants to 63 from last year's 35.

The Charlotte ARS and Peace River



DAVE ARMBRUST AE4MR
Encouraged by the clubs' scoring

Repeater Association joined forces with an very impressive 81 participants beating all other WCF entries in total participants.

I also like to thank ASM/SEC Paul Toth, NA4AR, for putting up with my company once again for the entire 24-plus hours and 505 miles of our Field Day trip.

A full listing of Field Day scores will appear in the December 2002 QST. It is also available on the ARRL members only web site as well.

Scores by clubs

1A Battery
East Pasco ARS
K4EX 50 5 6 950 WCF

1A
Clear Channel Communicators
KB4VC 1238 2 7 3,766 WCF
Looped Group
K0RK 1239 2 7 2,878 WCF
Amateur Radio Public Service
W4EFK 421 2 10 1,492 WCF

2A
Tampa ARC
N4TP(+N4WEB) 3689 2 47 11,670 WCF
Brandon ARS

K4TN(+W4TAS) 1678 2 63 6,508 WCF
Lakeland ARC
K4LKL(+AD4IH) 828 2 46 3,404 WCF
Polk Ham Club
W4TJM(+KG4BMP) 652 2 14 3,058 WCF
Englewood ARS
K8ONV 697 2 14 2,512 WCF
Gulf Coast ARC
WA4GDN 356 2 29 1,522 WCF

3A
FCG/Sarasota Emergency RC
NJ4M(+WB4NJV) 4344 2 40 13,188 WCF
CARS/PRRA
K4IB 765 2 81 3,944 WCF
Manatee ARC
K4GG 194 2 18 1,552 WCF

4A
Metro SPARC Wormhole
W4TA 1395 2 10 4,932 WCF

5A
Highlands Cty ARC
K4W 834 2 15 3,438 WCF
Clearwater ARS/Pinellas 4-H ARC
AI4K 826 2 24 3,198 WCF
Bradenton ARC
W4TB 130 2 29 1,066 WCF
1C
AA4G 1219 2 5 4,010 WCF
W4/VE3BUC 142 2 1 284 WCF
W8MVT/MM 52 2 1 132 WCF

Class A stations are clubs or groups operating with three or more participants. Score listings are group according to the number of transmitters in simultaneous operation.

The listing show club or group name, call sign (GOTA call sign) used, total number of QSOs, number indicate power output used (5 is less than 5 W, 2 is less than 150 W; 1 is more then 150 W), number of participants and total score including bonus points and ARRL section.

You can bet — things will go wrong!

By **LESLIE JOHNSON WA4EEZ**

It IS possible to wake up at 4 a. m. to go on a Dxpedition. It is much more difficult to stay awake at 4 a.m. the next day.

The bands WILL fold just when you need the activity to stay awake.

Boats WILL tend to run aground at dead-low tide. Dinghies tend to slip away at any time they choose. They choose quite often.

Radio equipment is heavy. Very. Lots of radio equipment is very, very heavy.

Eight-hundred feet of coax is enough. Just enough.

Forty-five-year-old jungle hammocks tend to disintegrate at 2 a. m. They then make good ground covers. In between, they make a kind of slant-board.

It IS possible to sleep on a picnic bench. For a few minutes.

Generators are noisy. See above.

When the wind blows a forgotten half-cup of coffee onto the back of the sleeping person on the bench, that person WILL wake up the entire camp with their loud exclamations.

Tepid canned iced tea tastes delicious. Really.

Tepid coffee tastes delicious too. Not.

You do NOT need a plate and fork to eat pancakes, syrup and sausage. I had no idea.

Dirt does not taste too bad. Somehow, purple ketchup does.

It is OKAY to not take a bath for two days. Three days is pushing it.

The lantern WILL run out of fuel around 3 a. m. No one cares.

Some bugs do not bite. Some do.

It IS possible to erect an entire screen room over a working 20-meter station without the operators even noticing.

Paper logs will not work. Laptops and logging software will.

There are morning people and then there are the others. Do NOT talk to the non-morning people before 10 a. m. Ever.

Just when the band gets hot again, the Captain says "we need to leave--NOW"

Island Dxpeditions are fun! DEFINITELY!

Turner

(Continued from page 1)

ARRL elections.

After such close results, a recount is the usual recourse for the loser. Unfortunately, it appears the ARRL does not have the political prerogative of re-counting fallen chads.

The final tally was Armbrust 490 votes, Turner 488.

Turner was non-committal. "What can I say? It was a good, clean election that surprised a lot of people. We'll see if there are changes made, if not, we'll be back in two years. In the meantime, we will continue to be the good hand that I am and help the community."

Turner had definite ideas for what he felt would be progressive changes in the WCF personnel and its relationship to the 22 clubs it administers.

Those convictions were stated firmly and clearly in his campaign liturgy.

"It is my strong belief that the individual membership and clubs are the backbone of Amateur Radio and that the Section and ARRL exist to support their activities.

"One of the first issues I plan to address (if I win) is the relationship of the West Central Florida Big Stick Repeater (K4WCF) Club and the officers of the West Central Florida Section. In my opinion, K4WCF and the West Central Florida Section are too closely related. The K4WCF Club is in the hands of section leadership competing for funds from West Central Florida Section clubs. The two should be separate entities, with separate officers, boards and fund-raising.

"Also in my opinion, WCF officials are dictating their aims to local clubs, more or less demanding at club meetings what hams should do, i.e. hams should be SKYWARN and ARES trained and members of K4WCF. For many people, ham radio is a hobby, not a profession or a job, and many hams resent being pushed into different aspects of the hobby not in their interests."

What happens now that Armbrust retains control is anybody's guess.

Storm changes signals on Hopkins

By **KEN HOPKINS**
WA9WCP

When I got the call to come to Louisiana to work as a FEMA disaster relief worker, I thought I was going in response to Tropical Storm Isadore.

As soon as I arrived in Baton Rouge, we were alerted to the impending arrival of Hurricane Lili. As I sat in my "secure" hotel room waiting for the storm to hit, I was heartened by the fact that I had remembered to bring my HT and thus able to plug into the local ARES net to get updates on the storm. In addition, since my duty assignment was 100 miles from Baton Rouge, I was further able to assess the situation in Houma, LA., and through ham radio, found that the damage to that area had been minimal.

Although I was too busy with FEMA to assess the scope of ham radio activity in the area, I can say that there was an active and thorough 2-meter net in effect during the entire event. I'm sure you will be able to read about that in QST.

The role of FEMA in disaster is to help people quickly recover from damages to their home and property. FEMA awards cash grants to disaster victims to repair their homes and replace damaged personal property. In addition, they work closely with SBA to offer low cost loans for home and business needs. For example, in Louisiana many small commercial fishermen suffered the loss of livelihood when their boats sank or their nets were destroyed. FEMA and SBA quickly helped those people recover.

Egmont Key — a dexpedition to be remembered

By JOHN STARK KU4BT

My Egmont Key expedition started early Saturday morning at 4:40. I met Mark Farr N9MIU and Dee Turner N2MNC to load the last of the supplies into the van for the trip to Anna Maria Island.

We transferred these to the second of two boats, nice, beautiful 33-footers, whose captains were themselves hams. Our trip was delayed half an hour while we worked to help free the first boat, which had run aground in the shallow water.

I don't know much about this because I was being used as ballast, but it was a real team accomplishment. The trip took about 40 minutes, the seas were cooperative and soon we were approaching the dock at the lighthouse on Egmont Key. This dock is primarily used by Coast Guard vessels which service the automated lighthouse. The dock was about four feet above the gunwale of the boats, making unloading quite an adventure. The Park Ranger on duty was a great help during the unloading.

We moved all the supplies to the back of the dock. Again, the Ranger was very helpful as he had a four-wheel, all-terrain vehicle and a small trailer we used to transport the supplies to our operating position.

Our location on the island was about 150 feet behind the lighthouse in a partially cleared area surrounded by palm trees with five picnic tables. The Ranger informed us that the island was inhabited by turtles, a few black snakes, and poison ivy, but nothing really dangerous.

Conditions were primitive. There was no running water, no grills and the most primitive toilet facilities

Leslie Johnson has a different slant on her experiences during the Egmont Key outing.
See page 4.

imaginable. We had to bring all our own water, food, and our own stoves.

We had three stations set up and on the air by noon. These were a 10-meter station using an IC-706 with an AS99 vertical antenna, a 20-meter SSB station using a three-element beam and an IC-706 and a 20-meter CW station using KR4U's Jupiter and homebrew vertical.

The ten-meter station, belonging to Leslie Johnson WA4EEZ and her husband, was used primarily on SSB, but also on CW as conditions warranted. We used paper logging at this station and the CW station also used paper logging. The 20-meter SSB station used computer logging. The rigs were battery powered by deep-cycle batteries and we had a small generator along to charge them.

Conditions were rough and the interference fierce. The 40-meter CW was not viable because of an OK contest. Our antenna set-up had to be moved to provide more separation and eliminate interference.

We made a lot of contacts and we certainly had a lot of people that wanted to work us. I know there were many stations out there that we were not able to work and I feel bad about it.

We operated from noon Saturday to midnight, when all the bands shut down on us. For dinner that night, we had hot dogs, hamburg-

ers and black coffee.

About 5 a.m., the bands opened up again and operations ran hot and heavy and we made many European contacts. For breakfast, we had blueberry pancakes and sausage, hot sausage for me, and plenty of black coffee.

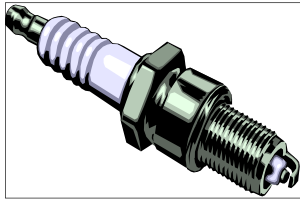
The overnight weather was beautiful and I slept under the stars on top of my blanket. We had a very picturesque view of the sky and the starry firmament with a light breeze all night. There were few mosquitoes, some ants, and large flying insects that didn't bite, but did land on you at the most unexpected times. I remember operating the 10-meter rig early Sunday morning, watching the sunrise on the lighthouse and the flags waving in the wind. A truly great moment for Ham Radio, and for me personally.

We operated until noon, as promised, then packed up. Another Ranger helped us move the equipment to the beach.

Because of the tide, it was decided to load the boats by walking the equipment out into the water on the shoulders of our wet-water crew. Last, we loaded up the people and departed Egmont for the trip back to Anna Maria Island. This trip was very beautiful also and somewhat warmer than the trip out. At the dock, we had to unload both boats, then transfer all the equipment to the vehicles and the trailer for transport back to St. Pete, where it was gradually unloaded at the homes of the owners.

It was a great experience of like-minded individuals pitching in and doing what needed to be done to accomplish a common goal.

I was very lucky to be included in this adventure.



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33731-4026**

Mailing
Address
Goes
Here

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DATE LOG - 2002

Tampa Bay Hamfest, Dec. 7-8, Manatee Civic Center, 8-5 p. m., admission \$6.
SPARC meetings - First Friday every month, 7:30 p. m., 818 4th St. N, St. Petersburg
Testing sessions - Fourth Monday every month, Gulfport Senior Center.
Class schedule will be announced at next meeting.

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 N2MNC.
CARS repeater: Wednesdays, 8 p. m., 146.970-, 224.940-, 444.150+, 444.450+.
Metro repeater: Mon-Wed-Fri, 7:30 p. m., 147.360+, 127.3.
WCF Section Net: Sun 7:30 p. m., Mon, Wed, Fri 9 p. m., 145.430+ & 442.950+(100Hz).

SPARC'S 2002-03 BOARD

President - Donn Davis N4KH	527-9636
Vice-president - Dee Turner N2MNC	548-7474
Secretary - Grace Harris KG4CTG	894-1447
Treasurer - Susan Dillon KD4FEZ	302-0611
Board - Mark Farr N9MIU	895-9201
Norm Martin AG4BI	712-8964
Bill Zulas KG4HPM	725-4020
PIO & Newsletter Editor	
Phil Gulick KG4IGX	392-3481
Special Events Co-ordinator	
Ken Hopkins WA9WCP	525-8411

**From the board
to all members
and friends of
SPARC**

**A Joyous
Christmas
And a Happy
and Prosperous
New Year to
all!**