

The Texan

Newsletter of the Texas NTS CW Net (TEX)

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

Net Manager: Steve Phillips, K6JT, Plano TX
(k6jt@arrl.net, 214-208-8900)

TEX Web Site: <http://k6jt.home.att.net/>

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

October 2007



Winter, Already??

It has started already. I have observed long skip on 80 meters at 10 PM several nights in the last couple of weeks. The most recent, Monday the 1st (local), saw Charlie, W5GKH, effectively talking to himself as net control. His signal was right at the noise level threshold up here. Interestingly, Pat, KD5TXD, was S8 at my QTH. Charlie could not hear either of us. A similar problem occurred on Sunday, but the band changed around 10:10 and Charlie's signal came up from just above the noise level to S9 plus. A week ago it was Rodney who was S9 here while Charlie was barely audible.

So what does that mean? From my trusty (and somewhat ragged from looking up all the unfamiliar cities for which traffic is listed) auto club map of Texas, the line-of-sight from my QTH to West Columbia is around 275 miles. To Pat's QTH it is about 385 miles, and to Rodney's is about 305 miles. That puts the calculated "skip zone" on 80 meters at somewhere between 280 and 300 miles. No wonder Sam, W5CU, up near OK City is very weak (or inaudible) here on late RN5! He is inside my skip zone radius. We can expect the skip zone to possibly lengthen even further as winter approaches. Sigh.

Fortunately, it does not happen every night yet (actually, it might happen more often than I can tell, but generally I can hear Floyd, N5EL, who is only about 140 miles line-of-sight from here). So what do we do? There is not much we can do about the ionosphere. At least conditions at 7 are now becoming better as each week passes. On the late session, all NCS stations should be aware that long skip **can** occur and do not be surprised if you cannot hear very many stations (if any) check in. If you as NCS do hear others, then please ask the one farthest away to call for QNI (or ask them to make a "net call" as it is said on the voice nets).

For the rest of us net members, be patient. If you do not hear anything from the net control station, listen for someone else to check in. When they finish sending, send your full callsign (not just a hail-sign) ONCE, followed by "QNP". If you hear someone else sending their call and QNP, and you copy the NCS, please get the NCS's attention (with a hail sign) and then tell him/her that another station is trying to check in. We will all need to be patient and also alert in order to relay both traffic and check-ins during the coming months, particularly on the late TEX session. Look at it as yet another "fun" operating challenge to keep things interesting and help build our skills.

Back to California

It is also that time again for me to make the trek to California to help out my parents. Seems like just a short time ago, but it has been 3 months since I left for my last trip. I will be gone from the 10th through the 21st. I will need fill-ins for my Wednesday early, and Thursday late NCS slots. I will also need help with my TCC schedules on Thursday evenings for the 11th and 18th, but I will try to arrange those separately.

NCS stations please send your reports to Rodney, W5DY, in my absence. Please also try to fill the RN5 liaison slots. Rodney and I have been filling in on Thursday and Friday (and also Saturday) late sessions when we are home. Thanks to Scott, W5ESE, who has been taking many of the early sessions to RN5. Since both Rodney and I will be gone on the weekends, it is particularly important to have someone cover the late sessions, which are difficult for Scott.

Rodney will be gone Friday and Saturday for the first 3 weekends of October to take care of family affairs. Just hold your reports until he checks in again, or you can E-Mail them directly to me at the address given at the top of the newsletter. Note that I have also changed the telephone number there to my cell phone number, which I will have with me even while traveling.

RN5 / CAN on 80 Meters Now

As of this writing, both sessions of RN5 as well as all sessions of CAN (that I listened to) the last couple weeks have been on 80 meters. RN5 has made it an official change, but I have not received any official word about CAN. See the duty roster later in this newsletter for the frequencies.

W1NJM Saga

Again, 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 7 of George Hart's recollections. "Geo" and Bunch continue their discoveries on and into the dregs of a world of "PHONE" and callsign advancement.

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. Part 7.

Traffic Handling at 3NF in 1928, and other tales

(From last month...)

I operated until daylight, managed to work a 7 in Montana and another one in Idaho, called several 6's but got no answers. At 7 o'clock I had to quit to get ready for school. During the day, in school, I bragged to several companions that I had talked by radio to stations in Montana and Idaho, but no one believed me. I believe they thought I was a little cracked, and some of them moved away from me. All day I walked on clouds. 3NF had an outstanding signal, at last! I could hardly wait to get home and do some more operating.

(Continuing)

But when I got there, Bunch had dismantled the 210 and was reinstalling the 852. As usual, he ignored my protests and when the work was done he sat and operated for hours while I stood by. It amazed me that the plate of the big tube no longer glowed red and the big transformer no longer groaned when the key was pressed. Not only did we receive answers to all calls, but CQ brought several responses, and all reports were R-8 or R-9. Bunch had to put a shunt on the RF meter to keep it from going off scale. The plate current milliammeter deflected to 100 ma. It was a happy time. But our signal reports, although much improved in strength, still were AC tone. I didn't care about it, but Bunch was never satisfied, and he lusted for a "DC note." Back into operation went the rectifier tubes, filter choke and filter condenser. And Lo and Behold! the first contact reported us R-9PDC (pure DC). The noise made by the transmitter in our regenerative receiver was quieter, loud clicks instead of the roar that had previously been produced. Bunch operated from the 1000 volt taps on the transformer to try to save the poor overloaded rectifier tubes. This seemed to make little difference in signal strength despite what must have been considerable voltage drop. We had an outstanding signal with a DC note. I hoped now that Bunch would leave the rig alone for a while.

"PHONE" Such a hope was dashed, however, when he decided to go on phone. This was accomplished by procuring an old upright telephone with the receiver removed and "loop modulating" the signal. A coil of two or three turns was wrapped around the tank coil of the transmitter with leads to the carbon telephone mike. This produced a combination of amplitude and frequency modulation of questionable quality but none-the-less understandable at the receiving end. We remained on phone for perhaps two weeks, at first basking in the uniqueness of communicating by this method as contrasted to CW, but very soon growing tired of the same old chatter and relative difficulty in establishing and maintaining contacts. Besides, considerable RF voltage found its way into the microphone and if you accidentally touched the mouthpiece with your lip, you got burned. The phone segment of the band, incidentally, was only 50 kcs. wide at the extreme low end, 3500-3550 kcs. Most amateurs used loop modulation, just as we did. Some of the more advanced types used grid, Heising or plate modulation. The latter two methods produced higher quality but required equipment that the typical amateur did not have and could not afford. FM was not unknown but not used by amateurs, except when produced incidentally with loop modulation.

PRE-WWII CALL AREAS The call areas were different from today's configuration, too. Only the first and fifth call areas were as they are today (2001). The 2nd call area was only Metropolitan New York City, that is, Long Island, New York City itself, a piece of southeastern New York State and a piece of Eastern New Jersey close to the City. The 3rd call area was the rest of New Jersey, southeastern Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, D.C. and Virginia. The fourth call area was as today except now adding Virginia. The 6th call area then included Arizona, Utah and Nevada, which are now part of the 7th call area. The 8th call area then included most of Pennsylvania, most of New York State, Ohio, West Virginia and Michigan, except its upper peninsula. There was no 0 call area until after WW II. In Canada, western provinces of Alberta and British Columbia were Canada's 5th call area, Manitoba and Saskatchewan the 4th, Ontario the 3rd, Quebec the 2nd and the Maritime Provinces the 1st. These were then the only Canadian call areas.

In those days, if you moved to a different call area you had to change your call. You could operate as "portable" for a limited time, using your "old" call with a portable indicator, but you

had to make application for a modification of your station license. Similarly, you could operate temporarily from a location other than your station license, but you had to notify the Commission (Federal Radio Commission until 1933, then FCC took over) where you would be operating from and for how long. Alternatively, you could apply for a portable station license and get a different call for it or you could obtain a separate call, if operating a permanent station from a different call area.

TRAFFIC HANDLING But enough of regulations. It is a complicated picture and there were many changes form year to year. Let's get on with my personal history. In 1928, I was still operating 3NF without a license, perhaps more than Bunch as he chased girls, although he continued to maintain the station, often to my dismay, putting us off the air while he made changes or decided to rebuild something or try something new. I was an operator, not a builder or experimenter. Bunch was the "compleat" amateur, seeking more technical knowledge and skill as well as high competence in operating. This lack of interest in the technical aspects of amateur radio has plagued me during my entire 70+ years of amateur radio experience. By this time I had reached a level of operating skill high enough to be bored with simply making ragchews or with formula contacts. So I got interested in traffic handling. This was an activity undertaken by a great many amateurs during that period and for decades to come, and ARRL encouraged and fostered it with the "trunk line" concept. With Bunch's encouragement and participation (when he wasn't chasing girls or monkeying with the equipment), several "schedules" were established, first in the "five point" system with a station in each of the four directions, and with a station in the nearest big metropolitan area, which was Philadelphia.

These schedules were kept every weekday. I remember we had difficulty setting up some of the schedules and those we did get set up weren't always reliable. Bunch and I (mostly I) kept our end religiously, and when the station at the other end too often failed to show up we (I) sought someone else. Traffic handling was a "big deal" in those days; we usually had no trouble in this regard; but continued reliability was a different matter. Even then, at age 16, I often contemplated the shortcomings of the system and sought solutions. It must have been in 1929 that I entered into extensive correspondence with W8DLG in Brooksville about a system of double-teaming of schedules to enhance reliability. I'm sure W8DLG (think his name was Gil), didn't know I was a mere lad of 16, and not yet licensed (I signed myself "Geo. W3NF"). The discussions, however, came to naught and petered out. Maybe my immaturity gradually dawned on him and he lost interest. I mention it because it was my first venture into traffic handling leadership.

Coming next in Part 8, Traffic Tricks on 80 and 40 Meters.

TEX Mailbox:

Pat, KD5TXD, sent in some more "book reports" to share, as reported last month. Thank you Pat, as they are quite interesting. We'll give you two gold stars for these ☺

"Ma Kiley: The Life of a Railroad Telegrapher" by Thomas C. Jepsen is another good look at ladies in the telegraph office. The author also wrote "My Sisters Telegraphic" and used that material for the introduction and conclusion to the "Ma Kiley" book. I was a bit disappointed in that. The "Ma Kiley" book is only 114 pages long and a fast read, but over half is taken up with the introduction and conclusion.

The really interesting and fun part of the book is the autobiography of Mattie C. Kuhn, known as "Ma Kiley". Mattie married very young and the marriage didn't work out for her. So she, a single mother, found she had to find work that would support her and her young son. She struggled to learn Morse Code, learning first to send with a bug. She could send great but faced another learning curve when it came time to learn to receive code. With a lot of practice she became a "first class operator".

Mattie described the many jobs she worked as a "boomer" from Mexico to Canada. She and her son had to move a lot to find work. She faced discrimination as a woman in a man's world of work. There were many who didn't consider it suitable work for a woman and gave her a hard time. However, Mattie was a tough lady and stood her ground. She demanded to be treated equal and earned respect for her telegraph skills.

"Ma Kiley", Mattie, worked for the railroads until retiring in 1942. Her autobiography is the most complete look at a woman's work life in telegraphy. Records of women employed as telegraphers were not well preserved. Most employers looked at women in the telegraph office as temporary workers, there only until they got married. Many employers even insisted that women leave their employment when they got married. "Ma Kiley" is a rarity as she was married five times. Thomas Jepsen was able to track her from her work history, which she had to compile in order to qualify for retirement benefits from the railroad. This was definitely a great story for me to enjoy.

(Next Book)

How about some high adventure history stuff? "SOS Korea 1950" by Raymond B. Maurstad details the drama and danger faced by real radio operators; military, broadcast, and amateur in Korea at the beginning of the invasion by the North. Seventeen radio operators pooled their memories of that heroic time to record for us a slice of radio history.

Mr. Maurstad details life in Korea before June 25, 1950. He and the others were assigned to train Korean cadets for communications work. Others were training Koreans to operate and maintain transportation systems. They and their families experienced the humor and heart break of an extreme cultural difference living in Korea after World War II. Maurstad came to Korea not appreciating amateur radio. After he encountered the total lack of communication options, an acquaintance demonstrated the magic of amateur radio by contacting a ham stateside who set up a phone patch so that Maurstad could talk to his wife in Minnesota. He was sold on amateur radio and immediately got a Korean call sign. Maurstad's wife would join him later and experience the traumatic evacuation of the families.

One of the main players in the story was a CW op who didn't use a mic at all. He would chat for hours on CW with his friends. On June 25th these two radio men set up their amateur rigs to establish contact with Tokyo and General MacArthur. Each man maintained an open frequency, one on voice and one on CW. Because of some poor communications planning their stations were the only contact to the outside world for several days after Taejon fell to the invading North.

Maurstad describes the days of terror for the families as they waited for evacuation. He describes the confusion and misinformation that plagued all communications efforts. He told

about one young radio operator who had been copying Morse code for long hours without sleep. When the young man finally got to sleep during the drive south on June 28th, his fingers were still moving, as he dreamed in Morse code.

Cargo ships and freighters were commandeered to evacuate the families. Women and children were evacuated first. Convoys of civilians being evacuated were strafed by North Korean aircraft. Maurstad describes his own good-bye to his pregnant wife as she left to be evacuated to Japan by ship. All radio and communications equipment had to be destroyed to prevent it from falling into the hands of the North Korean forces. "Highball" was the code word sent from two broadcast operators in Seoul before they blew up their commercial and amateur equipment and evacuated.

This is edge of your seat history related by radio operators who recorded their adventure for us to look back on so many years later. An exciting read y'all might enjoy if you haven't already had the pleasure. 73!! Pat KD5TXD

Scott, W7IZ, who is the STM in Oregon, passed along this tidbit about the ARRL doing an E-Mail test. I am interested in the results, which will hopefully be published in QST soon.

(Dated September 3) The ARRL conducted an unannounced emergency notification test today to test the reliability of email for notification of an emergency. The newly hired ARRL Emergency Communications Manager sent an email to all division directors with instructions to obtain specific weather information for their location and email it to him and then to contact the section managers in their division. The section manager was instructed to complete their same tasks and notify the section emergency coordinator.

We can expect to see results of the test from the ARRL soon. 73, Bonnie AB7ZQ

Arley, WB5NKC, writes: Here is a bit of info that you may want to pass along. 2 times we here in OKC have had disasters. First the Murrah building, with 169 killed, 1/2 of a 6 story block square building down into the parking garage, and a 30 foot deep hole in the street next to the curb in front. A rented Ryder truck load of fertilizer soaked in fuel oil and a fuse went off. In the group of 169 killed some were across the street, and a day care center on the second floor, many of the little children still in diapers. It damaged about 250 other buildings in the downtown OKC area that will have to be replaced soon. The second disaster was the 19 mile on the ground twister. South OKC, Moore, Del City, nw corner of Tinker AFB, Midwest City, and Choctaw damage.

Both times the phone company AT&T switched the long distance lines to the fire fighter's cell phones. Anyone trying to call in got the recorded message, "we are sorry but all the circuits are busy, please try later." They didn't tell anyone they had switched them.

H & W messages tried to come in. Only amateur radio was able to do it. I handled a book of 50 at one time. Got reports from the local fire department offices in the middle of the week, sent reports back telling the people's relatives where the damage was.

It will happen in other places, sooner or later. Also when there is a disaster, you can almost count on the wind blowing the "uncut trees" into the power lines. The power company puts it into the news, that it was an "act of God." They fail to tell people that they had charged

people to keep the trees cut, and they didn't want to spend the money doing it. This is when the mobile rig with the car battery does the job. A 5 watt cw signal will operate for a long time. Only problem is all the ssb operators don't know how to read cw.

Is this when you need to have the knowledge how to use a mirror to flash the sunlight to where you want it to go? Maybe use smoke signals like the Indians were supposed to do? With the fast moving wind here in OK that wouldn't work very well.

Keep up the good work, 73 Arley and Pat

David, K7IZ, wrote: My lack of participation lately has been the result of some nasty interference right on 3552 kHz. The noise blanker doesn't even touch it. NCS has to be at least S9 to be heard, and conditions haven't been that good in a long time. I live beside the telephone company and across the street from a major power distribution site, so tracking this thing down is a mess. 73, David, K7IZ

<ed> Sure hope you can track that nasty stuff down, David. If anyone has any ideas about what this might be and how to isolate the cause, let me know and I'll forward to David – Steve.

Brian, N5BA, sent in a bit of history that will likely bring back some nostalgia to the “old timers” on TEX. Thanks, Brian. He writes:

You seem to enjoy some nostalgia pieces, so thought I'd dig out my old logbooks and see who was where back when. Unfortunately, I can only find what's in my logbooks from 1970-1972, and a lot is foggy, but at least in those ol' days just after the dinosaurs we were still required to keep logbooks, so there is some data scribbled in the old sheets that may jog some memories. What follows is not much narrative, just a list, which I might occasionally comment.

W5QU	ROD	Fort Worth
W5QO	FRED	I think he was from Orange or Orange Grove

Both were the old hands of traffic handling back then.

W5EZY	JIM	I think from the San Antonio area
W5ABQ	JERRY	San Antone
W7WAH/5	PETE	Now known as K5GM in Austin
WB5BWV	GARY	Now WA5N
K5ROZ	PRES	Now W0WWR
WA5VJW	RUTH	
W5SSE	TOM	Seabrook
K5EJL	JOE	Still in Austin
W5RBB	MIKE	Houston
WA5YEA	JAMES	
WA5ZBJ		
WA5KHE	KEN	
WB5BVJ	GARY	Harlingen
WA5ZEM	PAUL	
W5AQL		

There's my list. Not nearly as long as the present list, but some of the names and calls are still out there. I guess Pete, K5GM has cut back quite a bit, but still see

him when I make it to the Austin Summerfest. I see Joe, K5EJL there as well.

Just so you know how much the net has moved, back then we met on 3770, above the Novice band. Cheers,

Brian N5BA - Back then I was WB2HEY/5 - I had to get a 2-letter call!

Finally, **Jim, KB5W**, the manager of RN5 and chairman of the Central Area Staff, passed along information on ARES / RACES Net Control Training Material. I have included the full text of it in the "operating" section following TEX Net topics. Although the material is largely applicable to SSB net operation, several TEX members are also active on those nets. It should be of interest to all of us, though, since we may be called upon to perform NCS duties or support the SSB nets in an emergency situation.

TEX Net Topics

Thanks again to Scott, W5ESE, for taking early RN5 on Saturdays (and filling in other days when he can). Thanks also to Pat, KD5TXD, for taking the early Friday NCS slot. We still have **many** openings for RN5 liaison. If you are able, please take one (or more) of the open RN5 slots. As mentioned earlier, Rodney and I will be gone several days this month so we cannot cover the late sessions as we often do.

TEX CW Net Weekly Schedule

Local	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
NCS #1	W5DY	KA5KLU	K6JT	AC5Z	KD5TXD	AC5Z	W5GKH
Backup	W5GKH	Open	KD5TXD	W5DY	W5DY	W5DY	W5DY
NCS #2	W5GKH	KA5KLU	KD5TXD	K6JT	N5PWG	W5DY	W5GKH
Backup	K6JT	Open	K6JT	Open	K6JT	Open	K6JT
RN5 #1	W5GKH	KA5KLU	Open	Open	Open	W5ESE	W5CU
Backup	W5DY	Open	W5DY	KA5KLU	Open	Open	W5GKH
RN5 #2	W5GKH	KA5KLU	Open	Open	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 alternate) at 19:30; RN5/2: 3567 at 21:30 local
 CAN: 3552 (7052 alternate) at 20:30 local; TSN: 3552 at 19:45 local

RN5 Backup: W5DY, W5ESE, W5GKH, K6JT, KA5KLU, K5RG
 NCS Backup: W5DY, N5EL, K6JT, KA5KLU, N5PWG, KD5TXD, AC5Z

Note: Although "backup" stations are listed above, anyone is welcome (and encouraged) to take the RN5 or NCS duty slots when it becomes necessary. If you don't hear anyone open the net within 2 - 3 minutes of start time after tuning up and down 3 KHz looking for the NCS, please go ahead and QNG. Be careful on late TEX, though, as skip may be present.

Sam, W5CU, will be gone from October 4 through the 12th. RN5 liaison stations should check into RN5 as TEX / OK during that time and pick up any OK traffic, to be routed via TSN or

KA5KLU's Pactor connection with Arley, WB5NKC. Will also need a fill-in for Sam's Sunday RN5 liaison slot on the 7th.

Statistics:

This month Floyd, N5EL, took top honors with QNI of 50 (Wow - 83%)! Pat, KD5TXD, was 2nd with 43 (72%). Thanks to everyone for your support.

The complete list of stations and traffic / liaison totals are shown in the following table. Traffic and QNI were both down a bit, no thanks to somewhat poor band conditions. Traffic averaged 3.0 per net session. Net time averaged 13.5 minutes per session. Check-ins averaged 5.25 per session.

TEX Net Statistics (September 2007)

Call		QNI	total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	CTTN	TSN
W5CDX	Wads	0	1						
*		1							
W5CU	Sam	8	13		5				
*		5			5				
W5DY	Rodney	12	28	3	4	2	2		
		16		4	7				
N5EL	Floyd	28	50	1					
*		22							
W5ESE	Scott	20	23		6			10	7
*		3			1			2	
W5GKH	Charlie	8	16	5	4				
*		8		7	4				
K5GM	Pete	2	2		1				
*		0							
W9GVV	Eric	12	15						1
*		3							
K7IZ	David	1	2						
		1							
K6JT	Steve	27	53	5	4		26		
*		26		5	8		26		
KA5KLU	Doug	9	14	4	6	2		8	
*		5		4	5	1		4	
K5KV	Benny	4	7						
		3							
W6LFB	Jim	1	1						
*		0							
AA0NI	Daniel	1	2						
		1							
KA5NNG	Mike	1	1						

		0							
N5NVP	Jim	3	8						
		5							
N5PWG	Jay	1	7						
*		6		6					
K5RG	Ken	6	13						
*		7							
KD5TXD	Pat	22	43	5		8			17
*		21		4		8			21
AC5Z	Bert	16	16	7		1			
*		0							
Totals		315		60	60	22	54	24	46
				100%	100%	37%	90%	40%	77%
QTC 1		113	182						
QTC 2		69		Sessions:		60	100%		
Time 1		457	808						
Time 2		351							

The roster, which follows, is unchanged from last month.

TEX Roster

Call	Name	Location / Notes	Call	Name	Location / Notes
# KBØAll	David	Minnesota	K5KV	Benny	Star
N5BA	Brian	Houston	W6LFB	Jim	Denton
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	Leesville LA
N5EL	Floyd	Temple	* N5PWG	Jay	Pasadena
* W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	K5RG	Ken	Houston
AA7FY	Mark	Fort Worth	W5ROK	Steve	Richardson (K6JT)
W5GKH	Charlie	West Columbia	KC5T	Bob	Houston
K5GM	Pete	Austin	W5TFB	Jack	College Station
W9GVW	Eric	San Antonio	W5TV	Tom	Nacogdoches
KA9IKK	Bill	Houston	* KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville
K7IZ	David	Bridge City	# W5UFK	Ken	College Station
AA5J	Chuck	Plano	* K5UN	Lee	Leonard
KJ9J	Newt	Pharr TX (winter)	KS5V	Ed	Bulverde
* K5JRN	Si	Denton	K5WQG	Eddy	Tomball
K6JT	Steve	Plano	AC5XK	Don	San Antonio
KA5KLU	Doug	San Antonio	* AC5Z	Bert	Nacogdoches (Lufkin)

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

Operating: As promised, here is the information from Jim, KB5W:

ARES/RACES Net Control Training Material

The purpose of this training material is to aide prospective Ares/Races operators how to serve as a net control station. A special set of skills are required to successfully control ARES / RACES nets. The different types of nets will be introduced along with what type of traffic should take place on each. The most essential parts of an emergency net are the character and skill of the net control station (NCS). The NCS coordinates all net activity and shapes the efficiency, or inefficiency, of net operations. The basic duties of the NCS are outlined below:

1. The NCS is in charge of the net while the net is in session. He/she is responsible for controlling who uses the frequency. This needs to be balanced with the fact that you are managing a group of volunteers. As NCS you will need to determine whether a tight or loose net discipline is required for the incident.
2. The NCS should have a commanding signal. Everyone on the net should be able to hear the NCS.
3. The NCS must keep track of which resources are on the net and who has cleared the channel. The NCS is also responsible for knowing which traffic each resource is capable of dealing with.
4. In large emergency incidents, if you are running the net from your home you need to find an alternate NCS to serve as your backup. A backup should be considered at all times.
5. You should keep a written record of the incident and a list of traffic for each station in a systematic manner. If you do not use an organized recording system you will get confused as the traffic gets heavier. Please remember, other people will be reading your notes so write the information clearly.
6. Make all net instructions clear and precise. Use as few words as possible. Use clear text. Do not use HAM Q-signals. Send traffic as fast as you would write it down. Tactfully remind other stations to do the same when necessary. Break every five words or so to allow stations time to catch up.
7. Use tactical call signs whenever possible and enforce this rule with members on the net. Tactical call signs are legal as long as the FCC 10 minute station identity requirements are met.
8. Different nets handle different types of traffic. If a message is inappropriate for the NCS, direct the traffic to the appropriate net and give that net's frequency.
9. When asking for reports or soliciting traffic, the next thing you do is listen.
10. Take down as many calls as you can distinctly hear before acknowledging anyone.
11. Acknowledge all the stations that you heard. Then yield the frequency to a single station, i.e. the first one you heard. When he/she has passed their traffic recognize the next station on your list. **Emergency and Priority traffic should be taken first.**
 - (a.) Continue this until all stations on your list have passed their traffic. Do not solicit more traffic until your list has been completed.
 - (b.) When traffic has been passed by the last station on your list, begin the same procedure over again. Other stations on the net will catch on quickly to this pattern. If they do not, take the time to explain what you are doing. When all stations are playing by the same rules things will go faster.
 - (c.) Minimize a contact to its barest essentials. Try to operate without wasting any motions. The NCS should remain calm, cool, and collected at all times. Being a NCS can be a trying experience and it is easy to become frustrated or angry. Becoming angry is not the way to solve a frustrating problem. A sense of humor is a very good asset to have and can help defuse a tense Amateur Radio Emergency Service situation. Being a good NCS requires practice.
12. As an NCS you are a traffic cop for the frequency and you will be enforcing discipline on the net.

Before we get into net discipline and how to apply it, you need to understand what to expect from the net members:

- (a.) They should report to the NCS promptly as they become available.
- (b.) They should ask NCS permission before they use the frequency.
- (c.) Answer promptly when called by the NCS.
- (d.) Use tactical call signs, usually assigned by the NCS.
- (e.) They should never leave a net without checking out.

13. All of the above sounds good but the reality is that you are dealing with volunteers who have a vast and differing set of training and experience levels. This means you cannot order net members to comply with your instructions, you can ask them to cooperate with your needs.

The best way to enlist the cooperation of the net is to explain what you are doing in a calm and straight forward manner or a small dose of real time training. As an example, a station constantly uses his call rather than the tactical call you assigned to his location. This is a problem of net discipline and a lack of training. The best way to deal with this problem is to ask the station to use his/her tactical call instead of his/her own call. If he/she continues to use his/her own call then the best thing you can do is to address him/her by his/her tactical call sign exclusively. Eventually he/she will catch on by your example. Try to emulate the professionals, such as 911 emergency dispatchers and air traffic control operators. If you are calm, other members of the net will be calm also. Take frequent breaks provided you have a back-up operator. As the frustration level begins to build, it can be detected in your voice causing other net members to lose their ability to operate in a calm manner. In high volume traffic incidents, a NCS should not work more than two hours without a break if possible.

14. There are three types of nets which can be used during an ARES event. They are:

- (a.) The tactical net.
- (b.) The resource net.
- (c.) The command net.

The tactical net will always be used. Whether all three nets will be used is determined by the size of the event.

15. The tactical net is the front line during any emergency event. It is typically used to manage operations within a specific city's boundaries. Types of traffic you might hear on a tactical net would be traffic handling, coordination of ARES efforts and recruiting additional operators. When the event goes beyond the city/agency boundaries to the point where mutual aid is necessary, the resource net is created.
16. The primary purpose of the resource net is to recruit resources, both operators and equipment, in support of mutual aid operations. Volunteer operators will be directed to the resource net by the tactical net control operator. The net is also used as a check-in point before the assigned responder leaves for his/her assignment. As the size of the event increases and more ARES jurisdictions become involved in the incident, a command net may be necessary.
17. The command net allows the ARES leadership to communicate with each other and resolve amateur radio operations related problems. The net would also be used to allow cities to talk to each other. It is the responsibility of the command net control operator to limit communications related to ARES, ARRL, and city/agency only. All other traffic is to be directed to and handled by the resource or tactical net.
18. The style of a net is related to the level of discipline used on the net. An example of a disciplined net would be a directed net, while an open net would be a non-disciplined style of net.
19. The open net allows most any kind of traffic or communications. Open conversations are allowed on the net provided they break every so often to allow incident related traffic to pass. A NCS may not be required for this type of net except to act as a hub should the net need to become a directed net. Stations are not required to contact net control before making a call to another station, and incident related traffic may be handled on a point to point basis. The style of this net is considered to be loose and informal.
20. A directed net is created when there is a large volume of traffic that cannot be dealt with on a first come first served basis. Stations doubling with each other in an attempt to make contact may increase to the point where the frequency becomes unusable. This is when a directed net is established. The NCS will determine who will use the frequency at any given time. He/she will acknowledge those stations first that have incident related traffic, i.e. emergency, priority, routine. Random conversations between stations are not permitted at

all. The NCS will assign tactical call signs to facilitate traffic handling. Stations having non-incident related traffic should be asked to direct their traffic to the appropriate frequency. The style of this net is considered disciplined and formal.

21. Tactical nets are where the real work gets done. Traffic can range from requesting portable toilets to letting a doctor talk to a medical technician in the field. This net is used to move information and coordinate field unit activities. It is suggested that you have a second operator who can transcribe incoming traffic. This keeps your hands free to operate the radio and take notes to keep the net moving. Consider using headphones in a noisy area.

When traffic is passed on a tactical net it must contain the following information:

- (a.) The exact title and address of the addressee from the sender. This is extremely important to guarantee the accurate, prompt delivery of the message.
- (b.) Be brief and concise when originating the message. If you are handed a written message to send, do not modify it. Send the message as it is handed to you. It is not important that you understand the message content, the addressee will.
- (c.) The message should have the exact title of the sender so that if any return traffic is required, the addressee will know who should receive the message.
- (d.) The message must contain a message number and time stamp. This will allow you to reference the messages more easily.

22. The message form must contain the following minimum information:

Message number, precedence, handling instructions, station of origin, the check, place of origin, time filed, date, text, signature and title.

HINTS AND GUIDELINES

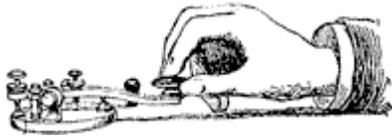
- (A.) Use a script when/where possible. If you have time, make notes to yourself to help with the information in the script, before you start the net.
- (B.) Be friendly yet in control; speak slowly and clearly with an even tone, not a monotone. Sound confident, even if you are not. Above all, don't worry. Just give it an honest try.
- (C.) Ask SPECIFIC questions, give SPECIFIC instructions. You can make it much harder on yourself with vague questions and instructions.
- (D.) Have pencil/paper ready and write down ALL calls, names and locations. It helps to practice with writing down calls when you are not the NCS.
- (E.) Articulate, don't slur. Speak close to your mike, but **talk across it, NOT into it.**
- (F.) When there is a double, try to get something unique from one or more of the stations. Then call for clarification from those stations ONLY.
- (G.) During check-ins, recognize participants by name whenever possible.
- (H.) Acknowledge check-ins and ALL messages.
- (I.) Be sure to frequently identify the purpose of the net, let people know what they are checking in to.
- (J.) If this is an emergency net, remind listeners to listen and tell them where the staffing/resource net is located. Someone checking in to say they are listening only slows the net.
- (K.) Don't be afraid to say "OOPS" if you get flustered and mumble a bit. Pause, take a deep breath, and go back at it. If you make a mistake, remember this is not Brain Surgery. Do your best to CALMLY recover. Nothing more will ever be asked of anyone.
- (L.) DON'T THINK ON THE AIR. If you need a moment to consider what is needed next, say something like "Stand by" and unkey your mic.

(M.) Avoid becoming the source for general information about the event. If it is an emergency, refer event status questions to the served agency Public Information Officer (PIO).

**To be USEFUL, you MUST be READY.
 To be READY, you MUST be TRAINED.
 To be TRAINED, you MUST plan AHEAD.**

Take care, y'all. There are no specific plans for TEX during the Simulated Emergency Test on October 6 and 7. You might try TSN, though, as Scott mentions below.

73, Steve K6JT



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 Stations (QNS)

Call	Name	City	State	Call	Name	City	State
AA0NI	Dan	Oklahoma City	OK	WB5NKC	Arley	Oklahoma City	OK
W5BYQ	Earl	Houston	TX	WB5NKD	Pat	Oklahoma City	OK
WX5CW	Chris	Ruston	LA	N5NVP	Jim	Leesville	LA
W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	TX	K5RDW	RD	Vilonia	AR
K5ECI	Bill	Enid	OK	KB5TCH	Carroll	Douglassville	TX
W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	TX	W5TFB	Jack	College Station	TX
AA5JW	Carl	Stafford	TX	KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville	TX
NN5L	Max	Dallas	TX	W5VDM	Bill	New Ulm	TX
KD5MMM	Phil	Fentress	TX	N5XGG	Joe	Colmesneil	TX
N7NET	Scott	Allen	TX	AC5Z	Bert	Nacogdoches	TX

Simulated Emergency Test

The ARRL Simulated Emergency Test occurs October 6-7. Why not check out your own emergency preparedness by checking into TSN on October 6 (Saturday evening) using emergency power, if you have it available? Perhaps you have an HF mobile setup that you could use; others may have an RV with a propane generator, or a QRP rig with a gel cell or other batteries. Feel free to bring traffic from your ARES group's SET to TSN, as we can relay messages to TEX, ARTS, and other nets. More information on the SET, and NTS' role in it, is available at <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/setguide.html>



September Activity Report

TOTAL SESSIONS 30
 TOTAL CHECKINS 112
 TOTAL TRAFFIC 35
 BY 12 DIFFERENT STATIONS

73 Scott W5ESE

The telegraph key image is courtesy of FCIT