
SIGNALS

Rockwell
Collins **Amateur Radio Club**

Monthly Newsletter of the

Volume 34 Issue 03

Web Site <http://www.w5rok.us>

December 2012

RCARC Membership Meeting

No Meeting in December
1700 Social 1730 Meeting
1800 Program

**Methodist Richardson Medical Center
At Bush/Renner/Shiloh Intersection
Second Floor Conference Room 200**

Subject:
No December Meeting

I stood there perplexed in a manner quite giddy.
Just who was this stranger - di di dah dah di dit ?
He looked very much like an FCC guy,
Who'd come to check up on some bad TVI.

I shouted to him, "OM ! QRZ ?"
" Hey you by the chimney, all dressed up in red !"
I suddenly knew when I heard sleigh bells jingle,
The guy on the rooftop was jolly Kris Kringle.

He had a big sack full of amateur gear,
Which was a big load for his prancing reindeer.
Transmitters, receivers, for cabinets and racks,
Some meters and scopes and a lot of co-ax.

He said not a word 'cause he'd finished his work
He picked up his sack, then he turned with a jerk.
As he leaped to his sleigh, he shouted with glee,
And I knew in a moment he'd be QRT.

I heard him transmit as he flew o'er the trees
"Merry Christmas to all, and to all seventy-three."

The World Didn't End.....At Least Not Yet!

You might think I was just lazy in getting this newsletter out so late, but NO! It was because I just didn't see any point in working so hard if the world was going to end anyway. But, best I can tell, everything is still here, so.....

Local Club News

Meeting Notice

There is no meeting scheduled for December, since the meeting date falls on Christmas day. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, 22 January 2013.

A CHRISTMAS POEM

Radio Amateurs 'Twas The Night Before Christmas'
(Author Anonymous)

'Twas the night before Christmas and all thru the shack
The rig was turned off and the mike cord lay slack.
The antenna rotor had made its last turn,
The tubes in the linear have long ceased to burn.

I sat there relaxing and took off my specs,
Preparing to daydream of armchair DX,
When suddenly outside I heard such a sound,
I dashed out the door to see what was around.

The moon shone down brightly and lighted the night-
For sure, propagation for the low bands was right.
I peered towards the roof where I heard all the racket,
And there was some guy in a red, fur-trimmed jacket.



**MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL, AND
TO ALL A GOOD NIGHT!**

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VE SESSIONS

Dallas tests are held 4th Sat of each month at 10:00. 13350 Floyd Rd. (Old Credit Union) Contact Bob West, WA8YCD 972.917.6362

Irving tests are held 3rd Sat. of each month at 09:00. 5th and Main St. Contact Bill Revis, KF5BL 252-8015

McKinney VE test sessions are held at the Heard Museum the first Sunday of the month. The address is 1 Nature Place, McKinney TX. The time of the testing is 14:30, ending no later than 16:45. **Note: no tests given on holiday weekends.**

Garland testing is held on the fourth Thursday of each month, excluding November, and begins at 1930 sharp. Location is Freeman Heights Baptist. Church, 1120 N Garland Ave, Garland (between W Walnut and Buckingham Rd). Enter via the north driveway. A HUGE parking lot is located behind the church. Both the parking lot and the Fellowship Hall are located on the east side of the church building, with big signs by the entrance door. Contact Janet Crenshaw, WB9ZPH, 972.302.9992.

Plano testing is on the third Saturday of each month, 1300 hrs at Williams High School, 1717 17th St. East Plano. Check Repeater 147.180+ for announcements.

Greenville testing is on the Saturday after 3rd Thursday, 1000 hrs at site TBA, contact N5KA, 903.364.5306. Sponsor is Sabine Valley ARA. Repeater 146.780(-) with 118.8 tone.

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President's Message

There is no President's Message this month. Please watch for the new President's message next month.

Secretary's Report

27 November 2012

The meeting was called to order by President Mike Schmit WA9WCC at 1730.

The following members were present at the meeting:

Jim Brown	TBA
John McFadden	K5TIP
Mike Schmit	WA9WCC
Richard Strnad	AA6DV

Officers and Committee Reports:

President's Report: There was no President's Report.

Vice-President's Report: We currently have no Vice-President.

Secretary's Report: The Secretary's Report is in this newsletter.

Treasurer's Report: There was no Treasurer's Report.

Website Manager's Report: There was no Website Manager's Report.

Station Trustee's Report: There was no Station Trustee's Report.

Database Manager's Report: There was no Database Manager's Report.

Old Business:

Expenditure of funds for station improvements was approved by the membership at the October meeting, but no one was present to report on status of subsequent actions.

New Business:

Mike Schmit asked for support for the Dallas Marathon scheduled for 9 December. The announced contact was W5BJ@arrl.net.

No December meeting was scheduled. The next meeting will be at 1730 on Tuesday, 22 January 2013.

Adjournment:

The business meeting was adjourned at 1745. There was no program scheduled.

On a Cold Winter Night

By Tom Thompson W0IVJ on October 12, 2012

Tom flipped on the light to the ham shack as he descended down the stairs into the basement. He turned on the Drake TR-3 transceiver and started listening on the 40 meter band. It had been a noisy summer and fall on 40 meters with all the thunderstorms in the area but tonight was different. The night was cold and the 40 meter band was quiet.

Tom admired the 813 linear amplifier that he had just completed. Electronics was not Tom's profession, so the amplifier project had been difficult for him. He found the design in the 16th edition of the Radio Handbook written by Bill Orr. The amplifier seemed like a perfect companion for his new TR-3 transceiver as he was transitioning from AM to Single Side Band. After many trips to the electronic stores in Denver, Tom had finally completed his 813 amplifier. To his surprise and delight, it actually worked. With a pair of 813s the amplifier really increased his TR-3 signal.

Tom enjoyed phone operation but his true love was CW. There was a certain simplicity and purity about CW that ... well just appealed to him. Hoping to work some DX, Tom turned on the amplifier to let it warm up. The purple glow of the 866A rectifier tubes and the warm orange glow of the 813 filaments sent a sense of peace and relaxation over him.

Tom tuned the VFO on the TR-3 to the low end of 40 while carefully listening to the rhythmic beat of the various fists. He caught pieces of each QSO as he decoded the CW in his head. Clearly some fists were better than others but all were music to his ears. Suddenly Tom heard dit dit dit dit, dit, dit dah dit dit, dit dah dit. The word HELP grabbed his attention and he paused his tuning to listen some more. Joe, in Utah was talking to a station in Idaho. Joe needed help!

Joe's hand was shaking on the key as he carefully explained his situation to the station in Idaho. When he turned it over the station in Idaho had faded out. The band had changed before Joe could send his position information.

Joe and Sally had planned this backpacking trip for months. Both were experienced hikers having hiked portions of the Appalachian Trail near their home in Pennsylvania. But this was different. The portion of the Appalachian Trail that they had hiked, had many hikers on it. The backpacking trip to the canyon lands of Utah would not be like that. They could anticipate days without seeing any other hikers. Also, since the only time Joe and Sally had coincident vacations was in the winter, the hiking traffic would be even sparser. Joe was a little worried about this, but he had served in Korea so he was used to sleeping in a tent in the cold. Besides Utah was known to have some warm days in the winter. Nevertheless, Joe had assembled a small, low power 40 meter CW transceiver. It was not light with the A and B batteries even though he had kept the circuitry simple using the same miniature tube for the super regenerative receiver and the transmitter oscillator. But Joe did not want to cut any corners since Sally was not as keen on this trip as he was. He figured that 40 meter CW would give him the best opportunity for a contact since they would be hiking in the canyons and he would be running low power.

Now, Joe was about to find out if his planning would pay off. Sally had tripped over a rock in the middle of the night and possibly broken her ankle. In any case, she could not walk and help was needed. Joe had quickly strung a temporary antenna between two high rocks and had been calling for about an hour when an Idaho station answered. Now the Idaho station had faded before Joe could give his location.

As Tom began listening to the weak signal from Joe he realized that this was no ordinary QSO. Joe needed help and the Idaho station could no longer copy Joe. Tom could not copy the Idaho station either so he called Joe immediately. After contact had been established, Joe described where he was. Tom, being an avid backpacker himself, had recently hiked in that same area. He knew roughly where Joe and Sally were. Tom assured Joe that he would call the county sheriff who would organize a rescue party. Tom agreed to meet Joe the next evening on the same frequency to check on Sally's condition. Tom signed off and called the county sheriff. He explained the situation and gave Joe's location to the sheriff. The sheriff assured Tom that a search party would be on the way as soon as possible.

Tom tuned his VFO momentarily but soon realized that a relaxing session on CW was not to be had. The adrenalin rush had not only ruined his concentration but his hands were shaking so much that sending was out of the question. He pictured Joe and Sally alone in the dark under the starry Utah sky. He felt the awesome responsibility that Joe had bestowed upon him. Tom went back upstairs and spent the rest of the night tossing and turning in his bed.

The next day at work Tom kept looking at the clock. Time seemed to drag as Tom's thoughts kept going back to Joe and Sally. Were they ok? Had the search party reached them? Were they able to get Sally to the hospital? Tom could hardly wait until the time for his sked with Joe arrived. He carefully tuned his TR-3 around the agreed upon frequency, but no Joe. Were band conditions not right? Had Joe and Sally been rescued? Had he given proper directions to the sheriff? This was driving Tom crazy. Maybe he shouldn't have become involved. No! That was out of the question. Tom spent another night tossing and turning.

The next day as he was driving to work the incident was still running around in his mind. He turned on the car radio and heard on the news that two hikers had been rescued by a search party in the canyon lands of Utah. The female hiker had suffered a broken ankle. Tom immediately relaxed as a grin spread over his face. The cold winter night had not been what he expected but he was very satisfied with how he and his station had performed. A few days later, Tom received a phone call from Joe. Sally was doing well and Joe and Tom discussed the details of the rescue.

Over the years Tom and Joe kept in contact. Their kids were grown and had moved away. They both had modern radio equipment now, mostly purchased not home built, but they looked forward to their weekly CW sked. They had discussed a lot of different things during those many contacts, but occasionally the conversation would turn to the night of that fateful contact on a cold winter night.

(To all who read my story: This story is fiction and intended to take those who read it on a nostalgic trip into the past. 73, Tom W0IVJ) (Reprinted with permission from www.eham.net)

Rockwell-Collins

Amateur Radio Club

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TO:



CLUB STATIONS

(972) 705-1349

W5ROK REPEATER

441.875 MHz +5 MHz Input

131.8 Hz PL - RX and TX

W5ROK-1 PACKET BBS ROK Node

145.05 MHz

W5ROK-N1, W5ROK-N2 & W5ROK-N3 HSMM-MESHNET Nodes 2.4 GHz

No Meeting in December

1700 Social 1730 Meeting

Methodist Richardson Medical Ctr
At Bush/Renner/Shiloh Intersection
Second Floor Conference Room 200

NEXT SIGNALS INPUTS DEADLINE:

→→→ 11 January 2013 ←←←