

# *The Texan*

Newsletter of the Texas NTS CW Net (TEX)

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)

November 2006



Hello TEX'ans! Sorry this newsletter is a bit later than usual. As you know from the E-Mail I sent out a few days ago, I had to make an unexpected trip to Los Angeles to pay our respects to my wife's family due to the loss of her aunt, with whom she was close. Although it was a sad time, the weather was certainly up to Texas standards – in the 90's while we were there.

## **Rotten FCC R&O!**

Thanks to those of you (W5ESE, W6LFB, W5DY, KA5KLU) who wrote to me concerning the new R&O. As I said in my earlier E-Mail, the FCC Report and Order that was released last month (but not yet published in the Federal Register in its final form) (mis)allocated 3600 to 3700 KHz to Extra Class Only, SSB service. I have no new information to report on this beyond what I sent out previously (i.e., my response to the ARRL), other than the following, taken from the ARRL web site: "Deadline extended to accept members' input on "omnibus" Report and Order (Nov 1, 2006) -- The ARRL has extended the deadline to receive members' input concerning the FCC's "omnibus" Report and Order (R&O) in WT Docket 04-140, released October 10. The R&O will take effect 30 days after publication in the Federal Register, and ARRL will accept members' comments until one week after Federal Register publication. The publication date is not yet known. A summary of the "omnibus" R&O appears on our Web site. The ARRL is specifically seeking member guidance on how the changes the R&O mandates will affect current operating activities on 80, 40 and 15 meters (see the current ARRL band plans and an ARRL FAQ that includes a chart showing the band changes.) Submit comments by e-mail. All e-mails will be read and considered, but individual responses are not possible. The E-Mail address to use is: [bandplan@www.arrl.org](mailto:bandplan@www.arrl.org) .

## **Activity Level:**

Thanks to all who took the time to check into the net more often this past month. The number of check-ins increased in spite of the fact that our traffic totals went down.

Perhaps it is time for us to be a little more pro-active with traffic. I am as lax as anyone in that respect. This month might be a good time to send out some Thanksgiving greetings messages to distant friends and relatives. It would certainly give a boost to

the system and provide some more interesting traffic to handle. If nothing else, perhaps we could all originate 2 or 3 messages to other net members who we think will be checking in some of the time that we are. Let me know if you have other ideas on how to increase the traffic activity level that would at the same time add a little spice to net operations.

## **Band Conditions and 160 Meters**

Although the band conditions on 80 meters have been fairly good this past month, we still need to get 160 meter capability ready for the coming months.

Several of you reported that you either have 160 meter capability or are planning to put up some sort of antenna that will allow you to get on 160. I discovered that I am in the latter category now myself since when I had to move one leg of my G5RV due to construction of a new fence, it changed the top load capacitance such that the antenna no longer will load up properly on the low end of 160. I have purchased 300 ft. of #16 stranded wire that I plan to put up going around the back fence when time permits (at least 270 ft. of it, that is), for an end-fed half wave on 160.

Those who reported they currently have 160 meter operating capability include Si K5JRN, Bert AC5Z, Scott W5ESE, Pat KD5TXD (with new antenna), Rodney W5DY, Steve K6JT (with better antenna), Lee K5UN, and Jay N5PWG (when new antenna is up). Bert and Rodney already tested out their path and were able to copy each other. Rodney and I did not have any luck, though, using 1812 KHz.

Scott also sent along the following tip: "A lot of TEXans may be able to get on 160m who don't realize that they can. If they short the center conductor of their (80 meter antenna) coax to the shield and feed the whole thing from the random wire output of their tuner, a lot of stations can be put on 160 this way. The setup behaves like a top loaded vertical. I've participated in the ARRL 160 Meter contest with just such a contraption. 73, Scott, W5ESE". I just want to add a note to Scott's good input – you will be using the coax as the actual antenna and the 2 legs of your dipole are a top-loading capacitive "hat", which do not radiate that much. So the placement and length of your coax is an important factor AND you should be prepared for lots of RF floating around the shack when you end-feed it like a random wire.

## **Feature Stories**

This month we are privileged to have two feature articles. Pat, KD5TXD, and her OM Charles, WB5IZD, went to a "Star Party" (the celestial kind, not the Hollyweird type) this past month. You may have heard her QNI to TEX with a "/P" after her call. She sent in a short description and some great pictures to share. Second, Bert, AC5Z, finally yielded to my pleas and sent in a mini-biography to share. Thank you both.

First from Pat:



We just got back home from our short vacation in El Dorado, TX. We were at the famous (or infamous) El Dorado Star Party. We had our telescopes out and enjoyed three perfect nights under the stars. The weather was excellent, about 75 degrees during the day. It got a bit cold at night, but that just makes the stars brighter. It was only 37 degrees Sunday morning as we were packing up our gear. That was a bit shocking since it was 90+ degrees with 110% humidity in Kingsville when we left.

Also, we had a great time on the radio. I checked in with my favorite nets during the long weekend. I apologize for not taking any traffic during that time, but we were awake all night and I figured I would be a poor relay station as I might sleep through all the traffic nets the next day. You all sounded excellent out in West Texas. I plan to torture all the folks I contacted with my home-made QSL cards.



I had a couple real good visits with Floyd, N5EL, who has really helped me with my CW. During the weekend I made contact with 12 new CW stations and several of my old pals. I am really pleased with my progress and I hope all of the TEX folks realize that you are a very important part of my progress. Thanks for putting up with my slowness and fumbling around on TEX. I am learning and getting better thanks to you.

We had Charles' ICOM 706 set up with a trap dipole antenna strung up in the live oak trees. It was only about 15 feet off the ground, but it seemed to get out pretty well. I talked to a bunch of Texas stations, Ohio, Wisconsin, New York, Michigan, Montana, Canada and San Juan Puerto Rico on CW. I am disgustingly pleased with myself. It was great fun. I even talked to one fellow who had been off the air for several years and just got his Heathkit 101 back on the air two weeks ago. He said my portable station on CW was the best he had heard...guess he hadn't been talking to many folks yet. HI HI





On the drive home 15 meters was wide open. Charles made voice contacts while mobile with Spain, Canada, Costa Rica, Chile, Venezuela, Brazil, Netherlands and the Marshall Islands. Needless to say, we were not bored on our drive home. He would make some voice contacts and then turn it over to me to make CW contacts, mobile. I built a little table for the passenger side of the truck before we left home and attached my Russian straight key (just like Rodney's key) to the table. I tapped out CW while Charles minded the

driving. Included are some pictures from our trip, enjoy. 73, Pat, KD5TXD

### **Mini-Bio of Bert, AC5Z**

Born 10/27/1925 at Edinburg, Texas; graduated, Edinburg High School, May 1943. Held temp. Civil Service (War time) appointment at Moore Army AFB, Mission, TX, Radio Repair Shop, '44 to end of WW II, Aug. 1945.

Attended Texas Lutheran College, Seguin, TX; Pre-journalism, 1945-47. Got married on June 26, 1948. Signed on with United Gas Corporation, Dec. '48, at Seguin, TX.

Aug. '50 - Transferred to LaGrange, TX, and promoted to "Local Representative; read meters, rendered bills, collected, sold, installed, and serviced appliances, helped crew dig ditches for new service lines.

Jan. '53 - Transferred to Laredo, TX, as Jr. Engineer, assigned to install "cathodic protection" on under-ground distribution system (prevents corrosion of steel pipe).

Jan. '63 - Transferred to Houston, TX, United Gas North District, as Service Foreman.

Aug. '66 - Transferred to Houston Division Training Department, to teach Basic Gas System service, Basic Electricity, "Training Representative".

Apr. '69 - United Gas' Corporate Training Center moved from Lake Charles, LA. to Houston. Received promotion to Training Ass't on Houston Corporate payroll. Taught same stuff to employees from Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

#### **Amateur Radio History:**

Dec. '72 - Got Novice License, as WN5IHY; Worked 46 states toward 40M, CW, "WAS Award" before moving to Nacogdoches in -

Aug. '73 - accepted promotion to District Operations Manager of the Nacogdoches District (lost the 46-state accumulation toward WAS due to ARRL rule that a move over 25 miles made one start over!!). Upgraded to General, Advanced, and Extra, all tests taken at FCC Offices in Houston. Got new call with new Incentive Licensing System, AC5Z.

Aug. 85 - Moved back to Houston as Manager of Technical Training, Corporate Office.

Nov. 1, '87 - Retired at age 62, on an "Early Out Offer" as the Company, now named Entex, Inc. merged with another Gas Distribution Company. Re-roofed our home and painted entire outside wood surface to enable sale of property, and on -

Aug. 89, returned to Nacogdoches, no longer bound to "the clock." Hallelujah!!

73, Bert, AC5Z

## TEX Mailbox:

Jay, N5PWG, wrote me: "Have you seen (and heard) Dr. Jack Belrose' paper regarding the equipment that Marconi used in his first transatlantic communication? I ran across it on the web by accident. I was looking for another paper written by Dr. Belrose concerning antenna tuners. The interesting thing to me was his recordings of what he thought the Marconi rig must have sounded like. You can listen to them at the following URL: <http://www.hammondmuseumofradio.org/spark.html>".

My response to Jay: "I looked it up on Wikipedia and read about the disputed 1901 transatlantic propagation. I tend to agree with Jack Belrose that 820 KHz would not propagate that well during the day, particularly since the actual transmissions were not at that frequency. Even though the spark transmitter produced megawatts of peak pulse power, unless there was a particularly favorable ducting of signals (very rare at that low a frequency), receiving a mere 3 dots and claiming reception is more likely local electrical noise."

If you all are interested, take a listen (and a look) and see if you agree with me. Thanks to Jay for an interesting topic.

Lee, K5UN, wrote in to say, "I will be out of the country Nov 21 through Dec 3. I will be in Martinique for the CQWW CW contest operating as TO5X". Wow, sounds like a real great way to spend Thanksgiving! We wish you lots of contacts in the contest, Lee. You will certainly be missed, but we'll muddle through those 2 weeks somehow ☺

## TEX Net Topics

The following shows the current NCS and liaison station assignments, which have not changed since last month. We will need a backup for Lee on Thursday, as noted above. Thanks to Scott, W5ESE, for filling in a couple of the RN5 slots this past month.

### TEX CW Net Weekly Schedule

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

TEX/1: 3643 (7143 backup) at 19:00 local; TEX/2 3643 at 22:00 local  
RN5/1: 3650 (7045 backup) at 19:30; RN5/2: 3650 at 21:30 local  
CAN: 3670 (7052 backup) at 20:30 local

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

Thanks to all of you (especially Rodney, Jack, Si, and Doug) who filled in for me on my NCS, DFW, and TCC assignments while I was helping my parents in California this past month. Special thanks to Rodney for doing a fantastic job keeping me updated with the reports.

**Statistics:**

This month Rodney, W5DY, again had the most QNI with 52 (84%) and Pat, KD5TXD, came in next with 34 (55%). Scott, W5ESE, almost made “500” with 27. Thanks to all of you and also many others who increased their QNI totals this month in response to last month’s plea.

Floyd, N5EL, managed to QNI 10 times even while recovering from angioplasty surgery, where stents were inserted into a (nearly 90%) blocked coronary artery. We are all grateful that they caught it in time before he suffered a serious heart attack. Hopefully his condition will continue to improve and we’ll again hear more of Floyd on TEX.

Join me in welcoming back Newt, KJ9J, who is now in Texas for the winter season from his Indiana QTH. I heard Newt on CAN several times the past few months from Indiana. He had a really great signal on 40 meters, but 80 has not been as kind to propagation since we switched back. Nice to have you back closer to us again, Newt.

Also welcome to Frank, WA5FB, in Biloxi, MS, who visited us one evening and to Mark, AA7FY, who is a lot closer to “home” in Ft. Worth. We also had Milton, K4OSO, QNI the late session from Virginia. Hope y’all can join us again on TEX.

The complete list of stations and traffic / liaison totals are shown in the following table. Traffic was down even further, averaging 2.2 per net session. Net time averaged a little over 11.6 minutes per session, down 1 minute from September. Check-ins were up, slightly, averaging 5.4 per net session. TEX/1 is the most popular, of course. There have been several nights where TEX/2 had only 2 QNI – the NCS and RN5 station. If you are not asleep already by 10, please give TEX/2 a try.

**TEX Net Statistics (October 2006)**

			total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	CTTN	TSN
Call		QNI							
N5BA	Brian	1	1						
		0							
AC5CI	Homer	22	22					1	
		0							
W5CU	Sam	5	10		4				
*		5			5				

			total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	CTTN	TSN
Call		QNI							
W5DY	Rodney	25	52	9	3	12			
		27		7	6	2			
N5EL	Floyd	10	10						
*		0							
WA5FB	Frank	1	1						
*		0							
AA7FY	Mark	1	1						
*		0							
W5ESE	Scott	25	27		2	2		3	9
*		2							
W5GKH	Charlie	8	16	3	5	3			
*		8		8	4				
K5GM	Pete	1	2						
*		1							
KJ9J	Newt	1	1						
*		0							
K5JRN	Si	12	21				6		
*		9					4		
K6JT	Steve	18	38	4	1		17		
*		20		4	1		20		
KA5KLU	Doug	4	8	4	4	1			
*		4		4	4				
W6LFB	Jim	2	2						
*		0							
N5NVP	Jim	1	3						
		2							
K4OSO	Milton	0	1						
		1							
N5PWG	Jay	0	4						
*		4		4					
K5RG	Ken	4	18						
*		14		1					
W5TFB	Jack	11	18	4	7				
*		7			6				
W5TV	Tom	2	2						
		0							
KD5TXD	Pat	17	34						17
*		17							17
W5UFK	Ken	7	9						
*		2							

			total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	CTTN	TSN
Call		QNI							
K5UN	Lee	6	11		5				
		5		3	5				
AC5XK	Don	1	1			1		1	
*		0							
AC5Z	Bert	21	21	7					
*		0							
Totals		334		62	62	21	47	5	43
				100%	100%	34%	76%	8%	69%
QTC 1		68	137						
QTC 2		69		Sessions:		62	100%		
Time 1		382	721						
Time 2		339							

The following is an updated TEX member roster. NCS stations please note the more recent entries so you can greet them by name when they check in.

### TEX Roster

Call	Name	Location / Notes	Call	Name	Location / Notes
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
KJ9J	Newt	Pharr TX (winter)	KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville
K5JRN	Si	Denton	W5UFK	Ken	College Station
KD5JSS	Dennis	Temple	K5UN	Lee	Leonard
K6JT	Steve	Plano	AC5XK	Don	San Antonio
KØKJ	Eric	San Antonio	AC5Z	Bert	Nacogdoches (Lufkin)
KA5KLU	Doug	San Antonio			

### Operating:

Since this issue is so late, I'll save the rest for another month. Band conditions have been OK, but short skip is showing up on the late session more often now. NCS's please ask other stations to call for QNI. Until next month, 73, Steve K6JT