

The Texan

Newsletter of the Texas NTS CW Net (TEX)

**** See "TSN Corner" on Last Pages ****

Net Manager: Steve Phillips, K6JT, Plano TX

(k6jt@arrl.net , 214-208-8900 Cell)

TEX Web Site: <http://k6jt.home.att.net/>

Assistant Manager: Rodney Baker, W5DY, Goliad TX

(w5dy@arrl.net)

August 2009



Poor Conditions Return

I guess we can't depend on old Sol to help us out just yet. I have noticed that conditions on early TEX have gotten worse, with weak signals and QSB the norm rather than the exception. While the sun is doing a wonderful job of making our electric bills skyrocket here in Texas (Doug, KA5KLU, reports that they have had over 40 days of 100+ temps so far this year down in San Antonio), the eagerly awaited sunspots just aren't forthcoming to assist the ionosphere in providing better HF conditions. Even 40 meters has been poor for the early RN5 and CAN sessions some nights. Late TEX does seem to be holding in there, though, but signal levels seem to be lower than they were a month ago.

I had been considering moving early TEX to 40 meters, but with the current fluctuations of propagation there, I think we will just stay on 80 for this year.

With these conditions, it is even more important for NCS stations to ask a distant check-in to call for TEX QNI. Even if you hear both distant and local stations well, as NCS be sure to do this at least once a few minutes into the net.

W4ZJY SK

As I was working on this newsletter, I received word about Dave, W4ZJY, becoming a silent key. It was very sudden, as I just worked him a couple nights ago. Dave had some health issues, evidenced by his withdrawal as central area digital coordinator last year, but he came back to pick it up when he was needed. True dedication.

Although I never met him in person, we exchanged E-mails and on-the-air banter aside from the traffic handling aspects, so I know he was a good man and also very conscientious about his traffic handling duties.

Rest in Peace, Dave.

W1NJM Saga

Thanks to Sis, WD8DIN, the editor of the "Traffic Call" newsletter of the Hit and Bounce Net (HBN – 0730 CT, 7042 KHz M-F, 7114 KHz S-S), for passing along George Hart's saga of the

“early days”. Here's Part 28 of George Hart's recollections, Geo gets even more into the "swing" of things.

RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS OF AN OLD HAM

A journalistic history of the life and times in Amateur Radio of George Hart, W1NJM, by George Hart, W1NJM.

Chapter 28 - The Hurricane

It was only about three weeks after I arrived in Connecticut that the hurricane of 1938 hit us. I don't remember the exact date or day of the week, but I do remember that it was one of the rare days when I was on the early (3 to 9) shift, probably because Hal had some personal business to attend to, or maybe construction and maintenance were in such good shape that he decided to give me a break. In any case, I arrived at 3 p.m., put my car in the garage and proceeded to attend to some paper work, in this case making out QSL cards. W1AW sent cards to every station we worked, and a card file record was kept for each station worked showing the name of the operator, location and any details gleaned from the contact or contacts with that station. Thus, when a contact was made the operator (Hal or I) could refer to the file, ascertain if it was a first contact or, if contacted before, be able to address the other operator by name and be aware of his location. The file, in other words, was our "memory," and often the operator at the other end was amazed that we knew so much about him. It made for good membership and even non-member relations. The file was my idea, and so keeping it current was part of my job.

It was a dark day outside. Rain was coming down and the wind was already quite brisk. As the afternoon progressed, the wind grew stronger and the rain was more intense. But I sat oblivious until I felt the building shudder and the electricity went off. I investigated the Memorial Lobby and found that the wind was blowing rain through the cracks around the front door. I went into the garage and got the mop and a bucket, mopped up the water on the floor, but as I was doing so I heard a splintering crash outdoors. Looking out on Main Street I saw a large tree laying across the road. It wasn't until then that I realized the intensity of the storm.

This hurricane had no name. The Weather Bureau didn't start giving them names until after WW II, but it was being tracked as it came up the coast and started heading out to sea. It was predicted to continue northeastward and die out in the north Atlantic, but it had suddenly switched due northward and hit with full force on the eastern part of Long island, Rhode Island and Cape Cod. The Hartford area was getting only the outer edge, but that was bad enough. Newington was without power for several days and W1AW was silent.

No damage was done to the station building except a few asphalt shingles were torn off the roof. But our new magnificent station sat dark and silent. No provision had been made for emergency power at the station. Later in the afternoon, as the intensity of the storm decreased, Mr. Handy and Hal showed up, saying they were both concerned for my safety but I suspect they were even more concerned for the building and antennas. After looking around they departed, saying I might as well go home because the downed tree across Main Street had torn down the power lines and restoration of power was unlikely at least for a day, probably more. Many other trees throughout the town and indeed the entire area were also down.

I stayed until it got too dark to work, then got my car out of the garage and headed toward Hartford and Annawan Street. Several detours were necessary to get around downed trees and flooded streets, but I finally made it. The power at Annawan Street was still on. Hal was in his room across the hall, and when he heard me come in he came over and told me that Mr. Handy had invited us both to his house in West Hartford where the power was also on to operate for emergency communications purposes, because commercial electricity and communications in Rhode Island and Cape Cod had been disrupted and amateur radio was being called on to assist. I gladly agreed to go, but Hal opted to remain in his room and operate from his personal station.

There followed two days of almost continuous operation from W1BDI. Operating Ed Handy's station was an adventure unlike any I have ever had in operating a station other than my own (up to this point in my amateur career I had never had my own station!) The second floor station was a veritable clutter of equipment, arranged in a highly unorthodox manner quite in keeping with Handy's own eccentric demeanor. All I did was operate. Ed Handy did all the setting up, frequency changing, tuning, accompanied by grunts, throat clearings and nervous fidgeting. It was a real adventure. Mrs. Handy kept us well fed and I managed to get some sleep in a spare room. We maintained contact with other amateur stations in eastern Connecticut, Rhode Island and southeastern Massachusetts, many of them operating on emergency power, handling mostly personal welfare messages but also a few official dispatches.

Commercial wire facilities were in bad shape and several days of frantic work would be required to get them back to normal. I seem to recall that we had another assistant, a non-ham who handled telephone calls, and a couple of times a newspaper called and wanted to interview Mr. Handy regarding the part amateurs were playing. The incident made me pretty well acquainted with the Handy family and gave me a closer insight into the personality of Ed Handy himself.

- *Coming in Chapter 29: Then there was Ms. Louise.*

Night of Nights

As I forwarded in an E-Mail a few weeks ago, the old commercial CW shore stations were in operation for one evening, known as the "Night of Nights". I hope that some of you were able to enjoy this year's event. For those of you that did not get a chance, you can thank the Internet for a view of some of the festivities with Denice Stoops sending the final message. A link to the video is here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2a4scmlC7tl>

Thanks to Ken, K6CTW, the RN6 manager for this info in his RN6 bulletin. I enjoyed listening to Denice send and also watching her keying technique, which is pretty "expressive", as she very skillfully works the bug. She only made 2 minor mistakes while sending the final message, and her fist sounded like an electronic keyer, it was so good. Take a listen (and look) and judge for yourself!

TEX Mailbox:

I received word that **Wads, W5CDX**, had gone in for heart surgery about the middle of last month. He has been on the air since that time, but not as often as usual. Please keep him in your prayers. The info received was as follows (from KE5PWL) on July 18: "Wads said that he would be going in to have a stint put in his heart artery. It shouldn't be a really big deal, he said he was not worried about it at all. It was not an emergency type thing. Wads will hopefully be back at the end of next week sometime."

Scott, N7NET, is attempting to put up some sort of antenna that will work on 80 meters so he can join us on TEX more often. Scott writes: Yesterday I lost a longtime friend, K7HY. He and I were friends from the early days of my ham career. During 2001 and 2002 he and his wife worked in Yellowstone while Barb and I worked at being snowbirds in Arizona. Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday he would give me a call on 20m and we'd do a CW sked during his lunch hour.

When his wife called me about his passing, these cherished memories rushed in on me like a thunderstorm, and I decided it was time to stop making excuses for not being on the traffic nets.

My QTH will not accommodate an 80m wire, so I erected a small vertical with a resonator and used my fence for a counterpoise. Some people call it a Hustler. I had to prune a longer stinger in order to make the 75m coil resonate on 80. The SWRs are flat. It should send a signal. If it does, I'll join you and the group soon.

73 de Scott/n7net

Note: Have not heard from Scott as yet, so the antenna probably is very poor. I know – I have a Hustler with 80 meter resonator on it in the attic here, and it just does not perform well enough for anyone on TEX to hear me (except perhaps David, KM5YQ, who is only about 20 miles away). Scott, try getting on late TEX, at least on Thursday night. I should be able to hear you – Steve

Bert, AC5Z, had some antenna problems last month, but considering his good signal now, it appears to have been fixed.

You have probably noticed that **David, KM5YQ**, has "moved up" from TSN to TEX. Although his code speed is improving, he still needs a little TLC (and QRS) from NCS stations when asking him to move off frequency to handle traffic. We are delighted to have David join us and I am sure that in very little time, he'll get that code speed up. David writes:

I just wanted to drop you a quick note now that I have been able to start checking into the net on a regular basis. At my old QTH in Irving I was limited to a rain gutter antenna. It was ok for casual QSO's but not the best thing for daily traffic work. The apartment I live at now in Dallas is next to a wooded area near White Rock creek, and my patio is about 20 feet from the tree line. I buried a feedline (low loss LMR-400 equivalent) into the woods about 300 feet and setup a full size off center fed multiband dipole. I am hoping to run a second feedline and setup another dipole oriented 45 to 90 degrees from the first one for better coverage and may get one that covers 160m as well. (There is that much space!)

I've been working on my code speed and TEX is providing me with all the motivation I need to keep working at it. I have also been active on the DFW Early and Late traffic nets checking in as liaison to TEX and also am still active on TSN. I received a card today from Pat KD5TXD and she asked me to be the TSN liaison to TEX. So I will start taking that duty as well.

I am starting to get a feel for the rhythm of the net but am still learning the process of sending and receiving traffic. I am going to keep listening to others on the nets, if you have any tips or advice I would be happy to hear it.

73,
David KM5YQ

Note: David's antenna is considerably better than mine, so if you cannot hear me ask for fills on traffic, and David has checked in, ask him to relay my responses. That worked well with Charlie a few nights ago. Just be sure to QRS when asking. – Steve

Scott, W7IZ, the STM of OR (and RN7 manager) passed along the following info about the George Hart Distinguished Service Award, sent by Mickey, K5MC, who is the Division Director of our neighboring Delta Division...

In case you haven't heard, the ARRL Board did approve the establishment of the George Hart Distinguished Service Award. The minutes of the July Board meeting have now been posted at www.arrl.org/announce/board-0907/ <<http://www.arrl.org/announce/board-0907/>> and the terms of reference for the Hart Award are as follows:

The George Hart Distinguished Service Award may be presented by the Board of Directors to the ARRL member whose service to the ARRL's Field Organization is of the most exemplary nature. The Distinguished Service Award is named in honor of George Hart, W1NJM, long-time Communications Manager at ARRL Headquarters and chief developer of the National Traffic System.

Selection criteria include

1. Operating record with the National Traffic System; or
2. Participation within the Amateur Radio Emergency Service; or
3. Station appointments and/or leadership positions held within the Field Organization.
4. Procedure
5. Nominations shall be accepted from anyone.
6. Nominations shall be submitted to the Membership and Volunteer Programs Manager at ARRL HQ by November 1.
7. Nominations should document as thoroughly as possible the nominee's lifetime activities and achievements within the Field Organization. It is expected that nominated candidates will have 15 or more years of distinguished service.
8. The Programs and Services Committee will serve as the Review Committee.
9. The Board of Directors shall make the final determination at its Annual Meeting in January.
10. The award shall consist of:
11. An engraved plaque and cover letter.
12. Coverage in QST.

There are a number of NTS ops worthy of this award, along with many other League members who have primarily focused their efforts within ARES or other aspects of the Field Organization. I hope you will pass along this information to anyone who might want to nominate a deserving ARRL member for this special recognition.

Note that Bill Smith, W7GHT, has been nominated from the Pacific Area. – Ed

Floyd, N5EL, reports that he is having a few health issues that prevent him from handling much traffic, but he will QNI when he can. Floyd writes: I've been intending to write several times but have just put it off until now. I need to not do much traffic handling right now but will be glad to continue checking in with the understanding that I only take traffic to Temple and Belton, maybe Kileen or Troy and close in, which hardly ever happens but a member needs to be there. I love checking in daily on early net if possible though and look forward to it, but for now, too long is not good for me. TEX is truly a great bunch. 73, Floyd

Floyd also reports that there is a book out, written by his CW friend Norm (see the videos of the Temple Train Station on the TEX web site). Floyd wrote: "Norm wrote and copyrighted a book entitled "Steam and the Chattering Brass" with my and Pat KD5TXD's help. She is one sweet lady to help us out, as you already know (*for sure!*). There's a picture on the back cover with he and I operating but you can barely tell who I am. Look for it on Google, it just tells a little about the book."

Speaking of our chief YL operator, **Pat, KD5TXD**, sent in a description (with her humorous twists, of course) of her club's efforts to build their QRP kit. Pat writes:

Our QRP kit project down here in the Wild Horse Desert is in full assembly mode. Monday we gathered at the TAMUK physics building in the astronomy lab. What a combination; radio, university, physics, astronomy... Once again we are out of our radio room at the Kleberg County EOC due to the Texas Forest Service being camped out with real fire emergencies. The fire fighter fellows said they were fighting a fire a day down here and no end in sight for our dry weather.

We picked the astronomy lab as our assembly meeting place because it has excellent table space, ample power plugs for soldering irons, and Charles has a key. We arrived at different levels of preparation. A couple folks have their kits completed or darn close to completed. My kit is about half way. The others were ready to sort their parts.

Also, our old timers were handy. They were thrilled to help out the new folks with getting started. We received a lot of excellent advice and it was great to tap into some serious amateur radio experience. I have made many kits over the years. Early on I made kits for Charles with no interest in what the kit would do. It is the craft person in me that loves putting things together. Kit building is purely an artistic expression. For me there is little difference between building a radio and making a decorative wall hanging. I do toroids really well because it is just like sewing a button or crocheting. Toroids seem to be more of a challenge for others.

Our most skilled old timer had some really excellent tricks for us. One trick is getting the leads clipped off very, very close to the board. This is done with a modified pair of dikes (clippie thingies). If you look at your standard set of dikes you will notice the bottom side of the cutting part has a little groove in it.

----^---- Sort of like this.

Well, that tiny groove allows a bit of the lead to stick up even after it is clipped off. Our old timer has taken his set of dikes and ground that groove flat.

----'---- This simple change makes for an amazingly smooth bottom on an assembled board. I figure I can do this trick using my grinding wheel and a pair of cheap dikes. I will report on my success or failure at making this tool modification.

So far we have had no solder burns or other accidents. I am still not sure that the new folks realize that they will have to learn some CW. Another of our old timers who has avoided CW for decades has started meeting me on 40 meters after the OTN net finishes and we work a few minutes of code. He can copy code pretty well. His problem is sending code. He has never had the dexterity to send good code and that is why he has avoided CW. I think if we can get him past that point he is really going to love CW. He is not yet ready to get a keyboard as he is a bit of a purist. I admire his situation and efforts to send code. He will be just fine since our little group is going to be in the world of slow code for some time to come.

The next big step will be to find appropriate boxes for our QRP radios. I have selected a green Ghirardelli Chocolate tin to put my "Small Wonder 40+" in, yummmm. Now, I am not always good at thinking ahead on things. I had not totally settled on that tin box for my radio (aka not finished eating the chocolate) when Charles and I went looking for connectors and knobs. Charles suggested a pair of ordinary looking black knobs. However, in the drawer at Radio Shack I found a pair of red knobs. Just in case you don't realize it I will repeat...red is good. Hopefully my radio will be completed and on the air before Christmas even if it has a green box with red knobs. I also offered to assist anyone wanting to use this excellent size box for their QRP rig by disposing of that useless chocolate that comes inside the box. Funny, no one has taken me up on my offer. ☺

Pat also reports that Texas A&M in Kingsville (TAMUK) now sports a new tri-band beam:

Excitement at TAMUK W5ZD

It has only been about seven years that this tri bander beam antenna has been sitting in the TAMUK radio room awaiting installation. Efforts were made for years to get volunteer help to install the antenna and rotator on the 70 foot tower. No go!! While sitting in one of many boring faculty meetings our TAMUK W5ZD trustee was finally confronted with the economic truth that he needed to spend some of the club's money to have the antenna installed professionally or have some other university entity try to claim W5ZD's fund.

At last, a fire was lighted. Welders and appropriate scoopie truck were hired for the job. It was a bright and sunny day Friday August 7th. The work crew arrived early. The Rohn 25 tower top was hoisted into place and lovingly welded firmly to the tower. The crew actually used a level to make sure it was straight. How encouraging!!



About mid day our club Trustee, Dr. Robert Diersing, who is the Vice President of IT, arrived and donned a climbing harness. He didn't climb the tower, but took an easy ride to the top with the work crew. He installed the mast and rotator. Then they installed a waterproof electrical box to house the rotator connections. Finally they hoisted the wondrous tri bander antenna to the top. One could almost hear the sound of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" being sung by an angelic chorus of heavenly amateurs who have awaited this event for nearly a decade. It was enough to bring tears to the eyes of local hams.

During the process a number of the assorted professors from various parts of the University came out to crane their necks and gawk. One leaned over to me and commented that it was really great to see one of the Vice Presidents of the University actually doing something useful. It was pretty late by the time they got the tri bander up and mounted. Tomorrow they will finish the

connections and do some testing. It will be so nice to have W5ZD's voice back on the air again. I will be taking in an appropriate code key to hook up in the near future.

73!! Pat KD5TXD

TEX Net Topics

We still have *many* open RN5 slots and 2 open NCS slots. I have not had any volunteers for any of the open slots or backup slots. If you can only take one of the NCS or liaison slots a given night, such as early RN5, that would be fine. We have **16** open NCS/liaison slots, with **8** open *primary* RN5 slots (all shown in **red**)! We don't even have a backup on Tuesday for early TEX NCS or either RN5 slot. Thanks to Sam, W5CU, Scott, W5ESE, Ken, K5RG, and Rodney, W5DY, we have managed to get through another month without missing any critical schedules.

TEX CW Net Weekly Schedule

Local	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
NCS #1	W5GKH	Open	KD5TXD	AC5Z	K6JT	AC5Z	W5GKH
Backup	Open	Open	W5DY	W5DY	KD5TXD	W5DY	W5CU
NCS #2	W5GKH	Open	KD5TXD	K6JT	N5PWG	W5DY	W5GKH
Backup	K6JT	K6JT	K6JT	Open	K6JT	Open	K6JT
RN5 #1	W5GKH	Open	W5CU	Open	Open	Open	W5CU
Backup	W5DY	Open	W5DY	Open	W5ESE	W5ESE	W5GKH
RN5 #2	W5GKH	Open	W5CU	Open	Open	Open	W5CU
Backup	W5DY	K6JT	W5DY	W5DY	K6JT	W5DY	W5GKH

TEX/1: **3541** at 19:00 local; TEX/2 **3541** at 22:00 local
 RN5/1: **7105/3567** at 19:30; RN5/2: 3567 at 21:30 local

TSN: 3552 - 19:45 local; CAN: 7052/3552 - 20:30 local; PAN: 7052/3552/3557- 22:30 local

RN5 Backup: W5CU, W5DY, W5ESE, W5GKH, K5GM, K6JT, KA5KLU, K5RG
 NCS Backup: W5DY, N5EL, K6JT, KA5KLU, KD5TXD, AC5Z

Statistics:

Traffic count came way up this past month. QNI remained about the same and net time was also up, due to the increased traffic. Rodney, W5DY, with 36 (58%) took top QNI for the month, followed by David, KM5YQ, with 29 (47%), who edged out a tie for 3rd by Mike, W5TMO, and PAT, KD5TXD, each with 28 (45%). Thanks to all who checked in for your support.

We had Robert, K5LYT, visit us from Corpus Christi. It was good to also see Larry, W5SBE, checking in again from Austin and Ken, W5UFG, from College Station.

The complete list of stations and traffic / liaison totals are shown in the following table. Traffic averaged 4.2 per net session (up from 2.9 last month). Net time averaged 17.1 minutes per session (compared to 14.8 last month). Check-ins averaged 5.2 per session (5.3 last month).

TEX Net Statistics (July 2009)

Call		QNI	total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	CTTN	TSN
W5CU	Sam	9	14		6				
*		5			5				
W5DY	Rodney	17	36	6	5	2	1		
		19		6	11				
N5EL	Floyd	8	8						
*		0							
W5ESE	Scott	21	23		10			10	9
*		2			1				1
W5GKH	Charlie	6	13	5	3				
*		7		6	3				
K5GM	Pete	8	10						
*		2							
K6JT	Steve	13	39	5	1		12		
*		26		11	7		24		
KA5KLU	Doug	15	22	1	5				
*		7			3				
K5LYT	Robert	0	1						
	Corpus Christi	1							
WA5MUF	Bill	0	1						
*		1							
N5NVP	Jim	5	12		1				
		7							
N5PWG	Jay	4	11						
*		7		3					
K5RG	Ken	7	18						
*		11			1				

			total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	CTTN	TSN
Call		QNI							
W5SBE	Larry	1	3						
		2							
W5TMO	Mike	0	28						
*		28							
KD5TXD	Pat	16	28	6		13			8
*		12		5					7
W5UFK	Ken	5	5						
*		0							
KM5YQ	David	11	29				5		1
*		18					5		1
AC5Z	Bert	20	20	8					
*		0							
Totals		321		62	62	15	47	10	27
				100%	100%	24%	76%	16%	44%
QTC 1		138	259						
QTC 2		121		Sessions:		62			
Time 1		603	1063						
Time 2		460							

The roster is unchanged from last month. Visitors are shown in the QNI list above.

TEX Roster

Call	Name	Location / Notes	Call	Name	Location / Notes
N5AF	Sam	Cleveland	WA5MUF	Bill	Watauga
KW5AS	Skip	Victoria (ex-KA8IXC)	# N7NET	Scott	McKinney
N5BA	Brian	Houston	KB5NJD	John	Duncanville
W5CDX	Wads	Crowley LA	WB5NKC	Arley	Oklahoma City OK
W5CU	Sam	Edmond OK	# N5NVP	Jim	Scott LA
NV5D	Martin	Allen	* N5PWG	Jay	Pasadena
* W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	K5RDW	RD	Vilonia AR
N5EL	Floyd	Temple	K5RG	Ken	Houston
* W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	W5ROK	Steve	Richardson (K6JT)
W5GKH	Charlie	West Columbia	W5SBE	Larry	Austin
K5GM	Pete	Austin	KC5T	Bob	Houston
W9GVW	Eric	San Antonio	W5TFB	Jack	College Station
KA9IKK	Bill	Houston	# W5TMO	Mike	Austin
AA5J	Lee	Plano	W5TV	Tom	Nacogdoches
KJ9J	Newt	Pharr TX (winter)	* KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville
K5JRN	Si	Denton	A16U	Chris	Sacramento (CA)
K6JT	Steve	Plano	# W5UFK	Ken	College Station
KA5KLU	Doug	San Antonio	* K5UN	Lee	Leonard
W5KNN	Ed	Bulverde (was KS5V)	K5WQG	Eddy	Tomball
K5KV	Benny	Star	# KM5YQ	David	Dallas
W6LFB	Jim	Denton	* AC5Z	Bert	Nacogdoches (Lufkin)
WA5MS	Marty	Highland Village	W5ZD	Pat	Kingsville (KD5TXD)

Not Capable of operating in 3600-3700 band; * Capable of 160 meter operation

Operating:

This marks the beginning of my 5th year as TEX manager. It has been a rewarding, and sometimes challenging task. Thanks to excellent help from my assistant managers, first Floyd, N5EL, and now Rodney, W5DY, the day-to-day net operations are pretty easy to maintain. Writing this newsletter is probably the hardest part of the job, taking the most time

each month (aside from the record keeping). But I am convinced that a newsletter really adds to the spirit of camaraderie necessary for a successful section (or state, in our case) net. So it is worth the effort. Keep your comments, stories, and anything else you want to talk about and share with other TEX'ans coming in the E-Mail basket. It really helps to have them when I sit down to write.

I am running out of the George Hart saga chapters. I now get them only one at a time every 3 months when Sis publishes them in the HBN "Traffic Call" newsletter. There is only one remaining in queue and then we won't have them but every 3 months. I know she gets them one at a time, too, so there is not much choice.

That makes your inputs and stories all the more needed for upcoming newsletters. A really big thanks to Pat, KD5TXD, for being such a prolific writer and supplying interesting articles nearly every month. Is she the only one who is active in a club or other operating events? Perhaps we need some more "featured station" articles. I know some of you have already submitted pictures and some anecdotes that have been in past newsletters. How about some of our newer members sending in your ham radio history and a picture of you and/or your equipment? Give it some thought and a wee bit of time, and it should be pretty easy to submit it to me. I'll smooth any "rough edges" in the prose, so don't worry about that part. It is the meat of the stories that is important, not the presentation.

Traffic routing 101

By Richard Webb, nf5b

(Taken from Richard's Brass Pounder's Quarterly Newsletter, Volume III, issue 2)

We're going to depart a bit from training on the very basics of formulating and handling a formal message, because that's available from a variety of places. But, your editor finds that there are some who don't understand why the organized NTS system is configured the way it is.

In past issues of BPQ we've touched upon the trunk line system and what came before the current system of section region area and TCC which comprises the present day routing structure of NTS. The theory is that traffic can move from coast to coast, border to border easily within one day or possibly less.

To review, there are three areas essentially, eastern, central and pacific. Central encompasses the central time zone in North America. Eastern and pacific each encompass multiple time zones because of offshore possessions of the U.S. and Canada. Pacific area covers the pacific and mountain time zones in North America. Otherwise, each area only covers one time zone within continental bounds.

These areas are further broken down into regions, and then sections. Many states, such as New York, Florida, California and Texas comprise more than one ARRL section. ARRL sections are sections within the NTS routing and organizational structure. Otherwise, most states are a section within themselves. Usually traffic would flow from the section where it was originated to a region representative, and if going outside the region on to an area net station and thence to a transcontinental corps station for movement between areas.

Newer digital modes and methods have offered another route, sometimes more direct, in fact often so where the address of a Winlink station which can speed it to its destination is already known. These stations should still endeavor to route traffic intelligently however, and be aware of area region and section coverage areas.

To illustrate, let me tell you about a situation I came across while working with the Satern net in September of 2004. I don't recall the name of the hurricane, I'm thinking Charley but might be wrong. Suffice it to say that there was a lot of health and welfare as well as tactical traffic related to the cleanup.

I'd been working as net control for Satern net on 14265 Khz and after finishing up remained on frequency. I get a call asking me if I can help with some traffic. Some operator in 9th call district had picked this up, and didn't have clue one how to get it into NTS or route it properly. Having discovered he wasn't up to the task he relisted it on Satern.

I volunteer to get the traffic onto regular NTS circuits. There were two outbound health and welfare messages on his hook, as well as a priority message. It's the priority message that had me scratching my head.

The priority message was from Vero Beach, going to the state EOC in Tallahassee. There was an opnote on it to deliver it via some net that evening on 3950 Khz. Why then was it routed to 9-land on Satern?

In this message the folks at Vero beach had the following message text:
Humane society Vero Beach Florida needs 400 linear feet of portable corral fencing.
It had a lady's name as the signature, no title or anything else. That's not a surprise, but it sure told me something. Whoever sent it from Vero Beach didn't know anything about where to find daytime nets, how the system operates or what he should do with this message.

I sent it to a station on daytime region 5 who said he'd take it to cycle 4 that evening, as there were plenty of good CW ops from Florida available to region 5 evening cycle.

I still wonder if the poor folks in Vero Beach ever received their portable fencing with which to hold displaced animals. I'd be willing to bet serious money they didn't.

It's important that folks learn about NTS routing topology and be mindful of it. Routing a message around the country because a relay station is ignorant of correct routing topologies and procedures is inefficient at best, negligent in cases such as the example above.

It makes no sense, for example, to originate a message in region five, which is central area, and then move that message to a station in eastern area to handle if it is destined for another region within central area. That is, unless the eastern area station will be immediately relaying it on the same net to a station within the destination region on the same network. Especially when that message is normal run of the mill bulk book traffic.

Likewise, it is counterproductive to move intra-region traffic outside the region, except for the same reasons cited above.

Operators who intend to be digital traffic movers should familiarize themselves with the way the system operates and endeavor to route their traffic so as not to completely bypass the opportunity for appropriate nets to move it, providing training for net participants. Bulk book traffic is poor training at best, but when all it does is overburden certain high volume digital traffic movers then it provides little real benefit to the system. If routed via long haul routes just to increase traffic counts then it also provides little real benefit, especially if this routing bypasses upper level nets.

It has come to light recently that some operators who primarily interface between packet and Winlink are misdirecting traffic, either through a lack of understanding of how the system operates, or an unwillingness to seek outlets via their NTS section.

If one has no outlets via the section net due to lack of operating privileges then he should endeavor to find a station which will inject such traffic into the system at the lowest possible level. Example: A station in Missouri without privileges to operate on 80 meters could inject traffic destined for another section in the tenth region via a relay who does have such privileges. Of course, if one cannot be found then he should use the best route available. With these expanded routing topologies it's important for those of us who are active in traffic handling and public service to continue to support and maintain the regular section region area TCC topology using SSB and CW. Although the email via radio methods are quite handy they are still essentially point to point systems, similar in many respects to the trunk line system of yesteryear.

Once traffic is sent to another station utilizing these systems it must be picked up and either sent on or delivered by the recipient of the email. Contrast this with listing traffic on a net where if the usual liaison station is missing another can volunteer to fill the hole and take on the liaison assignment for the missing operator. When the system is providing disaster communications, even health and welfare messages from the affected area, this may be preferable to sending traffic in the blind via the Internet. NTS operators who can be certain of timely movement of traffic can then pick up such traffic from regular NTS nets for routing via Winlink, etc.

By supporting the current NTS structure of scheduled nets and TCC schedules we insure the continued viability of the system and provide newcomers and experienced traffic handlers alike an opportunity to train and maintain their level of readiness.

Working as described above assures the health of the nets within the system, providing both training for newcomers and motivation to net participants, which is often in short supply.

(Thanks, Richard !)

Until next month,

73, Steve

(TSN Corner starts on the next page)



TSN Corner

Texas Slow Net (Daily) 1945 CT 3552.0 KHz +/- QRM

[Web Page Returning Soon](#)

Pat Allison KD5TXD (pja@atcweb.com)

TSN Net Manager

The telegraph key image is courtesy of FCIT

Greetings from the Wild Horse Desert – home of your TSN Manager

Hi to all!! Seems like July went by really fast. Band conditions in my part of Texas have been totally rotten. I have talked Arley into letting me call TSN on Wednesday night and Sunday night. That will give us three different locations for the NCS, and three different angles to see how well the skip works. KB5TCH, Carroll in Douglasville is calling on Friday night and Arley picks up the rest of the nights from OKC. Please give me some feed back on how this is working out from your areas.

I still need to get our TSN web page up. Sorry I am so slow. I am not a computer kind of gal.

July 2009 TSN Roster

Call	Name	City	State	Call	Name	City	State
N5AF	SAM	Cleveland	TX	KE5LOT	Club	Fentress	TX
W5AG	Arch	Lafayette	LA	WA5LOU	Lou	Kennard	TX
KD5CB	Mike	Hillsboro	TX	KD5MMM	Phil	Fentress	TX
K0CMH	Craig	St Louis	MO	WA5MUF	Bill	Stafford	TX
W0CXX	Steve	Cedar Rapids	IA	N7NET	Scott	Allen	TX
W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	TX	WB5NKC	Arley	Oklahoma City	OK
N5EL	Floyd	Temple	TX	WB5NKD	Pat	Oklahoma City	OK
K5END	Larry	Spring	TX	N5NVP	Jim	Scott	LA
W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	TX	K4OSO	Milt	Rockville	VA
WD0ESF	Mike	Medicine Lodge	KS	K9PUI	Rich	Indianapolis	IN
WB9FLU	Bill	Columbus	IN	N5PWG	Jay	Pasadena	TX
WB5GFU	Al	Alamo	TX	KB5TCH	Carroll	Douglassville	TX
KD5GM	Louis	Deer Park	TX	W5TMO	Mike	Austin	TX
AE5GT	Clint	Wimberley	TX	KA5TJS	Allen	San Augustine	TX
KA8IXC	Dan	Victoria (KF5AS)	TX	KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville	TX
AA5J	Lee	Plano	TX	KD5VGJ	Jay	Flower Mound	TX
W5JBV	Mike	Panama City	FL	W5VXI	Dave	Caddo Mills	TX
K5JE	Earl	Claremore	OK	N5XGG	Joe	Colmesneil	TX
K6JT	Steve	Plano (W0CXX)	TX	KM5YQ	David	Dallas	TX
W5JKK	George	Bethany	OK	AC5Z	Bert	Nacogdoches	TX
AA5JW	Carl	Stafford	TX	W5ZD	Pat	(KD5TXD)	TX

Welcome to New and Visiting Stations

We didn't have any new folks visiting TSN this month. Part of that is our poor band conditions. Also, I need to make time to just play on the CW bands and invite folks to come join us on TSN. If we all make some invitations to friends who maybe are interested in CW but feel uncomfortable about jumping in we could get a bit of excitement going. There is always a need for CW traffic handlers to progress to the other CW nets and join the traffic handling efforts. I am not the best CW op around, but I think I am holding my own and I owe much of that to Arley and the slow nets helping me build the courage to participate on TEX. We all need a code buddy and Floyd, N5EL, has been my code buddy over the years. Please think about helping a friend get into CW.

Thanks to all who participated

We appreciate all who have checked into the Texas Slow Net. Hope you can continue to check in and participate. Please bring your friends who want to learn CW traffic handling. Our net control stations will try to slow down to your sending speed. Please list a message for one of your friends or family members. Handling CW traffic is a learning by doing sort of thing.

Also, I have asked David, KM5YQ, to help us out by being our TSN liaison station when he checks into TEX. If you are interested in trying your hand at sending one of the training QST's, please let me know. What better way to learn than by doing?

TSN Activity Report for July, 2009

Total Sessions 31, Total Checkins 157, Total Traffic 35 by 12 different operators.

July QNS

QNI	Callsign	Name	QTH	QNI	Callsign	Name	QTH
30	WB5NKC	Arley	OK, Oklahoma City	9	KD5MMM	Phil	TX, Fentress
30	WB5NKD	Pat	OK, Oklahoma City	6	N7NET	Scott	TX, Allen
22	KD5TXD	Pat	TX, Kingsville	5	KB5TCH	Carroll	TX, Douglassville
21	KM5YQ	David	TX, Irving	3	W5VXI	Dave	Caddo Mills, TX
15	AA5JW	Carl	TX, Stafford	2	N5XGG	Joe	TX, Colmesneil
13	W5ESE	Scott	TX, Dripping Springs	1	N5NVP	Jim	LA, Scott

73!!

**Pat KD5TXD
August, 2009**