



MARCH 2007

*The Official Publication of*

## The Western Carolina Amateur Radio Society, Inc

[www.WCARS.org](http://www.WCARS.org)

### President's Microphone...Scott W4IYS

Work is progressing on the club repeater 146.910, should be done soon. Thanks to all those who have been helping. It would be great to see some new faces helping. Remember it's the CLUB repeater and you are the club. WCARS is seeking a volunteer to write / edit / publish Smoketest starting with the May 2007 issue. Thanks Dick K8SKX for your work on Smoketest since July 2005.

See you at the meeting ...73 Scott W4IYS

### WCARS March Meeting

The next WCARS meeting will be March 1, 2007, 7:30pm in the Simpson Auditorium, Simpson Bldg, at ABTech. Program: TBA

### Needed: Smoketest Editor

Effective after the April issue of Smoketest I will resign from my position as editor of the WCARS Smoketest. This is my second stint as editor, the first being in the mid-1980's before the days of "friendly" word processors, printers and publishers. I have decided that it is time to refocus my radio activities on ARES, the Red Cross station and personal operating. I will assist the new editor, whoever volunteers, with their first issue (May).

I want to thank those special hams that have taken time to send me possible material for Smoketest, without their help the job would have been much more difficult and Smoketest slimmer. You know who they are as I've tried to give them credit each time their material was used. THANKS again....73 Dick K8SKX

### February minutes...Steve KF4TVD

- Meeting called to order 7:35pm by Scott W4IYS
- 19 members in attendance.
- Treasurer's report by Karl K4PCY: \$7185 total balance. Report was accept and approved.
- Scot W4IYS reported that most of the new repeater equipment has arrived. Maybe 3 weeks until the repeater is installed and operational.
- Norm N4NH described the upcoming changes to VE exams and licensing.
- W4IYS stated the continuing need for an HF rig for the Red Cross workstation (a donation).
- Henry KF4ODC inquired as to Skywarn interest by the members in future training.
- John AI4HY presented CW trends and activity currently in vogue.
- 9pm motion to adjourn – seconded and carried.

### Ted McElroy 1939 World's CW speed record 75.2 wpm !

A photo of Ted McElroy taken by Life magazine in 1962 reprinted with kind permission from Neal McEwen K5RW. [k5rw@telegraph-office.com](mailto:k5rw@telegraph-office.com)



**World's Telegraph Speed Record**  
**Circa July 2, 1939**  
**Asheville, North Carolina**  
**Set by**  
**Mr. Theodore Roosevelt "TR" McElroy**

In these modern times of vast technologies, it is often fun and educational to look back into the past and draw out some of the best that mankind had to offer. This is some research or perhaps better described as links to the past. It is our past here in Western North Carolina and happened as the little city of Asheville was still waking up from its deep sleep of the Great Depression.

From what several old timer hams in the area have said, the July 2, 1939 world's telegraph speed record was set at what was believed to be the old Asheville Hotel in downtown Asheville. Until further research is done, the location of the old hotel is a mystery. Several old timers have said it was on Broadway and others have said it was located at the corner of N. Market and Woodfin Streets.

Importantly, it was the Asheville Radio Club later renamed the Western Carolina Amateur Radio Club, which made the 1939 contest possible.

[www.wcars.org](http://www.wcars.org) My thanks to Oliver WB4AAM and John W4QCF of the Southern Appalachian Radio Museum, [www.saradiomuseum.org](http://www.saradiomuseum.org) for helping with the background.

Included is an account of the July 2, 1939 contest in detail. Several older hams in the area say that over 300 persons attended the event. A Harry Robinson W2AZ now in Vineland, NJ recently said that he stood behind McElroy during the contest. We are looking into more info on that line.

The following is a retype from a WCARS December 1985 Smoketest (edited by Dick K8SKX) which was a retype of the old 1939 article by Bill Hayes, Sr. W4AFM, originally published in the old Asheville Amateur Radio Club publication "The Arc." Bill Hayes, Sr. was one of the participants in the contest.

**QRQ – Shall I send faster?**

**75.2 WPM**

**QRS – Shall I send slower?**

The Code Machine had been adjusted to take high speed, the Judges made sure that the text had been sealed and was intact, just as it was received from the FCC Office in Boston. W4HX sends a few Preliminary centimeters of tape through the

machine, the Contestants adjust their "Cans", one can observe intent concentration in the grim visages of the Contestants, W4HX at the machine glances at his stop watch, says "ready", pulls a switch and a Code Contest, which is destined to make history, begins.

W4CRV and two or three more wait about five seconds, then start typing, W8CW and W1JYN wait about fifteen seconds, then they too start typing. The machine is hitting it up at 40 WPM; McElroy, McDonald, W4CRV and one or two others are transcribing effortlessly; W4HX at the machine steps it up to 45 WPM. One or two sigh; take off their "Cans" while two or three more show a marked decrease in the speed of their typing. It sounds like ICW on the long waves, beautiful to the ear, the machine is pepped up to 50 WPM, and the staccato clicks of the typewriters at the far end of the table become Piano, then Pianissimo - - and there are three contestants left.

At 50 WPM the writer takes up a set of fones and listens. The "ands" and "the's" Pour through in a kaleidoscopic wave, the three dahs of "O" seem to blend into one Dah; the occasional "V" sounds like an "I" and the whole text is one mass of QRN. Around the table W8CW, W1JYN and W4CRV are looking down at their typewriter keys, typing furiously, oblivious to the QRM of the gallery. At 55 WPM, the three remaining contestants increase their tempo, but W4CRV slackens noticeably, then his fingers seem to fly over the keys in one final whirl of speedy typing, seems to slacken once more and he types slowly for the space of half a score of heartbeats, heaves a sigh, half chagrin, half disappointment, and resigns himself to the inevitable. All the while, McElroy and McDonald seem to be playing a symphony with four hands, so perfectly does their typing seem to blend into one cacophony of sound. The gallery is now much freer of QRM and as the machine is stepped up to 60 WPM, the silence among the spectators becomes almost eerie. The machine drones on, the two remaining contestants pound relentlessly onward as if to master the speed of the man-made demon which is pushing them onward. Walter Candler, who taught these champions, hovers in the background, masking his features' expressions, with an outward calm which would credit the histrionic talents of Svengali. He is in a neutral corner, so to speak, showing no partiality by voice or expression, glance or grimace, to either contestant; he is as if he were far removed into another world looking on,

invisible himself, but wearing a veil of gossamer which, if the veil be raised, disclose a contour of beautiful benevolence.

The machine whirls on to 65 WPM, approaching the world record. Bulldog like, but less phlegmatically, MacDonald hangs on, McElroy keeping the even rhythm blending into the even concord of his opponent's typing. At 70 WPM there appears a discord in the typing of the two contestants. Is there an ebbing in the receiving ability of one of these champions? A glance of the eye reveals that McDonald is losing his timing, but McElroy, with only a momentary pause as if to adjust crete of his sound sense to his opponent's touch sense, once more gathers momentum and makes resonance of his typing out of the dissonance of the erstwhile blended typing. At 70 WPM McDonald takes off his "Cans", moves a shaking hand across a perspiring brow, and concedes victory to McElroy.

But the machine does not stop; it is moved to 75 WPM. McElroy, having already eclipsed his former record of 69 WPM, won in 1935 at Brocton, Mass., tires, slackens his speed and as W4HX moves it up to 80 WPM, copies furiously for a breath or two, then desultorily halts the movement of his fingers on the keyboard, then stops amid breathless silence. W4HX stops the machine, the full import of the occasion dawns upon the gallery and there is an almost deafening volume of applause. A new world's record in receiving code has been established.

McElroy's achievement, based on the 24 Dot Word reception, is 75.2 WPM. He bears his badge with credit, and McDonald, who is, of course, disappointed, can know that he acquitted himself commendably. His is no mean achievement. W2APT, W4DW, and W4CQ were the Judges of the high speed contest; the tapes used were made by the FCC Office in Boston. The test was guarded by AARC Custodian, W4TW, until after the contest.

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There were two or three other items concerning the 20 and 30 WPM contests. I did not include them in this re-typing of the original ..... copied by W. L. Hayes, Sr., W4AFM Dated April 18, 1983

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The above was re-typed by W4AFM and copied by W4AFM from THE ARC, dated August 2, 1939. THE ARC was the official publication of the ASHEVILLE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, Asheville, NC. This article was published as the

true story of Ted McElroy and the high speed code copying contest held July 2, 1939 at the Asheville Hamfest. (from "THE SPARK GAP", Newsletter of Asheville, NC Chapter #145 QCWA, Bob Miller W4AEY (sk) ed.)

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This is the end of the December 1985 WCARS Smoketest article on Ted McElroy's record setting event. This re-type was performed by Riley T. Cumberland AF4SQ and is as close a copy of the original as possible. Double checking on the re-type was performed by Diane Weaver KF4CEY on this day of February 4, 2007.

An excellent source for more information on Ted McElroy can be found on Neal McEwen's website "The Telegraph Office" <http://www.telegraph-office.com/> and under the heading of Histories of the Key Makers – T. R. McElroy [www.telegraph-office.com/pages/mcelroy.html](http://www.telegraph-office.com/pages/mcelroy.html) There you will find a wonderful article on TR McElroy history and a nice collection of "Mac" keys by Neal McEwen K5RW.

A detailed account of speed contests may be found on the website – "The Art & Skill of Radio – Telegraphy" under the heading of Chapter 26, Speed Contests authored by Mr. William G. Pierpont N0HFF [www.zerobeat.net/tasrt/c26.htm](http://www.zerobeat.net/tasrt/c26.htm)

One last link to Ted McElroy and some info on Walter Candler (precursor to Farnsworth) may be found here at "Learning the Radiotelegraph Code." It is under the heading of Operation Upgrade by a Mr. Harry W. Lewis W7JWJ. [www.qsl.net/w9em/w7jwj\\_learning\\_cw.html#upgrade](http://www.qsl.net/w9em/w7jwj_learning_cw.html#upgrade)

That about wraps it up for our ride back sixty some years ago. It is fascinating to collect stories from those who can remember the stories told, or better yet, hear first hand the stories from the few left that were actually there at the event long ago in 1939. There are still several hams out there that experienced those days. You are encouraged to contact them. Take a ride back into the past. They love it, and you will too. Amateur radio is the perfect vehicle in which to link the present to the past. Much of modern technology pales in that arena. Isn't it rather ironic that the machine that this is being written on uses the same "on – off" technology that our telegraphs used a hundred and fifty some years ago.

Tnx & Dah dah di di di di di dah dah to all.

**Submitted by Riley AF4SQ c 2007**

# WCARS MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION SHEET

Full \$20    Family \$30    Student \$5

All information is requested to assist the officers and committee chairpersons in planning activities, programs and community service communications needs. If you so request by checking the appropriate space, the information in Section 1 will also be kept confidential and your call and/or e-mail will not appear in the WCARS roster when published.

## PERSONAL INFORMATION:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CALL: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ Smoketest Via email Yes( ) No ( )

**CHECK FOR NON-PUBLICATION OF CALL**  **OR EMAIL**   
ARRL Member? yes no

## LICENSE AND OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

CLASS OF CURRENT LICENSE (CHECK ONE)  
NOVICE TECH-NC TECH-PLUS GENERAL ADVANCED EXTRA  
YEAR OBTAINED \_\_\_\_\_ YEAR FIRST LICENSED \_\_\_\_\_  
PREVIOUS CALLS HELD: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMPLOYER: \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_

## COMMUNICATION CAPABILITIES ( P-PORTABLE M-MOBILE F-FIXED )

160 80 40 20 15 10 6 2 220 440 PACKET/DIGITAL

OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

I PREFER: CW FM OSCAR PACKET RTTY SSB

POWER OUTPUT: HF BANDS: \_\_\_\_\_ WATTS VHF BANDS: \_\_\_\_\_ WATTS

EMERGENCY POWER AVAILABLE: BATTERY GENERATOR SOLAR

## I AM INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THE FOLLOWING:

<input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVITIES SUPPORT TEAM	<input type="checkbox"/> PROGRAM COMMITTEE
<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC SERVICE COMM.
<input type="checkbox"/> ELMER PROGRAM	<input type="checkbox"/> RFI / TVI PROGRAM
<input type="checkbox"/> EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> SMOKETEST ARTICLES
<input type="checkbox"/> FIELD DAY TEAM	<input type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL EVENTS
<input type="checkbox"/> HAMFEST COMMITTEES	<input type="checkbox"/> VE PROGRAM
<input type="checkbox"/> MEMBER ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE	<input type="checkbox"/> MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____

DATE DUES PAID \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ AMOUNT: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
RECEIVED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to: WCARS, PO Box 1488, Asheville, NC 28802-1488**

**THE SMOKE TEST**  
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**Western Carolina Amateur Radio Society, Inc.**  
**PO Box 1488, Asheville, NC 28802**  
**www.wcars.org**  
**W4MOE/146.910 - /pl 91.5 Spivey Mtn/AVL**

**2007 OFFICERS**

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Awards Chair	Bob Dockery	WD4CNZ	254-0513	<a href="mailto:WD4CNZ@arrl.net">WD4CNZ@arrl.net</a>
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Field Day 07 Chair	Chet Allen	KE4VXC	258-3954	<a href="mailto:olblu@charter.net">olblu@charter.net</a>
Hamfest Chair 2007	Dean Blair	K2JB	665-1830	<a href="mailto:K2JB@arrl.net">K2JB@arrl.net</a>
Smoketest Ed.	Dick Burns	K8SKX		<a href="mailto:K8SKX@arrl.net">K8SKX@arrl.net</a>

American Radio Relay League Affiliate No. 0602

WCARS meets at 7:30 PM the first Thursday of each month at the Simpson Building at AB Technical Community College. Everyone is welcome to attend. Membership dues are \$20/yr payable in January.

**Weekly Nets of local interest**

Net	Freq(mHz) offset / PL	Day	Time	NOTES
WCARS Information Net	146.910 - / 91.5	Monday	21:00	Informal, Everyone Welcome
Oasis Shrine Radio Corp. Net.	145.190 -	Sunday	21:00	
BRARC Net	146.640 - / 91.5	Sunday	20:00	
Good Morning Net	146.760 -	M-W-F	9:00	Informal, Everyone Welcome
Madison Cty Am.Rad.Com.Tm	224.660 - / 100	Tuesday	21:00	Madison Cty Emerg Comm Net
Buncombe Cty Emerg Mgt Net	146.910 - / 91.5	Wednesday	21:00	Directed Net, ARES / RACES
Volunteer Net	147.180 + / 136.5	Friday	21:00	Info, News and Swap Net
6600 Net	145.190 -	Saturday	21:00	Many Check-Ins - Wide Coverage
Blue Ridge Traffic Net	146.610 -	Nightly	21:00	May be ARES / SKYWARN in bad WX
Mount Pisgah 220 Net	224.260 -	Sunday	21:00	Informal, Everyone Welcome
Mount Mitchell 220 Net	224.540 -	Monday	20:00	Informal, Everyone Welcome
SATERN Net	14.265	Daily	10:00	Salvation Army Team Emerg. Radio net
K4UUQ Morning Net	7.225	Daily	7:00	Rag chew
NC Morning Net	3.927	Daily	7:45	SSB Traffic Net
NC Evening Net	3.923	Daily	18:30	SSB Traffic Net
Carolinas Net (early)	3.573	Daily	19:00	CW (20-22 wpm) Traffic Net
Tarheel Emergency Net	3.923	Nightly	19:30	Directed Net, NC Emerg Mgt / traffic
Carolinas Slow Net	3.571	Nightly	20:00	Slow CW (8-10 wpm) Traffic Net
Carolinas Net (late)	3.573	Nightly	22:00	CW (15-18 wpm) Traffic Net

**Please send additions-corrections-deletions to the editor**

**For Sale:** Dual Band HT (144/440MHz), Standard C508A Wbander. Excellent Condx, book, box case. \$110. Proceeds to support ARES Red Cross station needs (cables etc). Dick [K8SKX@ARRL.NET](mailto:K8SKX@ARRL.NET) or 828-628-3153.

### **Coming Events / Contests**

Listings discontinued since there was no indication anyone wanted them.

**WCARS  
PO Box 1488  
Asheville, NC 28802-1488**