

# The SPARK GAP

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## PRESIDENTS CORNER

by Gale, WD9HFT

## CVARC MEETING MINUTES

by Ron, W9RJW

## NEXT CLUB MEETING

The next club meeting will be March 17, 2005 at 7:15 PM. at Connell's in the Airport. For those wanting to eat, we will be ordering at 6:15 PM. Topics – Foxhunt, Elections, 2005 dues.

## CLUB HAPPENINGS

Club 2M Foxhunt on 12 March 05. Open to all. All hunters must check in between 0800-0900 at Hardees at Hwy 53N and Eddy Lane. Fox Hunt from 0900-1100. Meeting at Hardees after the hunt is over. Course information map is on the website.

## AMATEUR RELATED NEWS BITES

by John, W9SWL

**CVTC Computer Class in March** - Bert Spangler, W9ZZI

A new basic computer course is being offered at the CVTC starting on March 15, and I'm wondering if you might put something about it on the web site or in the newsletter in hopes of getting a few more people to sign up for it. They are accepting registrations at this time but they still need five more people to sign up for it in order to actually hold it.

Many of the hams are too advanced for this course, but there may be some who, like myself, would benefit a lot from it. I corresponded with the instructor, Mark Puig, and this is how he described the class to me in an e-mail early last month:

"Later in the year (mid-March) we are looking at running a continuing ed class on computer basics and Internet security. This will be an evening course and will probably run for 8 weeks starting in March. In this course I will cover PC hardware basics, installation of Windows operating systems, some basic home/small business networking, Adware/Spyware and Virus protection." And here's how the CVTC web site describes it.

*PC Basics and Security 103-420L CRN# 90327*

*Cost: \$49.60*

For individuals who would like to learn more about internet/network security, how to control SPAM and pop-up ads. Course will also review Internet search tips. Internet experience preferred.

Incidentally, in order to search out the course on their web site, you need to leave the box requesting the course title BLANK, and select "spring 2005" in the box asking which term the course is to be offered.

## ARRL News

### AREA HAMFEST ACTIVITIES

by John, W9SWL

#### **March**

19 - Buffalo, MN - Mid Winter Madness

20 - Jefferson, WI [www.cmdline.com/trarc](http://www.cmdline.com/trarc)

#### **April**

1-2 - Milwaukee, WI AES Superfest

16 - Faribault, MN 146.79 (100)

16 - Souix Falls, SD

16 - West Fargo, ND 147.255 (82.5)

16 - Grayslake, IL 147.345 (102.7)

17 - Stoughton, WI Madison Area Hamfest 0800-1300 147.75

23 - Des Moines, IA 146.94 (114.8)

#### **May**

7 - Superior, WI

7 - Cedarburg, WI

20-22 - Dayton, OH

### CONTEST BUZZ – by John, W9SWL

**WI QSO Party Mar 13 All Bands/Modes 12 - 7PM**

ARRL Contest Calendar can be found here:

<http://www.arrl.org/contests/calendar.html> a more complete list follows. March 2005:

AGCW YL-CW Party                      1900Z-2100Z, Mar 1

ARRL Inter. DX Contest,              0000Z, Mar 5 to  
SSB    2400Z, Mar 6

Wake-Up! QRP Sprint                    0400Z-0600Z, Mar 5

DARC 10-Meter Digital                    1100Z-1700Z, Mar 6  
Contest (Mar)

RSGB 80m Club                              2000Z-2130Z, Mar 7  
Championship, Data (Mar)

ARS Spartan Sprint (Mar)	0200Z-0400Z, Mar 8
Pesky Texan Armadillo Chase	0200Z-0400Z, Mar 10
RSGB Commonwealth Contest	1000Z, Mar 12 to 1000Z, Mar 13
AGCW QRP Contest	1400Z-2000Z, Mar 12
Oklahoma QSO Party	1400Z, Mar 12 to 0200Z, Mar 13 and 1400Z-2000Z, Mar 13
North American Sprint, RTTY	0000Z-0400Z, Mar 13
UBA Spring Contest, CW	0700Z-1100Z, Mar 13
NSARA Contest	1200Z-1600Z, Mar 13 and 1800Z-2200Z, Mar 13
Wisconsin QSO Party	1800Z, Mar 13 to 0100Z, Mar 14
RSGB 80m Club Championship, CW (Mar)	2000Z-2130Z, Mar 16
10-10 Int. Mobile Contest	0001Z-2359Z, Mar 19
BARTG HF RTTY Contest	0200Z, Mar 19 to 0200Z, Mar 21
SARL VHF/UHF Contest	1000Z, Mar 19 to 1000Z, Mar 20
Russian DX Contest	1200Z, Mar 19 to 1200Z, Mar 20
CLARA and Family HF Contest	1700Z, Mar 19 to 1700Z, Mar 20
Virginia QSO Party	1800Z, Mar 19 to 0200Z, Mar 21
UBA Spring Contest, 6m	0700Z-1100Z, Mar 20
9K 15-Meter Contest	1200Z-1600Z, Mar 20
RSGB 80m Club Championship, SSB (Mar)	2000Z-2130Z, Mar 24
CQ WW WPX Contest, SSB	0000Z, Mar 26 to 2359Z, Mar 27
UBA Spring Contest, 2m	0600Z-1000Z, Mar 27
Spring QRP Homebrewer Sprint	0000Z-0400Z, Mar 28

## **ANTENNAS**

by John, W9SWL (If you would like to know about a specific type of antenna - drop me a note)

One of the most asked questions when it comes to antennas is what kind of wire should I use. The answer is as varied as the people who put them up. Things to consider are: Stranded or Solid, Coated or Bare, Thickness, Simple rules to follow: Copper vs Everything Else.

Once you pick the wire you want make sure you have thought these points out:

1. If a wire is going to be left on the ground coated /insulated wire is a must.
2. If a wire is on snow you can use either as snow in an insulator.
3. If a wire is up in the air and away from anything conductive you can use either type.
4. If up in the air and near or touching anything conductive you must use coated/insulated wire.
5. If you live in areas that are subject to bad weather especially high winds or ice storms heavier gauge wire should be used so it can with stand the elements.

OK now go out and put up something. Experimenting is half the fun in this hobby.

## **TECHNICAL TIDBITS**

by John, W9SWL

Soldering requires clean, **Really Clean parts:** Firstly, and without exception, all parts -- including the iron tip itself -- must be clean and free from contamination. Solder just will not "take" to dirty parts! Old components or copper board can be notoriously difficult to solder, because of the layer of oxidation which builds up on the surface of the leads. This repels the molten solder and this will soon be evident because the solder will "bead" into globules, going everywhere except where you need it. Dirt is the enemy of a good quality soldered joint!

## **ASK ELMER ??**

by John, W9SWL

## **CVARC OFFICERS**

President – Gale Sorum (WD9HFT)  
Vice President – John Balow (KB9VCO)  
Secretary – Ron Krueger (W9JRW)  
Treasurer – Ron Anderson (W9RMA)  
Past President – John Ingersoll (W9SWL)

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