



QRZ NEWS

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF
SOUTHERN PENNSYLVANIA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC
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AN AFFILIATED SPECIAL SERVICE CLUB OF THE ARRL, INC.

"Public Service through Communication"

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July 2008



Operating tent left: Mike Warner, N3XPD; front to back Paul Herr, KD8WY, at the VHF station; Dick Hess KB3LOJ building a sun shield for the computer; Jim, KW3E at the rear.

2008 SPARC Field Day Report Report by Ross, W3ZKU

The 2008 SPARC field day was a success in my opinion.

First, I want to thank everyone who participated and stopped by.

Big thanks to Grant Beauchamp for being the volunteer chef and providing

food and drink for all who attended.

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Thanks also to Dick Hess for providing the generator, which enabled us to double our QSO score.

The Scoring summarized here:

Score Item	Score Points
53 Phone QSOs	53
<150 watt X	2
Total QSO points	106
Bonus Item	Bonus Points
Emergency power	100
Xcvrs 4 X 100	400
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site visit by an invited served agency official. I Invited Paul Herr as Official Coordinator of HEARS. 	100
Youth Element Bonus	20
Total Bonus Points	520
Total Field Day Points	106 + 520 = 626

I was hoping SPARC would have at least 1000 Points. Unfortunately we did not make that goal. Because of that total and the fact we moved into the operating shack I will not submit the

results to ARRL. This has been a learning experience for field day and I look forward to 2009 Field Day.

On the next page there are some reflections on what was good and not so good about the exercise.

Need more effort in the administrative issues. I spent too much time planning for digital operations.

SPARC had exactly ZERO QSOs via digital modes thanks to W3ZKU (most of Saturday frittered away pursuing none QSO producing digital modes.)

The answer is KEEP IT SIMPLE STUPID!

Keep the operation more on typically normal modes, which most hams operate.

I believe operation on phone and CW modes only would have produced much better results.

In 2009 we should plan for continuous operation in bad weather from the field site.

Again I want to thank all of you participating in field day even those who did not operate but gave us the support that made the entire effort worth doing.

What are your thoughts on SPARC's 2008 Field Day (good or bad)? Email me at W3ZKU@comcast.net

It was FUN!

73

Ross

W3ZKU



Ross, W3ZKU at the HF position



Antenna installation by Mike Warner N3XPD; Dick Hess KB3LOJ; Ken Delucca KB3KPV



Field Day is not complete without good food and camaraderie. Chef Beauchamp at work.

Highlights of the June 2008 Meeting of the Southern Pennsylvania Amateur Radio Club (SPARC)

Held Wednesday, June 18, 2008 at 7 PM at the Rapho Township Municipal Building

Adopt-a-Highway was done on June 7, 2008, also the County's pickup that's at the repeater site was moved back to the fence.

Rapho Township Recycling was done June 14, 2008. 3500 lbs of paper was collected.

SPARC truck repairs have been completed.

Rick Watson will fill in as secretary until the end of this year.

Mike Warner is trying to renew our Special Service Club status.

Mike Warner notified ARRL that George Gadbois is SPARC newsletter editor.

Site rentals for RV's and garden plots was discussed.

George Gadbois needs newsletter information, please help.

There will be a Mini hamfest on Sept, 20, with rain date 27. Proceeds will benefit the Boys and Girls Club of Lancaster. More details will follow.

Cardboard items need to be kept separate from the newspaper during collection.

Coming Events

SPARC membership meeting July 16, 2008 at the Rapho Township Municipal Bldg., 971 N. Colebrook Rd., Rapho Twp.

Rapho Township Recycling August 9 and Adopt-a-highway.

HEARS hospital drill August 16.

Mini-hamfest September 20.

Lancaster Heart Walk Oct. 4, 2008 8:30 AM at Clipper Stadium.

The SCTF has scheduled a major exercise for 16 – 18 October 2008.

Auction of SPARC Surplus Equipment

The SPARC Board of Directors is pleased to announce an auction of surplus club equipment. The auction will be held during the regular club membership meeting on August 20.

Rules for the auction are:

- This auction is for the benefit of SPARC and the proceeds will be used to reduce the balance on the club's mortgage on the repeater site.
- A copy of these rules and a list of equipment to be sold will be included in the July and August club newsletters. Items may be added to this list by the Board of Directors prior to the sale.
- The equipment list and these rules will be provided to members at the July and August membership meetings.
- The equipment list and rules will be emailed to all active club members

no less than two weeks before the auction.

- No equipment will be delivered to the purchaser until it has been paid for in full.
- All equipment will be sold "as is." Where possible, an attempt will be made to test the equipment before the sale but such a test will not constitute a warranty of any kind.
- Some equipment will have a minimum bid set by the Board of Directors. At this time, those minimums have not been determined.
- Cash or check will be accepted for payment at the auction.
- Members who cannot attend the auction may submit a bid to the club by mail.

The current list of equipment to be sold includes:

- An aluminum tower
- Assorted antennas and associated parts
- Two (2) photography tripods, Manfrotto #3130
- Oscilloscopes
- Various lengths of LMR400 coax, many with attached connectors
- Other coax including hard line
- Floor stand for public address-type microphone
- Shure model 450 desk microphone. Hi-low impedance, 8-pin connector
- Turner hand microphone with a 3-conductor, phone-type plug
- UPC Unique long wire HF tuner
- Drake MN2000 HF tuner
- Ten Tec model 229 HF antenna tuner
- Paradyamics Corp 1000 watt HF SWR bridge

- Astron AS-12M 12 amp power supply with meters
- EPD 8 amp power supply
- Yaesu G450A and G550 rotors for a satellite antenna
- Drake L4B HF amplifier with L4PS power supply. Manuals included.
- Topaz 91002-11 Line Noise Suppressor
- HP 5383A 520 MHz frequency counter
- Metal cage 8 feet high with three (3) gates
- Assorted PC parts such as mice, keyboards and hard drives
- Kenwood 2meter/440 mobile radio and an Ameritron HF amp. The Kenwood is a TM-721A. I replaced the 440 MHz output module and checked it - everything is good. There is no microphone with it. The amp is an Ameritron AL80A. It appears to be OK but I have not operated it. Harry Bauder

Recycling Update

We are still learning how to maximize the return on recycled paper through our new recycler. I guess it is not a surprise that there are various grades of recycled paper. To the extent that it is feasible to separate the paper into grades, it produces the best return to the club.

Newspapers, magazines and catalogs bound with staples, office paper, etc are the highest grade that we handle. Window envelopes and mail are excepted.

Brown paper bags, cereal boxes, shoe boxes, phone books and magazines with a glued (flat back) binding need to be kept separate. Collecting

newspapers in grocery bags is no problem.

Corrugated cardboard should be flattened out and separated from the regular paper.

Plastic and Tyvek should not be recycled. Thank you for your support.

ARES/RACES



As part of the clubs commitment to emergency communications, the SPARC repeater system is maintained as available for linking with other area repeaters.

Lancaster County VHF Net is held on the first Tuesday of the month at 2030 hours local time. Presently being held on the 145.230 and 147.015 MHz repeaters with minus offset and 118.8 PL.

Pennsylvania RACES HF Nets are held at 3993.5 kHz LSB on all Sundays except holidays. The statewide net is on the first Sunday of the month at 0800 hours local time.

The Central Area (including Lancaster County) net is at 08:30 local time.

ARRL UHF Contest

SPARC Nets

SPARC holds nets on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Tuesday (every Tuesday except the first) at 2030 local time on 145.230 MHz minus offset and a PL of 118.8.

Club Officers

President: Mike Warner - [N3XPD](#)

Vice-President: Rick Watson - [N3SWJ](#)

- Secretary: Position Open, VP Rick Watson, N3SWJ is presently acting as secretary.
- Treasurer: Ted Freedman - [K3KSA](#)
- Repeater Trustees: Dave Payne - [N3LOM](#)
- Past President: Dave Payne - [N3LOM](#)

Editor's Comments

Many thanks to all those who have contributed to the information published here. I am always looking for material to publish both full size articles and short subjects that may not be date sensitive so they can be used to fill out a page.

We still need someone to write about the SPARC ATV repeater. I have some info on ATV in York County which I am holding for some future issue when news is running short.

73,

[George, W3FEY](#)

Coming Operating Events

[CQ World-wide VHF Contest](#) starts 1800 UTC Saturday July 19; Ends 2100 Sunday July 20. Es is usually still good for this operating event. It is a 6 & 2m event world wide.

August 2-3 ARRL UHF contest for all bands above 222 MHz. See the [ARRL contest pages](#) for details.

You will work the most stations and cover the greatest distances on VHF/UHF operating CW and SSB but the rules simply require simplex operation using any mode. Try your station on FM simplex and see what you can work.

Fuel-less VHF Rover

Randy Maurer, WA3HLP, wanted to do some limited operating during the June VHF QSO Party so he set up his rover station on his patio. Total operating time about 3 hours. Here's a summary of the operation:

6m - 23 QSOs. Best DX CO2OJ in EL83. Es helped 6m scores during the contest.

2m - 7 QSOs Tropo rather flat on the VHF bands. Tropo should be better in September.

432 - 6 QSOs

1296 - 3 QSOs with K8GP in WV as best DX ~ 206 miles. K8GP runs 1kw out on 1296 with a phased pair of DB6NT 500w amplifiers.

Randy worked [K8GP FM08fq](#), Spruce Knob, WV on all four bands.



Randy at the patio operating position.



The rest of the antenna stack on the WA3HLP rover mast.

Meaningful Work vs Make Work

[Jerry Boyd~ N7WR](#)

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One of the members of our local radio club (Wingville Township Amateur Radio Club) recently expressed some concerns about a trend she has observed within the Amateur Radio [Emcomm](#) community. It is a trend that has been documented in articles in Amateur Radio journals as well as on-line commentaries on *qrz.com* and *e-ham*. She suggested that maybe a more detailed discussion of this issue (real work vs. make work) might be appropriate in this column. I decided to take her suggestion though I clearly realize that my comments will not sit well with some readers.

The first point is one I've discussed before, but I believe it is worth repeating. Amateur Radio is a service, not just a "hobby." One of our basic purposes is to provide service to the public. Tragically, over time, we have seemed to move from that goal of serving the public to serving agencies. Granted, it can be argued that serving agencies does, at least indirectly, serve the public as well. I tend to think that indirect assistance is minimal. Let me briefly discuss a little history.

Going back as far as the great Alaskan Earthquake of 27 March 1964 (known as the [Good Friday Earthquake](#)) we see that Amateur Radio's greatest contribution was passing messages on behalf of the public, not agencies. Those in cities near the epicenter of the quake (Anchorage and Valdez) had no way to communicate their status to loved ones and friends outside the area. Amateur Radio stepped in and provided that service. Yes, Amateur Radio also assisted in passing traffic on behalf of

government entities but the primary focus was on citizens. I can recall a similar event and a similar focus of Amateur Radio at the time of the [Tehachapi earthquake](#) in Southern California in 1952.

It was not until the late 1970s that the focus began to shift from serving the public to serving agencies (mostly government public safety agencies). As I have noted in the past, service to agencies is a good and important thing as long as it is needed and as long as the public is also served directly. Too often and in too many places these days the public is left out. One of the most pressing needs when the infrastructure fails is to provide citizens with a way to communicate. Though there are some exceptions, government entities have multiple modes of communication and, most of the time, at least a part of government's communications toolbox remains functional. This is especially true because of the redundancy and target hardening of public safety radio systems made possible by [Homeland Security Grants](#) totaling billions of dollars since 2001.

What seems to be occurring, more and more frequently, is that when any event occurs it is used as a reason for some Emcomm units to immediately run to the side of their police, fire and EMS agencies - whether needed or not - with little if any thought given to whether the public may need a communications resource more than government does.

I have read many accounts, particularly over the past several months, of relatively minor events which resulted in amateurs flocking to the scene. In most cases there was no indication that their presence was requested or needed. Let me cite one example. A town experienced a very large structure fire in a historic area of downtown. Pretty major event for a small town. But the fire department's radios worked and they were interoperable with the neighboring fire

departments that responded under mutual aid. The police and ambulance radios worked and they were not only interoperable with each other but with the fire department as well. A dozen amateurs reportedly responded and were on scene for several hours. After action press releases from the Amateur Radio organization made a big deal about their presence, but without one mention of what they actually did that was related to Amateur Radio emergency communications. As one who has served professionally in law enforcement, fire and EMS I think I know the reason for that. There was no role related to Amateur Radio that could or should have been performed at this incident scene.

The preceding is an example of what I call a "make work" rather than essential work activation of an Emcomm group. It serves no legitimate purpose other than to make the Amateur Radio responders "feel good" and feel important. In my view, if they want to make a meaningful contribution in such incidents they would be better served becoming trained volunteer firefighters (this fire was fought primarily by volunteers).

Were this the only example it might not be worthy of comment. But it is far from being the only example. Not a week goes by without some Amateur Radio media source documenting, proudly I might add, something similar to that just described. Amateurs doing something that has absolutely nothing to do with communications yet trying, as amateurs and as individuals, to take the credit for it. In fact, in far too many cases, readers might get the impression that amateurs "saved the day" when, in fact, they did nothing of substance and nothing that was really needed.

In my view following the path described, which more and more Amateur Radio groups seem to be doing, is at the very least dishonest if not downright harmful. It is dishonest in the sense that publicity

concerning "make work" assignments gives the impression that amateurs really played an essential role in a major emergency (and, thus; perhaps are heroes) when in fact they are not. It is potentially harmful for a couple of reasons. One, showing up at a dangerous scene and not being assigned to a carefully defined communications mission generally results in an unnecessary and undesired exposure to dangerous conditions. The first time an amateur on-scene but without an assigned mission to perform is seriously injured or killed will be the last time amateurs are given access to such scenes in that jurisdiction.

Such escapades in pursuit of importance and recognition are also dangerous in terms of the future of Emcomm in places where such behavior occurs. As a former Police Chief and Fire Chief I can tell you, without hesitation or reservation, that public safety officials may tolerate, once or twice, amateurs showing up when their services are not needed or requested. But they will not tolerate it for long especially when it becomes clear that the motivation for such responses is less than altruistic. If they sense (and they read the press accounts of amateurs' heroism too) that what amateurs claim to have done has been exaggerated or, at best, was "make work" they will resent it. Public safety professionals put their lives on the line with no expectation of positive media attention. If they see that amateurs, who essentially have done little or nothing, continually capitalize on their meaningless responses for group or individual media accolades they will resent it. And, soon, they will restrict Amateur Radio access in such incidents to official requests for service only. And, those official requests for assistance will become fewer and farther between. That reaction is just human nature and, I assure you, is definitely the nature of the public safety animal.

One of the arguments I expect to hear from

those who disagree with my premise is that amateurs of this ilk only respond to "be prepared in case their services are needed". The phones might fail, the police radio repeater might go down, the hospital might need to be evacuated. There are a lot of "mights" in this world, but let me assure you that amateurs are not the appropriate ones to decide whether the "might" justifies an unsolicited response.

In this day and age almost any significant incident which occurs anywhere within the United States is managed by an Incident Commander (or Unified Command) with appropriate staff. It is their responsibility and they are trained to anticipate needs and "mights." If in their judgment there is a potential need for Emcomm support they will request it. Then and only then is it necessary and appropriate for the Emcomm group to respond. Responding to an official request is "real work," not "make work." The distinction is important for a variety of reasons and ought to be considered seriously and carefully by all of us in the Emcomm arena.

Until next time 73 from NE, Oregon de N7WR.

*The author can be contacted via
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