



# Greater Norwalk Amateur Radio Club

## Newsletter

### "The Voice of GNARC"

#### January 2009

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### THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER:

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It seems as though that everything is whirling around us at this terrific speed and one has to stop short of doing whatever and take a good look at what is happening. It is too bad that everything is so topsy turvy these days and you cannot get an even footing on things in the past and what is yet to come.

So much for the gloomy thoughts, I am never one to dwell and brood for any lengthy time. I do think that we should all develop the motto to "MOVE ON" and only look back to learn from your mistakes.

We are quickly approaching the end of 2008 and we look forward to 2009 with lots of high hopes. Things are looking up for the organization and we are definitely moving along in the right direction.

There is no need to dwell on any particular subject at this time as we know what is to be done in the New Year. But, first things first, we have to vote in a new administrative body in Jan 2009, or, perhaps the incumbents will remain and run the show for yet another year.

Hopefully, the nominating committee will be able to announce the candidates for 2009 at the Holiday Party. Happy Holidays everyone.  
Toy/K1WYQ

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### Next Meeting

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The meeting of GNARC will be held on January 14, 2009. The meeting location will be announced via the repeater and email list.

Beer and pizza prior to the meeting as well as impromptu stump speeches for prospective candidates will take place at John's Best Pizza on New Canaan Avenue in Norwalk.

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### Secretary's Minutes

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Minutes for the November 12, 2008 GNARC Meeting

Toy opened the meeting at 8:00 PM. There were 17 members in attendance and one visitor.

The presentation was given by Steve-NA1SV on Public Safety Interoperability and Amateur Radio. Steve works for the State of Connecticut designing communication systems

and doing frequency coordination. He spoke of the technical and political aspects of the communications problems that arise between the public safety groups and jurisdictions in CT. He provided an overview of the equipment and their capabilities including: bands, range, applications, data rates and analog vs. digital systems.

Business Meeting:

Treasurer's Report: We are in good shape.

ARES: Alan-NN1H said that Brian Fernandes resigned and Rod Lane is temporarily replacing him. On Oct. 25 we participated in a Simplex Exercise that had three teams with EC's passing three messages using simplex. All were delivered under one hour. He wants to do an RDF exercise next.

Tim-W1GIG told the group that since the Norwalk EOC is still under construction Westport will be our EOC and we will have equipment in their mobile unit.

Field Day: We placed first in CT and New England and fourth in the nation in the 3A category.

Repeaters: Tim-W1GIG proposed that we purchase "bullet proof" Sinclair antennas for both of our primary repeaters. A motion to purchase them for under \$1200 was unanimously approved. Then discussion moved to swapping repeater pairs with New Canaan as a test to see if it solves the inter-modulation problem. The technical committee believes it is caused by the broadcast station WICC on 600 KHz mixing with our repeater signal and interfering because of our 600 KHz split. The New Canaan pair has a 1 MHz split. We have CSMA coordination to test it for 6 months. A motion to do the swap and test was approved.

Election of Officers for 2009: Tim-W1GIG, Curt-W1FSM and Don-KA1TZR agreed to be the nominating committee.

Holiday Party: The party will be at the Laurel Athletic Club on December 10 from 6:30 to 11:00 PM with a family style dinner. A sign up sheet is on the web site. Tickets are \$30 per person or \$55 per couple.

Minutes: The October minutes were approved

Hugh-W1HBR said he might have space for Field Day equipment storage.

The meeting adjourned at 9:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Jim Francoeur, KC1FB, Secretary.

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#### **Hamfests**

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11 Jan 2009  
New York/Long Island Section Convention (Ham Radio University)  
Radio Central ARC  
<http://www.hamradiouniversity.org/>

Location:  
Bethpage, NY  
Briarcliffe College  
1055 Stewart Avenue

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#### **ARRL News**

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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.

It has been a 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 key hung up about the equipment.

When participating in SKN 2009, 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 at [www.arrl.org/contests/soapbox](http://www.arrl.org/contests/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 on-line album of stores and photographs to share with others.

Entries for SKN 2009 must be received by January 31, 2009. Votes for 'Best Fist' and "Most Interesting QSO" will be tabulated and included in the April 2009 issue of QST. If you have questions about SKN, please visit the Contest Branch Web Page at <http://www.arrl.org/contests> or contact [contests@arrl.org](mailto:contests@arrl.org)

-- Dan Henderson, N1ND

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WA7BNM Contest Calendar  
January 2009

<b>Contest Name</b>	<b>Time/Date/(Band)</b>
AGB New Year Snowball Contest	0000Z-0100Z, Jan 1
SARTG New Year RTTY Contest	0800Z-1100Z, Jan 1
AGCW Happy New Year Contest	0900Z-1200Z, Jan 1
NCCC Sprint	0230Z-0300Z, Jan 2
NCCC Sprint	0230Z-0300Z, Jan 3
ARRL RTTY Roundup	1800Z, Jan 3 to 2400Z, Jan 4
EUCW 160m Contest	2000Z-2300Z, Jan 3 and 0400Z-0700Z, Jan 4
Kid's Day Contest	1800Z-2400Z, Jan 4
ARS Spartan Sprint	0200Z-0400Z, Jan 6
NCCC Sprint	0230Z-0300Z, Jan 9
Hunting Lions in the Air Contest	0000Z, Jan 10 to 2400Z, Jan 11
NCCC Sprint	0230Z-0300Z, Jan 10
MI QRP January CW Contest	1200Z, Jan 10 to 2359Z, Jan 11
Midwinter Contest, CW	1400Z-2000Z, Jan 10
North American QSO Party, CW	1800Z, Jan 10 to 0600Z, Jan 11
SKCC Weekend Sprint	0000Z-2400Z, Jan 11
NRAU-Baltic Contest, CW	0530Z-0730Z, Jan 11
Midwinter Contest, Phone	0800Z-1400Z, Jan 11
NRAU-Baltic Contest, SSB	0800Z-1000Z, Jan 11
DARC 10-Meter Contest	0900Z-1059Z, Jan 11
NCCC Sprint	0230Z-0300Z, Jan 16
NCCC Sprint	0230Z-0300Z, Jan 17
LZ Open Contest	0400Z-1200Z, Jan 17
Hungarian DX Contest	1200Z, Jan 17 to 1159Z, Jan 18
UK DX Contest, RTTY	1200Z, Jan 17 to 1200Z, Jan 18
North American QSO Party, SSB	1800Z, Jan 17 to 0600Z, Jan 18
ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes	1900Z, Jan 17 to 0400Z, Jan 19
Run for the Bacon QRP Contest	0200Z-0400Z, Jan 19
NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint	0130Z-0330Z, Jan 22
NCCC Sprint	0230Z-0300Z, Jan 23
CQ 160-Meter Contest, CW	2200Z, Jan 23 to 2159Z, Jan 25
REF Contest, CW	0600Z, Jan 24 to 1800Z, Jan 25
BARTG RTTY Sprint	1200Z, Jan 24 to 1200Z, Jan 25
UBA DX Contest, SSB	1300Z, Jan 24 to 1300Z, Jan 25
SPAR Winter Field Day	1700Z, Jan 24 to 1700Z, Jan 25
SKCC Sprint	0000Z-0200Z, Jan 28
NCCC Sprint	0230Z-0300Z, Jan 30
SARL Youth Day Sprint	0700Z-1100Z, Jan 31

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