

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, 972-517-3332)
TEX Web Site: <http://k6jt.home.att.net/>

Assistant Manager: Rodney Baker, W5DY, Goliad TX
(w5dy@arrl.net)

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Hello again, TEX'ans! In spite of being a shorter month than usual, both traffic and QNI counts increased during February, as you will see in the statistics section. Thankfully, band conditions have been relatively good with only a few "skip outs" this past month. Thanks to all of you who continue to make TEX a great net.

No More CW Testing

As you are probably aware, as of the 23rd of February, there is no longer a need to learn CW in order to get an amateur radio license. Many of us have mixed feelings about this. In my own opinion, the reduced 5 wpm requirement was useless anyway. A person could generally pass that speed after simply memorizing the code (not to imply it was easy for everyone to memorize the code). But at that level of "expertise", unless someone had a lot of nerve or a personal tutor, they were not likely to get on the air to practice to increase their fluency. So it really served no useful purpose as the 13 and 20 wpm requirements had in years past.

There was a well-written article by Jim, K8SIW, about the "demise" of CW testing and what it might mean for us CW "traffickers" in the Hit and Bounce Net's bulletin, **Traffic Call**. I have asked for permission to reprint it, but I did not receive a response in time for this issue. I hope to be able to share that with you in the "feature stories" section of the next issue.

Drafted Noise

I am still having problems with the noise source in the 3500-3600 range as reported last month. However, I have discovered that its amplitude is considerably reduced when I use my 270 ft. end-fed "long wire" that wraps around the property in a loop.

Testing has revealed my transmit signal is not as good from this antenna as from the G5RV, most of the time, so I'm working on a way to switch it in as a receive-only antenna (my rig does not provide a separate RX-only antenna input). Meantime, I have been using it with reasonable success as my primary antenna when conditions are good.

New Members:

We have added several new TEX members in the past month. Those who checked in more than once are shown on the updated roster following the statistics. Please join me in welcoming:

David, KB0All, who regularly joins us from Minnesota.

Bill, KA9IKK, in Houston, who is operating from his mobile setup due to antenna restrictions. Bill used to live here in Plano and was active on VHF packet, handling traffic that I'd bring in from TEX.

David, K7IZ, in Bridge City, TX, near Beaumont and Port Arthur, a few miles from the Louisiana border.

Cal, WF5W, who checked in once from Tomball, where Eddy, K5WQG, is located.

David, KM5YQ, who also checked in once from Irving, here in the DFW area.

Feature Story

This month we have another interesting anecdote from Pat, KD5TXD. Thanks once again Pat, for an amusing story...

A Goat Story

We finished packing up and headed for Corpus Christi to attend the Corpus Christi ARC meeting. The most direct way is to go Chapman Ranch Road. It is a two lane road that is almost perfectly straight and perfectly flat. It is 40 miles of plowed field, no houses, no trees, no hills, no nothing. It is perhaps the most lonely road in the entire United States and maybe in the whole universe. It is home to the Flat Earth Society. Here is a link to the Chapman Ranch web page...it is a real place.

<http://www.texasescapes.com/TexasGulfCoastTowns/ChapmanRanchTexas/ChapmanRanchTx.htm>

We are zipping along at the speed limit...most folks pass us. I am not paying attention as there isn't anything on Chapman Ranch Road to pay attention to. Suddenly Charles says, "Oh, I don't believe it!" I look up and ask what is going on. He is standing on the breaks trying to stop our 3/4 ton Dodge pickup truck, yes, Dodge Ram pickup. There are three goats wandering around in the road ahead of us. Charles can't swerve as there is oncoming traffic. He can't go off in the ditch as there are more goats. He manages to slow the truck down to a point where when the idiot goat turns around and walks directly in front of the truck Charles has to hit it. It goes thump as we pull to a screeching stop. We hit the goat. Charles gets out and sees the thing lying under the front of the truck next to the driver's side wheel. It isn't moving. He goes to the back of the truck to see if there is something he can use to pull the goat out. We had just

cleaned out the truck and there wasn't anything. So he decides to back up and will have to pull it out by hand. He gets back out with a grim expression ready to pull a smushed goat over to the side of the road when the goat starts wiggling. It gets up a bit dazed and wanders off to join the other errant goats.

Well, there is a house near by. We assume it is where the goats live. Never saw that house before. The gate is locked, the sign says "no trespassing" and "beware of dog". So we don't go in. We get back on the road and use the cell phone to call 911. I know the 911 people just loved that. Charles explained that there were goats out on Chapman Ranch Road and the 911 operator asked for a cross street. What?? There aren't any cross streets on Chapman Ranch Road. It is 40 miles of nothing...really nothing...except 3 goats and a house we never saw before. Charles does his best to identify the exact location. (About 10 miles east of the cotton gin and 5 miles west of the oil drilling rig). After he hangs up he says to me that the deputy who gets stuck with that call is not going to be happy. Well, we weren't sure what to do. If some little car hit that goat there could be a bad accident. And people don't drive slow on Chapman Ranch Road. So we continue on our way. We make a 90 degree turn at the Chapman Ranch Post Office. Yes, Chapman Ranch has its own personal post office, its own one room school house (I don't think they still use that) and there are a few tiny wood frame houses at the 90 degree turn.

Corpus Christi ARC is a new/revived ham club and we had been there only once so Charles asked me where it was located. Ummm...I don't remember. We get on trusty 2 meters and sure enough there is someone ready to give directions. We actually arrived early. The club president gets up in front and starts the meeting. He sees me in the room and waves a radiogram at me. Then he tells the room that it is all my fault.

Wasn't sure if I needed to turn around and run or not. Turns out he had delivered the radiogram by hand and discovered an old timer ham operator who had been off the air for a few years due to health problems and inability to maintain his antennas and rig any more. This old dude used to be real active. He had his own repeater back in the day. On the wall was a certificate from (I think he said...) the FCC congratulating him for having the "first bi-lingual repeater in the SouthWest promoting good relations between the US and Mexico". So the club president came to the meeting with a project for the club to get this old guy back on the air. They are planning an antenna party to get the antennas up and someone is going to work on his rig. Some of the club members remembered the ham and knew him but had lost touch over the years. So I felt pretty good about this event. That radiogram really brightened someone's life.

Jo Ann, KA5AZK, and I have been gearing up to send out radiograms promoting the 7290 Traffic Net training and to advertise for the DTTN and TTN nets to get in some new traffic handlers. Once a week I am pulling off all the Texas hams who have any activity on the FCC. That includes upgrades, address changes and renewals. Jo Ann and I are splitting the list. She is taking the Extras and Advanced licensees. I am taking the Generals. I am after all of those no-code Generals that are going to be swarming in soon. Well, we discovered that about a third of the people on the list have unlisted

phone numbers. That is a lot of folks. I looked on QRZ and discovered that a good number of the unlisted folks had put out their e-mail addresses on QRZ. So I decided I would use Winlink to send, by digital radio, a radiogram into their e-mail addresses. I had just started doing that this last week. One of the hams at the club meeting came up to me and mentioned that his daughter had received my e-mail radiogram. Wow!! It worked.

That club is also planning on having a radiogram training class. So I offered assistance. Not real sure they wanted my assistance, but I jumped in anyway. I don't think anyone in Corpus has been as active handling traffic as me in many years so I surely am qualified. Now I am working up a presentation so I will be ready when they schedule the class.

On top of all that action there was a visitor to the club who turned out to be an old time friend of Charles'. He had been in the ham club that Charles attended when he first started getting interested in ham radio over 30 years ago. I almost had to leave Charles there as he didn't want to stop talking and catching up on old times.

We did not encounter any goats on the way home. Fun!! 73!! Pat KD5TXD

Got to add a P.S. The goat we hit was black and gray. Yesterday we noticed a black and gray goat in a yard in Recardo near where we live...could it be the same goat? Sure looked like the same goat. I think I am seeing goats now. Maybe the deputy put the goat in the back of his car and took it home??? Nah!!

TEX Mailbox:

Bert, AC5Z, wrote: We had a ball at the Columbia Recovery Special Event. I haven't seen the list of QSO's so don't know if we got many "locals" on 40 or not, but we stayed busy throughout the day. I'll send you a picture of K5QE's "White Rover" that he has built for the VHF contests. He lives in Hemphill, has a monstrous antenna farm and always ranks high in the scoring. The addition of the White Rover to his other Rover,



the "Red Rover", should greatly enhance the scoring, i.e., rover to rover should really add up the grid squares on 2, 70cm, 220, 1296, etc. on upward. (I don't remember all the frequencies!!) 73, Bert

Here's the picture of the "White Rover", as promised by Bert. He says perhaps it should be named "The multiband porcupine".

Bert Added: I saw it at our Columbia Recovery Special Event here in Nacogdoches. It was assembled on a white Dodge pickup that belongs to Marshall, K5QE, usually seen at the near-top of the VHF Contest reports. He has another Rover, the original Red Rover, that is similar. The stuff was gathered and assembled by Army Curtis, AE5P, our Club Sec./Treasurer, who is also into VHF "rovering". They begin at 144.56 to catch all the local hams, then to 432 Mhz, and upward across the spectrum, up to 2300 Mhz, and also 6 Ghz. I think that that covers it. He and aides rover the white one, and Marshall sends out the red one and acts as Base at Hemphill (in the far-east Texas Pineywoods country) under the call K5QU. They are gone overnight! I suspect that it will rove also during the Texas QSO Party, due up soon. I'm not into that ultra high and VHF stuff myself, but thought you might like to see the set-up. 73, Bert

Scott, N7NET, who lives near my QTH, was a bit shy about checking in one night. He wrote: I used to participate in the Oregon net and the Idaho/Montana net. Before they closed they slowed down and asked for visitors. I guess I expected that here. *When I responded to Scott that we just ask for QNI and it seemed they were a little more friendly than here, he replied:* I don't know that the nets were any more friendly in Oregon, Idaho, and Montana. There was a big turnover in operators. *I then commented on his use of "72" instead of "73" in closing, to which he replied:* I'm a QRPer and QRPP-er. I often use my SM-20 and power it with six AA batteries. I'm pleased with what 750 mW can do.

Among low power enthusiasts 72 is used in place of 73. It's a way of recognizing one another, I guess. 72/73 de Scott, N7NET

I believe we have some other QRP enthusiasts that check into TEX, too. Drop me an E-Mail if you are and/or want to set up a sked with Scott – Steve.

Pat, KD5TXD, also wrote: Jo Ann (KA5AZK) and I will be presenting a traffic handler training session at HAMCOM this year. She is covering voice nets and I will be presenting CW nets. If you have any suggestions for me I would appreciate that, too. I plan on using the TEX net call up procedure that you have on the web page as the example to follow for checking into a CW net. I am pondering having my computer play the code for that script. Or maybe I will simply record one of the nets and play it back so folks can hear how a net sounds. I have a while to plan what I am going to do. Time is limited and I think I have about 10 minutes. I don't have to cover the radiogram format, all I will need to do is illustrate the differences between CW and voice.

I am on a mission to contact as many of these no-code Generals who are due to burst in on us in a couple weeks. The messages in Jan and Feb are to get warmed up for the blast of no-coders. I think they need to pay some dues at least on the voice nets if nothing else. I am refusing to allow myself to feel bad about them or feel cheated, having to pass 5 wpm while they slide in with no code. There will be some like me who will discover CW much the same as I discovered it. I am sure I told you how I was NCS on DTTN in bad conditions and heard only two other stations and Arley (WB5NKC) checking in on CW. Thankfully one of the voice stations I could hear was able to copy

CW well enough to relay Arley. That situation convinced me that I had to get better at CW or I had no right to be an NCS. The rest is history. A few of the no-coders will discover CW in the same way and I will be there to pounce on them.

David, K7IZ, wrote: I really enjoyed traffic handling back in the 80's, and wondered if it would survive the advent of email, internet, and cell phones. At least we are maintaining our preparation for emergencies, and it is still fun. I wish the bands would get better soon. When in "7 land" I was active in ATEN, but Arizona doesn't have a state-level CW net. You could go to 12th region or PAN, which I occasionally did.

Bill, KA9IKK, wrote: Good to hear from you and glad to finally be able to QNI into TEX. Yes, my antenna is very limited; I am operating from my car in the parking lot using a 75M Hamstick, which is cut for the high end of the band. I am using an antenna tuner, which helps to load it, but SWR still a little high. Only running about 50W so not to set off any car alarms. I will try to check in as often as possible.

TEX Net Topics

The switch to 3643 during the weekend of the DX contest seems to have worked out well. We will do that again in coming weeks when there is a major CW contest. I'll try to get out a notification a bit earlier next time, though.

The following shows the current NCS and liaison station assignments, which have not changed since last month.

TEX CW Net Weekly Schedule

Local	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
NCS #1	W5DY	KA5KLU	K6JT	AC5Z	W5TFB	AC5Z	W5GKH
Backup	W5GKH		W5TFB	K6JT	W5DY	W5DY	
NCS #2	W5GKH	KA5KLU	K6JT	K5UN	N5PWG	W5DY	W5GKH
Backup			W5DY	K6JT	K6JT	W5TFB	
RN5 #1	W5GKH	KA5KLU	K5UN	K5UN	W5TFB	W5TFB	W5CU
Backup			W5TFB				W5GKH
RN5 #2	W5GKH	KA5KLU	K5UN	K5UN	W5TFB	W5TFB	W5CU
Backup			W5TFB				W5GKH

TEX/1: 3552 at 19:00 local; TEX/2 3552 at 22:00 local
 RN5/1: 3567 at 19:30; RN5/2: 3567 at 21:30 local
 CAN: 3552 at 20:30 local; TSN: 3552 at 19:45 local

RN5 Backup: W5DY, W5ESE, W5GKH, K5JRN, K6JT, KA5KLU, K5RG, W5TFB, K5UN
 NCS Backup: W5DY, N5EL, K5JRN, K6JT, KA5KLU, N5PWG, W5TFB, K5UN, AC5Z

Note: Although "backup" stations are listed above, anyone is welcome to take the RN5 or NCS duty slots when so motivated and it becomes necessary.

Statistics:

This month Pat, KD5TXD, took top honors with QNI of 40 (72%). Rodney, W5DY, was a distant 2nd with 28, and Ken, K5RG, came in 3rd with 22. Thanks for your support.

The complete list of stations and traffic / liaison totals are shown in the following table, which is then followed by the updated member roster. All statistics were up from January, even though it was a short month. We also missed one Friday night early session when Jack's antenna system went belly up and nobody else was available to take NCS. Traffic averaged 4.2 per net session. Net time averaged about 16.6 minutes per session. Check-ins were up, averaging 6.4 per net session.

TEX Net Statistics (February 2007)

			total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	CTTN	TSN
Call		QNI							
KB0All	David	0	8						
		8							
W5CDX	Wads	0	7						
*		7			1				
W5CU	Sam	9	13		3				
*		4			4				
W5DY	Rodney	15	28	4		5			
		13		4					
N5EL	Floyd	10	13						
*		3							
W5ESE	Scott	21	21		1			17	1
*		0							
W5GKH	Charlie	8	16	4	4	4			
*		8		7	4				
K5GM	Pete	5	6						
*		1							
KA9IKK	Bill	3	3						
		0							
K7IZ	David	6	13						
		7							
KJ9J	Newt	13	13						
*		0							
K6JT	Steve	25	50	5			25		
*		25		8			25		
K0KJ	Eric	10	12						
*		2							
KA5KLU	Doug	12	18	4	6	1		3	
*		6		2	6			2	

			total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	CTTN	TSN
K5KV	Benny	1	1						
		0							
W6LFB	Jim	1	1				1		
*		0							
N7NET	Scott	0	1						
*		1							
N5PWG	Jay	2	9						
*		7		4					
K5RG	Ken	8	22						
*		14							
W5TFB	Jack	10	16	2	6				
*		6			6				
W5TV	Tom	2	2						
		0							
KD5TXD	Pat	18	40			1			18
*		22							22
W5UFK	Ken	4	5						
*		1							
K5UN	Lee	7	14		7				
		7		3	7				
WF5W	Cal	1	1						
*		0							
K5WQG	Eddy	1	1						
*		0							
KM5YQ	David	0	1						
*		1							
AC5Z	Bert	18	18	8					
*		0							
Totals		353		55	55	11	51	22	41
				98%	98%	20%	91%	39%	73%
QTC 1		127	230						
QTC 2		103		Sessions:		55	98%		
Time 1		474	915						
Time 2		441							

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TEX Roster

Call	Name	Location / Notes	Call	Name	Location / Notes
# KB0All	David	Minnesota	KA5KLU	Doug	San Antonio
N5BA	Brian	Houston	K5KV	Benny	Star
W5CDX	Wads	Crowley LA	W6LFB	Jim	Denton
AC5CI	Homer	Caldwell	WA5MUF	Bill	Watauga
W5CU	Sam	Edmond OK	# N7NET	Scott	Allen
NV5D	Martin	Allen	KB5NJD	John	Duncanville
* W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	# N5NVP	Jim	Leesville LA
N5EL	Floyd	Temple	* N5PWG	Jay	Pasadena
* W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	K5RG	Ken	Houston
AA7FY	Mark	Fort Worth	KC5T	Bob	Houston
W5GKH	Charlie	West Columbia	W5TFB	Jack	College Station
K5GM	Pete	Austin	W5TV	Tom	Nacogdoches
KA9IKK	Bill	Houston	* KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville
K7IZ	David	Bridge City	# W5UFK	Ken	College Station
AA5J	Chuck	Plano	* K5UN	Lee	Leonard
KJ9J	Newt	Pharr TX (winter)	KS5V	Ed	Bulverde
* K5JRN	Si	Denton	K5WQG	Eddy	Tomball
KD5JSS	Dennis	Temple	AC5XK	Don	San Antonio
* K6JT	Steve	Plano	* AC5Z	Bert	Nacogdoches (Lufkin)
KØKJ	Eric	San Antonio			

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

Operating:

Remember to tune up and down a KHz or so around net frequency (down is preferred if it is clear) at net time to look for the NCS since QRM seems to be present frequently. Also, be sure to send "QRL?" when sent off frequency to handle traffic before starting to make a call.

When stations are sent off frequency to handle traffic, it is the station that will RECEIVE the traffic that is responsible for finding a clear frequency and calling the station that has the traffic to send. If you are the transmitting station and don't hear the receiving station within 30 seconds after moving off (tuning up and down around the assigned frequency), send your call on the assigned frequency, if it is clear, to let them know you are waiting.

A reminder: This year Daylight Time, through the folly of our esteemed legislators, begins on March 11 and ends on November 4. TEX will continue to meet at the same LOCAL times (one hour earlier UTC).

Until next month, 73,
Steve K6JT



TSN Corner

Texas Slow Net (Daily) 2000 CT 3552.0 Khz
http://www.geocities.com/scottamcmullen/Texas_Slow_Net.html
 Scott McMullen W5ESE
 TSN Net Manager

Propagation seemed to be better this month than last, with 80 meters not being long as often. The changes to allocations in the 80 meter band continue to be a challenge for us, with more QRM. Narrow IF filters can help a lot with this. For some years, I used a radio without a narrow IF filter, but eventually I bought and installed one, and it was a great benefit. The drawback to using a narrow filter is that it becomes more important for everyone to try to zero beat the net control's frequency.

QNI and the number of different stations checking in both fell this month. I think that could be a consequence of the more limited range on 80 meters this month. On the positive side, the average participant checked in more times this month than last.

Here is an updated roster of stations that have been active on TSN. Welcome to the new stations KB0AII (David), K0CMH (Craig), N5EL (Floyd), W5NW (Nelson), and KM5YQ (David). Please join us as often as you can.

Net Stations (QNS)

Call	Name	City	State	Call	Name	City	State
KB0AII	David	Ortonville	MN	W5NW	Nelson	Collinsville	OK
K0CMH	Craig	St Louis	MO	K5RDW	RD	Vilonia	AR
W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	TX	KB5TCH	Carroll	Douglassville	TX
N5EL	Floyd	Temple	TX	KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville	TX
W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	TX	W5VDM	Bill	New Ulm	TX
AA5JW	Carl	Stafford	TX	N5XGG	Joe	Colmesneil	TX
KA5KLU	Doug	San Antonio	TX	KM5YQ	David	Irving	TX
WB5NKC	Arley	Oklahoma City	OK	AC5Z	Bert	Nacogdoches	TX
WB5NKD	Pat	Oklahoma City	OK				

February Activity Report

TOTAL SESSIONS FOR MONTH 28
 TOTAL CHECKINS FOR MONTH 111
 TOTAL TRAFFIC FOR MONTH 55
 TOTAL DIFFERENT STATIONS FOR MONTH 15

73 Scott W5ESE

The telegraph key image is courtesy of FCIT