

# The Texan

Newsletter of the Texas NTS CW Net (TEX)

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

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## Family Matters

Some of you may recall the problems that have come up this year with my parents in California. Unfortunately, the situation there took a turn for the worse. As a result, my 83 year old father, who is blind from macular degeneration and cannot walk without assistance, has had to move here to Texas to live with my wife and me. Needless to say, he requires quite a bit of my time in order to care for him.

As a result, I have had to somewhat curtail my radio activities. This newsletter is late, and a bit shorter this month due to lack of time for preparation. While I can generally make the late session of TEX, my participation on the early session is going to be limited compared to what it used to be. There is one advantage, though – I no longer have to travel to California every 3 months and be away for a couple weeks at a time.

Thank you all for your continued support, which is more important now than ever. I will continue to do as much as I can with and for the net, but at a reduced level.

## Early TEX back on 3552 – 7120.5 alternate for passing traffic

On June 17, after experiencing several nights in a row of poor conditions on 40 meters, I sent out a notice that we were returning to 3552 KHz for early TEX. That seems to have worked out better in the intervening weeks, so we will continue on 3552. Attempts to use 40 meters to pass traffic have not worked out well in recent days either, so I guess we will just have to live with the noisy and weak signal conditions on 80 for now.

The use of 3643 for the 2 nets on Field Day also seemed to work OK. Hope those of you who participated in Field Day had a good time. I enjoyed working 40 and 20 meter CW from W5ROK, with a switch to 80 for TEX to handle the “bonus point” messages.

## Hamcom 2008

Jo Ann, KA5AZK, the 7290 Net manager, did another excellent job of presenting a traffic handling tutorial session at Hamcom this year. She produced and distributed a very well made folder of information including printouts of the presentation itself and many traffic handling aids. Thanks, Jo Ann. Hopefully we will get some more traffic folks as a result.

There were a few questions about CW traffic handling, which I fielded. The code speed of TEX seems to be the major stumbling block for most folks, so I referred them to TSN to get their initial taste of the fine art of CW traffic handling.

The only TEX'er I saw there was Chuck, AA5J, whom I had never met, even though we both live in Plano. I am happy that we finally got to see each other in person.

## **W1NJM Saga**

Thanks to Sis, WD8DIN, the editor of the "Traffic Call" newsletter of the Hit and Bounce Net (HBN – 0730 CT, 7042 KHz), for passing along George Hart's saga of the "early days". Here's Part 15 of George Hart's recollections. Geo finds there's more to crystals than meets the eye.

## **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 15.

## **PENN STATE AND COLLEGE RADIO STATION W8YA, PART TWO**

In a corner of the room where the W8YA operating position was located was the WPSC broadcast transmitter, 500-watts, with underground lines to the studio and to the various points on the vast campus, including football and baseball fields, the gymnasium and Schwab Auditorium on center campus. Walt (W3AJN) explained to me that WPSC was no longer licensed but there was hope that it would be re-licensed and so it was all ready to go at any moment.

It was served by a motor generator in the anteroom, which delivered 2300 volts but had no brake. This larger generator could be switched to W8YA and frequently was when more power was desired. He demonstrated both generators. The smaller, normally used for W8YA, started with a loud clack and stopped with a thump as the brake clamped it. The larger one started more slowly, ran with a distinct high-pitched whine and coasted for a few seconds after being turned off.

Walt set me down at the operating position and allowed me to operate the station, after tuning it up for 40 meters. The FB-7 receiver was full of images, but Walt said he was working on a pre-selector that would get rid of them.

"We're trying to get the EE Department to buy us an HRO," he said, "but Crossely is only an instructor and he doesn't have enough clout, so we'll have to make out with this 'til we can get more support. Doc Woodruff, W8CMP, is in our corner. He's a full professor with a long tenure, so I think we'll get it eventually. I seem to remember that you are a hotshot CW operator. Let's hear you call a CQ." I didn't have my "bug" with me, but I rattled off a CQ on the straight key.

"That's great!" Walt enthused. "We're on 7150, so start tuning at 7000. The calibration isn't accurate, but you'll be able to tell where the band starts."

I did as instructed, but heard no one calling W8YA. "Those darned Windoms are no good," Walt muttered "I've been trying to get Crossley to let us put up a couple Zepps, but he's a stubborn guy. But he'll be pleased with your CW skill. I'm only fair, but Jim Faries (W3AOA) is pretty good, and Norm Young is even better. Neither of them measures up to you, though. Crossley is impressed with high speed code, although he hardly knows a dit from a dah himself. Come around any time. If I'm here I'll let you operate, but freshmen don't get keys unless they're real hotshots. Xley might make an exception in your case."

"Xley?" "Yeah, that's what I call him, but not to his face. Go ahead and operate if you want to. I'll be here for another half hour or so, but then I gotta go." Of course the above is a version of how I remember the conversation, probably not accurate but close. "How many members are in the club?" I asked, as Walt went back to the little workshop to resume his crystal grinding. "There is no club. Crossley doesn't want a club, one of his several eccentricities. It's just 'the Radio Station Staff.' W8YA is licensed to the BE Department, and Crossley is trustee. The senior assistant is Jim Beaver, W3AHZ. There are about twelve on the staff right now". "How do I join the Staff?"

"You don't, not until you're a sophomore and pass a test. Xley sometimes hands out a key to a freshman of outstanding ability. He might give you one because of your CW skill, but don't count on it. Where are we now, Jim?"

I had many more questions but decided not to wear out my welcome. Already, I felt, Hawk had devoted much more time to me than the ordinary visitor. But in subsequent weeks I visited the station many times and met most of the staff members. Most of them showed up infrequently, Beaver, Hawk and Faries practically haunted the place, and "Pop" Crossley was also frequently present. Norm Young, a junior, was the crack code (CW) operator until I came along.

I met him and Crossley very early in my freshman year. Norm was a rather shy young man, a so-so student in electrical engineering. (They were all EE's except me. I was pre-veterinary in the School of Agriculture, which became the subject of many jokes among my W8YA colleagues in the months to come.)

During that first couple of months I met most of the other staffers, three of them freshmen like myself. I can't begin to remember them all, but one of the freshman I do remember very clearly was Charlie Kearns.

Kearns was from the Pittsburgh area and was a brilliant EE student, but like most such students a bit on the conceited side until maturity. Charlie was very young, only sixteen, a tall string bean. His mastery of electronics was superb for the day and for his age, but his CW was only mediocre. Unfortunately he did not rank very high with Crossley or, for that matter, with most of the rest of the staff.

Coming in Part Three, Chapter 16, Geo meets Xley, the real McCoy...

#### **TEX Mailbox:**

**Sam, W5CU**, was busy traveling last month. First it was Chicago and then a pleasant week in "Big Sky Country" (Montana). He's back now and has offered to take the Tuesday night RN5

liaison slots for TEX in addition to his normal Sunday night. Thank you, Sam! He will be gone one Tuesday each month, so we still need a backup for those slots. Also, Sam wants to pass along his thanks to those of you who checked into RN5 as "TEX and OK" to pick up OK traffic in his absence.

**Floyd, N5EL**, reports that his main computer died so he was "off the air" (so to speak) for a while. Floyd writes: "Bought a Dell, it's really small at 4 inches thick (use it vertical or flat), 14 inches across front and 16 deep. Even has a 3 1/4 inch floppy disk drive. 200 GB hard drive and 2 GB memory, so it's nice and fast." I'm sure you are enjoying using it, Floyd.

**Doug, KA5KLU**, has been taking care of family matters and also getting some fresh air while visiting the missions there in San Antonio. He lives less than 6 miles from 4 of them (not including the Alamo). He sent along some nice pictures, too. Doug has also been keeping busy caring for his mother, who is also going blind from the same problem as my father. We wish you all the best, Doug, and hope you will get a chance to join us once in a while on TEX.

**Scott, W5ESE**, asks that NCS's who send stations off frequency (e.g., to 40 meters) to handle traffic be sure to pick a frequency in the General subbands unless they are sure both stations are Extra class. Note that this is easily determined by checking the TEX roster. Those who cannot use 3643 also cannot use frequencies below 7025.

**Rodney, W5DY**, worked the Texas Water Safari again this year. He passed along the following report: "The 2008 Texas Water Safari started Saturday, June 14 at 0900 and finished Wednesday, June 18 at 1045. The first boat finished in 39-1/2 hours and the last boat finished in 97-3/4 hours, just ahead of the 100 hour deadline.

The rivers were low and slow. The temperature hovered in the upper 90's and the humidity was high. These conditions made for an extremely tough race. There were 95 boats that started and 53 that finished. In normal river conditions, about 75 to 80 percent of the boats that start make it to the finish. Tough year!!!! The length of the race is 262 miles by river. On a direct line, it is only 125 miles.

Communications for the race is provided by hams from the Victoria, Yorktown, Port Lavaca, New Braunfels and San Antonio radio clubs. There are 12 checkpoints that are manned by hams. A linked repeater system is along the entire route so hams at the first checkpoint can communicate with hams at the last checkpoint. We also use an Excel program operated through packet to enter individual boat data. The program was written by Jeremy, KE5ELI from New Braunfels. Harvey, WB5MCT and Pat, KC5WNH are the communications directors and members of both Victoria and Yorktown clubs.

This year there were 29 hams who participated. But, the guys 'n gals at the first checkpoint only work 6 hours as that is the cutoff time!!! It gets longer and longer the further you go toward the finish line. For instance, the cutoff time at the last checkpoint on the river is 97 hours. That's a lot of difference. Many points can be made for PSHR during this event. I have worked public service events for 30 some odd years and this is by far the toughest one. It is very rewarding, though, to see the look of appreciation on the faces of the people actually participating in the race.

For an interesting trip on the internet, check out their website: <http://www.texaswatersafari.org/>

Rodney, W5DY (who works all the checkpoints as rover and troubleshooter).”

Here’s a bit more background info that Rodney also sent:

## TEXAS WATER SAFARI

“World's Toughest Canoe Race”

Are you tough? Are you looking for a race that tests your limits? This is the race that could change your life and your ideas about who you are and what you are capable of achieving!

Legend has it that back around 1962 Frank Brown and Bill “Big Willie” George decided to take their “V” bottom boat, without a motor, from San Marcos to Corpus Christi. They accomplished their mission in about 30 days and decided that other people should have the opportunity to experience the same journey. So in 1963 they set up the first Texas Water Safari. Today, the Safari is a long, tough, nonstop marathon canoe-racing adventure, traversing 260 miles of challenging rivers and bays. Many participants enter the race with no intention of winning, but with the goal of joining the elite group of finishers and earning the coveted Texas Water Safari finishers patch.

Entrants must have all provisions, equipment, and items of repair in their possession at the start of the race. Nothing may be purchased by or delivered to a team during the race except water and/or ice. Each team must have a team captain (18 years old, or older) whose responsibility it is to follow the team by vehicle (car, truck, or bicycle) to keep track of their location and condition and give them water and/or ice. During the Safari, teams may not receive any assistance of any kind except verbal. Teams must be prepared to travel day and night, nonstop to be competitive, but teams who occasionally stop for sleep have been able to reach mandatory checkpoint cutoff times and cross the finish line by the 100 hour deadline.



**Chuck, AA5J**, who has been doing a good job at Tuesday NCS, will be out of town for 2 or 3 weeks due to family matters in Missouri and Arkansas. Someone will need to pick up his NCS slots during that time. We miss you Chuck and hope everything turns out OK for you and your family.

### TEX Net Topics

A few more changes to the schedule this past month. The RN5 slots from Wednesday through Friday are still open. Please, if you have the time, consider filling one or more of these slots as a regular (or even backup). Scott, W5ESE, has been filling the majority of the early RN5 liaison slots while Rodney has been filling the majority of the late RN5. We need to spread this out more, since any absence of either operator, as is bound to occur from time to time, will leave us with zero coverage to the region net.

### TEX CW Net Weekly Schedule

Local	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>NCS #1</b>	W5GKH	AA5J	K6JT	AC5Z	KD5TXD	AC5Z	W5GKH
Backup	<b>Open</b>	<b>Open</b>	KD5TXD	W5DY	W5DY	W5DY	W5CU
<b>NCS #2</b>	W5GKH	AA5J	KD5TXD	K6JT	<b>Open</b>	W5DY	W5GKH
Backup	K6JT	<b>Open</b>	K6JT	<b>Open</b>	K6JT	<b>Open</b>	K6JT
<b>RN5 #1</b>	W5GKH	W5CU	<b>Open</b>	<b>Open</b>	<b>Open</b>	W5ESE	W5CU
Backup	W5DY	<b>Open</b>	W5DY	W5ESE	W5ESE	<b>Open</b>	W5GKH
<b>RN5 #2</b>	W5GKH	W5CU	<b>Open</b>	<b>Open</b>	<b>Open</b>	<b>Open</b>	W5CU
Backup	W5DY	<b>Open</b>	W5DY	K6JT	W5DY	W5DY	W5GKH

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

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

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

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

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

#### Statistics:

This past month was another slow one with fewer than usual QNI and less traffic. Pat, KD5TXD, again took top honors with QNI of 36 (60%), and Rodney, W5DY, was second with QNI of 32 (53%). Thanks to everyone for your support.

The complete list of stations and traffic / liaison totals are shown in the following table. Traffic averaged 2.0 per net session. Net time averaged 14 minutes per session. Check-ins averaged 5 per session.

#### TEX Net Statistics (June 2008)

			total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	CTTN	TSN
Call		QNI							
W5CDX	Wads	0	9						
*		9			1				
W5CU	Sam	9	15		6				
*		6			6				
W5DY	Rodney	12	32	1	4		3		
		20		4	11				
N5EL	Floyd	22	25						
*		3							
W5ESE	Scott	25	26		11	2		20	10
*		1							1
W5GKH	Charlie	9	18	9	4				
*		9		9	4				
K5GM	Pete	4	4						
*		0							
W9GVW	Eric	4	4						
*		0							
KA9IKK	Bill	4	15						
		11							

Call		QNI	total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	CTTN	TSN
AA5J	Chuck	9	15	3		1	1		
*		6		3					
K6JT	Steve	18	46	3	4		18		
*		28		9	7		28		
N5NVP	Jim	4	11						
		7							
K5RG	Ken	3	19						
*		16							
KD5TXD	Pat	19	36	5		18			1
*		17		5		17			
AC5Z	Bert	20	20	9					
*		0							
Totals		295		60	58	38	50	20	12
				100%	97%	63%	83%	33%	20%
QTC 1		55	122						
QTC 2		67		Sessions:		60	100%		
Time 1		499	836						
Time 2		337							

The roster, which follows, has not been updated since last month.

### TEX Roster

Call	Name	Location / Notes	Call	Name	Location / Notes
N5BA	Brian	Houston	WA5MUF	Bill	Watauga
W5BYQ	Earl	Houston	# N7NET	Scott	Allen
W5CDX	Wads	Crowley LA	AAØNI	Daniel	Oklahoma City OK
W5CU	Sam	Edmond OK	KB5NJD	John	Duncanville
NV5D	Martin	Allen	# N5NVP	Jim	Scott LA
* W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	* N5PWG	Jay	Pasadena
N5EL	Floyd	Temple	K5RDW	RD	Vilonia AR
* 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
AA5J	Chuck	Plano	AI6U	Chris	Sacramento (CA)
KJ9J	Newt	Pharr TX (winter)	# W5UFK	Ken	College Station
* K5JRN	Si	Denton	* K5UN	Lee	Leonard
K6JT	Steve	Plano	KS5V	Ed	Bulverde
KA5KLU	Doug	San Antonio	K5WQG	Eddy	Tomball
K5KV	Benny	Star	# KM5YQ	David	Irving
W6LFB	Jim	Denton	* AC5Z	Bert	Nacogdoches (Lufkin)

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

Does anyone have any information on Jay, N5PWG? We have not heard him on since he went in the hospital for an operation. Also how about Jack, W5TFB, who has been off the air for quite a while? Please E-Mail me if you know anything about either one – I have sent E-Mails to their addresses but so far no response.

## Operating:

Rodney sent out the following request to stop using the middle initial for addressees in messages. Sounds like a good idea to me. Rodney writes, "I have been observing this for quite a long time. There has been a lot of confusion in sending messages that is caused by sending the middle initial of the name of the addressee. As long as the first name, last name and call sign are confirmed, there is no need to give the middle initial. Most of the confusion is on cw, but on ssb it is taking up a lot of time as the middle initial is sent as "middle initial - phonetic". This takes about 3 to 4 seconds. Multiply that by 5000 messages and that is a lot of time wasted.

I am going to advise all traffic handlers in the South Texas Section to eliminate the middle initial from their messages. I am hoping that this will go further and be utilized in all traffic soon. I would appreciate any comments. Either email me or send me a message.

My middle initial is "W", but I don't want to hear it in any messages addressed to me!!!

Thanks and 73. Rodney, W5DY"

It was good to hear Ed, KS5V, back with us the last few days (July). Also had a new QNI from Austin – Gene, K5GP.

I received the following info from Ken, K6CTW, the manager of RN6, in his net bulletin. I think it may be of interest to many of you. July 12th is the 9th running of the "Night of Nights" with a number of the former commercial CW stations (KPH, KFS, KSM, WLO, KLB, NMC, NMF and NOJ) on the air starting at 5:01 PM PDST (0001Z, July 13, just after early TEX starts).

KPH will transmit on:

426, 500, 4247.0, 6477.5, 8642.0, 12808.5, 17016.8 and 22477.5kc

and be listening for ships calls on:

184.0, 6276.0, 8368.0, 12552.0, 16736.0 and 22280.5kc on HF and 500kc on MF.

For details on all of the stations/frequencies go to: <http://www.radiomarine.org/non9.html>

While the stations are on the west coast, we should be able to hear them here on at least some of the frequencies.

Until next month,  
73, Steve

(TSN Corner appears on the next page)



## TSN Corner

Texas Slow Net (Daily) 1945 CT 3552.0 KHz

[http://www.geocities.com/scottamcmullen/Texas\\_Slow\\_Net.html](http://www.geocities.com/scottamcmullen/Texas_Slow_Net.html)

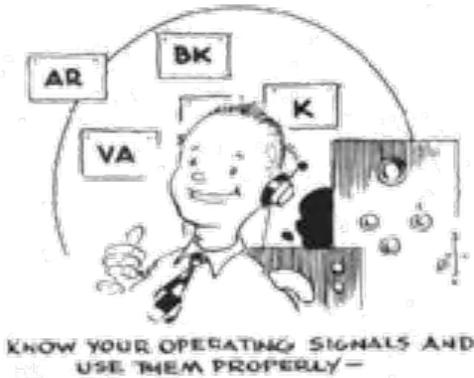
Scott McMullen W5ESE

TSN Net Manager

Here is a roster of stations that have participated in the Slow Net in recent months. Welcome to Clint, AE5GT, from Wimberley, Texas.

### Net Stations (QNS) April 2008

Call	Name	City	State	Call	Name	City	State
K0CMH	Craig	St. Louis	MO	WB5NKC	Arley	Oklahoma City	OK
W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	TX	WB5NKD	Pat	Oklahoma City	OK
N5EL	Floyd	Temple	TX	N5NVP	Jim	Scott	LA
W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	TX	K5RDW	RD	Vilonia	AR
WD0ESF	Mike	Medicine Lodge	KS	KI5T	Wade	Walker	LA
AG9G	Dwight	Phillips	WI	KB5TCH	Carroll	Douglasville	TX
AE5GT	Clint	Wimberley	TX	KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville	TX
AA5J	Chuck	Plano	TX	AD5VC	Dana	Baton Rouge	LA
AA5JW	Carl	Stafford	TX	N5XGG	Joe	Colmesneil	TX
K5KV	Benny	Prarieville	LA	KM5YQ	David	Irving	TX
KD5MMM	Phil	Fentress	TX	AC5Z	Bert	Nacogdoches	TX



### Your Novice Accent - *And What to Do About It*

In the November 1956 issue of QST, an article appeared that was to make a lasting impression on a generation of new amateurs. The Novice license had been in existence for just 5 years, so it was only beginning to influence the "culture" of amateur radio. The article offered operating advice, in a humorous and slightly crusty way, to new amateur operators. For years, it was mailed to all new licensees to promote ARRL membership, so the article continued to influence operating habits long after it's initial publication. A copy of the article, in the format in which it was mailed as an ARRL promotion, is

available on the web at <http://www.n4mw.com/ARRL/arrlyna.pdf>. I've prepared (with permission) an edition that some may find easier to read for the TSN web site at:

<http://geocities.com/scottamcmullen/Accent.pdf>.

### June Activity Report

TOTAL SESSIONS 30

TOTAL CHECKINS 103

TOTAL TRAFFIC 22

BY 8 DIFFERENT STATIONS

*The telegraph key image is courtesy of FCIT*