

**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**

Terry's Telegram...

Terry Evans, KF5OHR

At the start of the year, I was selected to be a part of the Belton Citizen's Police Academy training class for the year of 2017. It's my understanding this is a once a year class that the Belton P.D. puts on with the support of the City Management. For now I am about four weeks into the 10 week program and its been a hoot! The class is made up of about 20 people from around the Belton area, so I was really lucky to get into the program, not being from the Belton area.

We have gone to the Gun training area with the electronic training systems and trained on their Tasers. It's not like you would be qualified on the range or with the Taser, but you get a look into what the Belton Police officers training is and that they are always trying to improve their skills. We are not talking cheap equipment or training aids; this is good stuff and seems to be well supported by the City Council, the Mayors office and other city departments. To put on this class is not cheap, but it does give you some idea why the Belton Police Department is so well trained and well respected throughout the country.

On Saturday, February 7th I did a ride along with Officer Bandit (not sure if his name is spelled correct), once I signed the waver and put on the bullet proof vest, we went out to the car and got a rundown of the car and the equipment. It was once again pointed out to me not to get out of the car without his ok. We were off, during the night Officer Bandit pulled over about 15 cars, some because of lights out, failing to signal a turn and a couple speeding and as far as I know, just warning tickets. We spent a lot of time working in a high crime area trying to show a high police visibility. We did find two young men climbing out of a dumpster, who were looking for something that had been thrown away and they wanted it back. To wrap up the night, we got called Code 3 with lights and siren to a knife fight but we got canceled about two blocks away because other units got their first.

In closing let me just say that the Belton Police Department is well trained and well supported by the city and its citizens. If only other communities could come close to this training and respect crime would go way down.

In other news, Jay Urish-W5GM, will become the new Section Manager for North Texas effective April 1st. Urish is succeeding Nancy McCain-K5NLM, who did not run for re-election.

That's it from here for now. Hope to see you all at our next club meeting which will be on Tuesday, March 7th, at 7:00 PM at the Bell County Communications Center.

73 de Terry, KF5OHR





"The March of Time! The life of the world, its conflicts and achievements, its news and fun, its leaders and its common people."



The March of Time began airing as a weekly series over CBS March 6th, 1931 and was the first radio "newsreel" which dramatized news events, elaborately staged with sound effects and music, put together like a newspaper—often on deadline, with impact and accuracy its twin goals.

The show had a tough production schedule requiring 1,000 man-hours of labor, 33 hours for each minute of broadcast time; 500 hours for news research, writing, and re-writing, 40 hours of clerical work; 60 hours for music rehearsal and 400 hours for rehearsal of cast and sound crew.

The show has been long studied by scholars for its propagandistic effects because many people believed that the show's portrayal of the news was authentic and unadulterated.

You can listen-in again to the show which was characterized by one reviewer as *"probably the toughest job on the air"* by visiting:

<http://www.olderadiodownloads.com/historical/march-of-time-the>



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!

March NCS & Back-Up NCS Schedule

March 2nd:	March 9th:
Net Control: AD5SK	KG6FUJ
Back-Up: KG6FUJ	W5VEX

March 16th:	March 23rd:
Net Control: W5VEX	KD5FJF
Back-Up: KD5FJF	K6WXA

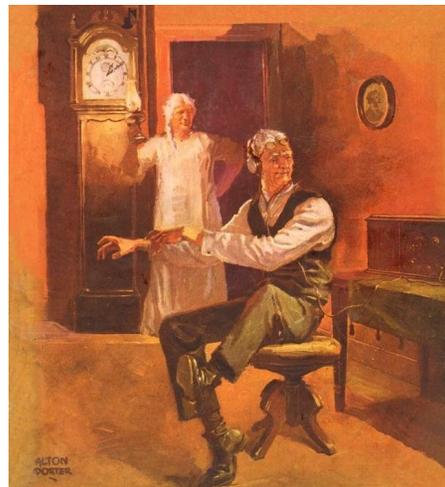
March 30th:
Net Control: K6WXA
Back-Up: KE5ISN



ARRL International DX Contest

Contest period runs from 0001Z March 4th, to 2400Z March 5th on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 Meters SSB phone. For more information on this, please visit: <http://www.arrl.org/arrl-dx>

Daylight Saving Time Begins



Daylight Saving Time begins Sunday, March 12th at 2:00 AM. Be sure to set your clocks one hour ahead before going to bed the preceding Saturday night.



Williamson County Swapfest

The Williamson County Amateur Radio Club will be holding their annual swapfest on Saturday, March 18th at the Community Center in the San Gabriel Park, 445 East Morrow Street, in Georgetown. Hours are 8:00 AM to Noon. Talk-in frequency is via their repeater on 146.640(-) PL 162.2 and call for N5TT. For more information, please visit: <http://www.wcarc.com/>



St. Patrick's Day Hamfest ARRL West Texas Convention

The St. Patrick's Day Hamfest and the ARRL West Texas State Convention, is on March 18th, at the Grand Texan Hotel and Convention Center, 4300 W. Wall Street in Midland. Talk-in frequency is 147.300(+) PL 88.5, and call for W5QGG. <http://hamfest.w5qgg.org/>



Greater Houston Hamfest ARRL South Texas Convention

The Greater Houston Hamfest and the ARRL South Texas State Convention, is on March 24th & 25th, at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, 4310 Highway 36, in Rosenberg. Talk-In frequency is 146.940(-) PL 167.9 and call for KK5W.

More information is available at:
<http://www.houstonhamfest.org>



CQ World-Wide WPX Contest

Contest period runs from 0001Z March 25th to 2400Z, March 26th on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 Meters SSB. For more information on this contest, please visit:
<http://www.cqwp.com/rules.htm>



North Country Special Event

Members of the North Country DX Association (NCDXA) will be active the entire month of March from several different locations in Alaska, Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Greenland. Listen for calls: **KL7RST**, **VY1RST**, **VE8RST**, **VYØRST** and **OX7RST**. QSL each via K7ICE.

Much more information can be found at: <https://www.qrz.com/db/K7ICE/5>



Skywarn Training



Bosque County (*Basic Spotter Training*) Thursday, March 16th, 7:00 - 9:00 PM at the Meridian Civic Center, 309 West River Street, in Meridian.

Burnet County (Basic Spotter Training) Thursday, March 23rd, 6:30 - 8:30 PM, at the Marble Falls Area EMS, 609 Industrial Blvd., in Marble Falls.

Lampasas County (*Basic Spotter Training*) Tuesday, March 7th, 7:00 - 9:00 PM at the Lampasas Fire Dept., 1107 East 4th Street, in Lampasas.

Mills County (*Basic Spotter Training*) Thursday, March 2nd, 6:00 - 8:00 PM, at the Mills County Law Enforcement Center, 2111 Priddy Road, in Goldthwaite.

Williamson County (*Basic Spotter Training*) Thursday, March 2nd, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM, at the Cedar Park Recreation Center, 1435 Main Street, in Cedar Park.



Help Wanted!

Do you enjoy checking-in to the Central Texas Amateur Radio Net on Thursday nights? If so, this job may be for you. We are in need of an amateur radio operator to be a net control station.

You would be scheduled as the backup one week, then net control the following week. If you are interested in this position, please contact Kenneth Watkins-KE5ISN, at: ke5isn@aol.com and you will be sent the net script and placed in the rotation starting in April.

John Singleton once described Australian radio station 2CH listeners as, "The type of people who read the funeral notices in the newspaper to see if they are dead." Two years later he bought the station.



ARRL Seeks Opinions Concerning Possible New Entry Level License

An Entry Level License Committee was established by the ARRL Board of Directors in September 2016. As part of their work, the committee is gathering member input and will make recommendations for possible rules changes to submit to the FCC.

The result could mean changes to the Technician license, but it could also be an additional, but simpler, license with privileges that would give a newcomer a taste of most facets of ham radio.

The committee has created an online member survey, which can be found at: <http://www.arrl.org/license-1> ARRL members are asked to complete and submit the survey no later than April 7th.



Coryell County Joint Comm Group Meeting

The next meeting of the Coryell County Joint Comm Group will be on Tuesday, March 14th, at 11:30 AM at the Lil Tex Restaurant, 502 South Main Street, in Copperas Cove.

To the Radio Engineer of Tomorrow

Brigadier General George Owen Squier
Chief Signal Officer of the Army
March 3, 1917



"Here is a toast that we want to drink to a fellow we'll never know - the fellow who's going to take our place, when its time for us to go. We wonder what kind of a chap he'll be and wish we could take his hand, just to whisper, "We wish you well Old Man," in a way that he'd understand. We'd like to give him the cheering word that we've longed at times to hear; we'd like to give him the warm hand-clasp when never a friend seems near. We've gained our knowledge by sheer hard work, and wish we could pass it on. To the fellow who'll come to take our place, some day when we are gone."

HamEXPO!



Sponsored by the Temple Amateur Radio Club -W5LM, *the Belton Hamfest* returns to the Bell County Exposition Center in Belton, **Saturday, March 11th** from 7:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

Getting there is easy; from U.S. Highway 190 take the exit for Loop 121 and follow the signs to the Exposition Center. Plenty of free parking!

Talk-in frequency is 146.820(-) PL 123, and call for W5LM.

General admission for the public is \$5.00 at the door. Admission price includes one free raffle ticket for various door prizes raffled off during the event. Winners must be present to collect their winnings.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.tarc.org/hamexpo>



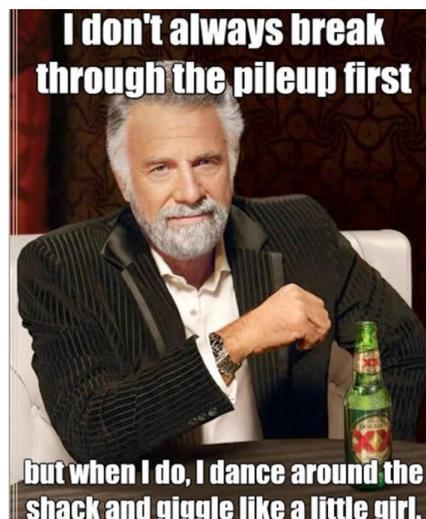
Ham Expo Amateur Radio Test Session

In conjunction with the HamExpo, amateur radio tests will be given in the main building of the Expo center, on the 2nd floor, and is sponsored by the Central Texas Amateur Radio Club. The testing will begin at 9:30 AM and end when all applicants have been tested, probably around 11:00 AM.

Since the test session is in conjunction with the very popular Ham Expo, we expect between 25 and 50 people taking the tests. This requires at least 10 Volunteer Examiners to properly staff the event. The VE's participating should be on site by 9:00. Both General and Extra VE's are needed since all test levels are being made available.

This is a 'Ham Community' effort and all area VE's are needed and most welcome to participate. If you will be able to participate, please send an email to Gerald Richmond - N5ZXJ at: gerald.richmond@gmail.com, or you can contact him by phone at (254) 913-7041.

People taking the test do not need to register before hand, just show up at test time. A photo ID and one other form of ID is required. The test fee is \$15.00.





100 Years U.S. Virgin Islands

On March 31, 1917, the United States purchased what is now the U.S. Virgin Islands from Denmark for \$25 Million. To commemorate the sale, Danish special event station **OZ1ØØDVI** will be active throughout 2017. QSL via OZ1IVA.

T2AQ will be active on SSB and **T2QR** on CW, from Tuvalu 14 March - 6 April. QSL via SP7DQR.

M1KTA will be active from Rarotonga Island, 10 - 19 March as **E51KTA**. QSL via his home call.

JJ2RCJ will be active from Grand Cayman Island, 20-24 March as **ZF2CJ**. QSL via his home call.

A group is active from Pitcairn Island, until 5 March as **VP6EU**. QSL via DK2AMM.

SMØXBI is active from Dominica Island until 27 March as **J79XBI**. QSL via his home call.

DF2WO will be active from Rwanda, 3 - 11 March as **9X2AW**. QSL via MØOXO.

KG9N is active from Barbados Island until 7 March as **8P9AL**. QSL via his home call.

F6ITD is active from Desirade Island, until 9 March as **TO7D** and signing **stroke FG**. QSL via his home call.

IK2GZU will be active from Tanzania 14 March - 12 April as **5H3MB**. QSL via his home call.

VE7ACN will be active from Prince of Wales Island, 8 - 20 March, signing **stroke KL7**. He will then be active from Kaien Island, 21 - 26 March, signing **stroke 7**. QSL via his home call.

A group will be active from Ghana 7 - 21 March as **9G5X**. QSL via MØOXO.

A group will be active from Niger as **5U7R**, 8 - 21 March. QSL via EA5RM.

A group will be active from Nicaragua 20 - 27 March as **YN2KW**. QSL via N5ET.

F8AAN is active from Saint Martin Island until 10 March, signing **stroke FS**. QSL via his home call.

WA1ZAM will be active from Sint Maarten Island 18 March - 3 April as **PJ7PL**. QSL via his home call.

A group is active on Raivavae Island, until 3 March as **TX5T**. QSL via DL2RUM.

A group will be active from Nepal 8 - 20 March, as **9N7EI**. QSL via MØOXO.

JA8COE will be active from Cheju Island, 8 - 11 March signing **stroke HL4**. QSL via his home call.

A group will be active from Melilla, 15 - 22 March, as **EA9/DL7DF**. QSL via DL7DF.

G8AFC is active from Mauritius Island, until 5 April as **3B8HE**. QSL via his home call.

G4SGX will be active from Belize, 9 - 14 March as **V31GX**. QSL via his home call.

A group will be active from Cote d'Ivoire 9 - 19 March as **TU7C**. QSL via F1ULQ.

AA4NC will be active from San Andres Island, this month as **5KØN**. The exact dates of his stay are not mentioned. QSL via his home call.

KE5TC will be active from Grand Cayman Island, 20 - 27 March, as **ZF2TC**. QSL via his home call.

EA5BY will be active from Guam Island, 29 March - 10 April as **KH2BY**. QSL via his home call.

A group is active from Antigua Island until 26 March as **V21ZG**. QSL via DL7AFS.

CTARC Weather Nets

With storm season quickly approaching, I thought it appropriate to re-visit the basic operating guidelines of our CTARC Weather Nets and to list the back-up frequencies of where to tune to in the event a weather system takes out a particular repeater or repeaters.

The CTARC Weather Net provides information to the National Weather Service Regional Office located in Fort Worth and various local authorities. The goal is to help protect the people of Central Texas and provide ground truth data to the National Weather Service.

One important note, if you are the net control station for a weather net, don't sign-off with the National Weather Service just because the storm system has left your particular area.

Operational Guidelines:

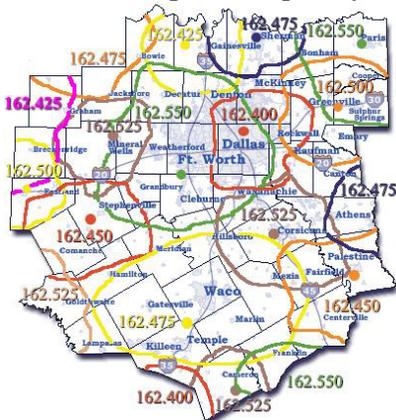
Standby Mode - The repeater is free for use. However, a CTARC Weather Net Control Operator will be standing by for any severe weather reports.

Active Mode - The repeater is under the control of the Net Control operator. All traffic should be directed through the NCS operator. Severe weather is occurring within our coverage area.

Emergency Mode - The repeater is under the control of the Net Control operator. All traffic is restricted to emergency traffic only. Extremely severe weather is occurring within our coverage area.

Weather Net Frequencies:

Primary Repeater W5BEC - Eddy, 147.140 MHz(+) PL Tone 123.0
Secondary Repeater N5ZXJ - Eddy, 145.310 MHz(-) PL Tone 123.0
Alternate Repeater W5AMK - Gatesville, 146.960(-) PL Tone 123.0
Alternate Repeater KB5SXV - Lampasas, 147.220 MHz(+) PL Tone 88.5
Alternate Repeater W5ZDN – Lacy / Lakeview, 145.150 MHz(-) PL Tone 123.0
Alternate Repeater KE5URD - Cameron, 147.020 MHz(+) PL Tone 123.0
Alternate Repeater W5BCR - Clifton, 147.180 MHz(+) PL Tone 123.0
CTARC Simplex Frequency 147.550 MHz



Another good idea is to program in to your scanner or memory channel in your HT, the frequency of the nearest NOAA Weather Radio transmitter in your area.

The National Weather Service Office in Fort Worth operates 13 transmitters located across North Texas. While several NOAA transmitters may be easily heard, for most of us, the principal frequency to tune to for our area is **162.475**, station **WXK35**.

More information on this can be found at:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/>



The Birth of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service

Good Friday, March 21st, 1913... the morning was chilly, not unusual for that time of year. A strong breeze picked up from the east, and as the morning progressed, the breeze evolved into formidable winds peaking to 86 mph by late morning. For hours, 60 to 70 mph gale force winds strafed farms and towns throughout Indiana, Ohio and Michigan slamming into cities like Detroit and Toledo. Roofs ripped off, trees toppled, power and communication lines downed. A man, while standing along the tracks, was blown into an oncoming train. Cars tumbled through storefront windows.

Then came the rain, the never ending, unrelenting, rain. Day after day - rain. Like a river in the sky dropping trillions of gallons of Gulf water onto the Midwest. Ground saturated, rivers reached high water marks that haven't been matched to this day, dams and levees failed, bridges twisted and felled. Buildings in Delaware, Columbus, Dayton, Chillicothe broke free of their foundations, succumbing to the forces of moving water.



Homes, some with people still inside screaming for help, floated past hapless observers, themselves stranded and fearing for their lives.

Amidst all of this carnage, a buzzy **S O S** was heard by the Overland Telegraph Company's commercial radio office in downtown Columbus. This spark gap splatter call for help originated from a young 15 year old boy, Herbert Akerberg, from his family's home on a rise of land called The Hilltop.



“SOS Hilltop Business Men’s Association wants city to send boats,” Akerberg, tapped out in Morse code, “Supplies will last until about tomorrow. Men are hanging on trees. Send supplies. Water is receding. Try and get us water and gas. People are suffering. Send this to Mayor Karb at once. SOS.” This first message—preserved verbatim—is often cited as the first use of radio technology in a national emergency.

For three days and nights, practically continuously for seventy-two hours, young Akerberg does not leave his battery-powered new-fangled electrical “wireless telegraphy” equipment, remaining in communication with the radio station in downtown Columbus, sending messages to the mayor and keeping the public advised as to the conditions on the devastated West Side. His mother brings meals to him in his room and silently takes away the last tray so her son could uninterruptedly send appeals for help and report on the tragic conditions of the submerged west side of Columbus, Ohio.

The young high school student kept this constant vigil during heavy downpours of rain and at intervals waded in water up to his knees to the doorsteps of adjoining houses to get information to communicate to the city.

Young Herbert was an outstanding eighth grader to have mastered not only building a crystal receiver, probably using a cardboard Oatmeal can as a coil form, a small chunk of galena crystal and a thin wire (*cat's whisker*) as the detector. The transmitter was most likely a Ford Model T sparkplug coil, some loops of wire and a salvaged telegraph key his father gave him when he was only eight years old. He most likely was running on a battery since the power station was damaged by the flood. His services were highly commended by the city authorities, and his achievement widely heralded over the country as the first person to use amateur radio in a disaster, and as a new contribution to the comparatively new science of radio.

After graduation from West High School in 1917, Akerberg served with the Army Signal Corps in World War I. He later directed the building of Avery & Loeb Electric Co.'s WPAL Columbus radio station in 1923. After WPAL he was chief engineer at WAIU, and while there, worked with a team to develop one of the first mixing boards to allow the use of three microphones at once. In 1929, he joined the fledgling Columbia Broadcasting System and went on to work for CBS Radio as Vice-President of affiliate relations. He later held the same position with CBS-TV.



Herbert V. Akerberg, passed away on November 6, 1964, at the age of 67 in Scottsdale, Arizona. In 2013 he was inducted into his former high school's Hall of Fame.

In today's world of ubiquitous cell phones, wireless internet access, and social media, do amateur radio operators still have a useful role? Immediately after a disaster, such as an earthquake or a tsunami, if the formal communications systems are not destroyed, they crash due to extreme overload. Radio amateurs with a transceiver and some copper wire get communication going from just about anywhere in no time. Earthquakes in Japan, India and Hawaii have proved that the first communication from a stricken area comes from radio amateurs. This agility is possible because radio amateurs are widespread and can set up their own radio relay links to meet whatever conditions exist at the time.



Another important consideration: emergency ham radios may be compact, mobile, and battery powered and thus able to keep transmitting and receiving even if regional power is lost in a massive power failure—a situation that would render many cell towers and internet servers just as mute today as the downing of the telegraph and telephone wires and electric power plants did during the Great Easter storm system of 1913.

It is obvious that Herbert was an extraordinary person who excelled in a new science at a young age. Unbeknownst to him, he broke ground, in emergency communications within the amateur radio service that today is one of the greatest assets of our hobby.

Tune In Yesterday

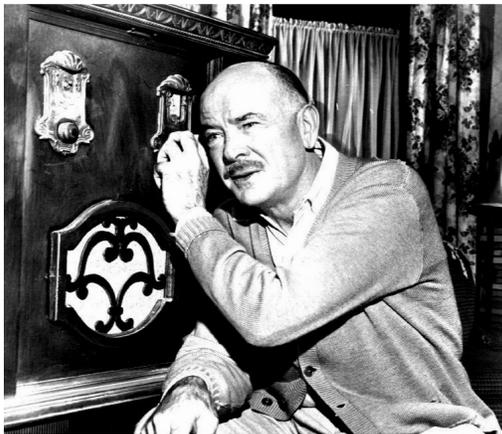
THE TWILIGHT ZONE - March 10, 1961

There is a fifth dimension beyond that which is known to man. It is a dimension as vast as space and as timeless as infinity. It is the middle ground between light and shadow, between science and superstition. It lies between the pit of man's fears and the summit of his knowledge. This is the dimension of the imagination. A dimension of sound, a dimension of sight, a dimension of mind. A land of both shadow and substance, of things and ideas whose boundaries are that of the imagination. It is an area which we call, *THE TWILIGHT ZONE*.

Ed Lindsay, an elderly bachelor, lives in a boarding house in which the other tenants, also elderly, spend their waning days and nights parked on couches and chairs taking in mindless hours of television. Lindsay, bored with this routine, goes down into the basement of the boarding house and retrieves his old radio, a hulking set that is over twenty five years old. A carry-over from that other era when quiz shows went up to only sixty-four dollars and entertainment was aimed only at the ears.



No one ever saw one quite like it, because it's a very special sort of radio. In its day, circa 1935, its type was one of the most elegant consoles on the market. Now, with its fabric-covered speakers, its peculiar yellow dial, its serrated knobs, it looks quaint and a little strange. Mr. Ed Lindsay is going to find out how strange very soon, when he fiddles with the knobs, changes a few stations, and finds a couple of programs that are broadcast only in... *THE TWILIGHT ZONE*.



Ed brings the radio up to his room and, to his astonishment and delight, he is pleased to hear the radio receiving 1930s - 1940s music and programs, including live performances by Edward Bowes, Fred Allen and Tommy Dorsey... all of whom are dead. Old radio programs he remembers from his younger years, programs which have long since gone off the air. When he tells the other tenants, they come into his room, but they hear only static.

What's more, when he tries to contact the station broadcasting these programs, he finds that the station went off the air - and out of business - 13 years earlier. Most frustrating for Ed is, that he is the only one able to hear the old radio shows, and only when he is alone.

After a time, Ed realizes that this strange old radio is actually a portal to his past, and his opportunity for a second chance with a woman he loved, but never married. His obsession with his radio continues to grow.

Vinnie Broun is an elderly maid that was once engaged to marry Ed many years ago. Circumstances prevented the marriage and thereafter Vinnie and Ed have been living tensely under the same roof, having grown into tired, bickering adversaries. Vinnie thinks Ed is imagining the broadcasts of all those old radio shows and tells him in a frank confession that she believes it is a result of them missing out on their one chance at happiness all those years ago, and that the phenomenon by which he can listen to defunct programs is nothing more than a delusion. Ed is furious and dismisses the idea that he is imagining the broadcasts, and throws Vinnie out of his room.

In an effort to stop Ed's descent into what she believes to be an unhealthy fixation, Vinnie sells Ed's radio to a junk dealer. When he finds out, Ed is furious and immediately retrieves his radio, having to buy his own property back from the junk dealer for \$10. Fearing the radio won't work the way it did before, Ed takes the radio back to his room and, to his great relief, finds it still operational.



This episode is a theme explored in a highly realistic setting, that says you can't go back again. It is interesting to note here, that the main writers of this show were all young men in their early to mid 30s and yet created this episode dealing with the elderly, exploring what it means to grow old with astonishing insight into the regret and sorrow that accompanies the process. The episode approaches the reason that the subject of time travel is so endlessly entertaining, because everyone imagines visiting another time, particularly as we get older and reminisce about our lost youth.

Ed Lindsay seems to have a past full of regrets, and laments what his life has become, and he looks to the radio as a way to transport himself back to the happier days when he was a young man.



This time, when Ed calls Vinnie up to hear the old broadcasts it is a young, vibrant version of Vinnie that appears in his doorway. Ed, now a young man again, realizes that they've gone back in time to be given a second chance—or rather, Ed has retreated 20 years into his past.

Item of consequence: an old radio that only plays tunes from the 1930s and 1940s, broadcast from a station somewhere in New Jersey that closed down over a decade ago. Ed Lindsay, an unhappy bachelor, a one-dimensional grump, a

man trapped in a miserable situation from which derives his ill tempered behavior. A man surrounded by people that, for the most part, he cannot relate to. All Ed Lindsay knows is that he desperately wanted a second chance to correct past mistakes and finally got it, through a strange and wonderful time machine, called a radio.

In *THE TWILIGHT ZONE*.



Graynella A. Packer

First Sea-Going Woman Radio Operator

In the closing weeks of 1910 a story would break, with the name and face of a United Wireless operator, twenty-two year old Graynella A. Packer of Jacksonville, Florida, who had become the first sea-going woman radio operator on the Atlantic Coast, and probably the world. Miss Packer served as wireless operator for the Clyde Steam Ship Company from November 1910 to April 1911, assigned to the liner *S.S. Mohawk* sailing between New York City and Jacksonville.

Miss Packer's credentials for "necessary experience" easily fulfilled the company's requirements. Before joining United Wireless, she was a landline Morse telegrapher, rising quickly to the position of manager at the Sanford, Florida, office of the Postal Telegraph Company. Although she was not the first woman operator hired by United Wireless, Miss Packer was the first to go to sea for she alone 'possessed the qualities that are required in this very important position.'

Miss Packer's stint as a wireless operator began at noon on November 29th when the *Mohawk* sailed quietly from New York harbor on a routine voyage to Florida. The publicity blitz began the next morning with the headline: "Don't Flirt With The Operator – Wireless Men Must Behave When Miss Packer's at the Key." The Clyde line and the United Wireless carefully choreographed this initial publicity, granting select reporters exclusive pre-sailing interviews with Miss Packer, provided they did not publish their stories until the next morning's edition. To say the least, it worked! The other newspapers, caught off guard with Miss Packer well out to sea, scrambled to catch up.



Miss Packer suddenly left Clyde line service in April of 1911, just five months after her assignment. Ironically, the hot button issue of women's rights that made her shipboard duty possible would also take it away. Miss Packer's position inadvertently ran afoul of the anti-prostitution frenzy that was then sweeping the nation. The Mann Act went into law, the intent of which was "...to prevent use of interstate commerce to facilitate prostitution or concubinage, or other forms of immorality." As the lewd and lascivious cohabitation as it would have been seen at the time, required of most women shipboard operators fit the "other forms of immorality" portion of this broad description, the wireless division of the Commercial Telegraphers Union of America aggressively took up the issue and took the steadfast position that all women operators should be barred from duty at sea.

History does not record Ms. Packer's later life and career, although there are references indicating that she was elected as a member of the Oklahoma State Bar Association in 1922 and opened a law practice in Coral Gables, Florida.

In Memoriam: Albert E. Merrikin and the loss of the *S.S. Texaco Oklahoma*

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. The monument was re-dedicated on May 30, 1957 and since then more names have been added to it.

One of those names added, is that of Albert E. Merrikin, an artist, as well as the radio officer of the oil tanker *S.S. Texaco Oklahoma*. The ship, a World War 2-era Type T2 tanker, was en route from Port Arthur to Boston with 33,000 tons of crude oil. But not only had she sailed from Port Arthur, Port Arthur was her home, and the home of many of those onboard. She was part of the proud Texaco fleet.

At approximately 3:30 a.m. on the morning of Saturday, March 27, 1971, the *S.S. Texaco Oklahoma* was unexpectedly struck by a massive wave while proceeding at a very slow speed in a severe storm about 120 miles northeast of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. The ship broke in two after being hit by the freak wave.

The forward section, including the navigation bridge, immediately lost all power. The forward section then collided with



the after section, destroying one of the two lifeboats rigged on the stern section, and subsequently sank, resulting in the death of thirteen mariners. The mariners in the stern section attempted to jury-rig a radio to send a distress message, but were unfamiliar with the process of sending Morse Code messages. High seas carried away the other lifeboat. The aft part stayed afloat for 32 hours. When the stern section began to sink, the remaining mariners attempted to abandon ship in life rafts. The stern section eventually sank with 31 men aboard, around 6:00 a.m. the following morning.



A passing vessel found the survivors the next day. Of the 44 crew members on board when the tanker left Port Arthur for Boston, only thirteen survived. As the week wore on, interest waned for ever finding more survivors. One evening late in the week, there was no further mention of the *Texaco Oklahoma* in the news, and families were forced to face the crushing truth that their fathers and husbands were never coming home.

The wreck resulted in extensive changes to American maritime safety regulations, including the decommissioning of 200+ WWII-era vessels. Five years later a memorial was erected to the fallen in Port Arthur and an annual memorial service continues to be held for all seaman lost at sea. One of Albert's paintings was featured on the September 1973 cover of *Yankee Magazine* and in 1990, he was posthumously awarded the Marconi Memorial Scroll of Honor.

Editor's added notes... the call letters of the *S.S. Texaco Oklahoma* were KAHM. On September 9, 1981, these call letters were reassigned to a radio station in Prescott, Arizona on 102.1 FM which still today, serves the Prescott - Flagstaff - Phoenix area.