



## **DECEMBER NEWSLETTER**

**2019**

KCARC Christmas Party  
Monday, December 9, 2019, 6:30 PM  
Joe Allen's Corral Room  
301 South 11th St.  
Abilene, TX

### WEEKLY NET TIME

Thursday, 8 PM on 146.76 repeater  
(146.2 Hz tone)

Club Website:

<http://kc5olo.org/>

### **2019 Officers:**

Allen Brooks, KF5SPQ, President,  
Lynn Bailey, K5AVJ, Vice-President,  
Jacob Bachmeyer, KE5WHG, Secretary,  
Peg Richard, KA4UPA Treasurer

### **..CQ CQ CQ... Notes from the President**

December is here! This time is filled with lots of activities as a result of the Christmas season. The closer we get to Christmas more and more people begin to hit the highways to travel to see family and friends.

The weather is often also unpredictable. It can go from sunny to heavy rain or even snow in a short manner of time. In many places heavy snow has made travel difficult and has also created accidents.

If you are one of those who will be traveling during the Christmas season please sure that you and your vehicle are prepared for the trip. This would be a good time to check the locations of repeaters along the route that you will be traveling and program them into your radio. You may or may not be able to have cell phone coverage if you encounter difficulties. If you haven't done so prepare a 72 hour personal "Go Kit" with the supplies that you would need if you have to be delayed along your trip.

I hope that you have a wonderful Christmas and that "Santa" brings you some great radio items for your Ham Shack!

At our meeting in January we will receive some needed information and training concerning flag etiquette, etc. Please be thinking about some type of training that you would like to present to the

club. This is your club and your participation is greatly needed. You have an expertise and knowledge that would benefit others and help to grow and build this great hobby that we all enjoy!!

Don't forget that the Christmas party is 9 December at Joe Allen's. Bring an ornament for the exchange. This is always a great time!

I hope to see everyone at the next meeting. Until then, "73's everyone!"

Thanks!

Allen Brooks, KF5SPQ

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### UpcomingHamfests:

[01/17/2020 |](#)

### [Cowtown Hamfest, ARRL North Texas Section Convention](#)

**Location:** Forest Hill, TX

**Type:** ARRL Convention

**Sponsor:** Cowtown Amateur Radio Club and other local clubs

**Website:** <http://www.cowtownhamfest.com>

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### **Pegged by Peg ...**

Reminder that 2020 dues are payable at \$20.00 per family, all living at one address, or \$15.00 per individual for the year.

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### **CONTESTS:**

<http://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar>

### **December 2019**

6-8 [160 Meter](#)

14-15 [10 Meter](#)

15 [Rookie Roundup-CW](#)

31-Jan 1 Straight Key Night

For a more extensive Ham Radio Contest Calendar, check this website:

<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestcal.html>

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### **EXAM SESSION**

**Sponsor:** Key City ARC

**Date:** January 4, 2020 (Saturday)

**Time:** 1:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed)

**Contact:** Peggy Richard

(325) 672-8889

**Email:** ka4upa@suddenlink.net

**VEC:** [ARRL/VEC](#)

**Location:** Berry Lane Baptist Church  
1515 Lakeside Drive  
Abilene TX 79602-4123

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### **A Straight Key Night Story:**

By Dan Henderson, N1ND

In my early days in amateur radio, I was privileged to have three top-flight Elmers. Each shared with me new interests and enthusiasm for different parts of the hobby. The first, Col. Frank, WB4JMG, was special because we shared the same birthday and he taught me most of what I learned in those early days about electronic theory. The second Everest, W4DYW, was special because not only because our families were so close – he was my principle mentor for on-the-air operations, especially CW traffic nets.

Unless your Elmer was one of your parents, you probably can't say what my third Elmer could say about our relationship. Dr. Mac, WA4VNV (later N4IX), would honestly say he knew me my entire life. Not only was he a dedicated amateur operator – he was my mother's OBGYN and was the man who literally "delivered me" to the world, and helped me find the world of amateur radio in later years.

I had been attending club meetings with the old Asheville Radio Club (which merged with the Buncombe County VHF Society to

later form the Western Carolina Amateur Radio Society) for months before I was first licensed. And being the precocious teenager that I was, I jumped in with both feet. In mid-1971 I agreed to take over as editor of the ARC's monthly newsletter, known as Smoketest from Dr. Mac. He agreed to help me as a regular contributor, but slyly with one caveat—he would only provide news stories for me for the newsletter if I would copy them over the air using CW, since I was only a novice and had no phone privileges during those years.

I accepted his offer, and began two years of almost daily QSOs on 3725 KHz— because that was one of the few crystals I had for the Heathkit HW-16, which Col. Frank had been commissioned by my parents to build for my Christmas present in 1970. It was a unique experience, but one which served to continue building what became my passion for Morse code. In later years I would follow in Dr. Mac's footsteps once again when I became the ARES EC and RACES Radio Office for the county (but that's a topic for another article).

Between the efforts of my three Elmers, my CW speed quickly increased from the nervous 5 WPM necessary to earn my license to being able to conduct a coherent rag chew in the 25-30 WPM range. And the mantra of all three was simple – If you want to be competent in CW, you have to use it.

So each year from 0000 UTC to 2359 UTC PM January 1st I have the chance to pay a small bit of homage back to the Elmers when I have the opportunity to participate in the

annual ARRL Straight Key Night. This 24-hour event is not a contest; rather it is a day dedicated to celebrating our CW heritage. Participants are encouraged to get on-the-air and simply make enjoyable, conversational QSOs. There are no points scored and all who participate are winners.

In the decade since I wrote my first SKN announcement for QST, I have seen marvelous metamorphosis occur. The number of entries has grown almost ever year, even with the elimination of CW as a licensing requirement in the US. Participants have also used this popular annual event for more than just demonstrating their prowess pounding a brass key. Numerous participants use SKN to test out and “show off” their vintage equipment. Some will plug in their old CW “bugs” and join in. The common bond for all of them is to have fun in a more relaxed setting. You will even find CW enthusiasts who get on to enjoy the rag chewing. And that’s the purpose of this popular operating event, so don’t get hung up about the equipment.

When participating in SKN instead of sending RST before sending the signal report send the letters SKN, to indicate your participation, and to clue in passers-by who may be listening that SKN is going strong. After SKN, send the Contest Branch a list of stations worked, plus your vote for the best fist you heard (it doesn’t have to be one you worked). Also, include your vote for the most interesting QSO you had or monitored.

Don’t forget to post your comments and interesting photographs from your SKN

adventure to the ARRL Contest Online Soapbox. Entries should be emailed to the Contest Branch at [StraightKey@arrl.org](mailto:StraightKey@arrl.org) or may be sent via regular mail to SKN, ARRL, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111. The Soapbox becomes an online album of stores and photographs to share with others.

(from ARRL.org)

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Would you like to put your communication skills to use for public service or disaster? **Amateur Radio Emergency Services** wants and needs you! It doesn’t matter whether you are a Technician, General, or Extra. There is a place for you.

The ARES Net is on Tuesday night at 8 pm on the 146.76 MHz repeater.

There is a group that meets the first Saturday of each month from 10:00 – 12:00 noon at the Abilene Public Library conference room in the Mall.

For more information contact Allen Brooks, KF5SPQ, Taylor County Emergency Coordinator at (325) 701-4683.

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