



THE LED

January 2010

Published by the Livingston Amateur Radio Klub
Howell, Michigan

Livingston Amateur Radio Klub
PO Box 283
Howell, Michigan 48844

www.W8LRK.org

NET 146.680
SUNDAY 9PM

CLUB CALL IS: W8LRK

NEXT KLUB MEETING
Thursday, January 14th, at 7:30PM
EOC, 300 S. Highlander Way
Howell, MI



BOARD MEMBERS

President	Jim	WB8AZP
Vice-President	Van	N8GVD
Secretary	Mary	KC8SER
Treasurer	Patrick	W8LNO
Program Manager	Jon	KC8VAB
Tech Director	Les	W8MSP
Director	John	KD8CCR

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON'S

Repeater Trustee	Jim	WB8AZP
LED Editor	Michelle	KD8GWX
VE Coordinador	Jim	WB8AZP
PIO Officer	Brandon	KC8YHE
PIO Officer	Jim	N8ENX
Web Site	Les	W8MSP

The Livingston Amateur Radio Klub maintains the 146.680 (Negative Offset, 162.2 CTCSS) and also the 444.525 (Positive Offset, 100.0 CTCSS) repeaters in Livingston County.

Jim's Jive

Welcome to 2010, and Happy New Year! Winter managed to delay its appearance for a few weeks, allowing some folks to put up last minute antennas before the weather gets too ugly.

I trust you all had a great holiday season!

Before the holidays, several LARK members worked on removing the Klub equipment from Clarius, KC8QQN's barn, to a temporary rented storage facility. We will be discussing what components we keep, what we sell off, and where we might store the gear at our next meeting. Our thanks to Clairus for storing our gear all this time, and my personal thanks to all those who volunteered to help us move the equipment.

Also, at the January meeting, LARK members in good standing will be able to sign out one of the 4 D-STAR handhelds owned by the Klub. You will need to be present to sign the equipment loan form. Les W8MSP, and Pat, W8LNO have worked on some examples to help you run the radio more effectively. Because we have only 4 handhelds to go around, we ask that only one radio is loaned to a family at a time, and we also ask that if you already own a D-STAR radio, you allow those who don't to borrow them first. The equipment loan is for 30 days, and you must return the gear at the next meeting. For details, contact Les, W8MSP, our Technical Director.

Additionally, at the next meeting, we want to discuss what kind of construction project we'd like to take on as part of our Klub activities. Bring your ideas to share!

Don't forget that LARK offers VE testing EVERY month. Tell your friends! Talk about it on the air!

Looking forward to seeing all of you at the next LARK meeting!

73



Jim WB8AZP

Thought for the day ...

Definition of forgiveness ... "Letting go of the hope for a better yesterday."

-Unknown Author

Finance Report ...

OPENING BALANCE OPERATIONS FUND

October 30, 2009 ----- \$1509.19

INCOME

50/50 ----- \$ 58.00

ACCOUNT BALANCE ----- \$1567.19

EXPENSES

Gift basket / Card for Clairus ----- \$ 58.00

NEW ACCOUNT BALANCE ----- \$1509.19

1000 CD ----- \$1390.59

500 CD ----- \$ 67.34

TOTAL BALANCES NOVEMBER 29, 2009 ----- \$3567.12

BAL. FROM EMG FUND AS OF OCTOBER 30, 2009

BALANCE ----- \$5660.45

INCOME

Radio's below \$100

Coupon for

ACCOUNT BALANCE \$5760.45

EXPENSES

Food for Club Meeting -\$145.25

Dstar radios for ARES/RACES/Loaners -\$1832.55

TOTAL BAL as of NOVEMBER 29, 2009 \$3782.65

No minutes submitted at this time for the October LED Newsletter.

LARK Board Meeting Minutes 12-16-2009

No minutes submitted at this time for the October LED Newsletter.

Awards Banquet Nominees for Amateur Radio Operator of the Year

Patrick W8LNO
Jim KB8AZP
Jon KC8VAB
Les W8MSP

Tell us at the next meeting who else you think should be nominated for the Amateur Radio Operator of the Year Award. We also want to hear about any awards you think should be presented. Like The "Workin' on it!" award or "Most likely to trip on their own RF" award. etc.

FCC

Seeks Public's Help in Reform Effort

According to its chairman, the Federal Communications Commission wants to change the way it is seen by the American public. In order to further that effort, on January 7, FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski announced that the Commission has launched a new Web site -- **Reboot.FCC.gov** -- saying it is the first-ever Web site dedicated to soliciting public input on ways to improve citizen interaction with the FCC, "creating a forum where the public can participate in improving the FCC."

Genachowski called the newly launched Web site as "a site dedicated to public education and discussion on how we can continue to improve our operations, both online and offline, here at the FCC. This effort is consistent with the President's Open Government directive, creating a forum where the public can participate in improving the FCC."

Saying that transforming the Commission into "a model of excellence in government" is one of his top priorities, Genachowski said that "the success of this

FCC Seeks Public's Help in Reform Effort (continued)

transformation depends on strong public participation throughout the process. With the launch of **Reboot.FCC.gov**, our goal is to get input from all corners of the country on ways to improve usability, accessibility and transparency across the agency."

To advance the FCC reform agenda, Genachowski said he has appointed a team of senior leadership from within the agency "dedicated to identifying the most needed and important areas for improvement." The **Reboot.FCC.gov** Web site highlights five key elements of FCC reform for public discussion and feedback:

- **Redesign of the FCC Web site:** As part of a long-overdue redesign of the FCC's Web site, the FCC is asking for ideas on how best to streamline and improve the experience for all site visitors.
- **Data:** Because data underlies all agency proceedings, the FCC is launching another Web site -- **FCC.gov/data** -- an online clearinghouse for the Commission's public data. The Commission is also looking for additional ways increase openness, transparency, efficiency and public oversight.
- **Engagement:** The FCC is reevaluating how citizens engage in government and is exploring new ways to increase public participation through the use of new media tools, e-rulemaking and expanding their audiences.
- **Systems:** The FCC is overhauling and reforming the systems available on the FCC's Web site, from the Electronic Comment Filing System to creating a Consolidated Licensing System. They want feedback on ways to make them easier to navigate and more useful.
- **Rules and Processes:** The FCC aims to modernize and grow the efficiency of agency proceedings, and seeks input on ways to improve the quality of agency decision-making, reduce backlogs and enhance the public's ability to understand and participate in Commission proceedings.

According to the Chairman, the new Web site boasts the first FCC-wide blog, online workshops on the Commission's reform agenda and "the first edition of new tools to increase transparency and access to public data. Most importantly, you'll find many opportunities to share your ideas and insights on how we can continually improve the FCC. I encourage ever one of you to contribute to the site."

Let them eat cake!

We had a great time at the last meeting over at the Livingston County Services - Transportation Complex! Lot's of great food, great friends and CAKE!!!

So, I want to know just who's bright idea was it to give Jim a sharp object!



For the CW lovers in the Klub!

Theodore Roosevelt McElroy

World's Champion Radio Telegrapher

The Man, The Legend and The Keys

by Neal McEwen, K5RW

k5rw@telegraph-office.com

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[To Telegraph Office Main Page](#)



Theodore R. McElroy lives on, almost 40 years after his passing. His ability to copy code made him a legend in his own time and the keys he made serve as reminders of his accomplishments. The photo above was taken in a Life Magazine photo op in 1962 and shows McElroy with his American Morse practice sets. Notice the Prince Albert can in the resonator box!

Born in Boston in 1901, Ted went to work for Western Union as a messenger boy at age 14. The telegraph operators taught him American Morse and by age 15 he was working the wires. During W.W.I he was a civilian operator at Camp Devins.

Shortly after the war, McElroy went to work for WSO, one of RCA's transoceanic wireless stations. There he worked the Morse wires until he learned the International Morse code used in wireless work. Until 1920 he worked the wireless circuits to POZ in Nauen, Germany and LCM in Stavanger, Norway, keying the giant Alexanderson alternators on 20,000 Meters. Ted stated that the signals were so strong that it was almost like working an "iron wire." Ted returned to Boston to work for Western Union once again.



For the CW lovers in the Klub! (continued)

In 1922 McElroy entered his first code copying contest and won hands down, winning at a speed of 56 words per minute (WPM). From then on he was untouchable. He was beaten in 1934, but regained the championship in 1935. At his last official competition in 1939 in Ashville, North Carolina, he won with a speed of 77 WPM. This Continental code record was untouchable for almost 60 years and was only recently challenged. Ted also was the American Morse code champion and Japanese Kanji code champion. Ted's phenomenal success at copying code was due in part to this ability to type. He could type 150 WPM as recorded by his seventh grade typing teacher! He remarked once that he could type three letters for every letter that his secretary typed. Needless to say, he also won typing contests.

In 1934, Ted started his own business manufacturing telegraph equipment. The first key to come out of the McElroy factory was called the MAC-KEY. The base, mainframe and posts were a one piece casting. This design helped to eliminate vibrations and the need for frequent adjustments. The "Tee-Bar" across the top of the frame served several

purposes. First it was an integral part of the frame holding the trunion pin. Second, it provided a convenient means for the professional operator to carry his key to and from a shift. The fingers were merely curled under the bar and the key lifted. Third, though probably seldom used, it allowed the key to be turned on its side; once the pendulum was locked with the damper post clip, the MAC could be used as a hand key.



Many MAC-KEYs were made. The topmost image is the third variation introduced in 1936.

They were heavy and rugged and once adjusted required little maintenance. Many MAC-KEYs are still in service today. One of McElroy's many refinements, was his "dot stabilizer." This was a small assembly fitted to the pendulum, which pre-loaded the dot spring. This slight amount of pre-loading gave smoother and better weighted dots, while eliminating contact bounce.

The MAC-KEY was the first of many models. In 1937, a modified design was introduced. Several of the new models were advertised in the December 1937 issue of QST. These keys were labeled with an inscription attesting to the skill of the maker. See the image at the left. The top of the line model had a simulated marble finished base and chrome upper parts. This Deluxe model, shown above, sold for \$9.50; wouldn't you like to find one today for that price! The Standard model had a black wrinkle finish and nicked upper parts. It sold for \$7.50. The Junior Model, very, very rare, had the same working parts as the Standard model, but was on a stamped steel base and sold for \$4.95.

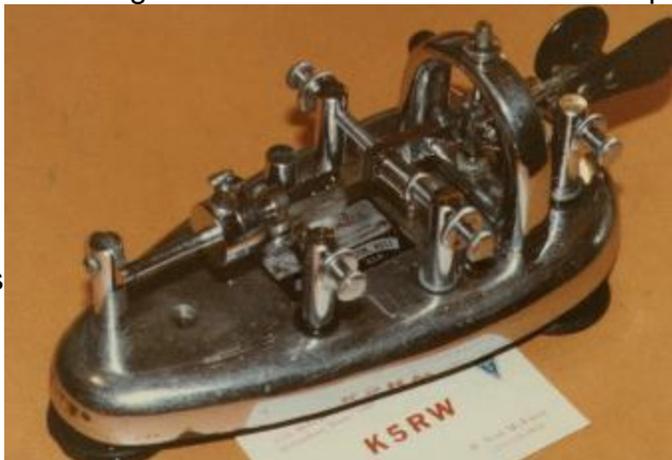


For the CW lovers in the Klub! (continued)



Even though other manufacturers were doing so, McElroy preferred not to make a chrome based model. "I know as an operator of about 25 years experience that it is very poor practice to have a chrome or nickel plated base on a key. Light reflection from such a base is a severe strain on an operator's eyes." This was so stated in a McElroy flyer dated 1938. Ted would later go against these very words. Read on! There were also four models of hand keys ranging in price from \$1.20 to 2.25.

Just before W.W.II, the famous McElroy "teardrop" bug appeared. These keys are popular collectors items because of the unusual shape of the base. The "art deco" base resembles a flatiron or tear drop. Some operators called them "flatiron" bugs. The "teardrop" was available with platinum contacts for the very competitive price of \$11.85. The model with silver contacts was slightly less. Many CW men thought McElroy's sanity should be questioned because of the unconventional design. However, in spite of all the cat calls, this was one of the finest handling semi-automatics built. The "teardrop" bug shown in the in the image saw duty on a DC-3 flying Pan American routes. It is often forgotten that commercial aircraft has a Flight Radio Officer of FRO as they were called. Notice the suction cup feet on this bug that keep it on the FRO's table. The teardrop shaped hand keys also appeared at this time. Two models, one with a metal base and one with a plastic base are shown below. The key with the plastic base has raised letter with a testimonial similar to the inscription on the bug label shown above.



In the late 30s, McElroy traveled the country giving code copying demonstrations. He loved to put on a show and thrived on attention paid to him.. One of his favorite tricks was to stop in the middle of a high speed run, drink a glass of water, and resume copy without missing any text. Ted was in Dallas in 1939, putting on a demonstration of his remarkable abilities in front of the Dallas Amateur Radio Club. Afterwards, he opened a case full of keys and sold a bunch of them. McElroy worked with noted code instructor Walter Candler, giving demonstrations and teaching the "Candler Method" as advertised in QST.

For the CW lovers in the Klub! (continued)



During W.W.II, Ted made telegraph apparatus for Uncle Sam. Ted and his "gang" produced more such gear for the Allies than any other company. They received the Army - Navy "E" Award for excellence and were able to complete many contracts ahead of schedule. Ted rewarded his "gang" with parties and jam sessions. Morale was high and the employees had fun. McElroy even made J-38s, the famed

bakelite based key made by many contractors for the Army during W.W.II.

After the war, McElroy continued to manufacture automated high speed telegraph apparatus. A former employee related that Ted could adjust the instruments sending at a speed of 100 WPM, when others in the factory had to use an oscilloscope! In 1955, he sold the company and went into semi-retirement. He later became a manufacture's representative and even dabbled in local politics. It is said that during this time, Ted liked to give telegraph keys to his friends as gifts. He passes away in his native Boston in 1963.

As long as there are those that are interested in the code and keys, McElroy the man, the legend and his keys will be remembered.

For more information, visit the [Telegraph Office](#) home page
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Please bring any articles you'd like to have in the next meeting. If you are unable to attend, have a friend bring the information to the meeting for you, email it to me at the above address or feel free to fax it to my work at the above number.

Thanks to everyone for the articles submitted to make the September 2009 LED a success!

January 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Happy	2

					New Year!!!	LARK Breakfast 8 am The Grand River Grill
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14 LARK Meeting 7:30 pm Howell EOC	15	16 LARK Breakfast 8 am The Grand River Grill
17	18	19	20	21 LARK Board Mtg 7:00 pm Teleconference	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6 LARK Breakfast 8 am The Grand River Grill
7	8	9	10	11 LARK Meeting 7:30 pm Howell EOC	12	13
14 Happy Valentine's Day!!!	15	16	17	18 LARK Board Mtg 7:00 pm Teleconference	19	20 LARK Breakfast 8 am The Grand River Grill
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						
