

# 2014 Straight Key Night Results

**“A bout of laryngitis is no impediment on Straight Key Night!” — Jan, WB6VRN**

**Sean Kutzko, KX9X, kx9x@arri.org**

New Year’s Day brings many traditions with it. The refrain, “Out with the old, in with the new!” can be heard echoing across the country, from Times Square to Santa Monica Pier, and beyond. For CW buffs in the US, Canada, and indeed the world over, New Year’s Day means ARRL Straight Key Night (SKN). Each SKN brings the Steady Fist and the Glass Elbow together for a few hours of enjoyment on the HF bands, with manually-sent CW as the focus.

The ARRL Centennial year was heralded in with SKN, the first ARRL event on the calendar. Two hundred and eleven operators submitted logs this year from 47 states, three Canadian provinces, and two DX countries, making some of the first QSOs in the League’s 100th year.

Everyone who participated had a great story to tell. Ralph Taggart, WB8DQT, of Mason, Michigan, summed it up nicely: “One of the fascinating aspects of SKN is the potential for simplicity — a comfortable straight key, a paper log, a two-tube homebrewed 5W 40-meter transmitter from a 1968, a handful of

crystals, and a capable receiver...and it’s almost like turning back the clock a half-century or so!” You can read other SKN participants’ stories on the ARRL Soapbox page at [www.arri.org/soapbox](http://www.arri.org/soapbox).

There was a three-way tie for the title of “Best Fist” this year. Edwin Hughes, KG4W, of Glen Allen, Virginia; Jon Brown, WB5KSD, of Farmersville, Texas; and Bill Gerth, W4RK, (the operator at the Corwin Heritage Amateur Radio Club, W9ABD) in Jefferson City, Missouri, each received two votes. The title of “Most Interesting QSO” went to Brian Roberts, K9VKY, of Fombell, Pennsylvania. As in previous years, his PRC-1 Spy Radio Set, with a whopping 12 W output, seemed to be the belle of the ball.

CW isn’t going anywhere, and being active on Straight Key Night for the first hours of the ARRL’s Centennial just added to the enjoyment of the event this year. One needn’t restrict the use of a straight key or bug to a single day, of course, but it is comforting to know that on the day when the old is swept out and the new is ushered in, we can rest on

tradition for some enjoyment before returning to modern efficiencies. Here’s hoping you make many more straight key CW QSOs before next year’s Straight Key Night on January 1, 2015.

## Participants

AA4AI, AA4TB, AA4ZS, AA5N, AA8UU, AB7MP, AB8FJ, AB9NZ, AC7JW, AC8JW, AE1T, AE3A, AE7CG, AF3Z, AF4MY, AG6V, AI6II, HP1A, HP1IBF, K1FPV, K1NV/7, K1PDY, K2QY, K2TV, K2WR, K3BVQ, K3KKA, K3MD, K3PX, K3TIM, K3VYY, K4BAI, K4BYF, K4DS, K4EOR, K4HGX, K4JYS, K4TRH, K5BZH, K5HK, K5MBA, K5SOH, K5WLW, K5WTA, K5ZRK, K6KQV, K6PBQ, K6RN, K6TY (WB6VRN, op), K7SU, K7TFW, K7ZYY, K8EAB, K8JRE, K8JV, K8MIH, K8QI, K8SOM, K9PFA, K9PMV, K9VKY, K9VP, K9ZTV, KA3IHS, KA3YNN, KA4WJB, KA7T, KA8NNY, KA8SYV, KB3AAY, KB5IRC, KC2FOL, KD5QHV, KE0G, KF7DX, KF8KS, KF0XV, KG4KGY, KG7BF, KI5JK, KI0G, KJ6MBW, KK5FX, KN4SA, KN5L, KO4OP, KO6YG, KO8S, K0CVN, K0JW, KQ5U, KT3A, KU3V, KW3U, KW6G, N1AW, N1DN, N2BE, N3AEA, N3HCN, N3IIA, N3JJT, N3LJP, N3QE, N4XE, N4ZT, N5AF, N5AFV, N5DY, N7RVD, N8GM, N8GU, N8XMS, NA4O, NG2T, NJ3K, NM8U, NM0L, N0EAX, N0ESE, N0JBF/5, N00V, N0ZH, NX0P, NY0O, PS7HD, VE3CBK, VE7BGP, VE7BQO, VE7DS, VE7NI, VO1NA, W1DUW, W1PID, W1TPB, W1TS, W1UJ, W2LG, W2LID, W2QJH, W3GW, W3MT, W4ED, W4JBB, W4YOK, W5MRM, W5NZ, W5PDW, W5QLF, W5ROS, W6JHQ, W6KN, W6KOW, W6LX, W6TUR, W6VNR, W7GVE, W7HWR, W7IZE, W7LBV, W7LNG, W7UUU, W7UYJ, W8FDV, W8IM, W8IX, W8RU, W9ABD (W4RK, op), W9DAN, W9KMP, WA1ABI, WA1CFX, WA2CHV, WA2KBZ/W5EWF, WA2QQF, WA2SON, WA2TBQ, WA3WAW, WA4QJN, WA4ZEN, WA5J, WA5KBH, WA5OLT, WA6BXV, WA7OET, WA7YNU, WA9STI, WA9YI, WA9ZBW, WA9ZJI, WA0VQY, WB5KSD, WB5LRP, WB6AAJ, WB6SCA, WB8CFO, WB8DQT, WB9CIS, WB9HFK, WB9MII, WB0B, WB0CNK, WB0IXI, WB0OEW, WD8RIF, WK4U, W0AAA, W0ESE, W0KIZ, W0RQO, W0TUP.



**Figure 1** — After 42 years of being a ham, Randy Ott, K5HJ, of Duncanville, Texas, participated in his first Straight Key Night in 2014. His dining room made a respectable shack for his Drake gear and the ubiquitous J-38 key. [Randy Ott, K5HJ, photo]