December 2023

PROPAGATION

Newsletter of the Longview / East Texas Amateur Radio Club

Above picture courtesy of William Collier, KG5SVM

In this issue

Radio contesting issue

Jo Ann Keith, KA5AZK is honored by ARRL leadership

LETARC interviews NCJ editor Lee Finkel, KY7M

LETARC POTA and Christmas activites

LETARC activities

LETARC met for our 2nd Saturday POTA on Dec. 9th at the Tyler Nature center. Thanks to Wyatt W5IQE for the POTA pictures later in this issue.

On Saturday, Dec. 16th we had our monthly meeting, an interesting video from Chris KG5SMZ, then we had our Christmas meal at Cotton Patch in Longview.

Afterwards Terry Conyers KJ5BHF of Gilmer, TX upgraded to general and Austin Jesmore KI5ZTS of Mt. Pleasant, TX upgraded to amateur extra. LETARC would like to congratulate both of them!

Thanks to Bert KJ5W, Jim N5VGQ, Rhett KG5NWI and Curt Hinshaw LETARC now owns a 165 foot tower in East mountain! Imagine what our Baofengs can do hooked up to that.

Pictures courtesy of Jim N5VGQ

Jo Ann Keith KA5AZK is honored at the UAARC's December meeting by ARRL North Texas section manager Steve Smith KG5VK and our West Gulf Director John Stratton K5AUS. Steve drove from Ben Franklin, TX and John came from Austin, TX to honor Jo Ann. All pictures are courtesy of William Collier KG5SVM. Congrats Jo Ann!

Visit the Upshur Area Amateur Radio club's website at uaarc.club

William KG5SVM was kind enough to also send the following info :

I've copied an excerpt from the ARRL BOD minutes for her nomination. I wanted to point out the end statement..."The Motion was APPROVED by unanimous vote (with applause)."

28. Vice Director Cooper as serving Director moved, seconded by Director Zygielbaum that:
WHEREAS, The George Hart Distinguished Service Award is named in honor of George Hart, W1NJM, long time Communications Manager at ARRL Headquarters and chief developer of the National Traffic System;
WHEREAS, The George Hart Distinguished Service Award may be presented to an ARRL member whose service to the ARRL's Field Organization is of the most exemplary nature;
WHEREAS, Jo Ann Keith, KA5AZK was first licensed in 1971 and has been active in amateur radio for 44 years. She serves as an ARRL North Texas Section Assistant Traffic Net Manager and as a West Gulf Division Assistant Director. She is also Manager of the 7290 Traffic Net and has presented seminars on Traffic Handling at HamCom for 13 years. She does on-the-air Traffic Handling Training on a regular basis, and her Traffic Handling training materials that she wrote are in use with many clubs and ARES groups, as far away as Yellowknife, Canada, and

WHEREAS, Jo Ann has always proudly distinguished herself as an outstanding amateur radio operator, mentor and contributing citizen, not only for the Amateur Radio community, but the community at large.
THEREFORE, be it resolved that the ARRL Board of Directors, with the recommendation of the ARRL Programs and Services Committee, does hereby bestow the 2023 ARRL George Hart Distinguished Service Award to Jo Ann Keith, KA5AZK.
The Motion was APPROVED by unanimous vote (with applause).

73
William
KG5SVM

Thanks William.

This award could not go to a kinder or more deserving person. Jo Ann KA5AZK and John Keith W5BWC are directly responsible for the founding of LETARC. They are also "salt of the Earth" type people.

If you have not visited the Upshur club in Gilmer give them a visit. Once again, congratulations Jo Ann!

Congratulations

December 9th POTA @ Tyler nature center - Pictures courtesy of Wyatt W5IQE

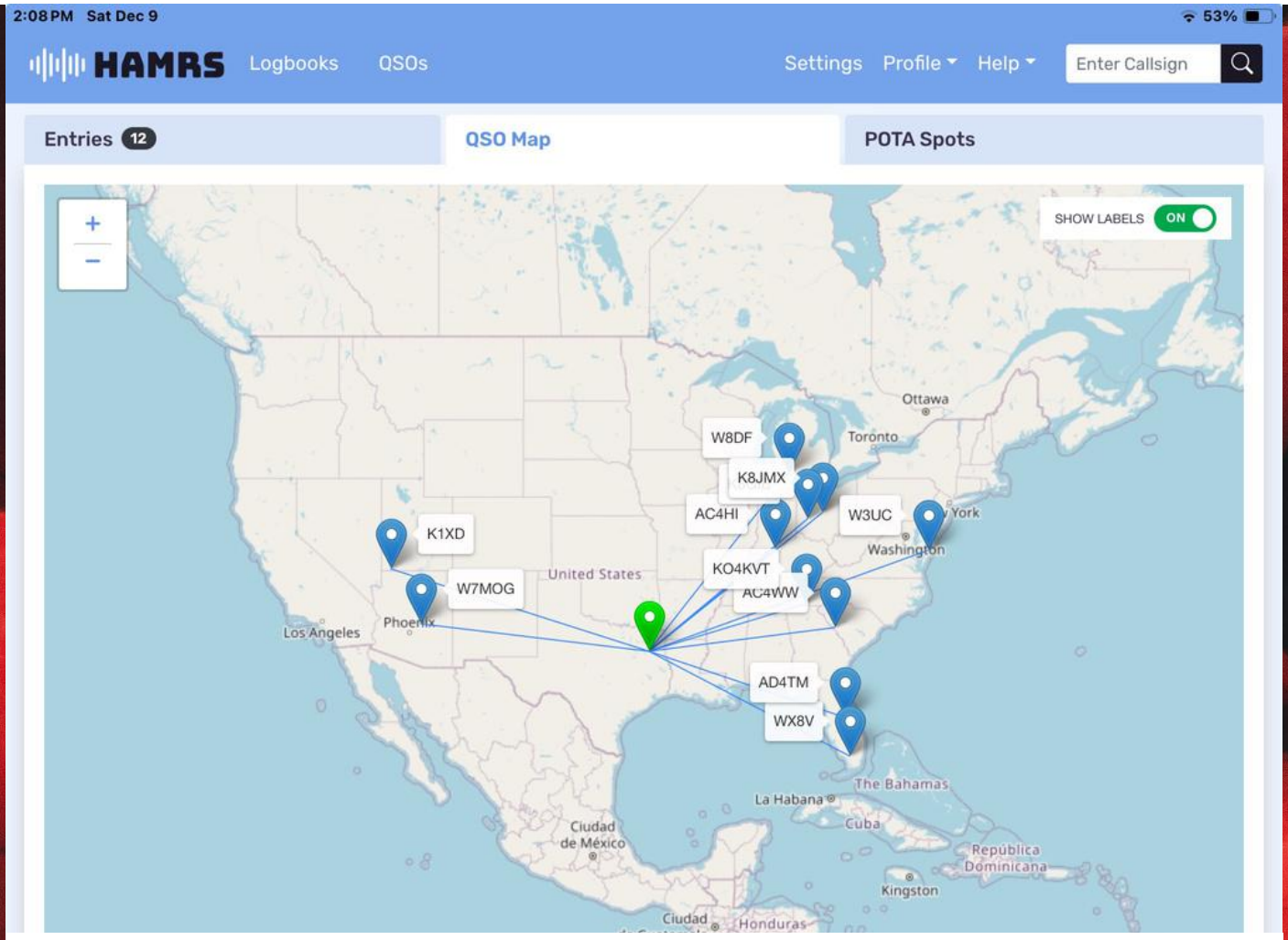
Charles KI5WWH operates from his nice pick up and Icom 7300 into a super antenna vertical

Crystal KJ5BNI operates from a Yaesu 891 into a 10 meter hamstick horizontal dipole

The low power bug has bit a lot of LETARC...Wyatt W5IQE operates QRP with a Yaesu 817/818 into an endfed and a vertical. Look how well he did on the next page!

POTA
PARKS ON THE AIR

Nice setup! Thanks for the pictures Wyatt.



Nice set of QSOs there. Speaking of POTA, here is the 2024 LETARC 2nd Saturday POTA activation schedule :

Jan 13 - Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge K-0633

Feb 10 - Daingerfield SP K-3002

March 9 - Martin Creek SP K-3036

April 13 - Tyler SP K-3059

May 11- Bob Sandlin SP K-3023

June 8 - Tyler nature center K-6588 (VHF)

July 13 - Martin Creek SP K-3036(IARU HF)

August 10- Caddo lake SP K-2994

Sept 14 - Daingerfield SP K-3002 (VHF)

Oct 12 - Tyler SP K-3059

Nov 9 - Martin Creek SP K-3036

Dec 14 - Bob Sandlin SP K-3023 (10m)

LETARC Christmas meal at Cotton Patch Cafe

East Texas Amateur Radio

Important announcement

PARKING RESTRICTIONS at the LETARC Monthly Business Meeting Location (Longview Fire Dept Training Academy Bldg at 411 American Legion Drive)

This is just a reminder (or initial notice, for those who were previously unaware), to advise anyone who parks a vehicle at the Longview Fire Dept Training Academy Bldg for the monthly LETARC meetings (or any other event).

1. **The closest two parking spaces on EITHER side of the main building entry doors are RESERVED spaces, even though they are not necessarily clearly marked (due to faded paint on the concrete curb).**

1. **The two spaces to the South of the main entrance are HANDICAPPED spaces, and**

1. **the two spaces to the NORTH of the main building entrance are RESERVED FOR LONGVIEW FIRE DEPT VEHICLES ONLY. As I stated, these two spaces are not conspicuously marked, as the markings on the parking space's curb are severely faded and are fairly hard to see.**

Please honor these parking restrictions when using the bldg., so the Longview Fire Dept personnel can park their vehicles near the bldg's entrance.

- The LFD allows us to use their facility for our monthly club meetings, without any fees or charges, and our goal is to maintain a continuously healthy working relationship with our gracious hosting agency.

- Important information for anyone who has the idea of parking their vehicle on the American Legion Hall (ALH) property:

Friendly advice....DON'T DO IT!!! Any vehicles parked on ALH property that are NOT directly associated with ALH activities/functions WILL be towed away, at the vehicle owner's expense! The ALH property is PRIVATE property, and is NOT to be used for LETARC organizational activity parking. We DON'T have any authorization to park our vehicles on ALH property!

Thank you to Dave KL7BX for passing along this info

KE4CPC is teaching CW on Sat. Jan. 20th in Gilmer

Saturday January 20th, 10:00 local time.
(Open Range Cowboy Church) 10536 FM 1650, Gilmer, TX 75645

There is no charge for this class. (Donations are accepted but not necessary) Please let me know if you can make it, but do not miss out if you aren't sure till that Saturday.

This is a beginner class, expected to last about 2 hours and will give everyone a chance to experience the basics of Morse code.

If you do not know Morse Code and are interested in learning it, with the intent to use it on radio someday, please join me! You aren't going to become proficient in one day but we will get started here and I will show you how to develop your proficiency over time at your own speed.

If you're already proficient with Morse code and would like to assist me in teaching others, please contact me. I need some basic straight keys and code practice oscillators for the students to learn on. If you have either of these, please help us out because I only have a limited supply myself.

Please contact me directly at jasonturcyn@yahoo.com.

LETARC interviews Lee Finkel, KY7M editor of the ARRL magazine the National Contest Journal

LETARC: Are you a member of a local HAM radio club? If so, what is your favorite activity or part of the club?

Lee KY7M: I am an active member of two local clubs – the Central Arizona DX Association (CADXA) and the Arizona Outlaws Contest Club (AOCC). The CADXA has over 100 members and holds monthly meetings. It has both Slack channels to share DX information in real time and a groups.io email reflector where DX information can also be shared. My favorite activity with CADXA is going to the meetings to see my friends and to hear presentations about DX-related topics. We often have programs about DXpeditions to interesting places that have taken place in the past year.

The AOCC is a group of over 100 radiosport enthusiasts who participate in contests. The club encourages contest activity and members are always available to provide advice on station equipment, software, and tactics.

Some contests encourage team participation like the North American QSO Parties sponsored by NCJ twice a year. AOCC members sign up to be on those teams. The AOCC also collects scores from all its members who participate in certain contests and that total score is the basis for club recognition. It also is a reason to encourage any club member to get on and make as many or as few QSOs in a contest as time and interest permits. It can be a few QSOs or an all-out effort, every point helps the club's overall score.

LETARC: Please tell us about the National Contest Journal and what it is like serving as editor.

Lee KY7M: The National Contest Journal ("NCJ") is an ARRL magazine published 6 times each year both digitally and in hard copy. 2023 marked the 50 th anniversary of NCJ. It started in 1973 being assembled on a dining room table in Minnesota using a mimeograph machine (do you remember those?). The NCJ is intended for anyone with an interest in what is known internationally as "radiosport." The articles and columns cover a wide variety of contest-related topics. It contains stories about contest experiences at DX locations, antenna building, station engineering to improve results, tips on contest operating tactics, and much more. Any ARRL member can access NCJ issues on the ARRL website.

The editor is a rotating volunteer position. Most editors serve in that position for 2 or 3 years.

My 3 years ended with the publication of the November/December 2023 issue of NCJ.

The editor is responsible for collecting and organizing the content for each issue and doing some basic editing on the content. There is also a Managing Editor who is an ARRL employee and does professional editing on the material for each issue after the volunteer editor submits it. Being editor gave me a chance to interact with many folks whom I have contacted in contests and/or met at the Dayton Hamvention or the Visalia International DX Convention. I thoroughlyenjoyed my time in the position, but it did take a serious time commitment for several weeks every other month.

LETARC: Do you have any favorite moments, stories, or info from the last three years at NCJ?

Lee KY7M: The world of radiosport is alive and well. As with other aspects of ham radio it has been evolving with technological innovations and with contesters pushing the envelope of what can

be accomplished in a weekend event. There continues to be widespread participation in radio contests internationally. With the sunspots heading toward a peak in Cycle 25, more folks have participated in contests to enjoy the improved propagation on the higher HF bands.

LETARC: What advice would you give to a HAM that wants to get started in contesting? Is Doug Grant, K1DG's ARRL book Amateur Radio Contesting for Beginners a good place to start?

Lee KY7M: Yes, I think Doug's book is an excellent place to start. I also think that anyone with an interest in or curiosity about contesting should ask around at their local club to find out who does it and see if there is an opportunity to visit their station to observe or participate in a contest operation. Of course, Field Day every year is another place where many contesters first got to experience the contest environment although, technically, Field Day is an "operating activity" and not a "contest."

LETARC: Do you have any favorite equipment or resources for HAM radio in general or for contesting?

Lee KY7M: I have used Elecraft K3 radios for many years but there are many other excellent radios on the market these days. You can spend as little or as much as you can afford on radio gear. Whichever radio you have is only one part of the equation, however. The antenna that goes with it is very important. You can have an expensive radio with lots of bells and whistles but if it is fed into an inefficient antenna all those features are worthless. You should rely on local club members for advice and assistance for both equipment and antennas. Make sure you use top quality coaxial cable and connectors. That is one place where spending extra dollars really pays off.

LETARC: What advice would you give a local radio club in general?

Lee KY7M: Plan for the future. Do whatever you can do recruit younger people into your club and get them involved in club governance. Many clubs are floundering because the old guard is tired of running things and nobody is around to pick up the leadership roles.

LETARC: What advice would you give a local radio club that wants to delve into also being a contest club? Should this be two separate clubs?

Lee KY7M: It is not easy to do both well in one club. My own experience speaks for itself. CADXA for many years had members who were contesters, but that was never the emphasis of the DX club. Finally, a small group decided to start a separate contest club and the Arizona Outlaws Contest Club was born. Initial expectations were that 20 or 30 people might join AOCC. With dues of only $5/year for many years AOCC grew and grew and grew. While maybe a quarter of the current members are like me and belong to both clubs there are many AOCC members who do not belong to CADXA or a general interest club because their focus is only on contesting.

Any radio club that wants to delve into contesting needs a committed core group of contesters who will lead the way and promote participation in contests.

It takes a real commitment to do it successfully and running Field Day once a year is not going to make it happen.

LETARC: What is your favorite part of amateur radio?

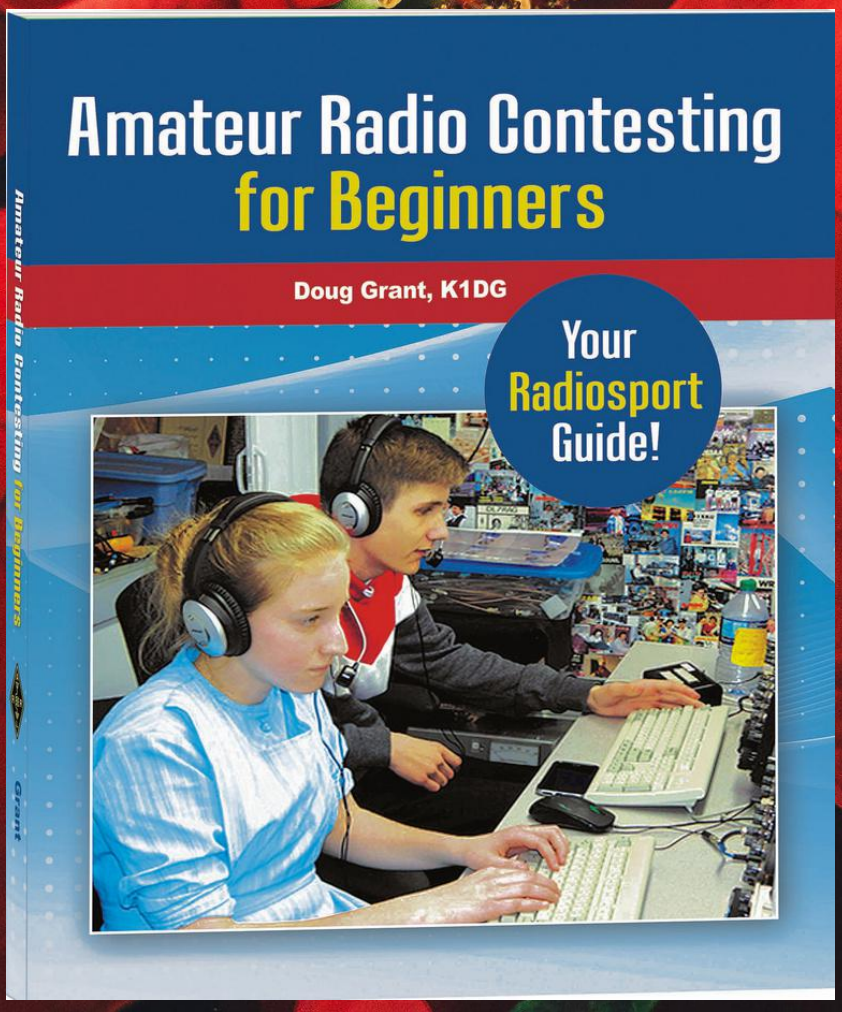
Lee KY7M: One favorite part of ham radio for me is the many friends I have made through the hobby. I look forward each year to seeing old friends while attending the International DX Convention in Visalia, California in April and I have missed very few of them (except during the pandemic). In recent years, I have also attended Hamvention in the Dayton area in May where I also renew acquaintances and often meet hams face-to-face for the first time whom I have talked to on the radio for many years. I have enjoyed traveling internationally for radio contests with teams and look forward to doing more of that in the future. So, in summary, I have many "favorite parts" but most of all the opportunities this hobby has given me for personal growth for over 60 years.

A huge thank you to Lee Finkel, KY7M for this incredible interview

Thank You

Book review: Amateur Radio Contesting for Beginners by Doug Grant, K1DG

Doug has written a very informative book about how to build a contest station, strategies for contesting, and lists of various contests. He goes over how to submit entries, contest ethics, and has 8 sections of appendices covering maps, Q signals, a glossary of terms, etc. You can buy this book from Amazon or the ARRL.



WA7BNM's Contest calendar

Bruce Horn, WA7BNM has published a very useful site for finding contests at https://www.contestcalendar.com/weeklycont.php

Bruce has a wide variety of contests and events listed including QSO parties, CWOPs events and SKCC events.

3830scores.com

3830scores.com's site reads "The site's purpose is to make it easier for contesters to share their claimed scores (score rumors) and comments immediately after a contest."

This is a very useful site as it has summaries of each contest or event and past scores. You can research past activities and get knowledge of how others have done in the contest. You can contact past winners of these events and learn strategy. I have looked up past top score leaders to interview for our Field day issues of this newsletter.

Visit 3830scores.com to find out more.

Thank you to

Lee Finkel KY7M
Mims volunteer fire department
The Longview fire training center on American Legion BLVD
Jim Perry KA5BCM for our radio room
John Zenter AE5OY and our VE team
Marty Duplissey N5KBP for his great work on the ARRL audio news
Steven Lott Smith KG5VK - ARRL North Texas Section Manager
JoAnn Keith KA5AZK - ARES Section Manager
David Chenault W5CWT - Rusk County ARES
John Keith W5BWC - Upshur County ARES
Tom Noe W5TDN - Gregg County SKYWARN coordinator
Jim Rogers N5VGQ - Repeater trustee
Ron Case W2RLC - letarc.org webmaster
Jim Quinn AJ1MQ - groups.io coordinator
Our Wednesday night net control stations -
Jim Rogers N5VGQ
Dave Luchak KL7BX
John Zenter AE5OY
Rhett Pilcher KG5NWI

Thank you for reading our newsletter. We hope to see you at our meetings and dinner gatherings and we hope to hear you on our nets. If you would like to contribute to the PROPAGATION please email Don at gambledon@gmail.com.

Please visit our website at letarc.org.

73 de Don Gamble KG5CMS.

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LETARC JANUARY 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	01	02	03 LETARC 2M NET 8:30 PM	04	05	06
07	08	09 LETARC dinner Cracker Barrel 6:30 PM	10 LETARC 2M NET 8:30 PM	11	12	13 POTA @ CADDO NWR K-0633
14	15	16	17 LETARC 2M NET 8:30 PM	18	19	20
21	22	23	24 LETARC 2M NET 8:30 PM	25	26	27 LETARC MEETING 9AM
28	29	30	31 LETARC 2M NET 8:30 PM			

Upcoming radio events

Jan 1 Straight key night

Jan 7 ARRL Kids day

Jan 7 RTTY round up

Jan 13 North American QSO Party, CW

Jan 20 North American QSO Party, SSB

Jan 20 10 AM Jason Turcyn KE4CPC teaches CW class at 10536 FM 1650, Gilmer, TX 75645

Jan 21 ARRL VHF contest

Jan 27 Winter Field Day