

**The Central Texas Amateur Radio Club
 meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM at the
 Bell County Communications Center, 708 West Avenue O, in Belton**



From the Editor's Desk...

Rick Murray, K6WXA



Hope this finds everyone fat and sassy from a good Thanksgiving – I know had one, or should I say two. One at my daughter’s house, and then one here at home.

For those of you that were not able to attend the club’s last meeting on November 3rd, elections were held for club officers to carry the club through 2016. Elected or re-elected into office were: Terry Evans-KF5OHR as President; Rick Murray-K6WXA as Vice President; Kenneth Watkins-KE5ISN as Treasurer; Russell Stoddard-KG6FUJ as Secretary and Joe Mayer-K4JMS as a Board Director. Staying on the subject of club officers... recently I was away in California and Gerald was unavailable to attend to club matters due to work commitments. I want to personally thank Russell for stepping up to the plate and leading the club in its business both during a board meeting as well as at a monthly meeting during my absence. I really appreciate it Russ and nice job!

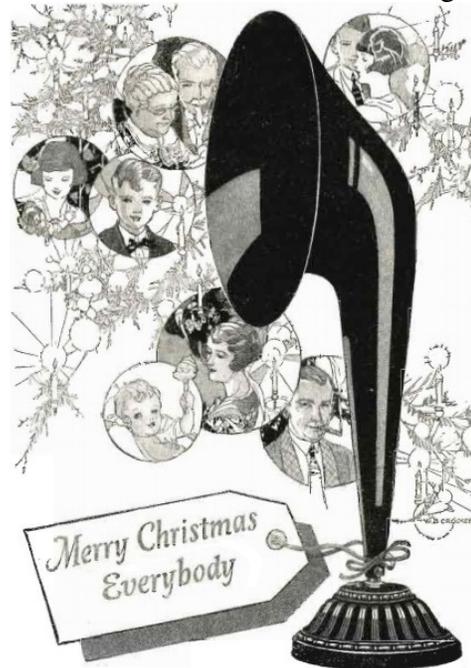
A couple of things coming up at the top of the month... Robert-KE5WVC, is looking for some volunteers to assist with the Temple Christmas Parade on the first. Also on December 1st is our annual Christmas dinner get-together. And, to mention it again, we won’t be having a regular club meeting in December... just the dinner get-together. More information on both of these events, as well as other events coming up in the month follows further on in the newsletter.

Later in the month, Christmas Eve falls on the 24th of December – a Thursday – so we won’t be having a weekly net that night.

One small note about January... tis that time of the season when annual club dues are due. Make a note to inundate Kenneth at the January meeting.

That’s all from here this go ‘round, hope to see everyone at “Johnny’s” on the first at dinner.

- 73 de Rick, K6WXA





The Central Texas Amateur Radio Club
Holiday Dinner at *Johnny's Steak & Bar-Be-Que*
301 Thomas Arnold Road in Salado



...This dinner get-together to be held in lieu of our regular December meeting...

Tuesday, December 1st at 6:30 PM

We'll be meeting in their "Banquet Hall" located to the right of the restaurant itself. The dinners are \$12.95, plus \$2.50 for those wanting dessert.

Their menu can be found at:

<http://www.johnnyssteaksandbbq.com/pdf/MenuCombined8-21-14.pdf>

Johnny's: (254) 947-4663

A Big Thanks to Joe Mayer-K4JMS for planning and coordinating this event!



Charles Dickens
"A Christmas Carol"



Originally aired live on Christmas Eve, December 24th, 1939, by *The Campbell Playhouse* over CBS, this radio broadcast will live in the memories of those that have heard it for a lifetime.

I wager that most of us inadvertently committed this to memory not by reading Charles Dickens' 1843 novel - which was the first book ever read over radio - but by having seen or heard a different adaptation of it each Christmas. The work has produced an abundance of productions on film, television, and the stage.

To celebrate the holiday season, here is the streaming audio of The Campbell Playhouse's 1939 production of Charles Dickens' classic, "A Christmas Carol." If you've never heard this outstanding hour-long radio adaptation, I highly recommend it. This is a must listen every Christmas season. Please visit: <https://archive.org/details/CampbellPlayhouseAChristmasCarol12241939>

The Central Texas Amateur Radio Net meets every Thursday at 8:00 PM on the N5ZXJ repeater, on 145.310(-) PL 123.0 Join Us!

December NCS & Back-Up NCS Schedule

December 3rd: December 10th:
Net Control: KE5ISN N5JLL
Back-Up: N5JLL K6WXA

December 17th: December 24th:
Net Control: K6WXA - No Net -
Back-Up: KD5FJF Christmas Eve

December 31st:
Net Control: W5VEX
Back-Up: AD5SK



Temple
Christmas Parade

The Temple Christmas Parade is on Monday, December 1st at 6:30 P.M. Volunteers are needed to assist with support communications. Initial meet will be at the Bell County Health Building, 201 North 8th St., in Temple at 3:30 PM.



Staging time will start at 4:00 P.M. We will be operating 2 meter simplex. Necessary equipment will be an HT, safety vest, flashlight and proper clothing for the weather conditions. At least 10 to 12 volunteers are needed for this event. If you can assist in this please contact Robert Shoemaker - KE5WVC, at: robert1867@embarqmail.com



ARRL 160-Meter Contest

Contest period runs from 2200 UTC, December 4, and wraps up at 1559 UTC December 6. This is a 42-hour all-CW event with no operating time limit. If you have ever yearned to try your hand at Top Band contesting, this is the perfect opportunity!

More information is available at: <http://www.arrl.org/160-meter>



Skywarn Recognition Day



This event takes place on all authorized amateur frequencies and modes from 0001 UTC Dec. 5th to 2400 UTC Dec. 6th. More info is at:

<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr/hamradio>



ARRL 10-Meter Contest

Contest period runs from 0001Z, December 12th to 2359Z, December 13th. The objective is for Amateurs worldwide to engage in QSO's with as many other stations as possible on the 10 meter band. For more info please visit:

<http://www.arrl.org/10-meter>



Christmas is Christmas
—with a Radiola



Sue 'Em!



“Sue ‘Em!”

The first radio play broadcasted in America, was aired December 29, 1925 over stations WGBS-New York, WIP-Philadelphia and WGY-Schenectady and centered around a typical middle-class American family, in their rather shabby and run down apartment.



The first radio play, "Sue 'Em," winner of a contest conducted by station "WGBS," New York, was put on the air on December 29 by three stations, "WGBS," New York, "WIP," Philadelphia, and "WGY," Schenectady, by members of the Princeton Players. The play, the first radio production ever presented over the air, was a complete success, judging by the applause cards which the broadcasting stations are receiving from their listeners.

The action takes place in the living room at seven o'clock in the evening. The wife is middle-aged and of a settled disposition; her husband, has been a patient listener ever since that fatal day when he stepped before the altar. While not necessarily hen-pecked, his wife manages to rule the establishment. The daughter has little interest outside of the movies, parties and new clothes--like thousands of others. The son is not held in high esteem by his family, but then prophets are often without honor in their own country. Not that the son is supposed to be a prophet in any sense, but he's certainly more than his folks give him credit for.

While no audio file of the original broadcast seems to exist, you can read more on the story as well as read the script from the play, at:

<http://emruf.webs.com/sueem.htm>



On Again, Off Again

Just as bad propagation can pretty much close the bands, the FCC outages have brought processing of VEC license and examination files to a screeching halt.

Now, another obstacle has struck the FCC's beleaguered Universal Licensing System, which suffered a second, and then third shutdown of its Electronic Batch Filing system. One stoppage occurred, appropriately perhaps, on Friday the 13th, and shortly after the system was restored on Wednesday, November 18th, it once again stopped working.

The ARRL's VEC Manager, Maria Somma - AB1FM, said she hoped volunteer examiners and applicants would try to be patient, especially since the FCC has indicated there is not yet a long-term fix for the problem. The agency did acknowledge, however, that the on-again, off-again ability to process files stems from the same issue each time.

According to Somma, the ARRL VEC had an estimated 400 applications and nearly 150 exam sessions awaiting FCC processing. A few files did manage to make their way through the system on the 18th, however, before the system went off-line again.

The scenario is reminiscent of the shutdown that occurred in early September, frustrating license applicants and examiners, while the FCC website underwent maintenance and a system upgrade.

At the time of this newsletter's production, however, it seems that the amateur radio community was once again in for a bit of a waiting game.



You're Missing Something!

If You're Not Attending Your Club's Luncheons



CTARC luncheon of November 14th at Oscar's in Temple. Photo by KE5WVC (...yeah, I know, I wasn't there either. I was in New Braunfels at their Wurstfest. -Ed.)

"The future holds great things in store for the radio enthusiast. In all parts of the country the radio receiving outfit is becoming as much a necessity as the telephone. In a short time, if the radio interest keeps on spreading as rapidly as it has in the past, there will be no home without one."

Pittsburgh Press - December 25, 1921



A Good Wife and a Good Radio Assures Lasting Satisfaction

(...from "Radio News" - December, 1925...)



SM6LRR will be active from Vietnam through the 5th of December as **XV2D**. QSL via his home call.

JA1XGI will be active from the South Cook Islands, 3 - 10 December as **E51XGI**. QSL via his home call.

DL7VOG will be active from Martinique Island until December 8th, signing **stroke FM**. QSL via his home call.

F6ICX will be active from Sainte Marie (Nosy Boraha) Island, through December 12th as **5R8IC**. QSL via his home call.

DDØVR will be active from Namibia 10 December - 10 January, signing **stroke V5** or **V5ØVR**. QSL via his home call.

VK2BJ will be active from Vanuatu, 2 - 16 December as **YJØBJ**. QSL via his home call.

I2DMI will be active from Palau 22 - 29 December as **T88RY**, on 80 - 10m RTTY only. QSL via his home call.

3D2RJ will be active from Viti Levu Island, Fiji starting 3 December for an unspecified period. QSL via N7RO.

ZL1IF will be active from Upolu Island, Samoa, through the 3rd of December as **5WØIF**. QSL via his home call.

W8AKS will be active from Barbados 5 - 12 December as **8P9EZ**. QSL via his home call.

K2HVN will be active from Saint Barthelemy Island 12 - 17 December signing **stroke FJ**. QSL via home call.

MW6GOZ will be active from Lesotho during the month of December as **7P8GOZ**. QSL via his home call.

ND3F will be active from Dominican Republic until the 3rd of December as **HI3W**. QSL via his home call.

K9AW will be active from Saint Lucia Island through the 7th of December, signing **stroke J6**. QSL via his home call.

A group of amateurs will be active from Suriname through the 2nd of December as **PZ5W**. QSL via NØAT.

DF6LO will be active from Mauritius Island for an unspecified period in December as **3B8RF**. QSL via LOTW or eQSL.

WA3DX will be active from different locations in Senegal 26 December - 12 January, signing **stroke 6W1** (Dakar), **stroke 6W7** (Mbao) and **stroke 6W6** from the Kaolack and Saloum Islands. QSL via his home call.

DL1RPL and **DL3RKS** will be active from Reunion Island each signing **stroke FR** through the 3rd of December. QSL via DL1RPL.

Special Event Station **W7D** will be active from Boeing Field, WA 10-15 December to commemorate the 6th anniversary of the first flight of the *Boeing 787 Dreamliner*. QSL via KB7QPS.

KD4UDU will be active from Liberia until 17 December as **EL2DW**. QSL via his home call.

OM3CGN and EA7TN will be active in Egypt during the month of December as **SU9ØIARU**. QSL via OM3CGN.

F4HEC will be active from Guam Island 3 - 9 December signing **stroke KH2**. Then, he will be active from Saipan Island 10 - 13 December signing **stroke KHØ**. QSL via his home call.

K7BV will be active from Bali Island 23 - 29 December signing **stroke YB9**. QSL via his home call.

DK9PY will be active from Sri Lanka until 4 December as **4S7SAE**. QSL via his home call.



Atlantic Hurricane Season Ends

Forecasts for the 2015 Atlantic tropical storm and hurricane season suggested an average to slightly below average season based on projected climate signals, with the Atlantic basin tropical cyclone activity to be around 20% below the 1950-2014 long-term norm and around 30% below the recent 2005-2014 10-year norm. The 2015 Atlantic hurricane season forecast was for 13 named storm systems, 6 of which would develop hurricane strength and of those 6, 2 would become major hurricanes. What transpired were 11 named storm systems, of which 4 attained hurricane strength, and of those, 1 became a major hurricane.

The 2015 Atlantic Hurricane Season "officially" started June 1st, and ended on November 30th - and this year's hurricane season made the history books.

This year the season started a little early with the formation of Tropical Storm Ana on May 7th, off the coast of South Carolina. Ana made landfall on May 9th at 6:00 AM EDT near Myrtle Beach, with sustained winds of 45 MPH. Interaction with land masses caused it to weaken to a tropical depression less than eight hours later.

Ana was the earliest tropical storm system to form in the Atlantic basin since 2003 - which was also named Ana - and that storm system was the only tropical cyclone on record to form during the month of April.



Tropical Storm Ana

The next history maker was Tropical Storm Fred. It formed off the west coast of Africa on August 30th and attained Category-1 strength the following day, becoming the first hurricane to pass over the Cape Verde Islands since 1892.



The cargo ship S.S. El Faro

In this modern day and age, we just don't hear about ships being lost at sea anymore thanks to the development of modern technology. But on the 29th of September, Tropical Storm Joaquin formed near the Bahamas and quickly grew to Category-4 strength. Near the eye of the storm, was the cargo ship *S.S. El Faro*.

The ship had departed Jacksonville, Florida for San Juan, Puerto Rico, carrying a cargo of 391 shipping containers, about 294 trailers and cars,

and a crew of 33 consisting of 28 Americans and 5 Poles. Around 7:30 a.m. on October 1st, less than 30 hours after the ship sailed from Jacksonville, the U.S. Coast Guard received a satellite notification that the vessel had lost all propulsion and was taking on water and had a 15 degree list.

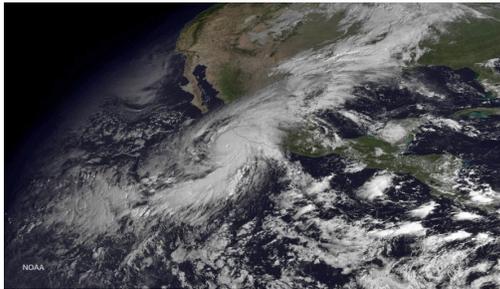
Near the same time, the Coast Guard also received a single ping from the ship's Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon. Subsequent attempts by the Coast Guard to open communications with the *El Faro* were unsuccessful. The *El Faro* had gone down with the loss of all hands.

On October 31st, during search and recovery efforts by the U.S. Navy, the resting place of the *El Faro* was located in 15,000 feet of water in an upright position and intact. Only one body was recovered. Former crew members of *El Faro* expressed surprise and shock that the vessel set sail with a major storm in its course. They claimed the vessel to be "a rust bucket" and that "it was not supposed to be on the water," saying

that the *El Faro* suffered from drainage issues and leakage was common in the cook's room. Additionally, they claimed the ship was covered in rust and its decks were filled with holes.



Hurricane Joaquin, October 1st



Hurricane Patricia – October 23rd

But the real history maker as far as tropical storm systems in 2015, was Hurricane Patricia – an eastern Pacific storm system. It was the most intense tropical cyclone ever recorded in the Western Hemisphere in terms of barometric pressure at one point measuring 880 mb, and the strongest globally in terms of reliably measured maximum sustained winds of 200 mph.

The National Hurricane Center said Hurricane Patricia was the strongest storm it had recorded in the eastern Pacific or the Atlantic and that the category five hurricane was comparable to Typhoon Haiyan, which killed 6,300 people in the Philippines in 2013.

After making landfall on Mexico's western coast, and after the storm had passed and officials were able to survey the damage, the Mexican government released its official death toll from Patricia: zero.

Winter Solstice

The days are getting shorter; the temperatures are cooler; the constellation Orion can be seen in the eastern sky at night. All point to one thing... winter is on the way.

For those of us here in Central Texas, the Winter Solstice will arrive on Monday, the 21st of December, at 10:49 PM, ushering in the first day of winter.





Woman's Work in Radio

What's On The Air - December, 1925

There is a great deal being said nowadays about women's interest in radio, and it is being said as if a woman's interest has but recently been aroused.

Salesmen and dealers are making the claim that it is a woman's influence which is solely responsible for the simplification and beautification of radio. This isn't true entirely. After an invention is well under way efforts are immediately made to improve it. Then follows the cry that the woman's influence is responsible for the finer features.



Deora Wolfe, Studio Hostess at WJR

The same applies to radio. The better a receiver looks, the more easily it can be operated, the more the man and woman like it. There are very few either men or women, who are content to have things in disorder or in a mess. Women's interest in radio began when the first small boy got under her feet making a set in the cellar or mutilated the phonograph to get a part for the receiver he was building. A few women, a few men, looked upon the boy's activities as another one of the youthful nuisances that had to be endured - like teething. But the father and mother, who were really interested in the character development and growth of their son, were interested in

this new thing which kept the boy at home and off the streets.

Mother's interest in radio was heightened when the youngster, long after he should have been in bed, came pattering down to the parlor, in pajamas and bare feet, with hair tousled and eyes aglow, and exclaimed that he had just heard the S.O.S. of a ship in distress, the signals at Arlington or some special news item. The next morning when this

news was in the paper there was rejoicing at the breakfast table because the youngster had heard it hours before.

There are very few mothers who wouldn't get a thrill out of the fact that their sons were able to achieve such wonderful things. Almost all the present day men, prominent in radio, were, a few years ago, boys monkeying around the house building sets and begging or working for extra cash to get special parts. These youngsters are really the backbone of the radio industry. Their mothers, fathers, uncles, aunts and cousins all listened years ago to a strange language about meters, wavelengths, transformers, condensers and what not

That is the time women became interested in radio and her interest has never lagged.



Mabel Everm, Program Director at WFI

Recently an article appeared in one of the papers in which it said that women should not be the choosers of a radio receiver because she judges entirely by the outward appearance rather than by its performance. The young man who wrote the article must have lived on an isolated island somewhere or he never would have made such a statement. A trip to two or three radio sales rooms will show him that the woman, while she may not buy a set that doesn't harmonize with house furnishings, she won't even look at one which hasn't good tone qualities.



Doris Secord, "Story Lady" at WOAW

Many of the radio dealers have exchanged sets three or four times because the lady of the house objected to the squeals, howls or lack of pure tone reproduction. When she finds the set that gives the service which she knows it should, she will soon arrange it to conform with the furnishings of the home.

Radio is offering women greater opportunities than almost any other industry and considering its extreme youth, there is probably a greater percentage of women in radio than in any other line of activity.

In the factory, where nimble fingers are necessary for accuracy, women are employed in winding coils, assembling parts, soldering, varnishing and packing.

There are a number of women, editors of both newspapers and magazines, who despite its technical nature, have proven their complete mastery of the subject of radio. One young editress, with bobbed head, can install any kind of a set from beginning to end and tell almost at a glance what is wrong with it if it doesn't work. One of the big newspapers in New York City has a woman in complete charge of its radio department and one of the large advertising agencies has a woman writing copy of radio ads. There are two women advertising managers, and another is a partner in the firm in which she is taking an active part.

Women are quick to see the unlimited possibilities of radio. When broadcasting became popular there was a great deal said against the woman as announcer or entertainer, contending that her voice hadn't sufficient carrying qualities and her throat couldn't stand the strain. Today many of the biggest stations have women giving out the programs and a large proportion of the entertainers are women.

Radio was still very young when a woman in New York took the agency for its sale and established a splendid service department for her clients.



Charlotte Mayer, of WTAM

Radio offers the modern woman something more than just a mediocre opportunity. To the live-wire woman, radio offers unlimited possibilities in its hundreds of departments. There are many girls in radio who delight in pleasing their vast audiences, because they know their offerings are sincere and are received as such. Radio is the nearest one can come to romance in the money-earning world. In Elena Munster's words, "Apply yourself the right way and choose broadcasting as a career instead of a business."

The Ship That Vanished *and came back... again... and again...*

By the early 20th century, Marconi's wireless had proven itself. Warren Tute, in his *Atlantic Conquest*, noted that "Wireless telegraphy was to deprive the sea of its ancient terror of silence." Yet by a strange irony it only gave it a new mystery—the mystery of missing Maydays and SOS signals. The modern terror of the sea turns out to be something more aggravating than silence: a question mark...

Standing at the lower end of Battery Park, where the tip end of New York looks out toward the remorseless ocean stands a memorial fountain to wireless operators lost at sea. The monument was dedicated on May 12th, 1915, and bore the names of ten young wireless operators who, in the midst of storm and terror, stuck to their post of duty and went down with their ships. Since then more names have been added to the monument.



One of those names added was Lawrence M. Waring Jr., the radio operator of the *S.S. Cotopaxi* a tramp steamer, built by the Great Lakes Engineering Works in 1918, she was a cargo ship of 2,351 gross tonnage, 253 feet long, with a beam of 44 feet. Her steam engine could propel her at 9.5 knots.



The S.S. Cotopaxi

On November 29th, 1925, under the command of Captain W. J. Meyer, with a crew of 32, the *Cotopaxi* departed Charleston, South Carolina carrying a cargo of coal, for Havana, Cuba - a voyage that would take her through the "Bermuda Triangle." On December 1st, *Cotopaxi* radioed a distress call reporting that the ship was listing and taking on water. Also reported was that the compass' onboard the ship was irregular, and the signalman messaged that a strange purple cloud began to

vortex ahead in the ships path. Minutes later the ship started an SOS call which was followed by a broken radio contact. The last plotted location of the *Cotopaxi* was 45 nautical miles southwest of Cuba.

The *Cotopaxi* was never heard from nor seen again. She was officially listed as 'overdue' on December 31st. You would think the story would end there; but it doesn't.

On November 16, 1977, EMI Films released Steven Spielberg's "*Close Encounters of the Third Kind*" where in one part of the movie, they find a lost cargo ship named the *Cotopaxi* in the middle of the Gobi Desert in Mongolia, suggesting it was placed there by a large UFO.



This was the last time the *Cotopaxi* was ever thought of again - or so you would think.

Then another story surfaced where on May 10th, 2015 at early dawn, a cargo ship, the "*Angostura*" commanded by Captain Leonidas, was making its way down through the Patagonian Channel near Chile. A desolate, cold and vast channel some 400 km's long South of the Brazilian continent, frequently navigated by ships on route through to Panama, and the Falkland Islands.



Just as Captain Leonidas entered the end of the channel at Punta Arenas, he saw another vessel slowly emerging out of the distant early morning fog some 600 meters ahead coming out of the channel towards him, heading towards the Atlantic Ocean. He signaled, to which the other ship made no response. As the oncoming ship came closer, it became apparent to Captain Leonidas that this vessel coming straight for him was in a peculiar appearance and state and the shaded grey image of the

vessel became more ominous as it approached and it's appearance became even more detailed... it was a wreck!

While this ghost ship passed by, Captain Leonidas grabbed his camera and snapped a few shots of the rusty hulk. It was the *Cotopaxi*. The ship soon trailed out to the Atlantic Ocean, continuing it's ghostly voyage and disappearing a few days later not since been reported by any other vessel.

While this part of the story is based lightly on true events, the ship spotted by Captain Leonidas, rather than being the *S.S. Cotopaxi*, was actually the *Bajo Cotopaxi* a Greek ship which ran aground in 1972 in the Patagonian Channel.

But we haven't finished yet...

On May 18th, 2015 the *World News Daily Report* ran an article in which the Cuban Coast Guard announced that they had intercepted an unmanned ship heading for the island. The Cuban authorities spotted the ship for the first time on May 16th, near a restricted military zone, west of Havana. They made many unsuccessful attempts to communicate with the crew, and finally mobilized three patrol boats to intercept it. When they reached it, there was no one on board and the ship seemed to have been abandoned for decades.

An exhaustive search of the ship led to the discovery of the captain's logbook. It was indeed, associated with the owners of the *S.S. Cotopaxi*, but didn't bring forward any clue concerning what happened to the ship over the last 90 years.

*The *World News Daily Report* is a fake news site, whose disclaimer page clearly states that its content is not meant to be taken seriously.



Here on shore, our files are very incomplete and poor. But out there, in the Triangle, is the only true and accurate accounting of missing vessels.