

# 2021 Straight Key Night Results

Many hams chose to ring in the new year by participating in ARRL's classic event.

## Paul Bourque, N1SFE

ARRL Contest Program Manager

Amateurs from around the world look forward to Straight Key Night (SKN) with much anticipation, whether they participate every year or for the first time. As we said farewell to 2020, 214 participants logged over 1,600 contacts during the event.

## Activating W1AW

For some lucky participants, SKN 2021 was extra special, as several ARRL staff activated W1AW for the event. ARRL CEO David Minster, NA2AA, operated on 40 meters, while ARRL Lab Manager Ed Hare, W1RFI, operated the 20-meter station. Additionally, ARRL Product Development Manager Bob Inderbitzen, NQ1R, operated on 80 meters using the W1AW call from the ARRL Headquarters club station, W1HQ.

Joe Carcia, NJ1Q, W1AW Station Manager, said the Headquarters staff used some special keys during the event. Minster used Hiram Percy Maxim's straight key from Hiram's rotary spark-gap transmitter "Old Betsy," Inderbitzen used the Begali key replica of one of Hiram's straight keys, and Hare used W1AW's J-38 key. In all, W1AW completed 173 contacts on the three bands. Carcia added that due to the pandemic, access to the facilities were limited and no more than one operator was present at any given time.

## Soapbox Comments

The number of submitted entries was slightly higher than last year, and many participants reported that there was plenty of activity on the bands. Jack Schuster, W1WEF, noted that "it was the most activity I ever saw and the highest number of contacts I ever made in SKN."

While many participants operated strictly on the HF bands, some chose to operate on the higher frequency bands. Chris Bisailion, VE3CBK, along with a group of other operators in Ontario, Canada, made several contacts on 2 meters.

Some operators dusted off their keys for the first time in years, and others used the event as an opportunity to mentor new and prospective hams. Eric Bartholomew, W8QT, stated that he hadn't made a CW contact in over 25 years, and enjoyed the challenge of working CW again. Aaron Ray, N4ARY, said that being joined by his daughter was "the highlight of this year's SKN."

## Best Fist and Most Interesting QSO

Each year, we ask SKN participants to cast their votes for "Best Fist" and "Most Interesting QSO." This year's vote for "Best Fist" is a six-way tie between Tom Billings, AA4TB; Nenad Tufekcic, AC6YY; Paul Raiche, N1XI; Jim Zimmerman, N6KZ; Bob Buecker, N9HAL, and Michael Hall, WB8ICN. For the "Most Interesting QSO," there was a four-way tie between Jack Hill, KKØI; William Diman, W2WLD; Randall Myers, WB4SPB, and Dennis Mudge, WB6PGJ.

The next ARRL Straight Key Night will be held on January 1, 2022. Let's see if we can continue the increase in activity for the event next year, as we move farther into Solar Cycle 25.

## Participating Stations

AA4AI, AA4TB, AA5AD, AA7FV, AA7IR, AA8KY, AA8UU, AAØQZ, AB8FJ, AB9BZ, AC6YY, AD8Y, ADØKH, AE3A, AE6Y, AE7CG, AE8EA, AF8A, AG4W, AI6SL, K1EEE, K2AL,



For SKN 2021, Ralph Irons, N4RLI, uncovered his vintage station, consisting of a Heathkit DX-20 transmitter paired with an Allied Radio Knight-Kit V44 VFO, and a Heathkit HR-10 receiver. [Ralph Irons, N4RLI, photo]

K3AFS, K3BVQ, K3MD, K3SWZ, K3TWT, K4EQ, K4FOY, K4HGX, K4RCW, K5JM, K5LDA, K5MBA, K5SOH, K5TSK, K6CTW, K6DF, K6GAS, K6KQV, K6PBQ, K6SK, K6SQL, K6TY, K7JRB, K7NSW, K7UA, K8LF, K8NB, K8TM, K9MMS, K9PFA, K9PMV, K9UQN, K9VKY, K9WWT, K9YA, KØARY, KØJW, KØKP, KØMIS, KØWOI, KA4WJB, KA6JLT, KA7T, KAØLDG, KAØMLX, KB2MN, KB2PVC, KB6NU, KB8TXZ, KB9W, KBØLMB, KC2LMB, KC4HW, KCØINP, KD2BD, KD5QH, KD5TXX, KD8CGH, KE1R, KE8AQW, KEØTT, KEØZ, KF8KS, KG4KGY, KG7BF, KJ4TG, KJ9X, KN5L, KN8RHM, KO4GBD, KO8S, KO9J, KR4U, KT3A, KW6G, KZ1X, N1ADX, N2BE, N2KDZ, N2KZ, N3EQF, N3HCN, N3YUG, N4ARY, N4CF, N4NTO, N4QR, N4RLI, N4TOL, N5DTF, N5EEI, N6KZ, N6TCZ, N7GOA, N8KC, N8QE, N8SS, N8XMS, N8XMW, N9BOF, N9BT, N9CKZ, N9EP, NØIMJ, NØKJI, NØV, NWØM, NF8M, NØR, NJ3K, NN7A, W1AW, W1PDI, W1PID, W1TPB, W1TS, W1WEF, W2GIW, W2LID, W2NTN, W2QJH, W2VTV, W3CB, W4FLL, W4RK, W4SGP, W4UR, W4YE, W5CUB, W5NZ, W5ZA, W6JHQ, W6KOW, W6PAP, W7GK, W7IY, W7QH, W8DO, W8DPK, W8DXU, W8SHF, W8UA, W8VE, W8WTS, W8WZ, W9ABD, WØAAA, WØESE, WØFUN, WØKIZ, WØKU, WA1CFX, WA2CHV, WA2ELW, WA2TBQ, WA7AXT, WA7OET, WA7YAZ, WA8UMT, WA8ZNC, WA9STI, WAØCFQ, WAØVQY, WB2AWQ, WB3CEG, WB3JKQ, WB4OFT, WB6AAJ, WB7AEA, WB7EHX, WB8CFO, WB8RFB, WB9HFK, WBØB, WBØCJB, WD5ABC, WD6EGW, WD8RIF, WDØK, WI9P, WN9U, and WR4RW.

DX and VE stations included HP1IBF, HP1RIS, VA3RKM, VE3CBK, VE3DQN, VE3WMB, VE6KC, VE7NI, VO1NA, VY1KX.