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St. Paul Radio Club Ground Wave

Jeff Iverson, WB9DAN, Editor
Dale Maroushek, NØPEY, Publisher

KØAGF

www.stpaulradioclub.org
Club Repeater: 145.310 MHz
114.8 kHz Tone
PO Box 9375
North St. Paul, MN 55109

NEWS AND NOTES FOR MARCH 2020 — Volume 80, Issue 3

NEXT MEETING: FRIDAY MARCH 6, 2020

6:00 PM Board Meeting (all are welcome to attend)

7:00 PM Fellowship and Refreshments

7:30 PM Short Business Meeting with Program Following

Program

Our March program will feature Randy Gawtry, KØCBH, speaking on the fast pace of digital modes.

Save The Date!

The Annual SPRC Banquet will be held Saturday, April 25th in the Commons Meeting Room, John R. Albers Center, Cretin-Derham Hall High School. Doors will open at 5:30 and we will have a buffet dinner starting at 6PM. We don't have a program yet, but please keep the date open if you would like to attend. If you know of an available speaker, please pass on the information to one of the Board members.

All meetings are in the Commons meeting room in the John R Albers Center at Cretin-Derham Hall High School, 555 Hamline Ave. S., St. Paul MN 55116. From the intersection of Randolph Avenue and Hamline Avenue S., take Hamline southward for 3 blocks. The parking lot entrance is on the west side of Hamline Ave. opposite Watson St. The Albers Center building is about 400 feet west of the lot entrance—use the double-door entrance on the east side of the building.

Dale's Details – Dale Maroushek NØPEY

CQ contest CQ contest CQ 160, Contest QRZ.

I can't imagine how many times I received or transmitted something like that late - late night from Feb. 21 to 23. All I can say about the CQ 160 Meter contest is that it was fun to be on the Top band again. Have to say thank you to Ray Johnson WB0EBG down the block for the heads up that it was happening, and another thanks to Ron KØRJW and Al WØNLY for helping install the OCF dipole in early winter.

Here is my operating recap and I'm throwing in a review of the N3FJP logging/contest software that I use. We also use that software for Field Day ops and it also covers has over 100 other contests, all for one price. Website N3FJP.com.

Not wanting to scare everyone away, I started a bit late and running barefoot, about 0120Z and got 20 of the easy big guns and some locals until 0300Z. My ears were not used to the noise, so I took a break until 0520Z. From there until 0915Z I made 45 more contacts and called it a night. First night total was 65 contacts, 25 multipliers, (states, provinces and DX) and just over 3200 points. The plan was to get some sleep and come back strong Saturday evening running QRO (high power).

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The N3JPF software ran smoothly and as intended, keeps very good records that are easily edited if needed, checks all your callsign inputs and shows if they are even close to a duplicate. It also inserts the RS(T) of 59 that we all use in contests, even when it takes 10 tries to make the exchange. You can check your contact counts state by state, and sort on any column to help when editing for operator mistakes, like putting in ID (Idaho) for IN (Indiana). The screen colors contrast nicely and are easy on the eyes. Retrieving files for contest entries is simple and help is available throughout. Many of the contests they cover use exact or very similar screen layouts so learning one usually covers you for more.

Back to the action on Sat. evening. I set up to use the amp about 0000Z, but it didn't respond. Long story short, I messed with it until I figured the contactor must be stuck and went back to barefoot contesting at 0130Z. Made 10 new ones until 0230Z, and broke for another nap before my forehead hit the mic again. At that early time, it was mostly the big guns and already worked ones and lots of noise.

Back in the chair and refreshed at 0500Z, made 39 more contacts until 1000Z, many of them digging very hard in the noise between lots of others out there. This is all using the Hunt and Pounce method. By this time, one can look at the software and get a picture of what multipliers are needed and start looking for them. Sure enough, I needed NV and MT and I could hear them both doing H&P right next to me as we all rolled up the band looking for targets! I couldn't find new stations calling, so I took another two hour break.

It is now 1200Z, 6 a.m. here. Sun is breaking, birds are singing, Deb is making coffee, I can't sleep yet, so let's do this one more time. But this time I set up on a frequency a couple times, and started calling until I got an answer. Then another and more and it was really fun. Note here that the CQ 160 Contest is not like the cutthroat high speed contests on the upper bands. I think players are patient and friendly, because it takes so much work just getting a station to cover the Top band, they show respect toward each other.

I topped off the night an hour later with 22 more contacts and a nice group of multipliers. The point to notice here is the solid proof that calling will outperform H&P all the time. That last hour of calling produced 16% of my contacts. By then, 0100Z, the band was falling off and only those same Big Guns that started the whole thing were still machine calling away looking for the last contact.

End results: 138 contacts, 50 multipliers, missed DC, NV, MT, WY (everyone was looking and calling direct for WY, must have been a sale at ODM or a good snow base on the slopes) stateside, (AK and HA are considered DX), 4 Canadians, ON, AB, MN and PE (boy was that one tough!), and the lone DX Cayman Is. (there were two stations but the other never heard me). QSO points 306 for a grand total of 15,300 points. Big contact states: OH-12, IL-11, WI/MI-7, MN/MD-6 (Funny, 6 out of MD but no one awake in DC, or is it?) Not bad for a barefoot, E to W OCF dipole at 60 feet that needed to be

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tuned about every 50 KHz to be effective.

March is here. Midwinter Madness Hamfest is coming with it on March 21st. SPRC usually has a Club table there, with a nice banner out front, to advance the clubs features, hand out newsletters and brochures, and recruit new members or recover old members. Your job is to answer questions, the brochure has all the information, and tell people what you enjoy about the Club. Sounds like a big job, but it has benefits!

We need one or more members at the table from 8 am to noon. If you pick an hour block from 9 am on, we can rotate and everyone can shop and rest. It's a place to sit down after a lap around the sale. You can store your purchases there to be carted out later. Store your coat and backpack or bag of goodies.

Who is ready to sign up?

The Workbench — by Scott Holisky N0AR

At a recent gathering of the qrp group that meets on echolink someone brought up how they would like to build something but didn't have a workbench. So as the conversation moved around the group everyone described their setup. Pretty revealing stuff. A couple of guys didn't have anything, one had a bench but it was buried under 20 years of projects, the list covered just about possible set-up. As for me I couldn't imagine life without a good dose of empty horizontal spaces. My indoor bench not only sports a 2×4 foot workbench and LED lights along with that all important 4" magnifying light. It is pretty much a "does all" bench so you might find fishing lures one day and the XYL's painting project the next. The picture is my old Black and Decker Workmate holding up what I call my "project board". It's almost two foot square. By putting a 1×2 across the bottom the Workmate can clamp down, making it quite sturdy. You can fit your anti-static mat inside if you need. There is plenty of room for building small projects and your soldering gear. Clamp on led lighting is the way to go. They are light and can be moved as needed. At the end of the day you can fold up the legs and hide it all away if you need to. I like the 2" sides, this helps with chasing down those parts that seem to walk around by themselves. There are several different portable units out there that could do just fine as a stand alone bench. Look them over and find something that meets your needs, then get building!



February Board Minutes— by George Power WØGCP, Secretary

President Don Kelly (WA6ZMT) called the board to order around 6:10 PM. Board members present: Don Kelly (WA6ZMT) President, Dale Maroushek (NØPEY), Vice-President; George Power (KØGCP), Secretary; Allan Klein (WØNLY), Treasurer; Ben Otto (KEØRFZ), board member-at-large, Br. Bob Walsh (WCØJJ), board member-at-large.

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Excused: John Faughn (KDØCAC). Interested parties present: John Crabtree (KCØG), Jay Maher (NJØM).

Reports and topics discussed.

President

Don reminded us that he will be away during the March, April and May meetings.

Vice-President

Dale reported that he has lined up programs for the March, April and May meetings. The June meeting will be coordinated with the Mining Club for Field Day preparations.

Secretary

George said the January meeting minutes were posted in the Ground Wave.

Treasurer

Allan reported that the funds are in good shape and the auction bills have been paid. [General fund \$9054, repeater fund \$702, education fund \$1167]

Auction

Allan reported that the auction gross income was \$4420.30, expenses were \$2792.08, giving a net of \$1628.22. Following club tradition, the net income (plus rounding) will yield a \$1700.00 check being sent to the ARRL Spectrum Defense Fund, which action was approved by the board.

Membership

Dale has our 2019-2020 membership at 134 as of the meeting start.

Banquet

The banquet is tentatively scheduled for April 25, depending on the speaker availability. Since we prefer using CDH facilities rather than UST, Jay has been checking possibilities for catering, but he confirmed that Taher is not available on April 18. There are two close-by caterers ([DeGidio's](#) and [Skinner's](#)), and Jay is checking on pricing. Brother Bob is checking on room availability. Dale is checking with Ralph Fedor's (K0IR) availability for speaking, and Jeff Iverson's (WB9DAN) wife suggested Keith Marler, the TV channel 9 weatherman as a backup speaker.

Lake Elmo Swapfest, 8247 27th St. N., Lake Elmo, MN 55042

John Crabtree reminded us that it is scheduled for September 19th. As the supporting club, we will need to set up 2 – 3 tables, and provide the snacks (coffee, water, donuts, etc.). John is the chairperson and is looking for volunteers.

We adjourned at 7:00 PM.

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We adjourned at 7:00 PM.

February Meeting Minutes— by George Power WØGCP, Secretary

President Don Kelly (WA6ZMT) called the business meeting to order at 7:30 PM. We had 27 members present. He led a round of introductions.

Items carried forward from board meeting:

Treasury is in good shape. The auction net proceeds were \$1628. Check to ARRL Spectrum Defense Fund will be \$1700.

Programs for rest of year are set.

Membership is a 134 for the 2019-2020 membership year.

May is the month for electing new officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Ed Jacobson (WB0VHF)) announced that he has space in his RV for the Dayton Hamfest trip.

Dale mentioned that there is a tower for sale in St. Cloud.

Dale also mentioned that at last week's VE session, we had 9 candidates and 9 passed. Rich reported that the MN QSO party was quite successful. Nobody had a clean sweep of the counties, as 2 did not have anybody working them.

The business meeting was concluded at 7:40 PM.

We skipped the break and went into the program.

Art Thell (N0IWQ) presented his program, "Smoke Signals to Cell Phones."

This was a chronology of communications technology developments. He started with copper wire and telegraphy, and traced the changes that enabled analog voice, multiplexing signals to save band width. He covered signal filtering, and the development of trunking – with the goal of putting multiple signals on a single wire (and eventually on a glass fiber, and satellite links).

After the program, we had the usual raffle, and the socializing went on until Brother Bob had to close up the room at 9:00 PM

Editor's Notes — by Jeff Iverson, WB9DAN

Not much to say this month except to second Dale's recommendation of the N3FJP logging software. I have been using it for years and it is very intuitive and easy to use. A small fee gets you the basic package, all the contest logs, and a lifetime of updates.



St. Paul Radio Club, Inc.
PO Box 9375
North St. Paul, MN 55109

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

SPRC Calendar

Fri Mar 6	6PM SPRC Board meeting, Commons Meeting Room, John R. Albers Center, Cretin-Derham Hall High School. *
Fri Mar 6	7PM Socializing followed by 7:30 PM SPRC Membership meeting. Commons Meeting Room, John R. Albers Center, Cretin-Derham Hall High School. See Page 1.
Sat Mar 7	10AM VE testing. Sun Ray Library, 2105 Wilson Ave., St. Paul. Contact Leon Dill, WØCOE@arrl.net or 651-425-0338.
Sat Mar 21	9AM SPRC Breakfast. Denny's, 1664 University Ave, west of Snelling.
Sat Mar 21	8AM – 1PM 39 th Annual Midwinter Madness Hobby Electronics Show, Buffalo Civic Center, Buffalo, MN
Fri Apr 3	6PM SPRC Board meeting, Commons Meeting Room, John R. Albers Center, Cretin-Derham Hall High School. *
Fri Apr 3	7PM Socializing followed by 7:30 PM SPRC Membership meeting. Commons Meeting Room, John R. Albers Center, Cretin-Derham Hall High School.
Sat Apr 4	10AM VE testing. Sun Ray Library, 2105 Wilson Ave., St. Paul. Contact Leon Dill, WØCOE@arrl.net or 651-425-0338.
Sat Apr 18	9AM – 1PM Brainerd Area Hamfest. Forestview Middle School Cafeteria, 12149 Knollwood Dr, Baxter, MN 56425
Sat Apr 18	9AM SPRC Breakfast. Denny's, 1664 University Ave, west of Snelling.
Sat Apr 25	9AM – 5:30 PM NLRS Aurora Conference. Grace Lutheran Church, 4000 Linden St. White Bear Lake, MN 55110
Sat Apr 25	5:30 -9:30PM St Paul Radio Club Annual Banquet. Commons Meeting Room, John R. Albers Center, Cretin-Derham Hall High School.

* Depending on business to be considered, Board Meetings are sometimes held electronically. Check with a Board member beforehand to confirm a meeting.