

# The Texan

Newsletter of the Texas NTS CW Net (TEX)

**\*\* See "TSN Corner" on Last Page \*\***

Net Manager: Steve Phillips, K6JT, Plano TX

([k6jt@arrl.net](mailto:k6jt@arrl.net) , 214-208-8900)

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

Assistant Manager: Rodney Baker, W5DY, Goliad TX

([w5dy@arrl.net](mailto:w5dy@arrl.net) )

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## Back Home (Again)

Hello TEX'ans. Good to be back home after a week in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Some of you may have heard me checking into TEX, TSN, CAN, and PAN from there using the Collins ARC station W0CXX (that was Art Collins' call, for those who didn't know). Listened to RN5, but did not check in. I even managed to take my Thursday late NCS slot. Be glad you are in Texas (or Louisiana and Oklahoma). The temperatures only broke freezing one day that I was there and hovered between 0 F and 25 F the other days, with wind chills as low as -10 degrees F with snow showers from time to time. Phew! I did enjoy operating the Orion II at the club station, but had some trouble with the keyer paddle. If I have to go there again, I'll take my own paddle with me! Thanks for keeping things running smoothly in my absence and thanks to Rodney for collecting reports and passing them on (some via radio!).

## Long Skip Continues

As you know, there have been intermittent long skip conditions again in the past month, on both early and late TEX. The 80 meter band has been pretty bad, with good conditions one night and very poor the next. Sure making the region nets miserable. Please continue to "hang in there" if you don't hear anyone at first at net time. You will likely hear someone check in. After you do, send "de (call), QNP NCS", since the station you heard will likely also hear you. When you hear someone else send that and you copy the NCS, please QNB the checkin the next chance you get (using normal hail sign protocol with the NCS).

## W1NJM Saga

Thanks to Sis, WD8DIN, the editor of the "Traffic Call" newsletter of the Hit and Bounce Net (HBN – 0730 CT, 7042 KHz), for passing along George Hart's saga of the "early days". Here's Part 20 of George Hart's recollections. Geo does his summer duties away from campus.

## 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 20.

## CHAPTER 20 - MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE FARM

My participation in AARS did not cease during the summer months. My brother Ed, W3NF, had also been active in AARS and in 1933 he was assigned WLML, and we took over the Wednesday night WLM operation as usual. Ed at that time lived in Bloomsbury, NJ, a suburb of Phillipsburg. He had a nice location just off the then route U.S. 22 with an empty field behind his house on which he erected an A-frame antenna. The result was an outstanding signal, even better than we had on College Hill. The farm by then had electricity, but Ed much preferred his own location, so I was a frequent visitor at W3NF in Bloomsbury, especially on Wednesday nights. If for whatever reason I was not able to be there, Ed was quite as capable as I, perhaps even more so, of conducting the WLM schedules.

Backtracking a little: During the second semester of my freshman year at Penn State, after Prof. Crossley slipped me a key to the station "under the table," I made contact with Ed at the farm once a week. He had obtained a second-hand generator in dubious condition, had installed it in an outbuilding and, after considerable effort, had succeeded in getting it running. It was capable of only 500 watts and Ed used it for the ham transmitter. I remember well the first contact using the generator and Ed's elation having "electricity at the farm." His signal was strong and of good quality and we had a good half hour conversation (all by Morse Code, of course, which was to us as good as talking by voice, better in some respects).

During our second contact using the old generator he mentioned that it "sounded funny," so we signed off so he could investigate. I learned the full story a couple of days later when we made contact with Ed using battery power again. On conclusion of our previous contact, he looked out the window and discovered the outbuilding in which the generator was housed, several hundred feet away, ablaze. He called the Riegelsville fire department, the nearest to the farm, but the telephone connection had to go through the Easton rural exchange. We were on a twelve party line, which was occupied almost all the time, so he had to get the party occupying the line to get off, then for the rural operator to answer, then wait for her to complete the long-distance routing to Riegelsville, which was only three miles away.

Thus, the call went from the farm to Easton, five miles north, to Riegelsville, nine miles south through lines that hummed and crackled - a far cry from the type of telephone service we enjoy today. By the time firefighters arrived, first from Riegelsville, then from Easton, the fire had spread from the generator building to a nearby wagon shed and was threatening the big barn, all of wooden construction, with old hay occupying the loft in the barn. The blaze lighted the sky for miles around and the one-car lane from the highway to our farm was soon congested with curiosity-seekers, making it difficult for fire trucks to reach the scene. When they finally did, the barn was ablaze -- flying embers were landing on the house. Hope for saving the barn was quickly abandoned and the firefighters concentrated on saving the house. Fortunately, the main part of the house was made of stone and the roof of slate; but an extension protruded toward the barn made of wood, as was the interior of the house. With a limited water supply, it was "nip and tuck" for several hours.

The big barn and other outbuildings were abandoned as a total loss, and the total effort was in saving the house. Meanwhile, spectators poured into the area and caused terrific congestion. It must have been a frantic time, but the house was saved. The three other buildings, however - the generator building, the wagon shed and the barn with its voluminous load of hay - burned to the ground. All that was left were a few smoking embers and the stone wall

surrounding what had been the barnyard. Thus ended the brief presence of W3AMR at the farm.

Shortly thereafter, Ed moved to Bloomsbury and set up W3NF there. Fortunately, the entire property, including all buildings, was heavily insured. The buildings were never rebuilt; they weren't being used anyway. The insurance money provided some badly needed funds to continue college education expenses for me and my younger brother, and for running an electric service from the highway, about 3/4 of a mile, to the house. A private contractor installed poles and line, which was then owned by my mother. The electric company approved the line, installed a transformer at its end, and imposed a \$10 minimum monthly fee. Reasonable? Not really. An average household in the city paid only about \$5 a month for electricity; but rural electricity laws were not yet in effect, and the electric company could dictate terms. The house was wired by an electrical contractor under Ed's supervision, all BX cable with #14 gauge wire and standard wall and floor outlets.

Electrical consumption then was nowhere near what it is today. Ed's residency in Bloomsbury didn't last long. He was unable to keep up the mortgage payments, and in a year or two he had sold the place and moved back to the farm where, with commercial electricity now available, W3NF was reinstalled and W3AMR became history. I maintained my station license at the farm, but I had no equipment of my own and during my weekend visits, vacations and summers I operated W3NF/WLML.

COMING IN CHAPTER 21: *Penn State rocky middle years.*

#### **TEX Mailbox:**

**Rodney, W5DY**, will be going to Arizona this next week to pick up an RV (Thor Residency Class A 35') and drive it back. The lower gas prices will certainly be welcome. Hope you and Barbara have a great time, Rodney, and the RV meets all your expectations. Sure would be nice if you could install a mobile antenna and operate "portable" from the RV parks in the evenings. I used to do that back in the early 90's, and it was a lot of fun (although rolling out a 130 ft. piece of wire worked much better than the mobile whip).

**Chuck, AA5J**, will be away on family business this next week, too, (possibly longer) so we will need some assistance on Tuesday and Thursday to cover his skeds. Hope everything turns out OK for you and your family, Chuck.

**Scott, W7IZ**, Oregon STM sent in this info that may be of use when delivering some of the Coast Guard traffic:

Hi All - Having just handled another WA2CUW message, curiosity got the best of me so I went and googled "semper paratus" - and "ZUT". Here's what they mean: Semper Paratus means "Always Ready" and is the official march song of the U. S. Coast Guard. ZUT is the Coast Guard CW Operators Association. Their web site is <http://www.comm-one.org> and is very interesting. So when Tom, WA2CUW, has "ZUT 1346" in his signature it means that he's member # 1346 in the Coast Guard CW Operators Association.

**Sam, W5CU**, passed along the following info on the demise of the Arkansas traffic net (from Tom, K4VIZ):

OK, guys, here is the latest skinny on the OZK CW net. Jim / WA5JAN is resigning as net manager as of the first of the year. Due to poor participation, we really no longer have an Arkansas CW net. Therefore, we will most likely combine with the Mississippi CW net, called MTN, for MS TFC NET. The net manager and honcho of MTN is Jim / KB5W. MTN has a pretty good check-in most nights and should be a lot of fun for us to participate in. That net also meets on the same 3.570 MHz. However, it meets at 6:45, 15 minutes earlier than our net. There is WAY less QRM at that time also. We will still need to send our own RN5 reps and most likely will share in the NCS duties. At this time, we do not know what the new combined net will be called.

**Pat, KD5TXD**, has been busy this past month. She writes: Hi All, well, I have been a bit too busy here. I spent the last couple months getting ready for a series of craft shows, Bishop craft show, Corpus Ham Fest, and the big Kingsville Birding Festival.

The Birding Festival was super cool. I set up shop for Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. There were few adults around on Thursday and Friday. I had planned to have my sounders and code keys out because those two days were for school kids to come out to the Birding Festival. They had butterfly camp, a local zoo had a presentation, and the Last Chance Forever group was out to show off assorted raptors to the kids.

There were about 500 kids on Thursday. They all got a chance to come around and “buy” stuff. Well, selling to school kids isn’t my thing. I had handouts for the train depot and my beloved sounders and keys out and hooked up for the kids to bang on. I had Morse Code playing on my computer and the kids were drawn to me like a magnet (not sure that was such a great thing).

It didn’t matter if it was little boys or little girls they loved the sounder and keys. The first question was, “What is that??”. Then, “How does it work?”. I had a great time telling them about the telegraph system and early radio. I tapped out their names on the keys. They all seemed to think it was cool. They ranged in age from first to maybe 6th grade.

Friday it was a bit on the rainy side. The kids couldn’t go out in the rain to see the raptors so they had the kids sit down in the center of the auditorium. The handlers brought the raptors into the room for the presentation. They had hawks and owls for the kids to see. Then they let the hawk swoop over the kids. You should have heard the squealing. They had about 700 kids the second day.

One little fellow on Friday was very interested in Morse Code. He took one of my handout pages and ran away and studied it. Then he kept coming back and tapping on my key. He would ask me what he said and I would tell him. He would run away and come back a couple times. Finally he just stood there at my key and tapped out stuff. Each time asking me what he had said. He was pretty good on the key and so I was able to answer him. He seemed a but distressed that he couldn’t fool me. That went on for about 20 minutes until I finally told him I was very old and he was wearing me out. ☺ His group finally left to go back to school, thank goodness. That kid might have learned something useful about technology for his adult life.

I was totally tuckered out and am still recovering from all that activity. I don't care if I don't see another person under 20 years old for at least 5 or 6 months. Saturday was the adult day and I sold a lot of stuff. It was worth the effort. 73!! Pat KD5TXD

Pat also had some trouble, barely escaping a fire that threatened to destroy her home and possessions this past week (Dec. 1). She reports:

Things almost got on the toasty side down here in the wild horse desert. We had a wind out of the northwest all day yesterday. The neighbor's pasture caught on fire at a point where it just about was taking direct aim at our house in the brush. The smoke was pouring over the brush and over our house so I drove out to see what was going on. When I got out on the road about a half mile west of the place I saw a wall of fire coming toward the road from the northwest. His cattle were running for their lives. No fire fighters were there yet as they were fighting a couple other fires in the county. I told the 911 operator that if the fire jumped our road it would be in heavy brush and they wouldn't have a chance to save a bunch of houses on the other side of the brush as well as our house.

I turned around and drove back to the house. Charles had the truck so I tried calling him to come home and hitch up the RV so we would at least have that to live in after the fire. I loaded up all the go bags into the car and got ready to pack the pups into the car (not a pleasant thought as they are nicknamed the Munchkins for a reason and it isn't their size).

The K2 and 2 meter rigs were packed up. My favorite keys and my KX1 were loaded. Computers and important papers packed. I walked out to the driveway and saw that the sheriff had blocked our road just east of the driveway to stop anyone from going in that area. I walked over and asked him how bad it was. He said it jumped the road. Now I am in full panic mode. I pulled all our clothing out of the closet. I tried to decide what treasures I should try to rescue and realized that the tiny car was already packed to the brim with just enough room for the pups and me so I declared myself ready to evacuate. Still no word from Charles.

I got on 2 meters and asked if any one had heard from Charles. KA5WPK said Charles should have already been to our house. He decided he would bring out his truck so we could drag out the RV if needed. Finally heard from Charles. He was a mile west on 1118 helping the neighbor hitch up a plow to plow a fire break around his house. I felt better as he was within a reasonable distance and could still drive around the property to get back to our house.

After the neighbor secured his place he took his plow down the road and plowed the grass up between the fence line and the pavement. I think he did more to stop the fire than the fire departments. A tank truck finally showed up to put water on the grass and brush. They had the Ricardo Volunteer Fire Dept, Kingsville Fire Dept, Alice Fire Dept, Falfurrias Volunteer Fire Dept and the NAS Kingsville Fire Dept all out fighting fires in various parts of the county. Just an hour before smoke broke over our property I saw all these fire trucks headed east on our road and another huge plume of smoke maybe 2 miles east of us. So it was an exciting and nerve wracking day here.

After dark I hounded Charles until he took me out to drive around the property to look for any hot spots. We drove west on our 1118 down our property line in the dark. I saw smoke in the headlights!! We turned around and drove back. Sure enough there saw a pile of dirt and

grass smoldering. But we saw flames on the north side of the road. There is one house that was within 100 feet of the fire during the day and we saw flames in a stump on their property line. So we went in and told them and called the fire dept again. We circled our property again and when we got back to the burning spot we saw the fellow was sitting out in his driveway in a lawn chair, watching the fire and waiting for the fire dept to come. We went home and went to bed. I was so tired that if we had caught on fire I wouldn't have known. Thankfully we are still here and the K2 is plugged back in. Now this story should warm you up a bit. 73!! Pat KD5TXD

Pat also submitted one of her famous book reports, but we'll hold that for next month. Enough excitement for one issue!

### TEX Net Topics

We still have open RN5 liaison slots. Please consider filling one or more of the open slots as a regular or even backup station. We still have **15** open NCS/liaison slots! Thanks to Sam, W5CU, and Rodney, W5DY, who have been filling the majority of them.

#### TEX CW Net Weekly Schedule

Local	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>NCS #1</b>	W5GKH	AA5J	K6JT	AC5Z	KD5TXD	AC5Z	W5GKH
Backup	Open	Open	KD5TXD	W5DY	W5DY	W5DY	W5CU
<b>NCS #2</b>	W5GKH	AA5J	KD5TXD	K6JT	Open	W5DY	W5GKH
Backup	K6JT	Open	K6JT	Open	K6JT	Open	K6JT
<b>RN5 #1</b>	W5GKH	W5CU	Open	AA5J	Open	Open	W5CU
Backup	W5DY	AA5J	W5DY	Open	Open	W5CU	W5GKH
<b>RN5 #2</b>	W5GKH	W5CU	Open	AA5J	Open	Open	W5CU
Backup	W5DY	Open	W5DY	K6JT	W5DY	W5DY	W5GKH

TEX/1: 3552 at 19:00 local; TEX/2 3552 at 22:00 local

RN5/1: 3567/7045 at 19:30; RN5/2: 3567 at 21:30 local

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

RN5 Backup: W5CU, W5DY, W5ESE, W5GKH, K5GM, AA5J, K6JT, K5RG

NCS Backup: W5DY, N5EL, AA5J, K6JT, KD5TXD, AC5Z

As noted earlier, Chuck will need fill-ins (see blue slots) for the next week or two while he is away taking care of family matters.

### Statistics:

Traffic count improved this past month, although QNI was a little lower. Rodney, W5DY, with 39 (65%) again took top QNI for the month, followed by Sam, W5CU, with 27 (45%) and Chuck, AA5J, with 24 (40%). Thanks to all of you for your support.

Had some visitors this month including Clyde, K4CQW, from Virginia, and Kevin, K4PG, from Florida. It was great to see Jay, N5PWG, check in with us after a long absence, and also good to have Newt, KJ9J, back for the winter. Benny, K5KV, in Louisiana joined us from Star,

his Texas home, on a couple nights. Also nice to see Ken, W5UFG, check in after a long absence.

The complete list of stations and traffic / liaison totals are shown in the following table. Traffic averaged 2.2 per net session (up from 2.0 last month). Net time averaged 12.8 minutes per session (compared to 13.6 last month). Check-ins averaged 4.5 per session (down from 5.3 last month). Traffic continues to be picking up, thankfully. The Christmas greeting season may help even more this month. Be sure to send greetings to friends and family. Make use of the system you help to maintain!

**TEX Net Statistics (November 2008)**

Call		QNI	total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	CTTN	TSN
W5CDX	Wads	0	2						
*		2							
K4CQW	Clyde	1	1						
	VA	0							
W5CU	Sam	18	27		10				
*		9			7				
W5DY	Rodney	19	39	2	9		1		
		20		4	9	2	2	1	1
N5EL	Floyd	14	14						
*		0							
W5ESE	Scott	14	15		2			14	14
*		1						1	1
W5GKH	Charlie	8	16	8	4				
*		8		8	5				
K5GM	Pete	3	3						
*		0							
AA5J	Chuck	14	24	5	5		3		
*		10		4	2		2		
KJ9J	Newt	4	4						
*		0							
K6JT	Steve	13	37	2			12		
*		24		10	4		23		
KA5KLU	Doug	5	5						
*		0							
K5KV	Benny	1	2						
		1							
WA5MS	Marty	3	3				2		
*		0							
WA5MUF	Bill	3	6						
*		3							
N5NVP	Jim	6	15						
		9							
KE5OK	Mac	3	3						
		0							
K4PG	Kevin	2	2						
	FL	0							
N5PWG	Jay	1	1						
*		0							
K5RG	Ken	5	14						

*		9			1				
KD5TXD	Pat	10	17	5		8			
*		7		4		5			
W5UFK	Ken	1	1						
*		0							
AC5Z	Bert	15	15	8					
*		0							
Totals		267		60	58	15	45	16	16
				100%	97%	25%	75%	27%	27%
QTC 1		57	129						
QTC 2		72			Sessions:	60			
Time 1		414	765						
Time 2		351							

The roster, which follows, has not been changed. Note the names and QTH's for the visitors are shown in the statistics table.

### TEX Roster

Call	Name	Location / Notes	Call	Name	Location / Notes
N5BA	Brian	Houston	WA5MS	Marty	Highland Village
W5BYQ	Earl	Houston	WA5MUF	Bill	Watauga
W5CDX	Wads	Crowley LA	# N7NET	Scott	Allen
W5CU	Sam	Edmond OK	AAØNI	Daniel	Oklahoma City OK
NV5D	Martin	Allen	KB5NJD	John	Duncanville
* W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	# N5NVP	Jim	Scott LA
N5EL	Floyd	Temple	* N5PWG	Jay	Pasadena
* W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	K5RDW	RD	Vilonia AR
AA7FY	Mark	Fort Worth	K5RG	Ken	Houston
W5GKH	Charlie	West Columbia	W5ROK	Steve	Richardson (K6JT)
K5GM	Pete	Austin	W5SBE	Larry	Austin
W9GVW	Eric	San Antonio	KC5T	Bob	Houston
KA9IKK	Bill	Houston	W5TFB	Jack	College Station
AA5J	Chuck	Plano	W5TV	Tom	Nacogdoches
KJ9J	Newt	Pharr TX (winter)	* KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville
K5JRN	Si	Denton	AI6U	Chris	Sacramento (CA)
K6JT	Steve	Plano	# W5UFK	Ken	College Station
KA5KLU	Doug	San Antonio	* K5UN	Lee	Leonard
W6LFB	Jim	Denton	K5WQG	Eddy	Tomball
W5KNN	Ed	Bulverde (was KS5V)	# KM5YQ	David	Irving
K5KV	Benny	Star	* AC5Z	Bert	Nacogdoches (Lufkin)

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

### Operating:

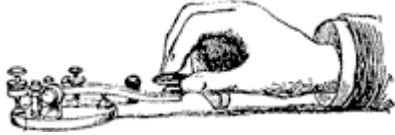
I mentioned about the long skip operating procedure earlier. Also be sure to tune up and down from net frequency 2 or 3 KHz to look for the NCS should there be QRM on 3552 at startup time. For contest weekends, also check 3643, just in case.

Until next month, May you all have a Merry Christmas and all the best in the New Year!

73, Steve

(TSN Corner appears on the next page)





## TSN Corner

Texas Slow Net (Daily) 1945 CT 3552.0 KHz

[http://www.geocities.com/scottamcmullen/Texas\\_Slow\\_Net.html](http://www.geocities.com/scottamcmullen/Texas_Slow_Net.html)

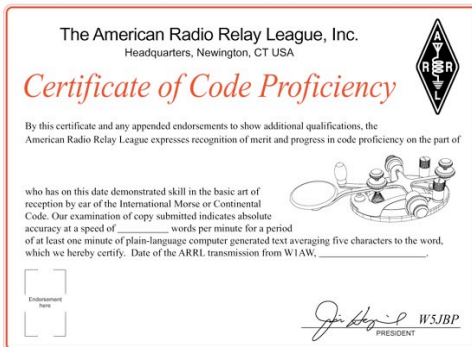
Scott McMullen W5ESE

TSN Net Manager

Net QNI was down this month; 122 checkins, probably owing in part to the Thanksgiving holiday. Here is a roster of stations that have participated in the Slow Net in recent months.

### Net Stations (QNS)

Call	Name	City	State	Call	Name	City	State
W5AG	Arch	Lafayette	LA	WB5NKC	Arley	Oklahoma City	OK
W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	TX	WB5NKD	Pat	Oklahoma City	OK
W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	TX	N5NVP	Jim	Scott	LA
WD0ESF	Mike	Medicine Lodge	KS	K5RST	Ross	Zapata	TX
AA5J	Chuck	Plano	TX	N0SSS	Adam	Oklahoma	TX
AA5JW	Carl	Stafford	TX	KB5TCH	Carroll	Douglassville	TX
W5KCM	Randy	Watauga	TX	KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville	TX
WA5LOU	Lou	Kennard	TX	KJ5XF	Tony	Austin	TX
KD5MMM	Phil	Fentress	TX	N5XGG	Joe	Colmesneil	TX
WA5MS	Marty	Highland Village	TX				



### ARRL Code Proficiency Program

The ARRL sponsors a Code Proficiency Program, based on monthly "Qualifying Run" transmissions from W1AW. The dates and times of the 'Qualifying Run' transmissions are listed in a sidebar to the contesting column in QST. The day of the week and time of the transmissions are varied each month. The Qualifying Run transmissions are sent at speeds from 10-35 wpm. Circle or underline one minute of text at the highest speed you can copy, and submit it with \$10 to ARRL HQ for checking against the W1AW text. If you pass, you will receive a handsome certificate, which can later be endorsed for higher speeds.

I have one of these myself, and it looks great on the wall of my shack. More information on this award is available on the ARRL web site at <http://www.arrl.org/awards/#cp>.

### Thank You

Thanks to all of you for participating in the Texas Slow Net. I've enjoyed serving as your net manager over the past two years. If you would be interested in helping out by serving as TSN net manager, please let Rodney Baker, W5DY, know: [rodney39@tisd.net](mailto:rodney39@tisd.net).

### November Activity Report

TOTAL SESSIONS 30    TOTAL CHECKINS 122  
 TOTAL TRAFFIC 32    BY 14 DIFFERENT STATIONS

*The telegraph key image is courtesy of FCIT*