The Texan

Newsletter of the Texas NTS CW Net (TEX)

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

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August 2014

Busy with Central Area Staff Activities

This month's newsletter is a bit later than usual because I have been very busy working on another White Paper for the NTS Central Area Staff. Some of you may be interested in reading or at least skimming it. 3 years ago the ARRL chartered a group of active public service hams (primarily ARES) to do a study of ARES and NTS and come up with some recommendations. It was named the Emergency Communications Advisory Committee (ECAC) and they came out with a report in late 2013.

The report, which was presented to the ARRL Board of Directors earlier this year, had a lot of good things in it, but due to their non-familiarity with NTS, there were a lot of misconceptions. Furthermore, their "solution", to create a non-binding oversight committee, did not seem to NTS officials to be the right way forward. So the NTS staff decided to develop a counter-proposal.

The newest document, White Paper NTS-004, deals with those misconceptions about NTS and further clarifies the NTS proposal for a closer relationship of ARES and NTS. It also addresses each place NTS is mentioned in the ECAC report. If you are interested, and hopefully you are interested in how we can better support ARES, please take a look at the document. You can access it at:

https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/73013707/NTS%20Response%20to%20ECAC%20Report%2014AUG14.pdf

George Hart Series

Here is the 20th installment of the George Hart Series. Geo does his summer duties away from campus.

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 20 - MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE FARM

My participation in AARS did not cease during the summer months. My brother Ed, W3NF, had also been active in AARS and in 1933 he was assigned WLML, and we took over the Wednesday night WLM operation as usual. Ed at that time lived in Bloomsbury, NJ, a suburb of Phillipsburg. He had a nice location just off the then route U.S. 22 with an empty field behind his house on which he erected an A-frame antenna. The result was an outstanding signal, even better than we had on College Hill. The farm by then had electricity, but Ed much preferred his own location, so I was a frequent visitor at W3NF in Bloomsbury, especially on Wednesday nights. If for whatever reason I was not able to be there, Ed was quite as capable as I, perhaps even more so, of conducting the WLM schedules.

Backtracking a little: During the second semester of my freshman year at Penn State, after Prof. Crossley slipped me a key to the station "under the table," I made contact with Ed at the farm once a week. He had obtained a second-hand generator in dubious condition, had installed it in an outbuilding and, after considerable effort, had succeeded in getting it running. It was capable of only 500 watts and Ed used it for the ham transmitter. I remember well the first contact using the generator and Ed's elation having "electricity at the farm." His signal was strong and of good quality and we had a good half hour conversation (all by Morse Code, of course, which was to us as good as talking by voice, better in some respects).

During our second contact using the old generator he mentioned that it "sounded funny," so we signed off so he could investigate. I learned the full story a couple of days later when we made contact with Ed using battery power again. On conclusion of our previous contact, he looked out the window and discovered the outbuilding in which the generator was housed, several hundred feet away, ablaze. He called the Riegelsville fire department, the nearest to the farm, but the telephone connection had to go through the Easton rural exchange. We were on a twelve party line, which was occupied almost all the time, so he had to get the party occupying the line to get off, then for the rural operator to answer, then wait for her to complete the long-distance routing to Riegelsville, which was only three miles away.

Thus, the call went from the farm to Easton, five miles north, to Riegelsville, nine miles south through lines that hummed and crackled - a far cry from the type of telephone service we enjoy today. By the time firefighters arrived, first from Riegelsville, then from Easton, the fire had spread from the generator building to a nearby wagon shed and was threatening the big barn, all of wooden construction, with old hay occupying the loft in the barn. The blaze lighted the sky for miles around and the one-car lane from the highway to our farm was soon congested with curiosity-seekers, making it difficult for fire trucks to reach the scene. When they finally did, the barn was ablaze -- flying embers were landing on the house. Hope for saving the barn was quickly abandoned and the firefighters concentrated on saving the house. Fortunately, the main part of the house was made of stone and the roof of slate; but an extension protruded toward the barn made of wood, as was the interior of the house. With a limited water supply, it was "nip and tuck" for several hours.

The big barn and other outbuildings were abandoned as a total loss, and the total effort was in saving the house. Meanwhile, spectators poured into the area and caused terrific congestion. It must have been a frantic time, but the house was saved. The three other buildings, however - the generator building, the wagon shed and the barn with its voluminous load of

hay - burned to the ground. All that was left were a few smoking embers and the stone wall surrounding what had been the barnyard. Thus ended the brief presence of W3AMR at the farm.

Shortly thereafter, Ed moved to Bloomsbury and set up W3NF there. Fortunately, the entire property, including all buildings, was heavily insured. The buildings were never rebuilt; they weren't being used anyway. The insurance money provided some badly needed funds to continue college education expenses for me and my younger brother, and for running an electric service from the highway, about 3/4 of a mile, to the house. A private contractor installed poles and line, which was then owned by my mother. The electric company approved the line, installed a transformer at its end, and imposed a $10 minimum monthly fee. Reasonable? Not really. An average household in the city paid only about $5 a month for electricity; but rural electricity laws were not yet in effect, and the electric company could dictate terms. The house was wired by an electrical contractor under Ed's supervision, all BX cable with #14 gauge wire and standard wall and floor outlets.

Electrical consumption then was nowhere near what it is today. Ed's residency in Bloomsbury didn't last long. He was unable to keep up the mortgage payments, and in a year or two he had sold the place and moved back to the farm where, with commercial electricity now available, W3NF was reinstalled and W3AMR became history. I maintained my station license at the farm, but I had no equipment of my own and during my weekend visits, vacations and summers, I operated W3NF/WLML.

Next in Chapter 21: Penn State rocky middle years

TEX Mailbox:

Pete**, K5GM,** sent along the following ditty to share with you all:
In days of old, when ops were bold and sideband not invented,
The words were passed by pounding brass and all were quite contented!
As Pete said, quite apropos for the *Texan* newsletter. Thanks, Pete.
- . . . -
Dean, **W8IM**, who has moved to a restricted antenna location but still manages to check in to the Florida nets and keep up with NTS, sent along the following link to a very interesting story about Railroad RF CW, something you don't hear much about. Thanks, Dean !
http://earlyradiohistory.us/1914trn.htm
- . . . -
George, **K5BMR**, the 7290 net assistant manager, passed along this link to what might happen if there is a very large Coronal Mass Ejection superstorm event. Good reading, and just a bit on the frightening side:
http://earthsky.org/space/scientist-warns-of-inevitable-solar-super-storm-propelled-towards-earth?utm_source=EarthSky+News&utm_campaign=d861c1e5cf-EarthSky_News&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c643945d79-d861c1e5cf-393915549
- . . . -
Pat, **KD5TXD**, sent along some information about an FCC Monitoring station in Kingsville. She wrote: A few months back I wrote an article for our local newspaper about the Kingsville FCC Monitoring station of the old days. Got an e-mail this week from an amateur, WB9FOP, in Katy, Texas. He had looked at our old FCC Monitoring station on Google Maps and saw all

kinds of vehicles parked in the parking lot at the old FCC building. He wanted to know if it was still a manned FCC station. No, it is automated if there is anything at all left on the site.

I decided I had to go over there and see the building and get a picture of it for Bill. The grounds are in pretty sorry shape now. The building had been used for a while by the Border Patrol

and is now, apparently, used by the local Task Force. The property is surrounded by the old style government fencing and even posted as federal property. It looks tacky and tired, unlike the crisp look it had in the 1940s. Here are a couple pictures to compare. One 1948, the other now. 73!! Pat KD5TXD

- . . . -

Ken, **K6CTW**, who is still stuck in California, sent along the following link to a story that definitely proves the Telegram is not yet dead. Well, at least not in Japan…
http://www.itworld.com/unified-communications/431519/telegram-not-dead-stop-alive-evolving-japan-stop

- . . . -

Scott, **W7IZ**, passed along the following link to a good website that shows lightning strike activity. Handy to have when storms are in the area. Also see the RN5 Corner for another site showing Blitzen (German for lightning).
http://www.lightningmaps.org/realtime?lang=en

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TEX Net Topics

There are 3 backup slots open (shown in *yellow*), all for RN5 liaison, and no open NCS slots. 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 any of the backup slots.

Note that late RN5 has changed to 80 meters, 3567 primary, due to several days of long skip during the past month.

The TEX Duty Schedule and Roster are shown on the following page (for easier printing of a single page). The Duty Schedule was updated, but the Roster has no new entries.

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.

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TEX CW Net Weekly Schedule

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

TEX/1: **7053**/3541/7108 at 19:00 CT; TEX/2 **3541**/3595/1841 at 22:00 CT
RN5/1: **7108**/3567 at 19:30; RN5/2: **3567**/3598/7108 at 21:30 CT
TSN: **3570** - 19:45 CT; CAN: **7052**/3552/ 7108/3595 - 20:30 CT; PAN: **7052**/3552 - 22:30 CT

RN5 Backup: W5CU, W5DY, W5ESE, K5GM, K6JT, KA5KLU, K5KV, K5RG, N5RL
NCS Backup: W5CU, W5DY, W5ESE, K6JT, K5KV, K5RG, N5RL, W5TMO, KD5TXD, W5FEA

TEX Roster

	Call	Name	Location / Notes		Call	Name	Location / Notes
	KW5AS	Skip	Victoria		N7NET	Scott	McKinney
	N5BA	Brian	Houston	*	KB5NJD	John	Duncanville
	W5CU	Sam	Edmond OK		N5NVP	Jim	Scott LA
	W5DH	Tom	Dallas		W5OMR	Geoff	Houston
	W4DLZ	Frank	Florida		AC5P	Mike	Bartlesville OK
*	W5DY	Rodney	Goliad		K1PKZ	Paul	Tom Bean
*	W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs		K5QOW	Gary	Reagan Wells
	W5FEA	Jim	Graham	*	K5RG	Ken	Houston
	W5GKH	Charlie	West Columbia		N5RL	Randy	San Antonio
	K5GM	Pete	Austin		W5ROK	Steve	Richardson (K6JT)
	W9GVW	Eric	San Antonio		KD5RQB	Jason	Atlanta
	K5JRN	Si	Austin		W5TMO	Mike	Austin
*	K6JT	Steve	Plano		KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville
	KA5KLU	Doug	San Antonio		NE5V	Chris	Liberty Hill
	N7KRT	Jeff	Victoria		WB8WKQ	Jeff	Michigan
*	K5KV	Benny	Star		K6YBV	Bob	Placerville CA
*	W6LFB	Jim	Denton		W5YE	Brian	Harlingen
	WA5MS	Marty	Highland Village		W5ZD	Pat	Kingsville (KD5TXD)

* Capable of 160 meter operation

Statistics:

Checkins were up but traffic was again down compared to last month. All but one RN5 slot were covered and TTN / DFW representation were very good.

Jim, W5FEA, with 62 out of 62 (100%) maintains his "perfect attendance record" yet another month. Jason, KD5RQB, and Rodney, W5DY, tied for second this month with 49 (79%) while Randy, N5RL, with 45 (73%) captured third. Thanks again to all of you who checked in for your support.

Visitors to the net included Larry, W5SBE, from Austin, who used to check in years ago.

The complete list of stations and traffic / liaison totals are shown in the following table. Traffic averaged 2.7 per net session (3.0 last month). Net time averaged 13.1 minutes per session (compared to 13.0 last month). Check-ins averaged 7.1 per session (6.8 last month).

TEX Net Statistics (July 2014)

Call	Name	QNI	Total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	TSN
KW5AS	Skip	8	8					
		0						
N5BA	Brian	1	1					
		0						
W5CU	Sam	6	19		5			
*		13			6			
W5DY	Rodney	23	49	1	5			
		26		5	4		1	
W5ESE	Scott	9	9					
*		0						
W5FEA	Jim	31	62	8		22		
*		31				2		
W5GKH	Charlie	8	16	8				
*		8		8				
K5GM	Pete	12	22					
*		10						
W9GVW	Eric	4	4					
*		0						
K6JT	Steve	13	36				4	
*		23		6	8		23	
KA5KLU	Doug	12	21		9			
*		9			8			
K5KV	Benny	10	33		5			
		23		4	5			
KB5NJD	John	23	23				23	
		0						
N5NVP	Jim	0	6					
		6						
K5QOW	Gary	3	3			2		
*		0						
K5RG	Ken	0	6					
*		6						
N5RL	Randy	22	45	6	6	2		

Call	Name	QNI	Total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	TSN
*		23				13		
KD5RQB	Jason	24	49			5		24
		25				5		25
W5SBE	Larry	0	1					
	Austin	1						
W5TMO	Mike	0	17					
*		17		8				
KD5TXD	Pat	8	8	8				
*		0						
NE5V	Chris	2	2					
Totals		440		62	61	51	51	49
				100%	98%	82%	82%	79%
QTC 1		70	166					
QTC 2		96			Sessions	62		
Time 1		429	812					
Time 2		383						

Operating:

Using <AA> in QTC listings. Last month the use of AA in listing traffic was discussed in the TEX Mailbox section. Turns out the NTS Methods and Practices Guide, chapter 4, section 4.6.3 addresses this. It says:

* <AA>: The <AA> separator may be inserted between items on CW for clarity if necessary. W3XX QTC LAUREL 1 TEL 301 555 <AA> 3RN 2 <AR>

The use of <AA> has diminished in recent years and is more often omitted in favor of appropriate pauses. On Area/Region Nets where the list is very succinct the <AA> between items is omitted, and items are listed in specific order.

So, since I have been handling traffic on NTS CW nets for over 50 years, using the <AA> is second nature because that's the way we always listed traffic in years past. But as it says in the newest MPG, it is not necessary and in fact should not be done when listing traffic on RN5 or CAN.

The other topic, that of handling books of messages, has the following in the same section:

* BOOK OF (qty): May be used ahead of group of messages to alert the NCS so dispatching of all recipients may be made together. (qty) is the total number of messages in the book.

Although we don't have that many book messages with recipients on TEX that can take the traffic, it does happen from time to time. A very efficient method of handling them, assuming the traffic has been listed as Book of <qty> to Destination 1, Destination 2, etc. is to have the station with the traffic and ALL possible recipients go off to a side frequency at the same time. The sender then verifies all are present on that frequency and proceeds to send the common part of the book to all of them. The sender then asks if there are any fills needed and takes care of them, if so.

The sender then chooses one of the stations who will receive the minimum number of addresses, calling them, and sends the message number(s) and address information. He then tells the station to return to net and calls another station and sends the message number / address, repeating the process until all have been handled that can be. Each receiving station returns to the net after his part is complete.

I have done this when NCS myself and I was the one with the traffic. It gets a little more difficult when stations are sent off frequency. But it is much more efficient.

Finally, as Chair of the Central Area Staff, I decided to put together a monthly total of traffic handled on the Region and Above nets and NTS Digital. This was sent to the CAS members, but I think it may also be of interest to some of you.

Net	Sessions	QTC	QNI	QTR	Rate
RN5 Cycle 2	54	127	415	692	0.184
9RN Cycle 2	12	398	58	177	2.25
10RN Cycle 2	22	547	195	317	1.726
RN5 Cycle 4	60	186	435	600	0.310
9RN Cycle 4	48	116	140	310	0.374
TEN Cycle 4	62	176	272	535	0.329
CAN Cycle 2	12	73	31	227	0.322
CAN Cycle 4	30	343	246	436	0.787
RN5 Cycle 4	60	186	435	600	0.310
TCC Cycle 2 #		30			
TCC Cycle 4		207	75		
Total Manual Nets		2203	1867	3294	
NTS Digital *			Received	Sent	
KB0OFD		11336	3626	7710	
WB9FHP		1529	770	759	
W5SEG		2507	1011	1496	
Total NTS Digital		15372	5407	9965	
Total Central Area		17575			

No report received - estimated from CAN reports
* 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.

Until next month, 73, Steve K6JT

(TSN Corner starts on the next page)

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

Photo Courtesy of VE3UU

Greetings From Northeast Texas

This months Texas Slow Net Corner is going to be brief due to a death in the family. It is with great sadness to have to report that my mom passed away on July 30, 2014.

Our deepest condolences, Jason. Good to see you are still keeping active on the nets.

Mr. Carroll KB5TCH filled in for Phil KD5MMM on July 3rd. Thanks Carroll!!!

Jim W5FEA filled in for Jeff N7KRT on July 20th. Thanks Jim!!!

TSN Activity Report for July 2014
Total Sessions 30 Total Check-ins 78 Total Traffic 30 by 8 different operators.

June 2014 QNS

Name	Callsign	QNI
Jason	KD5RQB	28
Carroll	KB5TCH	26
Phil	KD5MMM	7
Jim	W5FEA	6
Jeff	N7KRT	3
Mike	WD0ESF	2
Sam	KK4HCF	4
Rodney	W5DY	2

August 2014 Net Control Stations

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jeff N7KRT	Carroll KB5TCH	Carroll KB5TCH	Jim W5FEA	Phil KD5MMM	Carroll KB5TCH	Jason KD5RQB

2014 TSN Roster

Name	Callsign	QTH
Jason	KD5RQB	Atlanta, Texas
Caroll	KB5TCH	Douglassville, Texas
Pat	KD5TXD / W5ZD	Kingsville, Texas
Phil	KD5MMM	Fentress, Texas
Rodney	W5DY	Goliad, Texas
Mike	WD0ESF	Medicine Lodge, Kansas
Sam	KK4HCF	Maryville, Tennessee
Scott	W5ESE	Drippings Springs, Texas
Jim	W5FEA	Graham, Texas

Joe	AC5BE	Matagorda, Texas
Steve	KJ6T	Plano, Texas
Dave	AB0DK	Kirksville, Missouri
Jim	N5NVP	Scott, Louisiana
Gary	K5QOW	Reagan Wells, Texas
Randy	N5RL	San Antonio, Texas
Mike	W5TMO	Austin, Texas
Larry	W5LPD	Katy, Texas
Jeff	N7KRT	Victoria, Texas
Arley	WB5NKC	Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Pat	WB5NKD	Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Paul	K1PKZ	Tom Bean, Texas
Carl	AA5VE	Texarkana, Texas
Roy	W5JZ	Tyler, Texas
David	W5TRX	Justin, Texas
Joe	K5BRY	Austin, 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 30 of the ***RN5 Corner***.

As most of you are aware, the late session of RN5 moved back to 80 meters due to several days of long skip. Conditions are not that great on 80 yet, so it may be necessary for the NCS to send stations to 7108 to pass traffic on occasion. The NCS can also move the net to 40 if there are thunderstorms causing lots of QRN on 80. Generally 40 is less bothered by the lightning crashes.

Speaking of lightning… there are a couple of Internet web sites that show where the lightning is occurring. One that I found useful is http://www.blitzortung.org .

All RN5 operators are to be congratulated. So far this month, with only about 40 sessions reported, the traffic count is already over 300 ! It is going to be a new record in recent times. Thank you all very much for your dedication and good work. Special thanks to Jerry, W4SU, and Ben, KZ8Q, for all your extraordinary help with CAN and NCS duties.

We still need a Sunday NCS station, which Sam, W5CU, has been handling most of the time (thanks, Sam!). Monday and Sunday still need CAN RX slots, while Monday thru Wednesday need TX slots. I do appreciate all of you who are supporting the net and filling in when needed.

If there is no CAN TX station, but you are an RX station, please fill both slots that evening. There is rarely a need for separate TX and RX stations. However, if there are more than about 3 messages going to CAN, then it is best to have separate TX and RX.

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

July 2014 Statistics

SESSIONS	60
QTC	186
QNI	435
QTR	600
AVG QTC	3.1
AVG QNI	7.2
AVG QTR	10

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	KI5T	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