

The Texan

Newsletter of the Texas NTS CW Net (TEX)

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

Net Manager: Steve Phillips, K6JT, Plano TX

(k6jt@arrl.net , 214-208-8900 Cell)

TEX Web Site: <http://www.k6jt.com/>

Assistant Manager: Rodney Baker, W5DY, Goliad TX

(w5dy@arrl.net , 361-645-5107 Cell)

November 2014



A Return to 80 for all nets

All NTS nets in cycle 4 of the Central Area have now switched to 80 meters exclusively. Besides TEX, that includes RN5 and CAN. See the list of nets and frequencies following the TEX Net Duty Roster. PAN has also changed to 80 meters for those who have TCC assignments there. So far, it appears to be working satisfactorily for TEX, RN5, and CAN.

The Army Air Corps by Uncle Vic W7VSE

Here's Part 2 of Vic's story, begun last month. Thanks again, Vic !

I was still working many hours to improve my code speed, and was handling my shift a lot better. One day, I had worked the Graveyard shift, (Midnight to 8AM), December 7, 1941, that infamous Sunday morning, had breakfast and went to sleep in my bunk at our house. Soon I was awakened by a radio blaring very loudly from an adjacent bedroom. That wasn't supposed to happen at our military house. I listened for just a few minutes and the program sounded like an H. G. Wells movie about invasion from outer space, or something. I got up and went in there to raise hell about the noise and found out it was the report of the Japanese bombing Pearl Harbor. So I sat down and listened to that radio program for a long time. I did not get much sleep that day and had trouble staying awake that night on the Graveyard shift. The next day they moved the Air Base boundary to encompass our living quarters and we no longer were free to come and go as we pleased.

Things started happening in a hurry. A few of the old timers were transferred to duties at other locations, and we started getting replacements from Scott Field, Illinois, Radio School. I had been doing a good job for a few months and my code practice had paid off. I was beginning to read at about 25 to 30 words a minute. With the older guys moving out and the new ones coming in, I moved up to the number two spot in the paying line. I became the Chief Operator and was promoted to buck sergeant (3 stripes).

The NCOIC started training me to do his job in case he was transferred before me.. Sgt Wogstadt taught me all the required paper work of a Station Chief. This was in early 1942. I was 20 years old, and didn't feel much like one of the "old-timers" yet.

But my orders came in before Wogstadt got his. In May, I was selected as a member of the newly formed Tenth Communications Squadron of the AACCS and ordered to report to Bolling Field, Washington, D.C. to be briefed and trained for "Foreign Tropical Duty."

For the train trip back to DC, I was the Sergeant in charge of one of the newer operators, Corporal Rolf Cramer, who was also selected. He and I turned in all the government things, said our good byes, and boarded a train headed for Washington DC. Our train trip was uneventful, and took a day and a night or so to get there. When we arrived at the train station in D.C. I was supposed to call out to Bolling Field for transportation.

(I am glad the Statute of Limitations has run out after these 70-odd years so I won't get into trouble telling this story.) I was in charge of Corporal Cramer, and I knew what I was supposed to do. But we had a long talk there in the train station. I reminded him that we were scheduled to go to "Foreign Tropical Duty" somewhere---we didn't know where—and there was a war going on. We didn't know how long we were going to be alive. So, I put it up to a vote, we could call now for transportation, or we could get a hotel room, have a night out on the town and then call for transportation like we had just arrived. We could get in trouble by doing this, but the vote was 2 in favor and zero against the idea. So we got on a city bus and rode until it looked like we were in the main part of D.C. We got off near 9th Street NW, Washington, DC, found a hotel, and then went out on the town. We found "Haddon's Oyster Bar" with a "Pabst Blue Ribbon on Tap" sign in the window, and Nick the Greek's restaurant right next door. (All the necessities of life!) The bartender was a pretty gal named Margaret Haddon. I believe her mother owned the joint. So. Rolf and I spent the entire evening there and had, what we considered, our "last supper" with plenty of beer to wash it down.

Next morning we were only slightly hung over. We found some breakfast and talked it over. We both decided we wanted one more day. So, that next evening was a rerun of the first night and we really enjoyed ourselves. Then, the 3rd morning, we caught the bus back to the railroad terminal and called the Air Base for transportation. We both felt guilty. An army vehicle showed up and took us to Bolling Field. We asked where the 10th Communications Squadron barracks were located and they told us. When we walked into that area, a Tech Sgt approached us and we both thought we were going to get thrown in the brig or hung from the gallows or something. But when the T/Sgt got closer I recognized him. It was Travis Camp, from Louisiana, one of the regular operators at WYT at Tucson, who had helped me learn to work a shift at the station. He was grinning from ear to ear and shook hands and welcomed us. He was glad to see us. After a while, he reached in his hip pocket and got a stack of Class A passes, found our names, and gave us each our card. In his Louisiana drawl he said, "Y'all can go on back to town if you want to."

We had come out smelling like a rose and now, we wished we had stayed another day at the hotel. But during the four months we were there, we frequented Haddon's Oyster Bar and Nick the Greek's restaurant quite a bit. We also visited most of the government buildings, memorials, etc. in Washington D.C.

At the air base we attended classes daily. The first day or so, all the operators had to copy code from a machine. When I came back the 2nd or 3rd day, the instructor told me that my code operating was OK and that I did not need to come back for any more code practice. I could goof off those hours. All of my work back at WYT practicing code had paid off again. I

think the electronic (maintenance) and installation men got briefed on installing the equipment and maintaining it. Thank goodness, without them we operators would have been lost.

We were at Bolling Field for four months. We were issued additional clothing, a 30 caliber Army rifle, a bayonet, a belt full of bullets, a gas mask, a tin helmet, a canteen and other things that we would need in "Foreign Tropical Duty." We still did not know where we were going. We also got many inoculations. We were issued a passport later and it had visas for many countries. And all 60 of us were given a promotion to the next higher grade. I became a Staff Sergeant (Three stripes up and one loop underneath). I was now in the "first three grader" group. Staff, Technical and Master Sergeants, and had only been in the Air Corps for 15 months.

Then one day our briefing came to an end, and we were transported back to the Railroad Station by army trucks. We were in full uniforms, wearing tin hats, and carrying our rifles, gas masks and bullet belts with our barrack bags bulging. I suppose we resembled a typical Army Infantry platoon on the move. All 60 of us boarded a Troop Train bound for Miami, Florida. The trip was uneventful and, as I remember, we were on the rail for a day and a night, at least.

It was an enjoyable trip seeing the East coast States during the daylight hours, and the train noise lulled us to sleep at night. The chow was good and plenty of it. When we got to Miami, trucks picked us up and took us to a very nice place that used to be some kind of resort. The military had taken it over. There were coconut palms throughout the area, and nice cottages to stay in. Some of the coconuts we could reach out and touch from an upstairs veranda type porch. The food was good here also, and we stayed several days. There was a nightclub nearby on a canal. We found out we could get a big pitcher of beer for a quarter. There were civilians there and a jukebox and dancing. I would have been content to spend the rest of the war there.

But soon we began leaving in groups of about 10 men with all their gear. This was in mid-September, 1942. I was in one of the first groups to go. We were trucked to the 26th Street Airport where we boarded a C-47 (Military DC-3) transport and departed the USA and flew south. Our route took us over Mexico, Central America and we refueled at Trinidad and Tobago, and another place and then spent the night in Belem, Brazil. We were able to sample Brazilian beer. Didn't like it. Next morning got back on the C-47 and continued south, refueled some more and finally reached Natal, Brazil, late in the afternoon. Natal is the easternmost point of South America. Just before sundown, we boarded a "China Clipper," Pan American Boeing 314, four-engine flying boat. It still had the Pan Am crew, but it was leased to the military. When we left the dock we were taxiing in a river going out to the Atlantic Ocean. It was about an eighth of a mile to the mouth of the river. When we got to the ocean, the plane kept on going, I thought we were still taxiing, but then I realized he had full power on all four engines. Finally, we started to pick up a little speed and we were crashing into the oncoming waves for a while. Then the plane broke from the water, flew a short distance, then crashed into another wave and we were back in the water again. After doing this a few times, we finally got airborne. It was a long slow climb to our cruising altitude.

The Pan Am Crew treated us great. The meals were excellent. Most of us played nickel-knock poker almost all night. I played for several hours and got sleepy, so I went to the back of the plane, where they had some bunks, and went sound to sleep. I had thought it over

about playing poker and decided I wouldn't do that any more. Sometime later I woke up to find myself suspended a few inches in the air above that bed, then, suddenly, I fell back down on it. It was frightening. I learned later, from one of the crew, that we had hit a down draft and descended rapidly for a few thousand feet. He said that often happened on that route.

I hadn't realized it when we took off, but evidently that aircraft had all the fuel it could possibly hold, because we flew all night and fourteen hours later, after sunup the next day, we saw Africa ahead.

This was wartime, and there were no radio stations to "home" on, so they had to navigate by dead reckoning. I think the pilot figured we were north of Fish lake, our destination, and he turned and headed south and flew for about 10 minutes, then turned around and flew back north for about 20 minutes until we located Fish Lake. We landed and a motor launch came out and took us ashore. We had a good meal, then got on a truck and proceeded through the jungle for a few miles. There were many monkeys running and swinging in the trees along the road, screeching at the top of their lungs. They were probably objecting to our violating their territory.

When we got to the airstrip, a C-47 was waiting for us. That airstrip looked like they had hacked it out of the dense jungle, and it didn't look long enough to me. Sure enough, when we took off, we clipped some branches off of the trees on our way out. We refueled again at a similar short runway field, and then flew on to Cairo, Egypt where we spent the night. We saw the Sphinx and some pyramids along the Nile River.

From Cairo, we flew down the Arabian Peninsula and landed on a small island for fuel. I think it was Aden. The runway wasn't very long there either, and both the landing and takeoff were scary. They had brought the gasoline to the island on a barge in many five-gallon square tins. Those native workers had a ladder and about three of them would pass the 5-gallon tins up, one at a time, to the guy who poured the gas into the aircraft's wing tanks. It took quite a while to "fill her up."

Then we proceeded to Karachi, India (which is now in Pakistan.) The military had previously shipped several tons of our equipment over on a ship and it was docked in the harbor there. It took about two weeks of labor to unload and sort out the equipment for all the different radio stations and control towers. There was a 20 Kilowatt gasoline power supply for each station, and a myriad of radio equipment, wire, metal towers, tools, etc, for each location. With the help of local Indian laborers, we got all the pieces sorted out and separated and labeled for shipping to the various Air Bases. Then after a couple of days of doing nothing, there was a notice posted on the bulletin board that we had to do other duties while we remained in Karachi. It listed them. There was KP and guard duty and others. One of the listings was driving a garbage truck. That sounded like an easy job, so I selected it and reported to the motor pool to get checked out on driving a truck.

The Sergeant got his clipboard and took me to an English truck that had a canvas top over the seat, and no doors. This was British India and they drove on the left hand side of the road. Of course, the driver sat on the right hand side. I started the truck and put it in its lowest gear and he told me to move it out. So I let in the clutch OK, and then tried to change gears with the stick shift to the next gear. And, from force of habit, after driving for years, I reached over

to my right to change gears. I pawed empty air and almost fell out of the truck. The Sgt laughed at me. Then I got through the gears and thought I was doing alright,, but when I looked down the road ahead of me, every oncoming car was in my lane. Oops, I moved over to the left side of the road. The Sgt got another laugh. When we got back to the motor pool, I thought I had flunked the driving test, but the Sgt passed me. He said almost everyone made the same mistakes that I did. I spent the next week or so driving to and from the garbage dump with some laborers doing the manual labor. It was easy finding the dump, because there were hundreds of birds circling like a huge whirlwind above the dump waiting for us to bring more food.

But all good things must come to an end. One day I got my orders to proceed to Kunming, China. I boarded an Indian train and rode a day and a night to Lahore, India, Their trains are different from ours. You get in a railroad car, and after the train starts moving you are stuck in that car until the train stops again. They don't have isles through the train like we do. Some of the natives ride on the outside of the train and go from car to car when they want to, but I didn't try that. At Lahore, a truck transported us to the airport and we boarded another C-47. We then flew to Agra, India and stayed overnight. I saw the Taj Mahal. It was beautiful. Then we flew on to Chabua Army Air Base in the Assam Province of India. On this leg of our journey, the Crew Chief of the C-47 pointed out Mount Everest, the highest mountain in the world.

We were now in a war zone and very close to the "hump" over the Himalayas. There were no tower operators at Chabua and after we landed, nobody was around. There were a few bomb craters here and there. We soon realized that there had just been an air raid, and everyone had abandoned the Air Base. They all came back and things were normal. We stayed overnight in Chabua, and early next morning, we departed to fly the hump into China.

Later there were 5 Air Bases in the Assam Province of India: Chabua, Jorhat, Tezpur, Mohanberi, and Dinjanl. All 5 of them were used as departure and arrival bases for aircraft flying the Hump and carrying troops and supplies in and out of China. There was no other way to get in and out of China at that time.

George Hart Series

Here is the 23rd installment of the George Hart Series. Geo's year of debauchery at Penn State and on.

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*

Chapter 23 - A tough year in graduate studies in preparation for ARRL.

My senior year at Penn State was one of debauchery and fits of depression about my lost love, otherwise it might have been pure fun. The Liberal Arts curriculum was much easier for me and I graduated with my class in June of 1936. But the depression was still on and there were no jobs, so the debauchery and mental depression continued into the summer. I

continued operation of W3NF in Ed's third-floor apartment at the farm. With my departure from the State College scene the fortunes of WLMA waned, but Ed and I continued operation in the AARS from W3NF and WLML. I worked part time for my mother at the farm, spent a lot of time in Ed's third-floor apartment, went out drinking and chasing women almost every night. It wasn't a good time and I despaired of my future.

As Fall approached, still jobless, I started thinking of the possibility of continuing my education. I consulted my former adviser at Penn State to explore the possibility of entering the graduate school as a candidate for a master's degree. He expressed approval of the idea but suggested I attend some other institution, because it was policy to discourage "in-breeding." He suggested the University of Michigan as having a superior English department and an excellent master's program; I didn't much like the idea of being away from the familiar Penn State scene, but after a family council regarding finances, and with Dr. Gates' promise to pave the way, I decided, without enthusiasm, to seek my advanced education in Ann Arbor.

But the scene at Ann Arbor was far different from that at State College. The environment was more urban, the campus spread out through the city, the sprawling metropolis of Detroit a mere 40 miles away. I took no amateur radio transmitting equipment with me and sought in vain for an active amateur radio facility at the University. All I had was Ed's old SW-3 receiver, and this I set up in my room on Catherine Street with an antenna around the ceiling molding. Every night I would listen for W3NF, who would send "blind" letting me know of any developments at home.

You must realize that in those days, the mid-thirties, one did not simply spin a telephone dial to connect immediately to your distant party. Such calls had to go through a special operator who sought connections along the path, and they were very expensive. I don't recall ever, in my entire 6-year college career, making a long-distance call home. Contact was by letter or by amateur radio with Ed. I had a friendly roommate on Catherine Street and we later moved to a boarding house on Monroe Street where I made many friends, but the 5-month period at Ann Arbor was probably the longest hiatus in my entire 74-year (as of April, 2001) amateur radio career - except for 2 1/2 years in military service during WWII. More on that later.

I did come home for Christmas vacation, leaving my car in Ann Arbor in dead storage (students, even graduate students like myself, were not allowed to have cars). It was a long and arduous trip by rail, and I almost decided not to go back; but after consulting with my mother and Ed, it was decided I should finish the semester at Michigan, then we would decide on the future. So back I went, again by rail (there were few or no commercial air routes). I took the "Black Diamond" express sleeper on the Lehigh Valley Railroad from Easton to Buffalo, where I changed to the New York Central across the Canadian peninsula to Detroit and Ann Arbor. There I attempted to continue my graduate studies with little enthusiasm, but by the end of January, as final exams started taking place, I was so fed up and discouraged that I got my 1930 Willys out of dead storage, packed it with my belongings and headed via Toledo and Cleveland back to State College.

I can't describe my feeling of elation as I entered the borough limits on West College Avenue, then PA route 45. It was a homecoming. Before I even went to my fraternity, where I had lived for my four undergraduate years, I stopped in at W8YA and found Gil Crossley in the little workshop. He greeted me with enthusiasm and seemed delighted at my stated intention to

seek entrance to the Penn State Graduate School. The place looked exactly the same as I had left it five months before.

Crossley said the new crop of freshmen on the staff had been unimpressive, not a good CW operator among them, and he hoped my return would buoy things up. When I checked in at the fraternity I found here were a couple of vacancies. The new prexy had been a protégé of mine and invited me to move into his room. All feeling of depression and homesickness vanished as I greeted my undergraduate fraternity brothers and many other friends, all of whom seemed very pleased at my return.

Dr. Gates, although a little disappointed at my failure to gain graduate credits at Michigan, promised to help get me into Graduate School, and this was forthcoming with some reluctance on the part of higher authority who, for reason I couldn't understand at the time, still preferred graduates from other colleges and universities, and wished Penn State graduates to attend other institutions - for "Broadening." I did not wish to be "broadened" in that manner. I was a country boy with an intense dislike for the noisy, confused distractions of city life.

My status at W8YA became one of unlimited privilege and high respect. Crossley made me graduate manager, replacing Walter Hawk who had attained his EE degree and gone on to a lucrative job in industry. I was held in high respect by the rest of the Radio Station Staff, about 17 in number, and by my undergraduate brothers in the fraternity. The academic picture was a little less gratifying, because I had to take a number of English literature and other non-composition courses I had little stomach for, but I managed to get by them all and made top grades in my composition courses. The Penn State environment was a most familiar one and I was content. I had also developed a better social presence in the company of Louise Stebbins, a junior co-ed who eventually became my wife. The blight of the unhappy love affair in my last two undergraduate years was still with me, as were the bad habits I acquired because of it, but now it surfaced only occasionally and I felt more a whole person.

By the Spring of 1938, I had achieved all the requirements for a master's degree except the final thesis. This I undertook that Summer, partly at Penn State, partly at the Library of Congress in Washington, partly at Louise's home in Coudersport, partly at home on the farm.

This is supposed to be the story of my amateur radio career, but it cannot be told adequately without an explanation of other facets of my life. The AARS involvement continued after my return from Michigan, both from the farm and from W8YA, as I worked to acquire a master's degree in English composition. It was a period full of a sense of achievement accompanied by normalcy as I acquired, perhaps a little late, the traits of mature manhood.

Coming in Chapter 24 - Geo goes to W1AW and ARRL.

TEX Mailbox:

Pat, KD5TXD, responded to my plea for inputs. We are lucky to have both the following, sent right after the last newsletter came out and also her report on the Hamfest that is mentioned here. Pat wrote: Read in the Newsletter that your Tex mail box was on the thin side last month. First, thanks for covering for me Thursday evening. We had a really excellent evening at TAMUK. It started with a weather lecture presented by John Metz of our Corpus

National Weather Service. John had the students wowed with video clips of some pretty dramatic weather situations. John goes in for that weather shock value.

Next we had a lecture on Fracking. Our part of the country has been in an economic boom for several years because of the oil shale industry just north of us at Eagle Ford Shale area. The speaker described, in laymen terms, the process of well logging and fracking. The stuff they mix with sand and water to pump down the well is guar. Now I have heard of guar in terms of cooking, but never oil well work. So, I asked the speaker what guar was. His answer was that it was a polymer. A voice on the far side of the room piped up saying it was a legume crop grown in India (complete with Indian accent). Guar has been grown on occasions here in South Texas, too. I learned a lot that evening and even the speaker learned something. Guar makes a great sauce thickener, too :-)

We concluded the evening with a brilliant, clear night for star watching. There were almost a hundred visitors for our astronomy public viewing.

The Corpus Christi ham club is hosting the 16th annual South Texas Ham Fest in Aransas Pass, Texas, November 8th. I have not been to that ham fest in a few years. A few months ago I started turning pens again. I hadn't done that either in a number of years. The problem with turning is that I always have to buy more supplies and since I don't seem to be able to sell much of my stuff down here in the middle of nowhere I had to set that hobby aside.

One of the ham fest coordinators heard that I turned pens and casually mentioned that it would be cool if someone could put a person's call sign on the pen. I whipped out my handy dandy Morse code pen and showed that to him. He then got very excited and insisted that I had to be a vender at the ham fest. Well, turning the call sign into the pen on site is a bit difficult. I have never worked under pressure like that so I declined the invite.

Charles started thinking how we could attend and have things set up so I could turn call signs into pens at the ham fest. He ordered a mini lathe that we could put on the tailgate of the truck. So we signed up for a table inside the building and a tailgate spot outside the building with a very long extension cord to the lathe. Now, it just has to not rain that particular day and we will have some fun trying to turn Morse Code into pen blanks. I will report on how that turned out and if I actually got to see some of the ham fest or if I was confined to the pickup truck for the day.

Thanks and 73!! Pat KD5TXD

- . . . -

Jim, W5FEA, sent in this link to the story of the Hallicrafters SCR-299 transmitter, produced for the US Army Signal Corps in WW II. Brought back some great memories of the old war-surplus gear that was still widely in use when I was first licensed. Those of you licensed in the post-war years will also enjoy this. See: http://youtu.be/Jps0_2adUvo

- . . . -

Pete, K5GM, forwarded the following, written by **Glenn, VE3GNA**. It is something we have gotten a bit lazy about. It seems reasonable that the phone number be included in the service message ONLY if it could not be verified locally (e.g., using 411.com or whitepages.com). I also note that the number could get garbled in the return service message as easily as it

might have gotten garbled in the original message, so false positives may result. In any case, here it is for your review and comment:

Recently I received several service messages via NTS-D stating that a phone number is either disconnected, is out of service, or is not accepting incoming calls. None of these service messages included the phone number for verification. Often times a digit can be misconstrued both on voice and CW and the receiving operator has no way of knowing which it is unless queried at the time.

I think it should be made mandatory that this information be included in every service message where a phone number is involved. Granted, online lookup sites are by no means accurate, but I have found in the past that the above is exactly what has happened. How do we go about getting this out to the masses?

73

Glenn VE3GNA

- . . . -

Received the following via **Scott, W7IZ**, originally written by **Bob, K6YBV**. Since it appears to take place in Texas, thought I'd let y'all get a chuckle, too.

A tough old cowboy from Texas counseled his granddaughter that if she wanted to live a long life, the secret was to sprinkle a pinch of gun powder on her oatmeal every morning.

The granddaughter did this religiously until the age of 103, when she died. She left behind 14 children, 30 grandchildren, 45 great-grandchildren, 25 great-great-grandchildren, and a 40-foot hole where the crematorium used to be.

- . . . -

Scott, W7IZ, forwarded this little anecdote from **Vic, W7VSE**. Vic wrote: I'm 92 years old and I think this is one of the oldest jokes I can remember. I was born in Houston TX and had relatives in a few Texas towns. Fort Worth, TX, (Cow Town), was one of those towns and if you have never been there, I may have to explain a few things, so you can understand my story. Fort Worth has the Stockyards in North Fort Worth. People from all over the State brought their livestock to the Stockyards to be shipped by rail to anywhere in the USA. Cattle, hogs, sheep, you name it, were brought there and stored in pens until they could be put on a train for shipping.

I'm sure that the staff and workers at the Stockyards worked hard and tried their best to keep the place clean and the odors down. But with the untold thousands of animals that passed through the system, the cleanup job must have been enormous, maybe even impossible. Consequently, after many years of operation, naturally, there was quite an odor from all the deposits the many animals had left. In fact, if the wind was just right, you could smell that odor from several miles away, especially if you were approaching Fort Worth from the North. And even if there was no wind, the odor was quite obnoxious as you got near the Stockyards. I have not been to Fort Worth in many years, and I imagine they have done something about the situation by now. But if you were ever there in the early days you would probably never forget it.

Now that you know as much about the situation as I do, here is that story:

This happened many years ago. A number of railroads converge at Ft. Worth. I don't remember which railroad it was, but a woman passenger, with a baby, had just departed from somewhere, bound for Fort Worth. The middle-aged Conductor who had been on that run for many years came down the aisle and punched everyone's ticket, and then he went to the last car and sat in a window seat and soon went to sleep. Our woman with the small baby had a seat in the car just ahead of his car. Later on, she changed her baby's cloth diaper, and found it was really too messed up to try to save, so she simply tossed it out the car window. The wind caught it and blew it back and it entered the window on the last car where the Conductor was asleep. It hit the sleeping Conductor right in the face. He jumped up and with his thunderous, professional Conductor's voice, he announced:

"NORTH FORT WORTH! NORTH FORT WORTH!"

Vic Seeberger

- . . . -

As mentioned earlier, here is **Pat, KD5TXD**'s report on the Hamfest held last week. Here is my report on the 16th Annual South Texas Hamfest at the Aransas Pass Civic Center. Previous Hamfests put on by STARC had been held more in the Corpus area. This one was in the beautiful, bigger and more northerly Aransas Pass Civic Center. It may have been my imagination, but I believe they got more folks out from distant parts of Texas by locating the event just a tad to the north.

Charles and I signed up for a booth inside the Center and a tailgate spot outside. Since it had been raining for about a week prior to the Hamfest, I was seriously worried about our outside activities. I have been turning pens again and made that my excuse for setting up a booth inside to sell my handiwork and a tailgate spot so I could set up a small lathe. What the lathe was used for was to turn Morse code rings into the body of the pen. The Morse code rings would form the Amateur's call sign. Wide rings would be the dashes and narrow rings would be the dits. It is a pretty unique concept. I actually sold three such pens at the Hamfest.

Inside the Civic Center at our booth we had the opportunity to visit with just about all the folks who attended the Hamfest. I didn't expect to sell as much of my stuff as I did. My goal was to break even and visit with folks that I had not seen in some time. Pens and embroidery don't really fit in with radios and antennas. My pens and embroidery were a suitable distraction for XYL's who are or aren't licensed. In my pre-KD5TXD days I painfully remember going with Charles to Hamfests and being nearly insane waiting for Charles to properly finger every connector in the place. Now days there are more items of refuge for the non-Amateur at the Hamfests. The traditional Hamfest has somewhat evolved to be more of a family event. Plus, more of the XYL's have finally given in to the hobby and have their license.

The Hamfest had all of our favorite events listed. There was the official testing session, the ARRL and ARES session, an antenna building session, and, my favorite, John Metz from the Corpus NWS presenting a SKYWARN for the attendees. Any Hamfest that I go to I will be searching out the SKYWARN session. It is very interesting to learn about weather differences throughout Texas. Our South East Texas weather is very different from San Antonio or Dallas weather and the corresponding SKYWARN presentations provide a fuller understanding of Texas weather.

Charles made up some of his music CD's to sell at our booth. He sold a couple of them. This is especially interesting to me because it illustrates the diversity of Amateur Radio Operators. Yes, radio is the hobby of focus at a Hamfest. But Amateurs are not single hobby kinds of people. There is always the railroad fan, such as our Floyd, who attends the Hamfest and is easily drawn into a telegraph conversation. There are the astronomy hobby folks and, we have discovered, the music folks. I even met a couple wood turning Amateurs who discussed the art of turning pens with me. Any hobby that uses technology can walk hand in hand with Amateur Radio. Charles has been playing the flute for over 50 years and is now recording and synthesizing his music. I think his music is beautiful, and not just because he is my OM.

The networking aspect of a Hamfest is one of the key forces at work. We would not have met Linda without the Hamfest. She has just moved to Bishop, near Kingsville, and is a relatively new Amateur. It has been a long time since our area has been blessed with a new Amateur. We will be anxious to hear her on our Tuesday night 2 meter on the air meeting. We will be sure to invite her to our great Ride on the Wild Side bicycle run in April.

We also met an interesting couple who run one of the Kingsville ambulance services. They attend local gun shows, craft shows, and amateur radio hamfests just to meet and get to know their community. They are not Amateur Radio Operators.

Charles and I had a great time. We had not attended in a couple years so this was marvelous fun for us. We took turns manning our booth and wandering the isles, fingering connectors, contemplating antennas, and longing after radios both old and new. I saw only one code key for sale other than the ones I brought to the show. It can't truly be a Hamfest without code keys.

Thanks and 73!! Pat KD5TXD

- . . . -

Finally, I received a report from **Charlie, W5GKH**. He wrote: The radio is still not repaired. The guy who has it says that the parts (relays) are back-ordered from Yaesu. To compound that problem, last Monday morning, when I went out to pick up my newspapers, I discovered my antenna on the ground. It appears that the stainless steel wire that was holding the balun in the middle of the inverted V has broken. It could be that the balun itself has come apart. I can't remember exactly how old it is, but I'm thinking it dates back to the 1980's. My handyman seems to be out of pocket right now but I have left him a message on his answering service.

You might as well get a replacement for my skeds. It could be a few more months before I will have everything back working again. 73, Charlie, W5GKH

. - . - .

TEX Net Topics

There are 2 backup slots open (shown in **yellow**), both for RN5 liaison, and no open NCS slots. Jim, W5FEA, has been filling in on the Sunday backup RN5 slot, so he is now shown there. Please check the duty roster and advise if you are no longer willing to take the positions you are scheduled for on a regular basis. Also please advise if you are interested in filling either of the backup slots.

The TEX Duty Schedule and Roster are shown on the following page (for easier printing of a single page). The Duty Schedule was updated. Note that W5GKH is shown in Yellow, since Charlie is still without a repaired rig. Thanks to those who have been filling in the slots. As Charlie's note in the TEX Mailbox stated, it might be well to get a formal replacement for his Sunday and Monday NCS slots. When everything is working again there, he can come back to whatever works best for him. If you are interested in trying out an NCS slot (or another one) please advise. In the meantime, the listed alternates will continue to be the primary NCS stations. Note that Rodney has moved from Sunday to Monday so he can have a "night off" on Sunday.

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 numbers at the 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.

(This space intentionally left blank)

TEX CW Net Weekly Schedule

Local	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
NCS #1	W5GKH	N5RL	KD5TXD	KD5TXD	N5RL	W5FEA	W5GKH
Backup	W5DY	W5FEA	W5DY	W5DY	W5FEA	K6JT	W5FEA
NCS #2	W5GKH	K6JT	W5TMO	W5TMO	K5KV	W5DY	W5GKH
Backup	W5DY	W5DY	K6JT	K6JT	K6JT	K6JT	K6JT
RN5 #1	K5KV	N5RL	W5CU	KA5KLU	N5RL	KA5KLU	W5CU
Backup	W5DY	Open	W5DY	Open	W5ESE	W5ESE	W5FEA
RN5 #2	K5KV	K6JT	W5CU	KA5KLU	K6JT	KA5KLU	W5CU
Backup	W5DY	W5DY	K6JT	K6JT	W5DY	K6JT	K6JT

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, W5FEA, K5GM, K6JT, KA5KLU, K5KV, K5RG, N5RL

NCS Backup: W5CU, W5DY, W5ESE, W5FEA, K6JT, K5KV, K5RG, N5RL, W5TMO, KD5TXD

TEX Roster

Call	Name	Location / Notes	Call	Name	Location / Notes
N5AF	Sam	Cleveland	N7NET	Scott	McKinney
KW5AS	Skip	Victoria	* KB5NJD	John	Duncanville
N5BA	Brian	Houston	N5NVP	Jim	Scott LA
W5CU	Sam	Edmond OK	W5OMR	Geoff	Houston
W5DH	Tom	Dallas	AC5P	Mike	Bartlesville OK
W4DLZ	Frank	Florida	K1PKZ	Paul	Tom Bean
* W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	K5QOW	Gary	Reagan Wells
* W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	* K5RG	Ken	Houston
W5FEA	Jim	Graham	N5RL	Randy	San Antonio
W5GKH	Charlie	West Columbia	W5ROK	Steve	Richardson (K6JT)
K5GM	Pete	Austin	KD5RQB	Jason	Atlanta
W9GVW	Eric	San Antonio	W5TMO	Mike	Austin
K5JRN	Si	Austin	KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville
* K6JT	Steve	Plano	NE5V	Chris	Liberty Hill
KA5KLU	Doug	San Antonio	WB8WKQ	Jeff	Michigan
N7KRT	Jeff	Victoria	K6YBV	Bob	Placerville CA
* K5KV	Benny	Star	W5YE	Brian	Harlingen
* W6LFB	Jim	Denton	W5ZD	Pat	Kingsville (KD5TXD)

* Capable of 160 meter operation

Statistics:

All statistics were essentially the same compared to last month. All RN5 slots were covered and TTN / DFW representation were again very good.

Jim, W5FEA, with 62 out of 62 (100%) maintains his “perfect attendance record” yet another month. Thank you again Jim for your dedication and also your help with NCS and RN5 liaison duties. Randy, N5RL, had 51 (82%) for second while Rodney, W5DY, with 45 (73%) captured third. Thanks again to all of you who checked in for your support.

Visitors to the net included Frank, W4DLZ, from FL, Art, NS7E, from Seguin, Dave, NE5E, from San Antonio, Steve, N7FUL, from La Vernia, and Mike W8MAL, from OH. Nice to hear Gary, K5QOW, checking in again.

The complete list of stations and traffic / liaison totals are shown in the following table. Traffic averaged 3.0 per net session (2.9 last month). Net time averaged 11.0 minutes per session (compared to 11.2 last month). Check-ins averaged 5.9 per session (5.9 last month).

TEX Net Statistics (October 2014)

Call	Name	QNI	Total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	TSN
N5AF	Sam	2	2					
		0						
N5BA	Brian	0	2					
		2						
W4DLZ	Frank	0	1					
	FL	1						
W5CU	Sam	9	17		6			
*		8			5			
W5DY	Rodney	19	45	5	1			
		26		7				
NS7E	Art	1	1					
	Seguin	0						
NE5E	Dave	1	1					
	San Antonio	0						
W5ESE	Scott	1	1					
*		0						
W5FEA	Jim	31	62	7	3	24		
*		31				3		
N7FUL	Steve	1	1					
	La Vernia	0						
K5GM	Pete	10	15					
*		5						
W9GVW	Eric	7	7					
*		0						
K6JT	Steve	17	47	2			14	
*		30		11	12		30	
KA5KLU	Doug	10	20		9			
*		10			9			
K5KV	Benny	7	26		4			
		19		5	4			
W8MAL	Mike	0	1					
	Ohio	1						
KB5NJD	John	3	3				3	

Call	Name	QNI	Total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	TSN
		0						
K1PKZ	Paul	5	5					
		0						
K5QOW	Gary	1	1					
*		0						
K5RG	Ken	0	6					
*		6			1			
N5RL	Randy	24	51	8	8	2		
*		27				22		
KD5RQB	Jason	15	30			4		15
		15						15
W5TMO	Mike	0	10					
*		10		8				
KD5TXD	Pat	9	9	9				
*		0						
Totals		364		62	62	55	47	30
				100%	100%	89%	76%	48%
QTC 1		81	188					
QTC 2		107			Sessions	62		
Time 1		357	683					
Time 2		326						

Operating:

We could use some more outgoing (and also incoming) traffic. Try to bring something to send to the RN5 liaison a couple times a month. Must be someone out there you'd like to say hello to. Use HXE when appropriate to solicit a response from them.

The following shows the monthly total of traffic handled on the Region and Above nets and NTS Digital. The totals for both the manual nets and NTS Digital were significantly higher than last month, largely thanks to Simulated Emergency Tests being held.

NTS Central Area Activity for October 2014

Net	Sessions	QTC	QNI	QTR	Rate
RN5 Cycle 2	54	140	585	777	0.180
9RN Cycle 2	14	424	67	193	2.197
10RN Cycle 2	23	1068	173	339	3.150
RN5 Cycle 4	62	173	340	646	0.268
9RN Cycle 4	51	127	145	320	0.397
TEN Cycle 4	59	165	237	487	0.339
CAN Cycle 2	14	144	146	360	0.400
CAN Cycle 4	30	341	176	472	0.722
TCC Cycle 2		40	19		
TCC Cycle 4		156	88		
Total Manual Nets		2778	1976	3594	

NTS Digital *		Received	Sent
KB0OFD	3983	1819	2164
WB9FHP	4015	1905	2110
W5SEG	1075	695	380
WA4STO	5027	826	4201
Total NTS Digital	14100	5245	8855
Total Central Area		16878	

* Only the Area Hub / 10RN MBO, KB0OFD; 9RN MBO, WB9FHP; and RN5 MBO, W5SEG, are shown, not the DRS stations, but some duplication occurs due to mutual interchange. WA4STO was included this month due to an outstanding effort with the digital SET.

Until next month, 73, Steve K6JT

(TSN Corner starts on the next page)



Photo Courtesy of VE3UU

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

Greetings From Northeast Texas

I received an email from Jeff N7KRT that he would be unable to be NCS until December 8th due to work. Sam volunteered to fill in from November 9th until Jeff returns. Thanks Sam for picking up the net.

Mr. Carroll KB5TCH had a perfect attendance record this month (31 out of 31). Sam took second place (22 out of 31). Jim W5FEA came in third (19 out of 31). Thanks to all of you who checked in for your support.

TSN Activity Report for October 2014

Total Sessions: 31 Total Check-ins: 107 Total Traffic: 30 by 7 different operators.

October 2014 QNS

Name	Callsign	QNI
Carroll	KB5TCH	31
Sam	KK4HCF	22
Jason	KD5RQB	20
Jim	W5FEA	19
Phil	KD5MMM	9
Jeff	N7KRT	3
Mike	WD0ESF	3

November 2014 Net Control Stations

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sam KK4HCF	Carroll KB5TCH	Carroll KB5TCH	Jim W5FEA	Phil KD5MMM	Carroll KB5TCH	Sam KK4HCF

2014 TSN Roster

Callsign	Name	QTH
AC5BE	JOE	MATAGORDA, TEXAS
K5BRY	JOE	AUSTIN, TEXAS
AB0DK	DAVE	KIRKWOOD, MISSOURI
W5DY	RODNEY	GOLIAD, TEXAS
W5ESE	SCOTT	DRIPPING SPRINGS, TEXAS
WD0ESF	MIKE	MEDICINE LODGE, KANSAS
W5FEA	JIM	GRAHAM, TEXAS
KK4HCF	SAM	MARYSVILLE, TENNESSEE

Callsign	Name	QTH
N7KRT	JEFF	VICTORIA, TEXAS
W5LPD	LARRY	KATY, TEXAS
KD5MMM	PHIL	FENTRESS, TEXAS
N5NVP	JIM	SCOTT, LOUISIANA
K1PKZ	PAUL	TOM BEAN, TEXAS
K5QOW	GARY	REAGAN WELLS, TEXAS
N5RL	RANDY	SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
KD5RQB	JASON	ATLANTA, TEXAS
KB5TCH	CARROLL	DOUGLASSVILLE, TEXAS
W5TMO	MIKE	AUSTIN, TEXAS
W5TRX	DAVID	JUSTIN, TEXAS
KD5TXD	PAT	KINGSVILLE, TEXAS
AA5VE	CARL	TEXARKANA, TEXAS
WJ5Z	ROY	TYLER, TEXAS

Silent Keys

Floyd	N5EL	2013
Dave	W5VXI	2014

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

Region Net 5 (Daily) 1930 CT on **7108** 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 W4DLZ (W4DLZ@ARRL.NET)
RN5 Net Manager

Hello guys and welcome to Edition 33 of the **RN5 Corner**.

An operating hint this month: Copying a string of many messages with a pen is strenuous and painful, especially as we get older. Typing solves this problem no matter how many messages I type. It works very well and with no fatigue.

If you are interested in typing Radiograms while receiving them, there is a nice crutch for doing this. Just type with the index fingers (only) of both hands and you'll be surprised how fast one can type doing this. This is the way many Druggists and Doctors type. It takes a little practice to get going, but one quickly learns how to do it. I don't write down anything on paper any more, just type with my index fingers. After a period of time, you can take your eyes off the keyboard, going back and forth to the screen while typing. Your speed will increase as you continue typing. I started this as my fingers are stiffening up and cramping, but no problem with this while typing.

We still need Liaison stations for CAN, DRN5 and NCS slots filled. If you're interested and I hope you are, I'll assist you in any way, talking you through it on the telephone if needed.

Thanks again and keep up the good work.

73, Frank W4DLZ
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	W4DLZ	W5CU	W4SU	W4SU	W4DLZ	Open
NCS #2	KZ8Q	W4DLZ	W5CU	K6JT	W4SU	W4DLZ	Open
CAN TX	Open	Open	Open	KA5KLU	W4SU	KA5KLU	W5CU
CAN RX	Open	W4DLZ	W4AGL	KA5KLU	W4SU	KA5KLU	Open
DRN5	Open	Open	K5RG	Open	Open	Open	Open

October 2014 Statistics

SESSIONS	62
QTC	173
QNI	340
QTR	646
AVG QTC	2.8
AVG QNI	5.5
AVG QTR	10.4

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
W4DLZ	FRANK	FL	N5NVP	JIM	LA
WD4DNC	BARRY	FL	K4PG	KEVIN	FL
AD4DO	JOHN	FL	KZ8Q	BEN	AL
W5DTR	CURT	IL	K5RG	KEN	TX
K1DW	DALLAS	LA	N5RL	RANDY	TX
W5DY	RODNEY	TX	W4SQE	ANDY	TN
NY4E	BILL	FL	W4SU	JERRY	AL
W5ESE	SCOTT	TX	W6SX	HANK	CA
KJ4FDV	TREY	AL	K15T	WADE	LA
KC4FL	JOHN	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 W4DLZ