

# The Texan

Newsletter of the Texas NTS CW Net (TEX)

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

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March 2011



Seems like I just put out one of these newsletters... February is truly short!

## 7290 Picnic Announcement

I received a letter (yes, a real snail-mail letter!) from Jo Ann, KA5AZK, the 7290 net manager. She advises that the 41<sup>st</sup> annual 7290 Traffic Net Picnic is scheduled to be held once again at Riverbend Park in Smithville, Texas. This year it will be on May 14.

There will be the regular catered BBQ dinner at 4 PM. The net's website at <http://www.7290trafficnet.org/> will have more information, including the program schedule, in coming weeks.

Rodney, W5DY, will be handling the TEX "talk" at this years' event. Sadly, due to having to care for my father, who cannot travel very far without becoming carsick, I will be unable to attend. My aunt, who helped with him in past years, is no longer able to do so.

But don't let that dissuade you from going to the picnic. There are a lot of good traffic handlers there and I have enjoyed it in past years. The 7290 net has an astounding coverage area. I've checked in there a few times in the past weeks. They regularly have over 100 checkins during the 10 AM to Noon session from all over Texas (as well as QNI from neighboring states). Most folks are willing to take traffic, too, unlike some of the other SSB nets. If you are home at that time (Monday thru Saturday), give it a listen. There is also an afternoon session from 1 to 2, Monday thru Friday.

Jo Ann does a very good job and is serious about training. In fact, for those interested, check out her audio on-the-air training sessions that are now posted on their website:

[http://www.7290trafficnet.org/mgxroot/page\\_10739.html](http://www.7290trafficnet.org/mgxroot/page_10739.html)

## Daylight Time Again (Already !!!!!!!)

Yes, thanks to the "wisdom" of our esteemed elected officials in DC some years back, daylight time starts "early" on Sunday, March 13 this year. A reminder that TEX will meet at the same local time, 7 and 10 PM, but the UTC time will be 0000Z and 0300Z, respectively. Sigh, just when I was starting to enjoy standard time. ☹ Guess I should move to Arizona. They stay on standard time (mountain) all year.

## NTS Performance Survey

As an adjunct to last month's inputs from Frank, W4DLZ, regarding the poor performance of NTS, I wanted to summarize the results of a survey done a few years ago by Don, K7BFL, who lives in Spokane, WA, and is still very active in NTS. As a side note, I was first licensed (KN7OOR) in Spokane in my youth, some 50 years ago. Terrible CW call, isn't it?

Don ran a test as follows:

- Invitations to participate were sent out via email to ARRL and RAC Section leadership persons. Invitations to 156 persons in 79 sections resulted in 70 persons participating from 66 sections. 83 radiograms were sent to these 70 persons. One (or more) radiograms were sent to each participant, using the standard ARRL radiogram format.
- They were initially sent via voice (11), pactor (22), and CW (50). No effort was made to track the modes used to relay these 83 messages to their destination. The Text and Signature contained an average of 20 words. The voice and CW messages were started on regularly scheduled section traffic nets. The pactor messages were placed directly into the regional Digital Station's bulletin board, using Winlink (not 2000) software.
- Each person who was sent a radiogram was asked to email back the entire contents of the radiogram, as Delivered, along with the time and date of Delivery. The radiograms were then "scored" for "Travel Time" and "Accuracy". "Travel Time" was the time between the time Filed and the time Delivered. "Accuracy" was the percent of words Delivered exactly as they were initially sent. Accuracy was calculated separately for the Preamble, Address, Text, Signature, Total Message, and [Text + Signature].

Results were as follows:

1. 80 percent of the Sent messages were Delivered. "Lost" messages were sent to Alaska, California, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Ontario, Wyoming (1 CW each), Massachusetts (1 pactor), Quebec (2 CW, 1 pactor), Texas (1 CW, 2 pactor), and Washington (1 pactor). A Service Message regarding the problem of delivery was received for only 1 of the 17 "Lost" messages. 59 messages were able to be "scored".
2. The median Travel Time was 35 hours. Half of the messages traveled faster than 35 hours; half traveled slower than 35 hours. The average Travel Time was 52 hours.
3. The average Accuracy for the [Text + Signature] was 85 percent. 10 of the 59 scored messages had perfect reproduction of the [Text + Signature]; (17 percent were perfect).
4. There was no attempt to score the messages based on the mode of the first send. This is because it was not known if the message traveled the entire way via that particular mode. The NTS is a network in which messages may move from one mode to another mode, to facilitate transfer of the message.

Accuracy Discussion – Preamble: All of the messages contained "Handling Instructions" of HXC... Report date and time of delivery (TOD) to originating station. TOD information was

returned for 21 of the 66 messages (32%) that were not “Lost”. Twelve of the scored messages had an alphanumeric Message Number. Four (33%) of those messages were Delivered with the Message Number correct.

Accuracy Discussion – Address: The low (50% correct) score for the address could be attributed to the fact that most of the messages were being Delivered “by hams, to hams”.

Accuracy Discussion – Text and Signature: Is “85% Correct” acceptable to our “customers”?

Conclusion: NTS performance is very poor compared to what it should be. This test was done some years back (2003-2004). From the observations that Frank (W4DLZ) and Tom (K4VIZ) made, as described in last month’s newsletter, it does not appear we have improved much in the intervening time. Let’s all strive to make sure messages are passed in a timely manner (48 hours is the maximum a message may be held by an ORS, but we should try to get them out / delivered as quickly as we can), and with complete accuracy. If you aren’t quite sure of what the sending station sent to you, ask for a confirmation or a fill. Finally, pay attention to those handling instructions. Promptly respond to HXC and also service HXE messages, even if there is no response from the addressee.

There are quite a number of charts and detailed statistics for the test summarized above (28 pages). If anyone wants a complete copy, let me know and I’ll email one to you.

### **TEX Mailbox:**

You have probably noticed that **Tom, NK5Z**, has not checked in for quite some time. I am sad to report that he is being kept very busy caring for his mother, who is now in his home under hospice care. Tom has the “evening / night shift” for her care while his wife, Phyllis, takes care of the days. So he is unable to make net schedules although he reports that he has been able to “relax” a bit during the day and even work some DX. Please keep Tom, his mother, and his wife in your prayers. They need all the support they can get.

Received a short note from **Pat, KD5TXD**, along with her TSN Corner input. She wrote: Here is the TSN corner for Feb. Sorry, I don’t have any goofy stories. Charles is back teaching so he isn’t causing as much trouble around the house. My book deadline is coming up real soon and I am so very glad. It can’t arrive soon enough. Charles said he would take me camping on Spring Break. That will be the first camping trip in ages and ages. I am looking forward to that. Thanks and 73!! Pat KD5TXD

**Rodney, W5DY**, reminds us that the Pfeiffer Pfist award selection is coming due soon. Traditionally, the award has been presented at the 7290 picnic. However, given the poor TEX attendance in past years (and likely poor this year as well – see earlier announcement), he suggests we do it as part of the Hamcom convention, which will be held in Plano on June 10-11. We have some candidates in mind, but we also want to solicit “nominations” from those of you who received the award in the past. Please email them to Rodney or myself. Keep in mind that anyone who received the award in the past is not eligible to receive it again.

That’s it for this month. Please send in some feedback when you get a chance to keep this column alive.

## TEX Net Topics

We critically need help with the **16** open NCS/liaison slots, including **4** open *primary* NCS slots and **6** open *primary* RN5 slots now that Tom is unable to take the Tuesday/Thursday RN5 liaison (all shown in **red**). Please consider taking one of these, or even just an open backup position. The Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday early NCS and liaison slots are most critical since I can seldom get home in time during the week and Rodney has other events some of those nights during the month. We should not have to fill them all between the two of us, but that is pretty much what has been taking place. Check the TEX website (scroll down to the bottom) for an NCS guidelines document. It is really not that difficult. Also see the “operating” section of this newsletter for tips on performing the RN5 liaison, also not very difficult these days of little traffic flow.

Thanks again to Sam, W5CU, Ken, K5RG, Tom, NK5Z, Jay, N5PWG, and Rodney, W5DY, we managed to get through the month only missing one RN5 net liaison.

### TEX CW Net Weekly Schedule

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

TEX/1: **3541**/7108 at 19:00 local; TEX/2 **3541**/1841 at 22:00 local

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

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

RN5 Backup: W5CU, W5DY, W5ESE, W5GKH, K5GM, K6JT, N5PWG, K5RG

NCS Backup: W5DY, W5ESE, K6JT, N5PWG, K5RG, KD5TXD

### Statistics:

Check-ins were down since last month but traffic picked up some.

Rodney, W5DY, with 27 (48%) edged out Floyd, N5EL's 26 (46%) for first and second. Gary, K5QOW, and Mike, W5TMO, tied for 3<sup>rd</sup> with 22 each (39%). Thanks to all who checked in for your support.

We did not have any visitor checkins.

The complete list of stations and traffic / liaison totals are shown in the following table. Traffic averaged 2.25 per net session (1.7 last month). Net time averaged 12.1 minutes per session (compared to 11.9 last month). Check-ins averaged 4.9 per session (5.2 last month).

**TEX Net Statistics (February 2011)**

Call		QNI	total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	TSN
W5CU	Sam	9	18		6	1		
*		9			5			
W5DY	Rodney	14	27	6	4	1		
		13		2	1			
N5EL	Floyd	26	26					
*		0						
W5ESE	Scott	12	12					3
*		0						
W5GKH	Charlie	8	16	8	6			
*		8		8	5			
K5GM	Pete	4	6					
*		2						
W9GVW	Eric	2	4					
*		2						
K6JT	Steve	20	48	5	1	1	20	
*		28		9	11		28	
KA5KLU	Doug	2	2					
*		0						
W6LFB	Jim	6	6					
*		0						
WA5MS	Marty	9	9					
*		0						
N5NVP	Jim	1	4					
		3						
N5PWG	Jay	6	12	5	5			
*		6		5				
K5QOW	Gary	18	22			10		
*		4						
K5RG	Ken	6	15		1			
*		9			1			
W5TMO	Mike	0	22					
*		22						
KD5TXD	Pat	4	8	4				4
*		4		4				4
NK5Z	Tom	10	17		5			
*		7			4			
Totals		274		56	55	13	48	11
				100%	98%	23%	86%	20%
QTC 1		58	126					
QTC 2		68		Sessions:		56		
Time 1		358	676					
Time 2		318						

The roster has been updated to remove those who have not checked in for over a year. If your call has dropped off the list, just check in again and I'll be delighted to put you back on.

### TEX Roster

Call	Name	Location / Notes	Call	Name	Location / Notes
N5BA	Brian	Houston	N5NK	Rondel	Zephyr
W5CU	Sam	Edmond OK	WB5NKC	Arley	Oklahoma City OK
* W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	N5NVP	Jim	Scott LA
N5EL	Floyd	Temple	* N5PWG	Jay	Pasadena
* W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	K5QOW	Gary	Reagan Wells
W5GKH	Charlie	West Columbia	WA5MUF	Bill	Watauga
K5GM	Pete	Austin	* K5RG	Ken	Houston
W9GVW	Eric	San Antonio	W5ROK	Steve	Richardson (K6JT)
AA5J	Lee	Arkansas	N0SSS	Adam	Oklahoma
KJ9J	Newt	Pharr TX (winter)	W5TMO	Mike	Austin
K5JRN	Si	Austin	W5TV	Tom	Nacogdoches
* K6JT	Steve	Plano	KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville
KA5KLU	Doug	San Antonio	K5RDW	RD	Vilonia AR
* K5KV	Benny	Star	W5UFK	Ken	College Station
* W6LFB	Jim	Denton	* NK5Z	Tom	Conroe
N7NET	Scott	McKinney	W5ZD	Pat	Kingsville (KD5TXD)

\* Capable of 160 meter operation

### Operating:

Since we are in great need of RN5 liaison help, I thought I'd put in some RN5 Liaison guidelines for those of you who are "on the edge" of trying it out but aren't sure what to do. First, you do NOT have to be a "fast" CW operator. Check in at the speed you want to receive and ask any station sending traffic to QRS if necessary. You also do not need high power. I regularly check in to RN5 with my 100 watts and compromised stealth antenna. There are a few stations that can't hear me well, but there are relays available to help. Of course, it depends a lot on conditions, too.

**Early RN5:** Take any outgoing (out of state) messages from early TEX to the early session of RN5 on 3567 at 7:30. If they are for OK, LA, AR, MS, AL, TN, or FL, list them by state (using the abbreviations shown here). For ANY other state or Canadian province, list the traffic as "CAN". The NCS will link you up with the "CAN TX" station to pass your traffic or with the state liaison for the states listed above. About the only "hard" one is FL, due to the distance away, but I've successfully passed some to there.

There may be traffic for TX from the other states in RN5, but that is rare. If there is, you will need to receive it and bring it back to TEX. If you are only taking the early RN5 session and someone else is taking late, you may hold the traffic for the next day if you can't QNI to late TEX. Similarly, if you only go to the early session and are unable to move some of your messages, they may be held until the next day and given to the RN5 rep on early TEX (or a volunteer on late TEX).

**Late RN5:** Check into late RN5 on 3567 at 9:30 as "TX". If you have any leftover traffic that could not be passed on the early session, list it accordingly. Any leftover traffic outside RN5 should be listed as "DRN5", not CAN, however. That will be rare. The incoming CAN RX station may have traffic for TX that you will take and bring to late TEX.

Similarly, if any of the RN5 state liaison stations have Texas traffic, you will take it from them. That normally won't occur unless they missed the early session.

Finally, when Sam, W5CU, is going to be out of town, we pick up the OK traffic for him. In that case, you will check in to RN5 as "TX/OK". Most of the OK traffic is for WB5NKD, which I can take or it can be passed to the TSN liaison station.

I gave a lot more information than you will normally need. If there isn't any traffic on TEX, the early RN5 session is just a "de xxxxx TX QRU" and your QNX will occur very soon thereafter when there is no TX traffic (the norm).

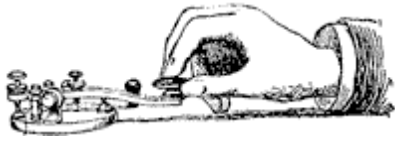
Similarly, the late RN5 session is also a "de xxxxx TX QRU" check in with QNX occurring very soon thereafter. We have not had much incoming traffic lately, so it should be a good time to ease into an RN5 liaison slot.

A final note. There will often be Transcontinental Corps (TCC) reports going to Pete, K5GM. Pete has asked me to take them and send to him via Winlink since he is no longer able to copy "by hand" at a normal speed. He also has trouble hearing a telephone conversation (and writing the information down), so it is best to not send them to an Austin station for delivery by that means.

Until next month,

73, Steve

(TSN Corner starts on the next page)



## TSN Corner

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

[http://www.atcweb.com/tsn/Texas\\_Slow\\_Net.htm](http://www.atcweb.com/tsn/Texas_Slow_Net.htm)

Pat Allison KD5TXD ( [pja@atcweb.com](mailto:pja@atcweb.com) )

TSN Net Manager

*The telegraph key image is courtesy of FCIT*

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

It's great to have a lot of regular checkins. We couldn't make it without Pat and Arley, WB5NKD and WB5NKC. Special thank you to Carl, AA5JW, who continues to be consistent in net attendance. We welcome two new stations, N0JL, Jim in IA, and W8LKI, Wolfe in OH. Please visit/join us any time and don't be afraid to bring traffic. Thanks to all who made TSN a regular part of their evening.

### FEBRUARY 2011 TSN Roster

Call	Name	City	ST	Call	Name	City	ST
K5AVJ	Lynn	Abilene	TX	W8LKI	Wolfe	Defiance	OH
ND0CW	David	Newburg	ND	KC0M	Larry	Branson	MO
K0CMH	Craig	St Louis	MO	KD5MMM	Phil	Fentress	TX
W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	TX	N7NET	Scott	Allen	TX
W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	TX	N5NK	Rondel	Zephyr	TX
WD0ESF	Mike		KS	WB5NKC	Arley	Oklahoma City	OK
K5FAL	Curt	Edmond	OK	WB5NKD	Pat	Oklahoma City	OK
KD5GM	Louis	Deer Park	TX	N5NVP	Jim	Scott	LA
W9GVV	Eric	San Antonio	TX	AA5NZ	Web	Goldthwait	TX
WR9H	Herbert	Rockford	IL	N5PWG	Jay	Pasadena	TX
KE5HCM	Patti	Kerville	TX	N0SSS	Adam	Oklaunion	TX
AA5J	Lee	Cabot	AR	KB5TCH	Carroll	Douglassville	TX
K6JT, W0CXX	Steve	Plano	TX	W5TMO	Mike	Austin	TX
N0JL	Jim	Chilliecothe	IA	KD5TXD, W5ZD	Pat	Kingsville	TX
AA5JW	Carl	Stafford	TX	KD5VGJ	Jay	Flower Mound	TX
K9JWV	Jim	St. George	UT	K4VIZ	Tom	Conway	AR
KT4KL	Alton	Bandera	TX	W4VLL	Victor	Pembroke	VA
K5KV	Benny	Star	TX	W5VXI	Dave	Caddo Mills	TX
KB5KWO	Steve	Norman	OK	WB5WKQ	Jeff	Dryden	MI
				NK5Z	Tom	Conroe	TX

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!!

### TSN Activity Report for February, 2011

Total Sessions 28, Total Check-ins 117, Total Traffic 31 by 13 different operators.

### February 2011 QNS

February	Callsign	Name	QTH
28	WB5NKC	Arley	OK, Oklahoma City
28	WB5NKD	Pat	OK, Oklahoma City
18	AA5JW	Carl	TX, Stafford
8	KD5TXD, W5ZD	Pat	TX, Kingsville



February	Callsign	Name	QTH
8	W5ESE	Scott	TX, Dripping Springs
8	KB5TCH	Carroll	TX, Douglassville
7	KD5MMM	Phil	TX, Fentress
5	W5VXI	Dave	Caddo Mills, TX
2	W5DY	Rodney	TX, Goliad
2	AA5J	Lee(Chuck)	AR, Cabot
1	K4VIZ	Tom	AR, Conway
1	N0JL	Jim	IA, Chillicothe
1	W8LKI	Wolfe	OH, Defiance

**73!!**  
**Pat KD5TXD**  
**March 4, 2011**