

What is SPARC?

SPARC is a group of Ham Radio Operators with diverse interests in Amateur Radio

The Saint Petersburg Amateur Radio Club (SPARC) is a member of The American Radio Relay League (ARRL), the national organization that promotes the Amateur Radio Service.

SPARC members are from Pinellas County and nearby communities. Members enjoy activities and friendships based on common interests in communicating via radio, both locally and around the world.



We use equipment and techniques that range from the oldest to the newest forms of radio communications. Those include late 19th century Morse code (CW) to 21st century digital repeaters, satellite communications, and using voice or digital messaging.

Volunteers help mentor those starting in ham radio, teach classes as instructors, and help local organizations or government agencies. Our volunteers are diverse in technical abilities from kit

builders to the design and construction of major systems.

Amateur radio combines a wide range of knowledge, from STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), learning how to converse with others, world geography and language through meeting people from around the globe, and helping others learn.

The Amateur Radio Service: Communicating is the most fun you can have with a radio. It's a way to talk with people around the world, orbiting the globe; or to send messages without an internet connection. It is also a way to keep in touch with friends across town or across the country.

It's called the **Amateur Radio Service** because it also provides another important service: critical emergency communications that has been recognized by national and local government agencies during times of disaster. When cell phones, landline phones, the internet, and other



systems are down or overloaded, ham radio still gets messages through. Ham radio is a *hobby* – that's the fun part. But it's also a *service* – a vital service that has

saved lives again and again when regular communication systems have failed. Many hams are also members of SkyWarn and the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES).

Club Meetings: SPARC meets the first Friday of each month at 7:30 PM (gathering begins at 7 PM). We meet in the Hobson Fellowship Hall at the Fifth Ave Baptist Church, 4901 5th Ave North at 49th Street. Parking and entrance around back off of 6th Ave N.

Club Station: SPARC has full HF/VHF/UHF equipment at the club station for members use. The radio room has two operating positions. Antennas include a tower with a directional HF antenna along with dipole antennas to cover the HF bands.

SPARC Activities: We operate many radio contests during the year and maintain a good ranking among radio clubs nationally.

RTTY Round Up
CW & SSB Sweepstakes
ARRL DX Contest
ARRL Field Day
Florida QSO Party
NAQP (RTTY, SSB, CW)

SPARC also sponsors a Swap Meet & Tailgate, better known as SPARC Fest, on the second Saturday in November.



SPARC Net: SPARC holds a 2 meter net every evening on the 147.060 MHz repeater, starting at 6:30 PM. All check-ins are welcome. This is not just a "check-in and check-out" net. We start this net with

NTS traffic followed by club bulletins.

SPARC Net, every evening at 6:30 PM
2m FM Repeater, 147.060 MHz
No tone required

This is a friendly net that is run by a different Net Control Operator each evening. We share what we have been doing in radio and general comments about our day's activities. We encourage all check-ins, checking "In & Out" for those short of time and mobile stations is welcome as well. Also, a nightly

multiple choice question from the license pool of questions is presented during the net. If you like, offer your best choice for the answer during your check-in.

Nightly questions are presented to help us learn new material added to the Amateur Radio exam pool of



questions. This helps us recall material we've studied when we took our tests and to help those now studying. We don't keep score, we just learn and have

fun. All club and all non-club hams are welcome to join in the fun.

Repeaters: SPARC sponsors three repeater systems that cover Pinellas county and surrounding areas for use by all amateurs, located at MLK & 27th Ave N.

2 meters: 147.060MHz +offset, no PL
220: 224.660MHz -offset, no PL
440: 444.475MHz +offset, PL 146.2

Getting your Amateur Radio License:

Call signs are issued by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). To qualify, individuals are required to pass a written exam. Exams can be taken with SPARC volunteer examiners (VEs).

Where to take a license exam:

- Third Tuesday every month at 6:30 pm. SPARC Club Station, 6699 90th Ave. N. Pinellas Park. Show up or contact Donn, N4KII – n4kii@arrl.net for more info.
- Fourth Saturday of every the month at 10:00AM Lealman Fire District, 4360 55th Ave N, St. Petersburg, FL 33714 Contact Tom, AI4QP – ai4qp@arrl.net

For more information: The club has several websites, an internet reflector and member pages.

The official SPARC page:

www.sparc-club.org



Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/sparcw4gac

Reflector: Groups.io:

<https://groups.io/g/SPARC>

Twitter: @sparc_w4gac

SPARC's Purpose

- To further and promote the social benefits and technical advancements of the radio arts
- To acquire, organize, establish and maintain facilities for social and emergency communication, both mobile and stationary
- To assist and cooperate with authorized agencies in any emergency of local, state or national scope
- To further fellowship among radio amateurs, potential radio amateurs and other parties interested in amateur radio

Join SPARC

- Join us at a club meeting or on one of our on-the-air nets
- Signup for membership at a club meeting
- Follow us on our web site or Facebook page
- Chat with SPARC members on one of the SPARC repeaters
- Find and e-mail an Elmer listed on the SPARC web site

SPARC

St. Petersburg Amateur Radio Club

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Founded 1932

W4GAC

W4TA

WA4AKH