

SPARK

July 2011

the monthly newsletter of the

North Ottawa Amateur Radio Club

IN THIS ISSUE

July Treasurer's Report.pg 2

Joe's Report from Hudsonville.....pg 3

N8FQ discovers Software Defined Radio.....pg 4

July 2011 calendar.....pg 5

Feb 1990 newsletter.....pg 6

QRP In The Park.....pg 8

Swap 'n Shop.....pg 9

Field Day couldn't have gone any better!

Perfect weather. Great band conditions. Good turnout. Record-breaking final score. Nearly 750 QSOs by the time it was over!

The club operated as class 4-A once again this year. Gordon KA8UQT and Jim W9BWC operated their 40 meter CW station under the pavilion, right next to John N8YQD's 20 meter digital station and Joe N8FQ's VHF station. Next to the restrooms, John KC8UNY hosted the GOTA station inside the county's communications trailer. Lou N8KYO ran a station out of his van and Roger N8RXC and Phyllis KB8NLN had one set up in a tent.

Paul W8IQE once again provided a solar power system, using an inverter hooked up to his electric car to provide 120V AC to run a battery charger at each station. With this setup, we ran non-stop until nearly 2 AM, and picked up again around 8 with fully-charged batteries.

NOARC board of directors

President

Paul Zellar, W8IQE – paulzellar@sbcglobal.net – (616) 844-0847

Vice President

Craig Christilaw, K8CRC – k8crc@arrl.net – (616) 846-0464

Secretaries

Roger & Phyllis Simmons, N8RXC & KB8NLN – rogersimmons6@gmail.com – (616) 846-3496

Treasurer

John Sundstrom, N8YQD – sundstrj@gvsu.edu – (616) 847-4249

SPARK Editor

Joe Veldhuis, N8FQ – jvn8fq@gmail.com – (616) 834-4989

Activities Director

** VACANT **

NOARC 2 meter repeater

W8CSO/R – 145.490 output, 144.890 input

Main RX: PL 94.8 – Grand Rapids RX: PL 91.5 – EchoLink: N8FQ-R #469574

July 2011 Treasurer's Report

Balance as of may 17 th (agrees with bank).....	\$1,804.25
check:.....IRA Hamfest	29.00
Deposits:	
Dues (CRC) + 50/50	77.00
N8LBG estate	138.50
Dues	50.00
N8LBG radio	300.00
Balance as of June 27, 2011 (agrees with Chase Bank).....	2,340.75

Grand Haven Community Foundation Balance.....\$5,519.14
(this balance is as of 03/31/2011 and includes investment gains of \$251.40 and a withdrawal of \$193.00 that was deposited into the club treasury to use to pay expenses)

Joe's report from Hudsonville



Not a bad turnout for this year's independent Repeater Association "Good Old Days" hamfest in Hudsonville. About 2 dozen trunk sales were set up between the two barns, which themselves were filled with tables – only a few of which were empty.

NOARC had 4 tables in the westernmost barn, filled with various treasures from John N8YQD and Paul W8IQE's respective junk piles. In the other building, a large assortment of parts and equipment were on sale from Abe W8HVG's estate. I picked up a big box of cables, while John N8YQD hauled off a bunch of HTs – some of which had usable batteries.



I managed to get almost everything on my shopping list by the time the doors officially opened at 8 AM – a short 2m beam, 100 feet of coax, a VHF/UHF diplexer, and a balun for my HF dipole. Having spent all but a dollar, and beginning to suffer from the adverse effects of being awake for 25 hours, I left for home a little after 9 AM.

N8FQ discovers Software Defined Radio

For a few years now, it's been said that Software Defined Radio is the future of amateur radio – and wireless communications in general for that matter. Essentially, SDR offloads the task of tuning and demodulation to a computer. That could be a PC for units like the SoftRock and Flex 5000, or a DSP chip in the case of radios like the Ten-Tec Jupiter and Elecraft K3.

SDRs that interface with a PC usually provide an “I/Q” signal. The receiver's local oscillator runs in the center of the desired passband, like a direct-conversion receiver. The upper sideband is passed in-phase, while the lower sideband is sent in quadrature (i.e. advanced 90 degrees) on a separate audio channel. This phase difference helps to minimize images on the opposite sideband.

Because there is no front-end filtering other than a very broad bandpass filter, you will be able to monitor a section of the band equal in width to the sampling rate of your soundcard. If your soundcard runs at 96 kHz, you can receive the entire 30 meter band all at once. A 192 kHz soundcard can capture nearly all of 160 meters simultaneously.

With an I/Q receiver hooked up to your soundcard, you use a program such as SpectraVue, HSDR or GNURadio to tune and receive signals. If you're familiar with programs like FLDigi or MultiPSK for digital keyboarding, these are very similar – you have a “waterfall” display showing the signals on the band, and you click on them to tune them in. The difference is that the displayed bandwidth is about 30 times wider, and the program outputs demodulated audio through your speakers, rather than decoded text. You can also record the entire input passband to a standard WAV file, then load that file later and “tune” through it as if it were a live signal.

As the title of this write-up implies, I have recently come into possession of two SDR receivers: a FUNCube Dongle for VHF/UHF and a SoftRock Lite II for HF.

The SoftRock Lite was demonstrated at a recent NOARC meeting. It comes as a kit, and can be built for a fixed frequency on 160, 80, 40, 30 or 20 meters. I built mine for 30m. It is somewhat tricky to put together, as it uses a number of surface-mount components and you need to wind two band-specific toroids, but it's hard to beat for \$20. The only bad thing about them is that they are very difficult to get – 99% of the time, the website will simply say “check back soon”. It is by pure luck that I checked one morning and found a single unit in stock.

The FUNCube Dongle is a frequency-agile unit for the VHF and UHF bands built by the AMSAT-UK group. It is essentially the receiver from a soon-to-be-launched satellite repackaged as a standalone unit. It looks exactly like a typical USB flash drive, except for the SMA connector sticking out the other end. It can be tuned to any frequency from about 60 MHz up to 2 GHz, and provides a 96 kHz-wide slice of bandwidth to your PC – enough to monitor the entire downlink passband of a typical satellite, the whole beacon subband on 144, 222, 432, 902 or 1296 MHz, or an FM broadcast station (almost – the audio will clip somewhat as the signal is about 110 kHz wide). These are also a bit of a pain to get, as they are only manufactured in runs of about 100 at a time, and they sell out within minutes. Scheduled sales are announced ahead of time on the “funcube” Yahoo group.

July 2011 calendar of events and net control schedule

Every Tuesday:

NOARC net/coffee at Russ' in Grand Haven
8:00 PM

Every Wednesday:

Breakfast at Idle Hour Restaurant in Spring Lake
7:00 AM

Every Saturday:

Breakfast at Vic's Restaurant in Spring Lake
7:00 AM

July 9:

Indianapolis Hamfest
<http://www.indyhamfest.com>

July 10:

Fox River Radio League Hamfest, Aurora, IL
<http://frrl.org>

July 17:

KARSFest, Peotone, IL
<http://www.w9az.com/karsfest.html>

July 23:

QRP In The Park
Helder Park – 3751 104th Ave, Holland
5 PM to Dusk

July 28:

NOARC club meeting, Spring Lake District Library
6:30 PM

NOARC net control schedule:

July 5: **Joe, N8FQ**

July 12: **Phyllis, KB8NLN**

July 19: **John, N8YQD**

July 26: **Paul, W8IQE**

E-mail me at jvn8fq@gmail.com if you want to get on the net control roster!

SPARK for February 1990

NOARCCgcusaSPARK

february, 1990

GRAND HAVEN, MICHIGAN

COAST GUARD CITY, USA

north ottawa amateur radio club

PRESIDENT--WILL RUDD W9LNU VICE PRESIDENT--BOB VAN RHEE N8LAS

TREASURER--BOB JAPENGA N8IKU SECRETARY--TED SWANSON N8HKN

ACTIVITIES MANAGER--DON SMITH N8HCS WE HAVE AN OPENING IN THIS SPOT

NOARC EDITOR--BEN DOCTER K8AR

CLUB REPEATER AT 145.49

NET MEETS EACH TUESDAY NIGHT AT 8 P.M.

CLUB MEETS AT COMMUNITY CENTER 4TH THURSDAY EACH MONTH AT 7:30 P.M.

There will be a V.E. Upgrade Examination given on Saturday April 21, 1990 at 9:00am in the Caesar's Lounge of Muskegon Community College. Those wishing to participate should contact Bud at 773-9650 or Bob at 733-1611 for further information.

Please check your mailing label on this issue. If there is a red dot, that means we have you marked as a paid member. If the dot is not there, be sure to mail your dues in so that you do not miss the next issue of our newsletter. NO DUES--NO NEWSLETTER!

Bob and I would like to thank all those who attended our 1990 Ladies' Night Out. Those who were not there sure missed an excellent meal and program. It was nice to have hams from Muskegon, Holland, and Grand Rapids join us. The Grand Door Price (a beautiful AM-FM dual cassette portable stereo with high speed dubbing) was won by Lou (N8KY0). He says it works great. So thanks again and be on the lookout for some exciting family events to be coming in the months ahead.

KA8USK & N8LAS

KA8USK and N8IKI did a presentation at Mary White school for the Cub Scout Troop. About 12 kids attending watch the Tune In The World tape and listened to a station that Randy and Ben set up. If anyone would like to do something similar for a group that you know of please contact this fearsome duo for information of the loan of the tape.

Our apologies for leaving out the net control list for last month so here we go for Feb--March.

2/20 KB8HU 2/27 N8ICR 3/6 W9LNU

3/13 N8HUB 3/20 N8LAS 3/27 N8KYG

This Thursday is club meeting night so please schedule some time for this. At this time the program is still open so maybe some of you can bring in your projects for this winter and show the rest of us what you are capable of. A little pat on the back always feels good.

PARDON ME MA'AM

from "The Readout", Stanislaus (CA) ARA, via A.R.N.S.

During the Stanislaus (CA) ARC picnic (1985) an exceedingly good time was had by all those who participated in the hidden transmitter hunt.

The hunt provided some humorous moments when the search focused on a young couple enjoying the pleasure of each other's arms under a cooling shade tree on the banks of a river not far from the starting point.

Joe, N6LSB was the first hunter to suspect that possibility that the transmitter might be somewhere near the couple. But he was not about to disturb them while they were amorously involved.

Jim, KB6DJ, with his gentlemanly smile, wasn't adverse to at least causing a short interruption in the proceedings. As the rest of the hunters looked on, Jim said politely, "Pardon me folks, would you mind if we looked for a hidden transmitter?"

Professing not to know the lease bit about what he was talking about while showing mild indignation, permission was granted as the lady straightened her coiffeur. Jim explained that the assembled multitude, with their funny looking radios, were looking for a hidden transmitter and they had narrowed their search to their immediate area judging from all the signals.

The couple uprighted themselves from the lawn, revealing nothing but their wrinkled blanket. Denny, WG6P, quickly asked if they could look under the blanket?

Request granted! Zap! No Luck! As speculation increased, 40 over S9 signals continued to intermittently peg meters and quiet squelches. The hunters knew they were close enough to feel the heat off the heat sinks of the hidden transmitter. The couple waited patiently as the hunters contemplated their next move. It was noted that the man was wearing cut-off's while the lady was wearing a roomy dress.

Suspicious immediately focused on the young lady's dress but now one was willing to put their thoughts into actions. Inasmuch as WA6ZLO knew where the the transmitter was and was therefore disqualified, he suggested that the hunters might ask the young lady questions in an attempt to probe forbidden areas.

Jim and Joe politely asked her if there were any foreign items in or about her bosom. "No," said the lady, "I don't need such items!"

Expectations were then lowered as the next question asked if she had anything foreign under her dress. "Well I declare!" said the lady. Following the laughter, she was asked to raise her dress....."just a little bit."

She agreed, and much to the enjoyment of all present, the top end of a rubber duckie was seen protruding alongside her left thigh. A few more carefully measured inches and the Icom 2-AT was fully visible. It was attached to her thigh near the knee with an Ace bandage. A remote keying line and microphone ran from the talkie up under her arm and was keyed when she placed pressure on her arm.

After the excitement died down, it was learned that the couple was actually man and wife and personal friends of WA6MIZ, who had solicited their help.

They were thanked for their splendid job and appeared to enjoy it as much as the hunters. They were heard to say as they were leaving that they had not "made out" like that since they were teenagers.

DX NEWS by KI8W
from the Cherry Juice, Traverse City, Mich.

The past year has brought us some great DX and some very rare countries put on the air by DX-peditions. Two countries in the top ten most wanted list made appearances this year and a couple of rare countries that surfaced in 1988 returned to the air again in 1989. The DXAC also decided to add a few new countries too.

In November, Laos made it's long awaited appearance. Laos ranked 8th on the most wanted list. The calls used were XW8CW for CW contacts and XW8DX for SSB. If you worked them and need a card, QSL via French DX Foundation, Box 1384, Millbrook, N.Y. 12545. A second DXpedition went to Laos in December, XW8KPV, and if you worked them, you can QSL via JH1AJT.

Laos has now put together a club station XW8KPL, so if you missed the two expeditions this year, look for XW8KPL.

As of late, the major topic has been the Bouvet operation. Bouvet ranked third on the most wanted list and the operation began around the 27th or 28th of December. The debut for 3Y5X was less than smooth. Numerous pirates were on the bands making contacts with unsuspecting amateurs and when the real 3Y arrived, they were greeted with deliberate QRM from stateside amateurs! Not all the QRM was from the US, but 95% was. The Bouvet expedition did cause some major problems at first with the crunch of stations calling, the 3Y never gave specific listening frequencies the first night and the entire 20 meter band was demolished! Since the opening crunch, the 3Y has given specific ranges of listening frequencies. If you found and worked him, the QSL route is via LA6VM.

The ARRL DX Advisory Committee added a few new countries this year. So to help you out, here is a listing of new countries added in the past year or so:

3D2--Rotuma 3D2--Conway Reef
4J1--Malyj Vysotskij T33--Banaba Island
ZS9--Walvis Bay (Not official yet I think)

Along with the addition of new countries, many countries have changed their prefixes to confuse us. So I will list a few of these:

Western Sahara--50
Russia--Many new prefixies, EK_ES_YL_4K. The 4K assignments go like this:
4K0-Polar Arctic; 4K1-Antarctic; 4K2-Franz Josef Land; 4K3-European Arctic; and
4k4-Asia Arctic
Swaziland--3D6 uses 3DA0
Micronesia--KC6 is now V63
Marshall Islands--KX6 is now V73

This list is by no means complete, there are many strange calls floating around the ham bands. I will pass on any information I get in the future. Have Fun chasing the rare DX on the HF bands.

Barry KI8W

ITS HAMFEST TIME AGAIN SO HERE ARE THIS MONTHS CHOICE OFFERINGS:

DEARBORN HAMFEST FEBRUARY 25, 1990
LaPORTE, INDIANA FEBRUARY 24, 1990
DELTON, MICH. MARCH 3, 1990
AND THE BIGGIE COMING UP----DAYTON APRIL 27,28,29 1990

 * NOARC APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP *
 * NAME CALL PHONE# *
 * ADDRESS *

HE'S BEEN DOING THAT EVER SINCE ONE OF THE GUYS TOLD HIM HE HAS A GOOD "RADIO VOICE!"

HELLO CQ, HELLO CQ---

THANKS TO MEGAWEC-123
 THAT HEATSINK IS GETTING TOO HOT--- LET'S MOVE OVER TO THE OLD HEATHKIT, HE NEVER USES THAT ONE

WORLD RADIO, December 1989

THIS MONTHS ISSUE IS THE LAST ONE FOR THOSE WHO ARE NOT PAID UP MEMBERS.

WE URGE EVERYONE TO RENEW NOW. THE COST IS ONLY \$20 PER YEAR. REMEMBER THIS INCLUDES FREE USE OF THE REPEATER AND YOUR OWN PHONE MEMORY LOCATION FOR INSTANT CALLS HOME WHILE YOU ARE ON THE ROAD.

THIS IS ALSO A GOOD TIME TO REMIND EVERYONE THAT ALL MEMBERS WHO HAVE NOT RENEWED WILL HAVE THEIR NUMBER ERASED. WHAT A WAY TO GO.

Arnold Madio! WD8JIV is interested in any information that he can gather about telegraph messages, equipment, reports, tables, and etc. Everything is fair game.

Thanks to Paul W8IQE for digging this out of Woody N8LBG's stuff. Look for the March 1990 edition next month!

QRP In The Park!

As if Field Day weren't enough fun, a group from the Holland ARC went out to Helder Park last month and did a little portable operation. Jeff KB8QAP and Chris KC8RQT brought out their rigs and ATAS-120 screwdriver antennas, working 17 and 40 meter phone. I brought out my VHF equipment and worked 6 meters, Joe AC8JD worked 20m CW with an end-fed wire, and Dave WD8PUO set up his K2 and MFJ loop - which, unfortunately, developed an internal short and was rendered useless. That's Mississippi's Finest Junk for you. Tom K8TB and Sheila K8AJ supplied the snacks, and John WB9JSR and Ross KD8MGM were also in attendance.



Swap 'n shop

For Sale: Zenith Trans-Atlantic all-band radios – John Sundstrom, N8YQD

For Sale: Textbooks on basic electronic theory, multimeters and oscilloscopes – Paul Zellar, W8IQE

The **Te-Ne-Ke** is still in production - \$50 shipped anywhere



Donald Smith Painting
Don Smith
Owner
*Painting, Staining, Custom color matching, Drywall
repair, Texturing, Carpet cleaning*
We deal in Pigments of your Infatuation

**12960 Taft Rd.
Nunica, MI 49448**

616-502-3622

*Good as the
Best - Better
than the Rest*

NOARC membership form

Dues:

Individual: \$25 yearly or \$70 for 3 years

Family: \$35 yearly or \$75 for 3 years

Name: _____ **Callsign:** _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: _____ **E-mail:** _____

Make checks payable to **NOARC**

Mail form to:

NOARC

PO Box 976

Grand Haven, MI 49417