

# The Texan

Newsletter of the Texas NTS CW Net (TEX)

**\*\* See "TSN Corner" and "RN5 Corner" on the Last Pages \*\***

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## Delayed Issue

Sorry for the delay in getting this issue of The Texan out. I have been spending nearly all my elective time working on a new NTS Digital white paper, often until 2 AM. It describes NTS Digital, Winlink 2000, and how they work together along with the user programs and examples of how to format messages, etc. I was hoping to complete it long ago, but I got so much good feedback and suggestions from the NTS staff of all Areas that I am still refining and reworking it. I will post a link to the current draft version on the TEX website by the time this newsletter comes out for those who may be curious or wish to become active in digital traffic handling.

But this month we have not one, not two, but **three** great stories to share with you, so hopefully it will have been worth the wait.

## 44th Annual 7290 Traffic Net Picnic

Received the following from Jo Ann, KA5AZK, the 7290 Traffic Net manager. All TEX members (and TSN, too) are invited to attend. The Pfeiffer Pfist award will be presented at the meeting.

The picnic will be held at the SPJST Lodge, as it was last year, just outside of Taylor, Texas, on May 31. Pictures and a map are on the web site for the location. There will be the regular catered BBQ at 4 PM that all are invited to attend. The menu will include brisket, sausage, and all the trimmings from the same caterer as in prior years. The cost will be \$15.50 per plate. Tom, W5UFO, will also be there with his homemade ice cream.

Please check the net's website at <http://www.7290trafficnet.org> for details as they become available.

I plan to be there, assuming I can again get my elder sitter to care for my father, and I've heard from a few others on TEX that they plan to go as well. Now's the time to make plans and hold that date open. It will take place just a week or two before the Hamcom convention in Plano.

## The Last Few Months, and Civilian Life (Part 2)

This is the second part of the story from Uncle Vic, W7VSE, started last month. Since it is such a long narrative, I am breaking it up into multiple parts. There will be more to come in following issues. I am also happy to report that Uncle Vic has sufficiently recovered so that he is now back on the air again, joyfully pounding brass.

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This was in late September 1945. I was now out of the service, and Dellene and I decided to get hitched, and she wanted to tie the knot in California. She said she didn't want news of the wedding to get listed in the Medford paper. This was all right with me, so we rode the Greyhound Bus to Yreka, California, and were married in early October by Judge White, a Justice of the Peace. I learned somewhere how Yreka, CA, got it's name. Apparently, back in the old days there was a bakery there in a small community that had some other name. But a Bakeshop owner put up a very large billboard sign that could be read from far away, and he spelled Bakery in two directions. It came out as YREKABAKERY. So, people assumed YrekaBakery meant the town was Yreka. I'm not sure where I learned this and cannot swear to its authenticity.

When we returned to Medford after getting married, I moved into the mother-in-law's house with Dellene, and "Jerry," her 12-year-old son. I was now a civilian, and needed a job to support my family. So, I went back to the Medford Ice & Storage Company, and told them my story and applied for a job. The Foreman wasn't happy to see me. The fruit season was just about over and he didn't need any help. But he said he would put me on because I was good enough to come and help them last summer. I didn't like working in that cold storage place, but it was a start.

As I walked to and from work from 14 Almond Street, I passed right by the Western Union Telegraph Office, (WUTEL) on Main Street every day. After a week or so, I got my courage up, and stopped in to talk to the Manager about a job with Western Union. Maybe I could stay in communications. Mr. Gray, the manager, was very glad to see me. He said they had been short-handed for several years because so many men were in the armed services. And 3 employees had worked several years with no vacations. He said he would coordinate with the Portland office and see if he could hire me. A couple of days later, I got a phone call and stopped by to see him. He had authorization to hire me as a Clerk-Operator, and wanted to know how soon I could come to work. I told him I would let him know. When I took this news to the Foreman at Medford Ice and Storage, I asked him if I needed to give him a 2-week notice? He said, "No, I didn't want to hire you in the first place, so get the hell out of here!"

I thanked him and went to work as a Clerk/Operator for WUTEL at 110 East Main Street, just diagonally across Main Street from the U.S. National Bank. It was a lot warmer place to work, and I was staying in the communications business. But, two weeks later, when I got my first paycheck, I was quite surprised to see that I only earned fifty-five cents an hour! That's \$22.00 a week. I had a talk with Mr. Gray and told him that I was now a married man with a family and didn't think I could live on that salary, and maybe I should go back to the cold storage job, which paid a living wage. Mr. Gray was very apologetic, and told me he was trying to get authorization to hire me as a relief T and R (Testing and Repair) Attendant, and that paid about one dollar seventy eight cents per hour. In a few days, permission came from Portland, and I stayed on the payroll.

The work was similar to my job in SLC. All messages coming in and going out of Medford went by Teletype to Portland, Oregon. It was a little different than what I was used to at SLC. The Teletype keyboard was a little different than the FAA machines. Also, the wire to PD (Portland, OR), used a method I'd never seen before. I think it was a CDDH, (Combined Duplex, Duplex Half repeater). I didn't fully understand how it worked then, so I can't explain the technology now. But it was a 60 WPM Teletype circuit and Portland could send at the same time you were sending. When you typed, you never saw a copy. It was just typing away in the blind, and hoping it was good copy. There were ways to correct mistakes, but I won't go into that. After a few months of that sending in the blind, I got fairly good at it. There were two types of telegram. Straight Wire and Night Letter. The Straight Wire messages were sent immediately, and cost more, and the Night Letters had a lower cost and we held them until the evening shift. Sometimes there was quite a stack of them and it was my job to send all of them. I remember a couple of evenings, when the girls were working the counter, and I had a large stack of night letters to send to Portland. Someone came in and filed a telegram and observed me pounding away on that Teletype machine. The person hung around a few minutes, then went out to the car and got the rest of the family to come in and watch me send those Night Letters. It happened twice that I remember.

I knew that a job with the CAA, (Civil Aeronautics Authority), which later became the FAA (Federal Aviation Agency), required the same skills that I learned in the Army Air Corps. So, I decided to apply for a job with the CAA. They had a CAA station at the Medford Air Base. I went out and got the info for applying for a job, and sent it in the mail. In a month or so, I was notified to go back to the CAA station and pass some tests.

Ira "Pappy" Parrish was the Station Chief. He had been advised what tests I should take. One of them was to prove I could send and receive Morse code at thirty-words-per-minute. Pappy got out an oscillator, some earphones, and his Vibroplex "Bug" (semi-automatic key) and gave me about a five-minute code exam. I copied it perfectly. But he had only sent at 25 words per minute (WPM). So he did it again, with another text, and I copied this with no trouble, but it was only 28 WPM. One more trial and he still could not send 30 WPM. So, he said that it was close enough. My code sending speed on the "Bug" impressed him. I operated a Teletype, a typewriter and other things that were required with no problems. He sent this into the Regional Office. I received a confirmation letter from them that said, as a veteran, I had 5 points over non-veterans for getting a position, and they mentioned that they had so many requests from returning military applicants it would be a few months before they could offer me a job.

So, I continued working for WUTEL. After about a year, I got some time off for vacation. I hitch hiked back to my home-town, Waurika, Oklahoma. Mom and I drove the old '37 Chevy down to Ft Worth to visit our relatives again. I needed a car, and I had been sending Mom an allotment of \$75,00 per month for the two years I was overseas and she had not needed it, so she saved it for me. Good used cars were hard to find right after the war, and the manufacturers were slow in getting back to production of new cars.

In Ft Worth, Uncle Ted Layton (actually a cousin, but much older than I) directed me to a used car agency and I found a 1935 4-door Ford sedan, in good shape, and bought it. Then I drove the Ford back to Medford. So now we had transportation.

Dellene was expecting our baby and Daniel Lee Seeberger was born in the old Community Hospital on East Main Street on September 18, 1946. That hospital building is now an apartment building. Later we moved to our own apartment on North Peach Street.

The CAA was a little off their estimate -- It was 23 months after I applied when they finally offered me a job at the Los Angeles Airport CAA station. By this time I was making \$3800 a year with WUTEL. The CAA offered me a job that paid \$2644.80 per annum. (a \$1150 dollar per year reduction in pay). I thought about this, briefly. The WUTEL job had very little promise for the future, while the CAA civil service job would have more chance for advancement. So, I accepted the job in Los Angeles.

But there was one day in July 1946, I'll never forget. We had the highest temperature ever in Medford. It was 115 degrees! I remember that day well. I had worked the "graveyard shift", midnight to 8AM, at Western Union and came home to 14 Almond Street, to get some sleep. I went to bed about 9 AM, but by 10 AM I felt like I was back in the tent in the Assam province in India again. It was suffocating hot, and I was bathed in sweat, and we did not even own a fan. I could not sleep. So I got very little rest that day. That night I had difficulty staying awake at work.

Dellene had quit her job and was a stay-at-home Mom, and expecting again. But we decided to move to Los Angeles. We put everything we owned in that 12-year old '35 ford and hit the road. Dan was about 18 months old and Jerry was 14 and in high school.

When we arrived in Southern California, we stayed a night at a Tourist Cabin in El Segundo, California, near the LA airport. I reported for duty and found out there was veteran housing available for 35 bucks a month. Some veterans had started an organization to fund reasonably priced housing. They had purchased several 40-man military barracks and moved them to a large leased area. Then they remodeled each barrack and made 2 or 3 apartments in each of them with GI beds and little else for furniture. Each apartment had at least one bedroom, living room, kitchen, electricity, plumbing, and, of course, a bathroom. But the price was right. I don't remember it ever getting cold enough to need heat. We lived there all the time I was working at the LA FAA radio station. (It wasn't called LAX until later).

There were about 5 of us new arrivals at the CAA station. We were considered on conditional duty until we could pass all the tests and learn what we needed to know to operate a CAA Radio Station. If we failed any of the tests, we might be out of a job. We had to demonstrate our CW (code) speed, both sending and receiving at 30 WPM. No problem for any of us. Then we had to be able to type on a Teletype and a typewriter at 40 WPM. Also we had to learn to read the Baudot Teletype tape at 10 Words Per Minute, by looking at the perforations. We read this tape out loud. I found that my maximum speed was 13 WPM, as that was about as fast as I could talk, speaking each letter. We were given a lot of instruction on how to make a weather broadcast every 30 minutes of the day and night.

Our Station Chief at LA was named Don Fulton. A very likeable man and very strict about wanting our weather broadcasts to be enunciated properly. As an example, he had one word that had to be pronounced correctly. It was the word "temperAture," with an accent on the "A". He had other words that he wanted spoken properly, but that's the only one I can remember. I

know we all left there with a better enunciation than when we arrived. I think I also lost some of my Texas drawl.

We had to memorize about 300 two-letter identifiers for the Airports. SF, for San Francisco; PD for Portland; LA for Los Angeles, etc. And just about the time we had all learned those two letter identifiers, they changed the whole United States to three letter identifiers and we had to learn them all over again! And then we were at LAX, instead of LA.

After a while, I was selected to be a liaison operator at the LAX Air Route Traffic Control (ARTC) building, just down the street from the Station. Part of this is covered in the story, "The Silver Bracelet." That was published in the June 1947 issue of Reader's Digest.

One day at the station, one of the guys came in and announced: "The Grunion Are Running!." He said he was going Grunion "hunting" that weekend and wanted some of us to go down to the beach and help pick up the fish as they came ashore. This sounded to me like the old "Snipe Hunters" trick. Back where I grew up, they would tell a newcomer they were going Snipe hunting and when they got him a long way out of town, they would manage somehow to get the guy isolated from the rest of the bunch. Then they would all get back in the car and drive back to town, leaving him out there to walk or get back as best he could. So, I challenged this guy about trying to get us to go pick up fish that would walk out on the shore. He said it was for real, and happened every year. The notice was in the newspaper. We could take a few six packs of beer, build a fire, roast wieners, and wait for the fish to come ashore, and then just pick them up on the beach. He insisted we wouldn't even get wet. Well, the six packs and the campfire chow part of this story couldn't be all bad, so I agreed to go Grunion hunting with the gang. We went down to the beach, one late afternoon, and built a nice fire and sat around shooting the breeze, and drinking our beer. The waves were coming in as they always do, and we had a good view of a long straight beach. I kept asking the guy when were the fish going to walk ashore, and he would tell us to just be patient. Finally, just as we were about to run out of beer, and the fire had almost gone out. I was getting ready to go home. Then he said, "Look, the Grunion are running!" I looked, and sure enough, there were a few little silver fish flopping on the wet sand, after a wave had come in and went out. I thought to myself, what a big deal, but when the next wave came in there were more fish. I couldn't believe it. We all went running to that spot and started picking up fish. I was wearing a GI flight jacket with big pockets. Every new wave brought more fish. So I started picking up fish and filling up the pockets. I made the mistake of turning my back to the sea and a big wave came in and hit me right in the butt and drenched me from the waist down. So I took my khaki pants off and tied the legs together and picked up quite a few pounds of fish and sand.

When I arrived back at the apartment, I dumped fish and sand into the kitchen sink. This was a big mistake! The sand plugged up the sewer pipe and we had to clean it out later. But the fish tasted great after they were fried.

Dellene had been expecting our second child, and in 1948 they couldn't tell you if it was a boy or a girl until it came into this world. We were both hoping it was a girl. Finally the day arrived and I took her over to the Hospital in Inglewood, a suburb of Los Angeles. It was a girl! Born May 14, 1948. I wanted to name her Coralene Vicki, because her maternal grandmother's name was Cora, and my maternal grandmother's name was also Cora. Her mothers name

was Dellene, so Coralene would have been for three relatives. But Dellene didn't like that, so the name became Coralynn Vicki Seeberger.

The hospital there in Inglewood had a deal whereby they would take that day's copy of the Inglewood daily newspaper, the day of the birth, and remove the existing headline and replace it with a headline that read SEEBERGERS HAVE A BABY DAUGHTER. It was in huge black letters, about 3 inches high, or more. It really looked awesome and authentic. Somewhere, maybe, we still have a copy of that paper. It cost 25 cents.

The CAA/FAA had a system of "onward and upward" in their jobs. When a vacancy occurred anywhere in the Region, which covered several western states, they would send a notice to all stations in the region. It was similar to the way the railroads treated a vacancy. Anyone that was qualified could bid on the job. Only one person would be selected and the government would pay the moving expenses. And this was about the only way you could get a promotion that paid a larger salary. After I had passed all the tests, I started bidding on every job that came open in the Western Region. I was a CAF-5 and barely making enough money to get by.

I forgot to mention that Jerry was very unhappy away from Medford and his classmates. His grandmother said he could come live with her in Medford and finish high school. We sent him home on the bus shortly after we got to LA.

There was another way to change locations in grade. You could swap jobs with someone else that held your same civil service grade, and you each paid your own moving expenses. One day I got a letter from a CAF-5 at the Oakland, California CAA station. She wanted to come to Los Angeles, and she heard that I might want to get closer to Medford. Dellene and I talked it over and decided to make the move. So I coordinated with the powers that be in the Regional Office, got the swap approved, and moved everything we had to Oakland, and she moved to LA.

We found an apartment in Oakland not far from where Dellene's sister, Ernestine Steele, lived. I reported for duty at the Oakland CAA Station. It was several miles to the airport from our apartment.

The Station Chief at Oakland was named Richard Spiegelberg. Tom Alford was Assistant Chief and Wm. J. McIntyre, Harold Grow and Bill Pond, (W6AR), were three of the four watch supervisors. There were a couple of other CAF-5s in training there, but we had all passed the required tests and we just operated the station. One of the trainees was Arthur Wibom. After working alongside him for a few days, I found out his personal sign was "AW." When I heard him sending code on the practice oscillator, I recognized his sending "fist" as the AW that I had worked on that Morse landline circuit back at Medford Direction Finder station. Small world! This was quite a coincidence. We had some good times together and stayed in touch for years after that.

One day a drunk driver sideswiped us in the '35 ford. All four of us were in the car. Thank goodness nobody was hurt. Later I found a 1940 4-door Desoto and traded the Ford in on it.

Lake Merritt was a favorite place to picnic in Oakland. One day we went down to the park adjoining the lake. Dan was about three now, and no problem. Vicki was almost a year old, and could stand alone, but in spite of much urging, she had not attempted to take her first steps. I was carrying Vicki, a blanket and a basket full of food and drinks from the car to a place where we could spread the blanket and have our picnic. I put her down on her feet and helped her get her balance, and she stood alone OK. I told her to wait a minute, and I went a few steps away and put the basket down and spread the blanket on the grass. I turned around to go get Vicki, and she was walking toward me. Her first steps! I held my arms out, and waited, and she walked right into my arms. After that day she walked everywhere and we had trouble keeping track of her.

I don't remember Dan's first steps. Probably that happened at home while I was at work.

I started bidding on every opening that was advertised in the Western Region (about five states). I must have bid on ten different locations. Hanksville, Utah; Bryce Canyon, Utah (they were still using the Morse code at those two stations. They were so remote they didn't have Teletype yet). Also, I bid on all stations that advertised a vacancy. We needed that promotion and pay raise.

In 1950, I had enough service to get two weeks of Annual Leave, with pay. We decided to drive that 1940 Desoto back to Waurika, Oklahoma and visit my grandmother, Cora Layton, who raised me. We got there after some long days of driving.

Mom was elated to see us. We rested up and visited a couple of days.

I could hardly wait to show off my family to the friends I had grown up with. I figured I was a fair success with a beautiful wife and two healthy children, and working as a responsible Government employee for the FAA. Dan was 4 and Vicki was 2. One afternoon late we all got dressed up and walked the 3 or 4 blocks up Main Street to the center of town. We soon met someone I knew, and I introduced my wife and children. This friend seemed nervous and said he had an appointment, excused himself and left us. We walked further up the street and met another friend. This friend also had an appointment and soon was excusing himself and leaving. Then we encountered Ernest Crew, one of my closest friends. Ernest was all smiles, when he saw us, but then he also had somewhere urgent that he had to go to. I knew him well enough that I took him by the arm and asked him what in the hell was going on? Did everyone think we had the plague, or something? Everyone we met acted like there was something wrong with us. He said, "Well, when did you get out?" I said, "You know, I got out of the service in 1945 just like you did." He said, "No, when did you get out of the federal pen? There were some FBI agents that came here last year or so, asking questions about you, and we figured you had been sent to a Federal jail."

Of course, those were Federal agents, but they came to see if I had given the correct information. Because I would be handling confidential material in my work with the FAA, they had to see if I had stated correctly where I lived and see if I was a trustworthy person, and not a spy. Just a normal government background check was all they were there for.

This really angered both Dellene and I. Eventually, I got over it. Dellene never did. She said she would never set foot in that place again. And she didn't.

This was sad. Some idiot heard that the Feds were looking for me, so he made up a story that I must be an outlaw and had done something bad. Then they spread this rumor around and that's the way someone's reputation gets ruined by a rumor.

One good thing I remember about that visit. A long time acquaintance, (I have forgotten his name) lived just across the street in the old Seay house. He came over and told me he worked for the Rock Island railroad and would be operating a switch-engine in the yards that day. He said, "Bring the wife and kids and we'll give you all a ride on a steam locomotive." I told him that I had never ridden in a locomotive myself, and we would be there, so that afternoon we drove down to the yards and found him and his "puffer belly" steam switch-engine. We parked on the road nearby and got out and walked over within about 20 or 30 feet from that steam engine. It was sitting there with a little smoke rising from the stack, and the normal grunting and wheezing, and white steam blowing off a steam engine. You could see the light from the fire under the boiler. He came over and told us to come on, and take a ride. I was raring to go, but my two kids were terrified of that wheezing, grunting, steaming monster! I could not get either of them any closer to the train. I went over with the engineer and we both climbed up in the cab. We waved out the window, and tried to coax them over, but they wouldn't budge. He released the brake, and moved the engine up and down the tracks, but we never did convince those kids, or my wife, to come ride with us. Oh well, I tried.

73, Vic Seeberger W7VSE

*Next month, in Part 3, Vic continues the saga of the early post-WW2 years*

### **George Hart Series**

Here is the 14th installment of the George Hart Series. Geo goes to "State" and hears about Gil Crossley.

### **RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS OF AN OLD HAM**

*A journalistic history of the life and times in Amateur Radio of George Hart, W1NJM (SK)  
by George Hart W1NJM*

#### **Part 14 - PENN STATE AND COLLEGE RADIO STATION W8YA, PART ONE**

My hiatus from all amateur radio lasted only a couple of weeks. During the first week at Penn State I was rushed by several fraternities and joined one, attended many Freshman Week programs, started getting acclimated to college and fraternity life (not really new to me because I was raised in the academic atmosphere at Lafayette) and started classes in the demanding pre-veterinary curriculum. Sometime during the third week I investigated the college radio station, located behind the college power plant on Burrowes Street on campus, and behind the University Club on College Avenue.

The station consisted of two small wooden buildings surrounded by three wooden towers approximately 50 ft in height. The building in the center of the three towers contained the



transmitting equipment for the broadcast facility (WPSC, 500 watts, at that time not in operation) and the 250-watt amateur radio station, W8YA. The other wooden building, about the same size, had served as a studio for the broadcast station and was no longer used but still maintained.

The entire facility was approached from Burrowes Street through a small parking lot alongside the big power plant, across railroad tracks constituting a spur of the Bellefonte Central Railroad for delivery of coal to the plant, down an embankment to a boardwalk that provided entry to both of the small buildings.

I approached the problem of entry with some trepidation. I could see the towers from Burroghes Street, which was on the west side of the main campus, but how to reach them was not immediately apparent, but I saw no "no trespassing" signs, so I traversed the obstacles and went up the boardwalk. It was a warm September day and the door of the middle building was open. I entered the building timidly. Inside, in the small workshop, were two students, absorbed in crystal grinding. They paid no attention to me at first, but when I introduced myself by my call letters they grinned at each other, wiped their hands and greeted me cordially. One was Walter Hawk, W3AJN, a senior EE from Northampton. The other was Jim Faries, W3AOA, a junior EE from a suburb of Philadelphia. Hawk looked very familiar. "Don't I know you?" he asked, looking at me closely. I remembered, then, that he had been at a couple of LVARC meetings I had attended with Ed. The ice, if indeed there had been any, was broken. Hawk gave me a tour of the facilities, while Faries went back to his crystal grinding. Crystal control was all the rage at that time, and the little workshop in the W8YA building served as a laboratory for experimenting with different cuts of quartz crystals to be used in oscillators.

At that stage of the technology, a crystal oscillator was by far the best means of providing a stable signal. I am not a technical person, but my understanding was that the quartz came primarily from Brazil and that it was cut into small squares, the thickness of which determined the frequency on which they would oscillate. But they would not oscillate unless the surfaces of the square were ultra-smooth, so once squares were cut from the block of Brazilian quartz, they had to be polished until they oscillated in a test oscillator. The thickness of the square determined the frequency on which it would oscillate, so once this was determined the crystal would be "ground down" until it oscillated on the desired frequency. This was accomplished by spreading a thin coating of carborundum on a piece of plate glass, wetting it, placing the little square of quartz on it and moving it in figure 8's with one's fingers on the glass. Every so often the crystal would be rinsed, wiped dry and placed in the oscillator to determine its frequency. This is a basic description only, possibly lacking in accuracy or correctness. There were many variations of the procedure, which we will not get into here; but crystal grinding techniques were a major part of the little workshop at W8YA, as I later found out.

During my five or six years of amateur radio exposure up to that time I had seen quite a few amateur stations, but none constructed like W8YA. "Breadboard" construction was all the rage, and W8YA was no exception, but the breadboard was not on a horizontal flat surface but mounted vertically against a wall. The tubes were mounted on little shelves on the board, other components mounted to show all connections. The board was hinged so it could be swung down and the heavier wiring behind it exposed. The oscillator, a 247 tube, was crystal controlled. This fed into an 865 buffer and then into another buffer, a 203A, and then a final

204A as a final amplifier. That was it, 250 watts input on each band. The 247 oscillator operated in the 80-meter band, exact frequency depending on which crystal was being used. Keying was done by a relay on the filament center tap of the 865 buffer stage. The two antennas strung among the three wooden towers were Windoms, fed by a single wire off center, connected through capacitors directly to the final tank coils.

Walter Hawk said he didn't approve of the antenna arrangements but this was the way the boss, a BE instructor named Crossley, wanted it. Power for the final amplifier tubes was supplied by a motor generator located in an anteroom on the other side of the building from the workshop. This was an a.c. electric motor coupled to a d.c. generator, the current from which went through a bank of filter capacitors to the final tubes. The motor generator was equipped with a brake so that when turned off, it would stop instantly and not "coast," thus creating electrostatic noise in the receiver, which was a National FB-7.

*Coming in the next installment: Geo gets to key W8YA.*

### **Looking Back: They're Listening**

By Pat Allison, KD5TXD

And here is the promised third story in this issue. Pat, KD5TXD, originally wrote this for the local Kingsville Record newspaper. It may have been published there by now, but we'll just consider we may have "scooped" the paper! Thank you, Pat, for a great story.

Long distance communication at the speed of light did not start with the Internet and cell phones. It began with the Telegraph in 1844. Morse Code signals were transmitted over wire lines essentially at the speed of light. Suddenly, an event in New York City could instantly be reported in far away Texas. The next step in communications was to do the same magic through the ether, wirelessly. That was the birth of radio.

Just as modern governments are diligently listening today to a rainbow of communications in the name of international public safety, they were listening in the early 1900s. The world was poised for great changes and a Great War. We tend to think of the wars of Europe and Asia as being very far from our South Texas home. European powers often tampered with the United States and our relations with other nations. Such was the purpose of the Zimmerman Telegram. It was intercepted by the British in January of 1917. The Zimmerman Telegram was a communication between the German Foreign Secretary and the German Ambassador in Mexico. It included authorization to approach the Mexican Government with a deal to help Mexico recapture Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona should the U.S. enter World War I.

This was disturbing information considering it was just a couple years earlier that the same Southwest area had endured the anarchy of the Plan de San Diego. The U.S. was shocked and unhappy about this. Mexico rejected the German proposal. So, why was Britain telling us this? And why weren't we discovering this kind of transmission ourselves?

Ed Erard, one of Kingsville's unique characters, was the editor of the Kingsville Record as the globe writhed in the pre World War II atmosphere of the early 1940s. He started work to bring the Naval Air Station to Kingsville in the fall of 1941. But that's another story.

In February of 1940, a fellow wandered into the Record office. He introduced himself to Mr. Erard as Joe McKinney of the Associated Press staff. McKinney proceeded to ask a lot of questions about Kingsville. Erard, being the newspaper editor, had been around the block a few times and was a good judge of people. Erard interrupted McKinney, "Mister, if you're an Associated Press reporter, you're a damn poor one. Just what is it you are trying to find out?" McKinney produced his government credentials. I imagine Ed Erard's eyes twinkled at the discovery that the FCC needed a place to set up a Monitoring Station.

The FCC had planned to establish the Monitoring Station in Robstown. When the landowner found out that this was to be a government project he raised the purchase price for the land and the deal fell through. Erard rented a truck and hauled the FCC technicians and their equipment around the community in search of a spot with good ground conductivity that was electromagnetically quiet. Land just south of town was perfect, and 257 acres were purchased for \$30 an acre.

The March 5, 1941, article in the Kingsville Record announced that the FCC Monitoring Station was secured for Kingsville. It was operated twenty-four hours a day by a staff of 15. That also meant that 15 new families would need places to live in Kingsville.

There were seven primary monitoring stations nation wide. These, along with the new Kingsville station, would be listening to all forms of radio communications. The locations of the various stations insured complete coverage of all radio emissions and regular commercial broadcasts as well as aviation, police, amateur radio, trans-oceanic channels, and marine transmissions, ship to ship and ship to shore.

The FCC Monitoring Station had several goals: stations were monitored to make sure they were in their correct frequency, listen for forbidden language, locate the source of subversive broadcasts, identify and locate unlicensed stations, record foreign broadcasts for study, locate and eliminate interferences that might impair transmission and receipt of distress signals, and check to make sure communication treaties were being observed.

The 257 acres of land was covered with assorted radio reception antennas and an array for direction finding. The FCC folks could switch from antenna to antenna and manipulate antennas to get the best reception possible.

During World War II no one got to see inside the FCC Monitoring Station other than those 15 people who worked there, patiently listening. As the years passed by, technical organizations could request to have a tour of the facility. The Monitoring Station employees developed a congenial relationship with local Amateur Radio Operators whose club did get to go inside.

The building was filled with radio receivers. These were the listening stations that were manned by the employees. Each station covered a different radio frequency range. The FCC also had direction finding equipment. If a questionable signal was heard the workers would adjust the receiving antennas to get as exact as possible bearing of where the signal was coming from. To pin-point the location of the questionable signal required at least one of the other Monitoring Stations to be listening to the signal also. The other stations would get as exact as possible bearing from their locations. In the good old days the location was

calculated by hand. Later computer systems could plot the location of the signal to within 13 – 20 miles. From that point mobile stations were dispatched to pin-point the station.

Today Kingsville still has one of the 14 FCC Monitoring Stations. In the mid 1990s it was fully automated and requires no human interaction. Data is sent away to a mysterious location where it is analyzed. They're still listening!

### **TEX Mailbox:**

As with last month, there were not too many emails from TEX members, but the following two E-mails that floated through my inbox seemed like good ones to share.

This first one, received from **Scott, W7IZ**, worried me in light of the problems recently with some merchants' credit card files being stolen. Watch the video, which is a news report, and judge for yourself. I personally don't have any of these "smart" credit or debit cards, and I will refuse to accept them upon renewal.

### WI-FI SYMBOL ON YOUR CREDIT CARDS

#### WATCH FOR THE SYMBOL ON YOUR NEW CARDS

Check your newer credit cards for the Wi-Fi Symbol on it. You need to watch the video below to really know why I sent this to you. I read this about a couple weeks ago, and then checked my cards for the little Wi-Fi Signal Icon on each one. I found none with that signal on them, but I was determined to watch for it when my cards came in on renewals. Well, yesterday I got my CHASE SLATE card AND THERE IT WAS! My first time to see it. I'll not activate that card after seeing this. I guess I'll go to the bank and see if I can replace it with a non Radio Frequency Card. Thought all my contacts ought to see this if you've not already seen this demo...

<http://youtube.googleapis.com/v/ILAFhTjsQHw%26sns=em>

- . . . -

The following came from **Ed, AL7N**, the STM of Alaska via the NTS-Officials reflector of ARRL. He has some very good things to say that are applicable to all NTS operation.

Re: NTS-Message relaying accuracy...

I have to comment on the following recent statement:

"your example "NS AND CWT ROCK" means nothing to most people."

Well, so What?

An NTS station relaying a message should never be concerned (or be in judgment of) what is in the text of a message (as long as it is nothing illegal).

That content is the purview of the originating party and the recipient, nobody else.

IT DOESN'T HAVE TO MAKE "SENSE" TO YOU!

Your job, and your only job, is to get that text, and in fact, the entire message, relayed from point A to point Z WORD FOR WORD, CHARACTER FOR CHARACTER, SPACE FOR SPACE just exactly as the originator wrote it. That, and only that, and nothing else. If you have a problem with a message, add an Op Note, but do not change anything in it.

Also, Amateur Radio might be a "hobby" to some, but in the eyes of the FCC, it is a SERVICE. And when we get to dealing with handling message traffic for third parties especially, we need to act like we are providing a SERVICE.

There is no place in NTS for lackadaisical attitudes toward what needs to be done, and done correctly. Accuracy in message work is paramount.

Mistakes will occur, but the rampant sloppiness we have today is totally unnecessary and unacceptable. It hurts the Amateur Service in the eyes of the public and any agency we might need to serve in an emergency.

If you don't want to do it correctly, quit doing it and go do something else. If you want to do it correctly, learn how and then do it right...always.

Ed AL7N  
STM Alaska  
. . . .

### **TEX Net Topics**

There are still 5 backup slots open (shown in **yellow**) and **1** open NCS slot (shown in **red**) in need of a station for Saturday early NCS. Please advise if you are willing to take any of these positions on a regular basis.

The TEX Duty Schedule and Roster are shown on the following page (for easier printing of a single page). The Duty Schedule and Roster were updated since last month. Note that we have added Jeff, N7KRT, who has become a regular. Welcome to you, Jeff.

***If you are scheduled for an NCS or Liaison slot, and you cannot make it, if at all possible, please notify both K6JT and W5DY (see email addresses and cell phone number at top of page 1) as soon as you can before the net meeting so that the backups can be alerted. Thanks to those of you who have been doing this.***

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### TEX CW Net Weekly Schedule

Local	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>NCS #1</b>	W5GKH	N5RL	KD5TXD	KD5TXD	N5RL	<i>Open</i>	W5GKH
Backup	<i>Open</i>	W5ESE	W5DY	W5DY	W5DY	K6JT	W5CU
<b>NCS #2</b>	W5GKH	K6JT	W5TMO	W5TMO	K5KV	W5DY	W5GKH
Backup	K6JT	W5DY	K6JT	K6JT	K6JT	K6JT	W5CU
<b>RN5 #1</b>	K5KV	N5RL	W5CU	KA5KLU	N5RL	KA5KLU	W5CU
Backup	W5DY	<i>Open</i>	W5DY	<i>Open</i>	W5ESE	W5ESE	<i>Open</i>
<b>RN5 #2</b>	K5KV	K6JT	W5CU	KA5KLU	K6JT	KA5KLU	W5CU
Backup	W5DY	W5DY	K6JT	K6JT	W5DY	K6JT	<i>Open</i>

TEX/1: **3541**/7053/7108 at 19:00 CT; TEX/2 **3541**/3595/1841 at 22:00 CT

RN5/1: **3567**/7108 at 19:30; RN5/2: **3567**/3598/7108 at 21:30 CT

TSN: **3570** - 19:45 CT; CAN: **3552**/7052/7108/3595 - 20:30 CT; PAN: **3552**/7052 - 22:30 CT

RN5 Backup: W5CU, W5DY, W5ESE, K5GM, K6JT, KA5KLU, K5KV, K5RG, N5RL

NCS Backup: W5CU, W5DY, W5ESE, K6JT, K5KV, K5RG, N5RL, W5TMO, KD5TXD

### TEX Roster

Call	Name	Location / Notes	Call	Name	Location / Notes
N5BA	Brian	Houston	N7NET	Scott	McKinney
W5CU	Sam	Edmond OK	* KB5NJD	John	Duncanville
W5DH	Tom	Dallas	N5NVP	Jim	Scott LA
* W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	W5OMR	Geoff	Houston
* W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	AC5P	Mike	Bartlesville OK
W5FEA	Jim	Graham	K1PKZ	Paul	Tom Bean
W4FWT	Frank	Florida	K5QOW	Gary	Reagan Wells
W5GKH	Charlie	West Columbia	* K5RG	Ken	Houston
K5GM	Pete	Austin	N5RL	Randy	San Antonio
W9GVW	Eric	San Antonio	W5ROK	Steve	Richardson (K6JT)
K5JRN	Si	Austin	KD5RQB	Jason	Atlanta
* K6JT	Steve	Plano	W5TMO	Mike	Austin
KA5KLU	Doug	San Antonio	KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville
N7KRT	Jeff	Victoria	WB8WKQ	Jeff	Michigan
* K5KV	Benny	Star	K6YBV	Bob	Placerville CA
* W6LFB	Jim	Denton	W5YE	Brian	Harlingen
WA5MS	Marty	Highland Village	W5ZD	Pat	Kingsville (KD5TXD)

\* Capable of 160 meter operation

**Statistics:**

Both checkins and traffic were slightly up compared to last month. All but 1 RN5 slots were covered and TTN / DFW representation were good. Thanks to all for a good job.

Jim, W5FEA, with 62 out of 62 (100%) was able to complete another “clean sweep” during the month. He has made updates to his mobile station so he can QNI wherever he might be. What dedication! Randy, N5RL, with 51 (82%) captured second, and Rodney, W5DY, with 40 (65%) was third. Thanks to all of you who checked in for your support.

We had a couple of visitors to the net including Pat, KM5L, in Dallas, and AC5P from OK again checked in. Bob, K6YBV, from California is now considered a “regular” with 17 checkins last month. Welcome to all and thanks!

The complete list of stations and traffic / liaison totals are shown in the following table. Traffic averaged 3.1 per net session (3.0 last month). Net time averaged 12.9 minutes per session (compared to 11.9 last month). Check-ins averaged 7.0 per session (6.2 last month).

**TEX Net Statistics (January 2014)**

Call	Name	QNI	Total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW
N5BA	Brian	5	6				
		1					
W5CU	Sam	13	25		8		
*		12			8		
W5DY	Rodney	21	40		1		
		19		3	1		
W5ESE	Scott	9	9	1			
*		0					
W5FEA	Jim	31	62	1		26	
*		31				4	
W5GKH	Charlie	7	15	6	1		
*		8		8			
K5GM	Pete	10	17				
*		7					
W9GVW	Eric	2	6				
*		4					
K6JT	Steve	18	49	4			17
*		31		8	4		31
KA5KLU	Doug	15	24		9		
*		9			8		
N7KRT	Jeff	9	9				
		0					
K5KV	Benny	9	32		4		
		23		3	7		
KM5L	Pat	1	1				
	Dallas	0					
W6LFB	Jim	1	1				
*		0					
AC5P	Mike	0	1				
	Bartlesville OK	1					
K1PKZ	Paul	6	6				
		0					

Call	Name	QNI	Total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW
K5QOW	Gary	7	7			5	
*		0					
K5RG	Ken	3	13				
*		10			2		
N5RL	Randy	26	51	8	8		
*		25				16	
KD5RQB	Jason	21	21				
		0					
W5TMO	Mike	0	14				
*		14		10			
KD5TXD	Pat	10	10	10			
*		0					
K6YBV	Bob	0	17				
		17					
Totals		436		62	61	51	48
				100%	98%	82%	77%
QTC 1		75	193				
QTC 2		118			Sessions:	62	
Time 1		421	798				
Time 2		377					

### Operating:

Remember that Arkansas traffic is to be picked up by the late RN5 liaison station from TEX and brought to the late session to be passed either to K6JT or the TTN liaison station to take to the 7290 traffic net. This has worked pretty well the past month with the AR stations who check into 7290 handling all that has been sent there.

Until next month, 73, Steve K6JT

(TSN Corner starts on the next page)



## TSN Corner

Texas Slow Net (Daily) 1945 CT 3570.0 KHz +/- QRM

Website: <http://www.k6jt.com/tsn/>

Net Manager: Jason KD5RQB, [tsn.3570@aol.com](mailto:tsn.3570@aol.com)



Photo Courtesy of VE3UU

### Greetings From Northeast Texas

This month Texas Slow Net Corner starts out with some sad news. Richard "Cotton" Linck ND5CL from Onalaska, Texas became a silent key on December 31, 2013. Cotton was active on the 7290 and Texas Traffic Net.

Laverne Wilson NQ0B became a SK on January 15th. Laverne served as Tuesday Net Control on the Daytime Texas Traffic Net for several years.

Jim W5FEA is now net control on Wednesday evenings. Thanks Jim for helping with the net!!!

I want to welcome Larry W5LPD from Katy, Texas to the net. He checked into the net on January 5th. The band went long but Mr. Carroll KB5TCH was able to pick him up. Welcome to the net Larry, please check in as often as you can. Thanks Carroll for your help!!!

Jeff N7KRT from Victoria, Texas checked into the net on January 10th and has been checking in regularly.

Paul K1PKZ checked into the net on January 22nd. Welcome to the net Paul, please check in as often as you can.

### TSN Activity Report for January 2014

Total Sessions 31, Total Check-ins 113, Total Traffic 30 by 11 different operators.

#### January 2014 QNS

Name	Callsign	QNI
Jason	KD5RQB	31
Carroll	KB5TCH	31
Phil	KD5MMM	10
Rodney	W5DY	1
Mike	WD0ESF	5
Sam	KK4HCF	6
Larry	W5LPD	1
Randy	N5RL	2
Jeff	N7KRT	19
Jim	W5FEA	4
Paul	K1PKZ	3

### February 2014 Net Controls

Name	Callsign
Carroll	KB5TCH
Phil	KD5MMM
Jason	KD5RQB
Jim	W5FEA

If you have time and are interested in helping us out, please drop me an e-mail at [tsn.3570@aol.com](mailto:tsn.3570@aol.com) We have some available evenings if anyone would like to take on NCS duties. Please include a contact telephone number and what nights would be best for you.

### February 2014 TSN Roster

Name	Callsign	QTH
Jason	KD5RQB	Atlanta, Texas
Carroll	KB5TCH	Douglassville, Texas
Pat	KD5TXD / W5ZD	Kingsville, Texas
Phil	KD5MMM	Fentress, Texas
Rodney	W5DY	Goliad, Texas
Mike	WD0ESF	Medicine Lodge, Kansas
Sam	KK4HCF	Maryville, Tennessee
Scott	W5ESE	Drippings Springs, Texas
Jim	W5FEA	Graham, Texas
Joe	AC5BE	Matagorda, Texas
Steve	KJ6T	Plano, Texas
Dave	AB0DK	Kirksville, Missouri
Benny	K5KV	Starr, Texas
Jim	N5NVP	Scott, Louisiana
Gary	K5QOW	Reagan Wells, Texas
Randy	N5RL	San Antonio, Texas
Mike	W5TMO	Austin, Texas
Dave	W5VXI	Caddo Mills, Texas
Larry	W5LPD	Katy, Texas
Jeff	N7KRT	Victoria, Texas
Arley	WB5NKC	Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Pat	WB5NKD	Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Paul	K1PKZ	Tom Bean, Texas

In order to help increase participation on the Texas Slow Net and help train operators for NCS duties, I am going to make Saturday nights TSN NCS training Night. Each Saturday night will be open for anyone interested in "getting their feet wet" with NCS duties.

## **TSN NCS Training Night**

On Saturday nights where I do not have any new operators wanting to try out NCS duties, either me, Carroll, or an operator that participated in TSN Training Net Night before and wants to do it again will do the net. In order to achieve the main purpose of the Texas Slow Net, I will offer the slot to operators that have done the net before on TSN Training Night first.

I have been in touch with Jeff N7KRT and Roy WJ5Z. They have expressed interest in doing the net at least once to see what is like. Whenever everything is lined up, I will send out an email to Jim, Carroll, and Phil to let them what date that Jeff and Roy will be doing the net.

And finally I want to thank Mr. Carroll, Jim, and Phil for being NCS during the week. Without their dedicated service there would not be a Texas Slow Net.

Stop by any evening on 3570kHz at 7:45p.m. CT.

This is a great place to learn how to handle traffic on CW. If you are a voice net traffic handler this is a great addition to your amateur radio skill set. See you on the air!!

Until next month

73,  
Jason KD5RQB

(RN5 Corner Starts on the next page)

## **RN5 Corner**

Region Net 5 (Daily) 1930 CT on **3567** and 2130 CT on **3567**  
Alternate Frequency 7108 (early/late) or 3598 when conditions warrant  
*Serving TX, OK, LA, AR, MS, TN, AL, and FL*  
Frank Thrash W4FWT (W4DLZ@ARRL.NET)  
RN5 Net Manager

Hello guys and welcome to Edition 24 (Yes, 2 years' worth) of the **RN5 Corner**.

I have been fighting radio problems again, so was off the air for a couple weeks recently. It seems to be resolved, at least for now, so hopefully I can be more regular on the net.

As reported last month, we were working with the 7290 traffic net managers to provide a workaround for AR traffic that might come in from CAN or other RN5 sections. I am happy to say that several AR stations were contacted who regularly check into the 7290 net. They agreed to accept any type of traffic for delivery to their local areas. So as of now, any AR traffic may be sent to the TEX net liaison station for handling thru the 7290 liaison stations on TEX. Keep in mind it does no good to try to pass them on DRN5 since there are no cycle 2 AR stations that QNI there.

We still need a regular NCS for the early session on Thursday and for both Sunday slots. There are still a lot of CAN Liaison slots open, too, especially those on Monday and Friday, which have neither a TX or RX station. Thanks again to those of you who fill in when needed. Please consider taking one or both slots on a given night. Remember, it is NOT up to the NCS to go to CAN if there are no volunteers. One station can take both TX and RX, since there has not been much traffic lately.

Speaking of not much traffic, the statistics show that our averages have been dropping month after month. Please consider at least generating some messages to friends or other stations you contact on the air.

Jim, W4AGL, reported that beginning February 1, the Florida CW net (QFN) will cease their late session due to lack of operators. That does not directly impact RN5 since their late session took place before late RN5, so any FL traffic had to be held until the next day anyway. But it is still worrisome. QFN has been one of the most active section nets in the country.

73, Frank W4FWT  
RN5/4 CW Net Mgr..

(Schedule, statistics, and roster on the next page)

### RN5 Duty Roster

Local	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
NCS #1	KZ8Q	W4FWT	W5CU	Open	W4SU	W4FWT	Open
NCS #2	KZ8Q	W4FWT	W5CU	K6JT	W4SU	W4FWT	Open
CAN TX	Open	Open	Open	KA5KLU	Open	KA5KLU	W5CU
CAN RX	Open	W4FWT	W4AGL	KA5KLU	Open	KA5KLU	Open
DRN5	Open	Open	K5RG	Open	Open	Open	Open

### January 2014 Statistics

SESSIONS	62
QTC	172
QNI	330
QTR	698
AVG QTC	2.7
AVG QNI	5.3
AVG QTR	11.2

The following roster shows stations coming to RN5 in the past 3 years and their sections.

### Region Net 5 Roster

Call	Name	Section	Call	Name	Section
W4AGL	JIM	FL	AA4HT	BOB	FL
WA4BAM	JOHN	FL	W8IM	DEAN	FL
WA5CAV	DICK	LA	K6JT	STEVE	TX
W5CU	SAM	OK*	KA5KLU	DOUG	TX
AC5CW	ERIC	LA	K5KV	BENNY	TX
KO9D	BENNY	IN	K8KV	BEN	FL
WD4DNC	BARRY	FL	N5NVP	JIM	LA
AD4DO	JOHN	FL	K4PG	KEVIN	FL
W5DTR	CURT	IL	KZ8Q	BEN	AL
K1DW	DALLAS	LA	K5RG	KEN	TX
W5DY	RODNEY	TX	N5RL	RANDY	TX
NY4E	BILL	FL	W4SQE	ANDY	TN
W5ESE	SCOTT	TX	W4SU	JERRY	AL
KJ4FDV	TREY	AL	W6SX	HANK	CA
KC4FL	JOHN	FL	K15T	WADE	LA
W4FWT	FRANK	FL	K4VIZ	TOM	AR**
KA4FZI	PHYL	FL	K5WNU	JACK	MS
W5GKH	CHARLIE	TX	K6YR	ROB	CA
K5GM	PETE	TX	WA4ZPZ	TOM	AL

\* When W5CU is not present on Late RN5, OK traffic may be sent to the TX station

\*\* K4VIZ is no longer active on RN5. Send AR traffic to the TX liaison station

73, Frank W4FWT