

The Texan

Newsletter of the Texas NTS CW Net (TEX)

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

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Back Home Again

Hello TEX'ans. Good to be back home after 10 days in France. Still catching up with mail, E-Mail, and chores. It was a great trip. Sorry to say, I did not see any ham antennas while there (at least not any beams) in Normandy, Caen, Liseaux, Paris, or Lourdes. But then it was not about hamming. Many thanks to those who filled in for me in my absence. From the reports that Rodney (bless him) collected, all seemed to run smoothly right through the time change.

Sincere Condolences

On behalf of all of us on TEX, I want to offer our sincere condolences to Floyd, N5EL, who lost his dear wife Wilma, N5ELW. She passed away on October 28th from complications following heart surgery. Her obituary includes the following:

Wilma R. Bumpus, age 80, of Temple died Tuesday, October 28, 2008 in a local hospital. Mrs. Bumpus was born October 10, 1928 in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She was reared and educated in Conway, Arkansas. She married Floyd Bumpus on February 2, 1947 in Conway. They have been residents of Temple for the past 14 years. She was a member of Oak Park United Methodist Church, Temple Garden Club and Newcomers Club. She was a Ham Radio operator with the radio call of N5ELW.

Survivors include her husband, Floyd Bumpus of Temple, one son, David and wife, Bonnie of Belton, two daughters, Linda Lake of Waxahachie and Roxanna Ginnett of Italy, three grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

She will certainly be missed. Our hearts and prayers go out to you, Floyd.

Long Skip Continues

There have been intermittent long skip conditions again in the past month, primarily on late TEX. The 80 meter band has been unpredictable, with good conditions one night and very poor the next. Sure making the region nets miserable. Both CAN and PAN have had troubles on a regular basis. 40 meters has also been all but dead some nights, completely unusable for any regional traffic handling or even inter-area traffic (e.g., CAN to PAN). See "Operating" near the end of the newsletter for more info.

W1NJM Saga

Thanks to Sis, WD8DIN, the editor of the "Traffic Call" newsletter of the Hit and Bounce Net (HBN – 0730 CT, 7042 KHz), for passing along George Hart's saga of the "early days". Here's Part 19 of George Hart's recollections. Geo tangles with the Army Amateur Radio Service.

RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS OF AN OLD HAM

A journalistic history of the life and times in Amateur Radio of George Hart, W1NJM, by George Hart, W1NJM. Chapter 19.

THE AARS ACTIVITIES AT W8YA

When I came to W8YA in 1932, the station was already involved in the Army Amateur Radio System. AARS was run almost entirely by licensed amateurs, affiliated with but not enlisted in the U.S. Army Signal Corps, primarily for the purpose of training in Army procedures and the handling of third party messages.

Participating amateurs used their own call letters in Army-sponsored networks in the amateur bands. The AARS was a commanding presence in amateur radio traffic handling at the time, and for many years afterward right up until WWII. When I arrived, AARS participation was handled almost entirely by Norm Young, whose amateur call I seem to have forgotten, Norm was a competent operator and, although only a sophomore, prominent on the staff.

AARS also used two frequencies outside amateur bands (3497.5 and 6990 kc.) for its higher echelon operation, using call letters assigned from the WL block. W8YA was Pennsylvania net control and used WLQJ when operating on 3497.5. 6990 was used by AARS only at night. During the daylight hours it was used by WAR for official Army traffic.

I had little to do with the AARS phase of W8YA operation in my freshman year, but Ed and I had participated in it in a small way from W3NF and I was familiar with it. Some time during my sophomore year I was called into Gil Crossley's office in Engineering and he explained that a dispatch from Washington had requested W8YA to take over as first alternate to the AARS main control station, WLM, located in the Munitions Building in Washington, D.C. Norm Young had requested to be relieved of AARS responsibilities so he could concentrate on academics. Our AARS call letters would be changed from WLQJ to WLMA and our operating responsibilities would no longer be restricted to Pennsylvania or the Third Corps Area (CA). It was a major step up in the system and Gil wanted to know if I could handle it.

Not knowing the full requirements, I nevertheless felt sure I could, and Gil tended to agree with me, but my academics were not in the best of shape, and this was a major concern. I was spending too much time at the station already, often at the expense of study in my difficult pre-veterinary curriculum. Nevertheless, it was decided that we should accept the assignment on a tentative basis, which was the basis offered in the first place.

My class schedule, that first semester of 1933-4, was less demanding on Thursday and Saturday. There were no classes on Saturday afternoon or on Sunday, but I didn't want to be tied down on weekends because of fraternity social obligations and/or weekend trips home.

So my training schedule as alternate AARS net control station for the entire U.S. and possessions would involve only Wednesday evenings and an hour Thursday after classes. I would show up at W8YA on Wednesday after classes, put the rig on 3497.5 and make contact with WLM in Washington, signing our AARS call, WLMA. The procedure was to "clear the hook" at WLM - that is, take all the message traffic on hand at WLM to be sent to each of the corps area stations throughout the U.S. (only 48 states then), and also the Panama Canal Zone and the Territory of Hawaii. I don't recall any Alaskan or Caribbean contacts. None of the messages was official, just routine amateur radio traffic ordinarily handled in the amateur bands. Even the message format was the same, for by then ARRL had adopted the Signal Corps format for message traffic.

This was a daunting project, for most of the operators at AARS Corps Area (CA) level were highly skilled, many of them operated by amateurs like myself from their home stations either as alternates to the AARS Corps Area (CA) control stations or substitutes for those stations where no AARS control station existed. My Wednesday evenings were spent contacting representatives of each CA, either on 3497.5 or 6990 kc., on an hourly or half-hourly basis -- nine CAs, plus WLXL at Fort Clayton, Canal Zone, and WVQB (later WLXB) at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. The operation in most cases was swift and precise, either with AARS stations operated by Army personnel at CA headquarters or an alternate or substitute.

Operation in AARS was a major part of my amateur radio activity during those years and my memories of it are precise and pleasurable. The First Corps Area (CA) contact was with WLG, operated by Percy Noble, W1BVR from his home station in Westfield, MA. Perce was a long-time ARRL director and vice president who became a close personal friend. Since at the beginning there was no AARS station at Corps Area headquarters in Boston, Perce was permitted to use its call, WLG. Even after such a station was put on the air, Perce continued using WLG and the CA station used WLGA - an exception to the general rule. Second CA headquarters was at Governor's Island in New York Harbor, AARS call letters WLN (W2SC). They did have a station but often the signal was down. The schedule was sometimes kept by W2PF, David Talley, whose AARS call I don't remember. I do remember that Dave had a very peculiar swing to his "fist" that was very difficult to copy until you became used to it.

Third CA HQ was at Fort McHenry, Baltimore, MD. with AARS call WLQ (W3SN). Fourth CA was in Fort McPherson, GA. with call WLR. I never heard WLR. Usually the schedule was kept by alternate WLRY, who was the renowned "Dixie Squinch Owl" whose name and amateur call escape me at the moment of writing. Fifth CA was in Columbus, Oh. WLH. This schedule was kept by W8ZG, or W8GZ using WLH on 3497.5, who was none other than Loren Windom, the inventor of the Windom antenna and a prominent military and amateur radio figure. I recall some derogatory exchanges between "Windy" and "Dixie," but believe they were close personal friends. Sixth CA HQ was in Chicago, WLT, schedule usually kept by an alternate but WLT did have an AARS station. Seventh CA HQ was at Fort Omaha, NE, WLU (W9BNT). WLU had a super operator but I never knew who he was or if he held an amateur license. Eighth CA HQ was at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, TX, WU (W5OW). WU usually had a good signal and good operator on 6990. Ninth CA HQ was at the Presidio, San Francisco, WLV. All these AARS CA HQ stations had amateur calls and could be operated by licensed amateurs in the amateur bands. Thanks to my early training in traffic handling at W3NF, I fitted right in with the AARS operators on 3497.5 and 6990 kc., most of whom were of highest quality. WLMA (W8YA) became a Wednesday night fixture on the AARS world network.

The AARS station at Fort Clayton, C.Z. used the call WLXL and usually had a strong signal on 6990. I don't remember its amateur call; it would have been a K5. But the biggest challenge of the evening was contacting WVQB in Hawaii on 6990 kc. at 11:30 p.m. Their amateur call was K6DV. Surprisingly enough, the contact was usually successful, with quite a few messages exchanged. The operator out there was very good and usually reported our signal good. The "outlying" AARS stations were given WLX calls. I don't know why WVQB was used at first, but the call was later changed to WLXB, which I always felt never had the "swing" of WVQB.

COMING IN CHAPTER 20: *Meanwhile back at the farm.*

TEX Mailbox:

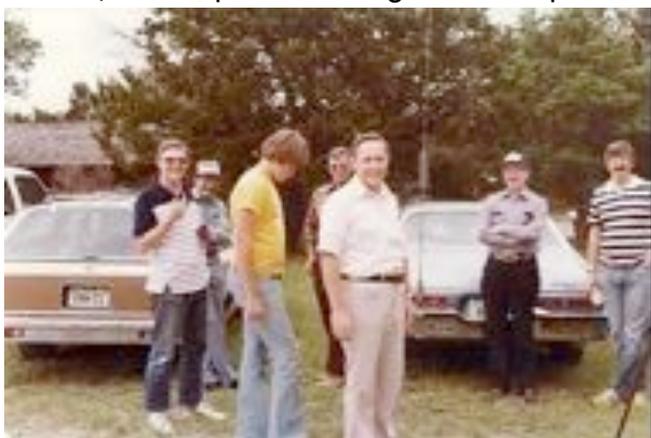
I am happy to report that **Marty, WA5MS**, has joined us on TEX from the DFW area. My apologies to Marty for listing his name as "Martin" in last month's newsletter. Note that he can take DFW traffic and I have asked him to QNI the early TEX session as the DFW liaison. Marty writes: Thanks for the welcome. I thought you were angry with me and that is why you were calling me Martin – that's what my parents did-HI-I do prefer Marty. I have looked at the newsletter. I do check in from time to time at DFW early – would be happy to give you a break. Hope to hear from you soon. Thanks and 73, Marty WA5MS

Scott, W7IZ, Oregon STM sent in this interesting observation about daylight savings time. Thanks, Scott.

Why Saskatchewan has no Daylight Saving Time – Saskatchewan listened to the Wise Old Indian.

When told the reason for daylight saving time the old Indian said, "Only a white man would believe that you could cut a foot off the top of a blanket and sew it to the bottom of a blanket and have a longer blanket."

Chuck, AA5J, passed along a few old pictures from the 7290 picnic, circa 1982. You old timers may recognize some of the calls for those Chuck could identify.



CW OPS, Left to right: W5SBE, AE5I, UNK, WB5LAT, N5TC, W5VMP, AK5N



7290 Net: Back Row, Left to Right: N5WB, W5VMP, AK5N, UNK, WB5LAT, N5TC, UNK, UNK, UNK, WA5RVT, UNK. FRONT, Left to Right: Harry, unk, AA5J, AE5I, UNK, K5SOR, UNK, UNK

Chuck also writes that he is having too much trouble with his SDR-1000 to use it any longer. It just won't key properly on CW, although the receiver works great. It keeps "crashing", putting him off the air, possibly due to RF but perhaps also from buggy software (after all, it IS a "software defined radio"). He will need some fill-ins for his Tuesday NCS and Thursday RN5 liaison slots until he can get his older Omni back on the air.

Scott, W5ESE, had a great time on his outing for the Texas QSO party. Scott writes: I put a few photos from my Texas QSO Party outing to the Guadalupe Mountains up at:

<http://www.geocities.com/scottamcmullen/TxQP2008.html>

Let me know if you need any of these at better resolution. I created some reduced resolution images for the web site so that it would load more quickly for those with low bandwidth connections (like me).

It sure was fun. Hope that some others from TEX will consider participating in TxQP in future years. 73, Scott, W5ESE

Pat, KD5TXD, is having some fun at the university in Kingsville. She writes: They finally got a reasonable HF antenna up for 20-15-10 so I plugged in a key and called CQ. First time that station has had CW in many months. I think I am the only person on the university campus that does any CW. Got a fellow in Shockapee MN, my old stomping ground from my wild youth. We had a good QSO. Just got the QSL card from him. Now when I am cooling my heels at the university waiting for Charles to finish up so we can ride home together I can play on 20 meters. Just wish someone would help me put up a good 80 meter loop on the roof of the physics building; then I could check into TEX on the nights I am stuck over there. Also, sure could use some sun spots or something to perk up the bands. You know, this prolonged solar minimum is all my fault...soon as I got my license the band went down hill in a big way. Some places I read even think that this is a sign of serious global cooling and we are all doomed. Guess Al Gore needs to start putting out some hot air for us. Hi Hi!!
73, Pat

TEX Net Topics

Thanks to Chuck, AA5J, for picking up the Thursday RN5 liaison slots. Please consider filling one or more of the open slots as a regular or even backup station. We still have **15** open slots! Thanks to Sam, W5CU, and Rodney, W5DY, who have been filling the majority of them.

TEX CW Net Weekly Schedule

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

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

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

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

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

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

As noted earlier, Chuck will need fill-ins (see blue slots) for the next weeks until he can get his station back in working order.

Statistics:

Traffic count and QNI improved this past month. Rodney, W5DY, with 40 (65%) again took top QNI for the month, closely followed by Chuck, AA5J, with 39 (63%). Thanks to all for your support.

Good to hear Bill, WA5MUF, on the net more often now. Even had a QNI from his XYL, Teresa, WD5HPK. Also good to hear Larry, W5SBE, back with us once again after many years' absence. Had a visitor, Ron, W9UW, from Wisconsin check in and I was happy to hear Scott, W7IZ, who made it all the way from Oregon one night.

The complete list of stations and traffic / liaison totals are shown in the following table. Traffic averaged 2.0 per net session (up from 1.3 last month). Net time averaged 13.6 minutes per session (compared to 10.9 last month). Check-ins averaged 5.3 per session (up from 4.6 last month). Things are picking up, thankfully.

TEX Net Statistics (October 2008)

			total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	CTTN	TSN
Call		QNI							
W5CDX	Wads	0	12						
*		12							
W5CU	Sam	17	24		10				
*		7			6				
W5DY	Rodney	18	40	1	8	1			
		22		4	12				
N5EL	Floyd	9	9						
*		0							
W5ESE	Scott	17	17		1			17	17
*		0							
W5GKH	Charlie	8	16	7	5				
*		8		8	5				
W9GVW	Eric	3	3						
*		0							
WD5HPK	Teresa	1	1						
	WA5MUF XYL								
W7IZ	Scott	0	1						
	OR	1							
AA5J	Chuck	22	39	4	3		5		
*		17		6	3		2		
K6JT	Steve	12	39	4			10		

			total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	CTTN	TSN
Call		QNI							
*		27		8	3		26		
KA5KLU	Doug	1	2		1				
*		1			1				
WA5MS	Marty	14	24				7		
*		10							
WA5MUF	Bill	14	21						
*		7					1		
N5NVP	Jim	10	24						
		14							
K5RG	Ken	8	17		1	1			
*		9			1				
W5SBE	Larry	2	4						
		2							
KD5TXD	Pat	14	22	5		14			
*		8		5		4			
W9UW	Ron	0	1						
	WI	1							
AC5Z	Bert	15	15	10					
*		0							
Totals		331		62	60	20	51	17	17
				100%	97%	32%	82%	27%	27%
QTC 1		56	127						
QTC 2		71		Sessions:		62			
Time 1		465	842						
Time 2		377							

The roster, which follows, has been updated with WA5MUF and W5SBE. Note the names and QTH's for the one-time visitors are shown in the statistics table.

TEX Roster

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

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

Operating:

During these days of potential long skip conditions, here are a few things to keep in mind:

NCS stations please continue to ask stations distant from you to call for net QNI, preferably within the first 4 or 5 minutes of net operation. This should apply especially to late TEX, but it is also a good idea for early TEX now that we have changed back to standard time.

If you are listening and do not hear the NCS, but you do hear another station QNI, please wait until about 3 minutes after net startup time and then send "de (call), QNP NCS". Hopefully the station you heard can also hear you and relay to the NCS. If you hear another station do that, get the attention of the NCS (using another hailsign) and then relay the information.

It is going to be a little bothersome for a while, but I do believe conditions have started to come out of the low-sunspot cycle, so hang in there.

QRM on 3552:

When there is a contest or severe QRM from the Mexican stations on 3552, we can try changing frequency to 3643, assuming it is clear. The only drawback with this is that many stations will not know it changed.

If you are NCS and elect to move to 3643, please send an alert yourself on 3552 for a minute or so and then send someone to 3552 for about 5 minutes to alert others to move to 3643.

If you are on 3552 at net startup time and nothing is heard by 1 minute after, first check 3643 before starting to call up the net. Also don't forget to check up and down 2 or 3 KHz from 3552.

If the problem is Mexican QRM rather than a contest, it is better to stay close to 3552. PAN has elected to move to 3557 in that case, but that's a bit far so it is not recommended for TEX. Instead, pick a frequency up or down a couple KHz where you no longer hear the QRM and start the net there.

Be careful not to use 3555, since there is another traffic net on that frequency at the same time as TEX.

When coupled with the long skip problem, changing frequency from 3552 can be a net killer. One never knows (especially on late TEX) whether it is the skip that is preventing you from hearing the NCS or a change in frequency. Thus, jumping to 3643 on late TEX is not recommended unless there is obviously a contest going on. It may be prudent for the NCS to just send "TEX QSY 3643" (or TEX QSY 3539, etc.) for a minute or so on 3552 before making the change. If the RN5 and other liaisons are punctual, that will help alleviate confusion.

Until next month, 73, Steve

(TSN Corner appears on the next page)



TSN Corner

Texas Slow Net (Daily) 1945 CT 3552.0 KHz

http://www.geocities.com/scottamcmullen/Texas_Slow_Net.html

Scott McMullen W5ESE

TSN Net Manager

Net QNI was up again this month; 137 versus 119, with 13 different stations again participating. Welcome to first time participants Arch, W5AG, and Marty, WA5MS. Come back and join us as often as you can.

Here is a roster of stations that have participated in the Slow Net in recent months.

Net Stations (QNS)

Call	Name	City	State	Call	Name	City	State
W5AG	Arch	Lafayette	LA	KD5MMM	Phil	Fentress	TX
K0CMH	Craig	St. Louis	MO	WA5MS	Marty	Highland Vlg	TX
W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	TX	WB5NKC	Arley	Oklahoma City	OK
N5EL	Floyd	Temple	TX	WB5NKD	Pat	Oklahoma City	OK
W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	TX	N5NVP	Jim	Scott	LA
WD0ESF	Mike	Medicine Lodge	KS	K5RST	Ross	Zapata	TX
W5KCM	Randy	Watauga	TX	N0SSS	Adam	Oklahoma	TX
AE5GT	Clint	Wimberley	TX	KB5TCH	Carroll	Douglasville	TX
AA5J	Chuck	Plano	TX	KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville	TX
AA5JW	Carl	Stafford	TX	KJ5XF	Tony	Austin	TX
K5KV	Benny	Prairieville	LA	N5XGG	Joe	Colmesneil	TX
WA5LOU	Lou	Kennard	TX				



W1AW Code Practice Transmissions

A service the ARRL offers is weekday code practice transmissions. The code practice transmissions are sent at 8AM, 3PM, 6PM, and 9PM, in sessions of Fast Code and Slow Code. Slow Code sessions are 5, 7-1/2, 10, 13, and 15 wpm, and the Fast Code sessions are 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 13, and 10 wpm. The practice text is from QST magazine, and the source of the text is given at the beginning of each practice session. The frequencies used

are 1.8175, 3.5815, 7.0475, 14.0475, 18.0975, 21.0675, 28.0675, and 147.555 MHz.

Help Wanted

At the end of this year, my two year term as net manager of the Texas Slow Net will be drawing to a close. I've learned a lot, and enjoyed it very much, but would like to hand the reins over to someone new. If you would be interested in helping out, please let Rodney, W5DY, rodney39@tisd.net, know of your interest.

October Activity Report

TOTAL SESSIONS 31 TOTAL CHECKINS 137
 TOTAL TRAFFIC 36 BY 13 DIFFERENT STATIONS

The telegraph key image is courtesy of FCIT