

The Texan

Newsletter of the Texas CW Traffic Net (TEX)

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

Net Manager: Position Open (W5DY resigned due to poor health)

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May-June 2022

Saying Farewell and Good Luck to Pete, K5GM

After 50 years in Texas, Pete, K5GM, will be moving to Oak Ridge, Tennessee, to be with his daughter in July. His 80 and 40 dipoles and beam are already down, to be transported along with his tower. He still has an R8 vertical, which works on 40 meters and higher frequencies, but not sure for how long. The lack of 80 meter capability means we won't be hearing Pete on TEX again until after he is all set up in Tennessee.

Pete is already very much missed. He has been holding down many skeds for years, including not only TEX NCS and RN5 liaison duties but also two nights of CAN NCS (Saturday and Monday) and numerous Inter-Area (formerly TCC) skeds including Echo (CAN to WAN) on Saturday and Sunday, and Foxtrot (WAN to CAN) on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday evenings.

Pete started in traffic handling in the fall of 1955 on WSN and RN7, added PAN in 1956, and except for college and the first few years of graduate school, he has been active ever since as QNI, NCS, liaison to RN5 and CAN, and TCC/IATN. He has held the Saturday Echo spot for 47 years, and Monday CAN NCS for about 30 years. So it will be a real challenge to cover all of Pete's activities.

We certainly all thank you for your many years of service, and wish you the very best, Pete. We look forward to hearing you as K5GM/4 in coming months.

K5RG's Report on 9N7RG – Portable QRP Operations in Nepal

Ken, K5RG made his 7th trip to Nepal starting on April 21st and returning to Houston on June 25th. The radio objective was to operate backpack/QRP from Nepal while in the Khumbu/Sagarmatha National Park (Everest) region. He took an ICOM IC-705, an ICOM AH-705 antenna tuner, a Buddipole Deluxe portable antenna, two 160 watt-hour LiFePO4 battery packs, a 60 Watt solar panel, a portable Iambic key, a handheld microphone, a Microsoft Surface Pro 3 laptop for FT8 contacts using WSJT-X software and far too many different but necessary connectors and USB interface cables.

Prior to the trip Ken participated in two NASA Johnson Space Center Amateur Radio Club Parks on the Air Activations (POTA) in San Jacinto State Park, obtained a Nepal Radio License (9N7RG) from the Nepalese government and baselined some Buddipole portable antenna configurations for 14 – 28 MHz. Once the initial portable antenna setup was conducted at home over real ground and not over the driveway cement with all of its rebar, the setup parameters worked out very well such that the ICOM AH-705 automatic antenna tuner wasn't really necessary. But did one want to take the chance and not bring it along?? Since the IC-705 has a built-in GPS capability, the necessary FT8 time sync signal for the laptop could be obtained with some external software using the GPS constellation which worked out fine except just once when surrounded by some very big mountains along with some very heavy ground level cloud cover.

The trek/climb plan was ambitious having been cancelled and rescheduled numerous times since 2019 but during the first two weeks of travel in the mountains, a number of things went south. First was a failure to adequately acclimatize during these first two weeks while in the Sagarmatha National Park (Everest region). Second it was unseasonably cold weather in the region. For example, between Namche and Mong La, Ken trekked in a hail storm. The cold weather also had an impact on LiFePO4 batteries since they don't like cold temperatures either.

One initial plan was to visit Everest Base Camp (EBC) but the climbers on Everest had almost perfect weather this season resulting in their summit rotations to the top being very early which conflicted with Ken's schedule to visit at the same time, which is not a good time for a visitor during these critical phases. Another problem was being unable to change the return flight reservation without a severe financial penalty (\$2500) so the trek was replanned to expand the amateur radio operations with four operational radio days in Pheriche and four days in Chukkung (both high points of the trek) while keeping the original return date of May 25th by speeding up the return trek by two days.

The amateur radio operations went very well over the 28 days in the mountains at the two chosen high point locations, although setting up the portable antenna in the cold weather wasn't easy. Luckily, Ken's Sherpa guide became a very quick learner and was a great "radio" assistant. The equipment had to be inside the tea houses with the portable antenna set-up just outside using 75 feet of RG-8X coax brought thru the slightly opened window in a bedroom. Since it was the end of the trekking/climbing season without many people in the region, Ken had his choice of any bedroom in the tea house that would accommodate setting up the portable antenna nearby. The result was 60 FT8 contacts in Asia, the Pacific rim and Europe but unfortunately none in the USA (which wasn't even heard). Also two CW contacts in Malaysia and one SSB contact in Indonesia.

Being an expedition of one, it was very easy to make major changes in the schedule, especially with some excellent support from Ken's outfitter in Kathmandu. Sometime, ask Ken how he cut two days out of the return trek back to Kathmandu. Hint: it was two quite different forms of alternate transportation, one from the 18th century and one from the 21st century.

The Clerk (fiction)

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We are fortunate to have another original story written by Scott, N7NET, to present in *The TEXAN*. *Thank you, Scott.*

Being the smallest person in school has some drawbacks - too short for basketball, not enough body mass for football. Softball? Well, I'm tall enough. Weight doesn't matter either. But patience does. Standing around waiting for a fly ball is not my favorite activity. So I spend the majority of my time alone fishing and reading. Amateur radio could be another pastime if I can ever get my arms around the Morse code.

Luck smiled on me a few months later when Uncle Ted passed away. I'm not wishing him ill, God rest his soul, but when his attorney read his will I became the owner of his dark green Olivetti Lettra 22 typewriter. Getting the hang of it took time. But time is on my side.

As the evenings became weeks my fingers came to know words like my eyes know the words in a book. Now I've added another activity to my short list of non-competitive sports – short story writing. Sweet.

After high school I needed a job and finally I spotted the help wanted sign in the Brookings Southern Pacific Depot window. Everyone knows Brookings, Oregon is not large enough to support a Western Union office. Instead, the train dispatcher handles the telegrams.

They are looking for someone to deliver telegrams each afternoon. George is the daytime train dispatcher, ticket writer, Western Union Operator, and station manager all wrapped into one. He's a skinny old man, pushing forty, probably. His hair is thin and gray at the temples and he's stooped. But it's his eyes that really draw my attention. They are washed out and tired looking.

I start that new job this very afternoon. The pay isn't great, but that's not a big deal, still living at home and all.

I don't even get a chance to go home for supper because George hands me a stack of telegrams already in envelopes bearing names and addresses. Then he wheels a bicycle from the storeroom. A sign bolted to the front fender reads: WESTERN UNION. That's pretty swell.

Everything is routine for the first three months. But then rumors of an impending war turns Western Union into a busy place. It becomes a madhouse and George can hardly keep up.

One afternoon a fat lady wearing a purple coat with a white, furry collar, and run-over shoes stands at the window. She's buying a ticket to San Francisco. She argues about every detail, layovers and meals. George is beside himself. His ears are red. She has taken so much of George's time that a stack of handwritten messages are sitting by the typewriter. After a few minutes of waiting, I sit down and begin typing. Fortunately, I've learned to copy the sounder, so when the Western Union wire comes to life I intercept the new message and then send an acknowledgement just like George does. Then I return to the stack of cursives.

"I sensed you were picking up Morse, but I didn't know you could type too," George said from across the room after the fat lady left. My demonstration didn't earn me a raise, but I gained some respect and I became the pinch-hitter.

On 7 December 1941, Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japan. Before the month was out I received a summons from the draft board. Evidently, George spoke up on my behalf, because the following week I board a southbound train heading for basic training. After that I joined others already engaged in high-speed Morse training. These students have already advanced beyond pencil copy and are using typewriters. That is right down my alley. Changing over from American to International Morse threw me a time or two, but I managed.

The building we are using was hastily constructed. The studs and rafters are exposed, rough cut, and unpainted. Sessions are conducted around the clock. My classes are at night. The instructor, a cranky old man, is as bald as a stone. He is said to be a World War One veteran. He has hard dark eyes that miss nothing. His uniform is as crisp as a new dollar bill. And he demands that we address him as Master Sergeant McDougle, but he is often referred to as the Old Baldheaded Bastard, not to his face, of course.

Listening nonstop to random Morse becomes boring as the nights wear on. When one of us drifts off, as we all occasionally do, we hear the code speed pick up and change from random characters to PE777 PE7 JA, the rhythm associated with the song "The Old Gray Mare".

With school behind me, my first duty begins in the radio room of a newly commissioned Liberty Ship. I settle in comfortably with a bug, headset, and typewriter. I'm grateful for the typewriter. With paper and pencil I get in my own way. Call it a short attention span, if it must have a name. That shortcoming is not exposed for a year, until my ship is at anchor in the Philippines. I'm standing watch on the forward deck when Harry, a tall man who works in the galley, stops for a chat.

"Is that light sending a message, or is it just flashing?" Harry asks, pointing across the harbor.

I recognize it as Morse. "Here, jot down the letters as I call them out," I tell him, handing him a scrap of paper and a stubby pencil.

Harry begins scribbling. "Is he finished?" he asks when I stop.

"I think so. What's it say?"

"It says our ship is on fire."

Naturally, I sound the alarm and the problem is quickly resolved.

Throughout the war I was never again challenged to decipher code without a typewriter.

The war is over now. Years have passed and I'm now an old man sitting at my desk waiting for 20-meters conditions to improve when my oldest granddaughter walks into my shack.

"Grandpa?"

"What is it?" I asked, glancing at my eight-year-old granddaughter, who is wearing a new pink dress, a gift from her grandmother. Her dark hair brushes her shoulders.

"What is it?"

"What did you do during the war?"

"My mind is swept back through the years and I recall our ship going up like a roman candle after we took the torpedo. Everything was on fire, including people. The noise was deafening as I sat at the transmitter sending SOS. A seaman fell into my radio room. His clothing was on fire and his skin on his face was melting like candle wax. When the radio room began flooding the captain appeared in the hatchway and I followed him out. The ship lay low in the water and we literally stepped out into a sea of bodies. There were too many to count. We swam to a lifeboat a few hundred yards out. Only five of us survived. I don't want to relive that ordeal, nor do I wish to answer all the questions that will surely follow, so I lied to her.

"Honey, I was a clerk."

Excerpt from Jack, W5TFB's Book

Here is the next excerpt from Jack's book. Jack gets more involved with helping Sue's granddaughter and illustrates his cooking skills.

I considered what Mae had said. It could have been just a wish on her part. Yet Sue and I were holding hands on the walk and Sue wanted Mae to see that we were. Too early to tell. I can see why Mae would believe that, especially since she had years with Sue observing how she was with men. The big gap in all this was Mae's grandfather. I was unlikely to go there without priming the pump, but that was tricky because there was so much of my past that is at least messy and one niche unresolved. And I could not leave that out. I decided to let it be for a while. Anyway, maybe I'm thinking too much.

Mae came down, said, "The fax is off. There was a big job ahead of me from work using the scanner which was almost done but still took ten minutes to finish." That was the only scanner that could handle large items such as maps and the only one Mae could use. The fax machine was really a software thing that ran on the big Mac that "read" the image from the scanner. If it found characters it would send text, else it would convert to jpeg and send that. I was almost certain it could not read Mae's handwriting.

In the offices there were individual scanner/printer/copy machines, all put together by Apple. (Hewlett Packard actually made the printer/scanner hardware. The computer did not need to be connected to make copies.) It was an advantage to have one right in your workspace. Considering the extreme security measures they did not want a common printing area except for large or color copies requiring high quality and fast turnaround. Then it was policy to have any sensitive printing supervised with the room cleared.

I asked Mae what she wanted for dinner. She told me pasta, and I said OK provided she would go pick about five pounds of the big red tomatoes and a head of romaine for a salad. Also some fresh basil, about a cup. I put on a large pot of water to blanch the tomatoes and

filled it from the almost boiling source. I could use the water to cook the pasta later. The kettle had a lid. The right front burner was really intense and would have it boiling by the time Mae returned. It was the same range as the one I had at home, a Hotpoint, which had been a constant Consumer Reports best buy and, at the same time, close to top rated range for years. I can't imagine why anyone would buy anything else unless they needed more burners or a grill.

I looked in the pantry for pastry flour but didn't see any, put that on my list, and looked around for pasta. It was in a big plastic cubby on the next to top shelf. There was more thin linguine than anything else. That was my favorite with a good sauce. It was sturdy enough to wrap around a fork yet had lots of surface area for the sauce. I thought maybe Mae would be interested, so I jotted down the sauce recipe. I thought I might as well make a lot. This may be shocking but I never seed tomatoes, although I do peel them when necessary. This time I did. I took a heavy saucepan and started by chopping a large onion and sauteing it in olive oil, adding four cloves crushed garlic. By now the onion was transparent. Mae arrived with the produce and I asked her to remove the little white cone containing the stem and, when the water was boiling put in enough whole tomatoes to blanch in one layer, about 30 seconds a batch. I found the red pepper and cored it, sliced it thin, and added it to the onions. When the water was back to boiling Mae added another layer. I cut each tomato in roughly eighths, peeled off the skin, and chopped that tomato and tossed it in with the onions. By that time Mae had more tomatoes ready. I asked her to reserve one for a salad. In no time we were finished, so I turned up the heat under the tomatoes to maximum, boiled until thick, covered the saucepan and cut that fire to minimum. When just barely simmering Mae added her finely chopped basil. I washed and tore the lettuce, put it in a colander, covered it, and put it in the icebox. Meanwhile I tossed salt into the hot water, brought it to boil, and added about a fistful of the pasta to the boiling water. Then we made the salad. There were some wonderful kalamate olives which I sliced thick, feta cheese, the large tomato Mae had reserved, more garlic, and olive oil. I used two cloves garlic, one to rub the salad bowl which had been sprinkled with sea salt and oil and one for the dressing: crushed garlic, 2 T Balsamic vinegar, 3 T olive oil (all of the olive oil was the best quality extra virgin). I let Mae finish the salad assembly while I fetched the pasta. I asked Mae if she would have bread. She said, "I think not, with the pasta." I agreed. It was time to eat. She surprised me: she picked up her napkin, made it large, and tucked a corner in her blouse. I always do that with Italian food, but I hadn't even taken a seat yet. The napkins were nice linen, ironed but not starched. I had a serving of pasta and was almost full. Mae had two.

I fetched salad plates from the icebox, served myself, and passed the salad bowl to Mae. She had as much as I did, and we almost finished everything. There was enough for Sue just in case she came down, but she didn't.

Mae said, "They don't cook like this here. This was wonderful, and no meat, and so simple. A child who is old enough to handle boiling water and knives could have prepared this."

I thanked her. I didn't completely agree. Knowing when the tomato sauce is thickened perfectly does not come naturally, it must be learned. Even knowing when the pasta was just right is no cinch. But she was right about the mechanics. I don't know any every-day cooking that is different. There are still tricks and things to learn which are usually learned by failing.

Mae said, "It has been a good day. It was nice to see that creepy Mr. Wills out cold on the floor. It was all I could do not to step on him. And you have been nice and have helped so much, not just with that, but with giving me things to do: Without that I would probably have gone to pieces. And somehow locating someone who wants to help me if that is needed. I won't ask how you how you did it."

"It was nothing. I was glad to help. For one thing I don't want you to believe that even a few men are like Mr. Wills. He is rare, especially for someone with the position he has."

Unfortunately, I knew what I just told her was false, but if you know that when you are 15 then all life is impossible. I knew it, but work and Sue make life a joy in spite of what I know. There was enough pasta for someone's lunch and a pint of sauce, so I put those in the icebox while Mae put the dishes in the machine. She noted that it wasn't full so set it for rinse and turned it on. So rare! She said she was going to watch TV, and I countered that I've been up since 5 and was tired. We turned off everything downstairs and went up. The media center was next to my room, so I was curious to see whether I could hear the TV. I found I could hear the lower bass, say below 200 Hz, but not well enough to make out the program material. I could easily hear it in the hall. She had it on loud. I don't remember sleeping, always a good sign.

Tuesday 20 November I went down to make coffee and smelled it had already been done. That would be Sue. She poured me a big mug. I thanked her and asked her how her sleep was. I don't know why I do that. I suppose it's a bad habit. She did her part and said it was fine. I asked something which might be relevant. "What do you want for breakfast? You must be starving."

"Can you make me a cheese souffle? There is some Swiss cheese in the icebox, I think in the door. Souffle dishes, several sizes, are in the top drawer under the wall ovens. Two of them have metal collars."

"That will take almost an hour, but certainly."

"I had some milk and toast so I'm not starving. I can help, and the Sunbeam has a balloon whip which turns egg whites into stuff that almost floats away."

I set the lower wall oven to 375°, got out six eggs, the Swiss and some Parmesan cheese, butter, and milk. The rest was handy near the workspace. I found the dishes, selected the smaller of the two with a collar. I asked Sue to separate the eggs, putting the whites in the Sunbeam bowl, and yolks in a large mixing bowl I got out. I didn't mention it, but I always beat egg whites by hand. I finely grated about a tablespoon of the Parmesan cheese, buttered the souffle dish and the collar, and sprinkled with the cheese.

I needed three cups of diced Swiss, but only had two, so I filled in with cheddar. I put a heavy saucepan on the stove, medium heat, and melted 1 C butter, mixed in the same of flour, a pinch of cayenne, and made a light roux. I asked Sue to heat 12 C milk in the microwave until just simmering, added the hot milk all at once, and off heat stirred in all the cheese a little at a time until melted but was not stringy. This is tricky with the cheddar so I grated it and added it last. Sue beat the egg yolks until smooth and I dribbled in the cheese sauce while she stirred.

The egg whites were ready to finish. She put in a pinch of cream of tartar and cranked up the mixer with the balloon whip to maximum. When the peaks were stiff, we removed about a third of the whites to the cheese sauce, folding it in, then dribbled that into the egg whites, again folding everything gently. (I had no idea how much easier it would be with two extra hands.) I had already put the collar on, and she poured the mixture into the dish. I opened the oven and she slid the dish in, closed the door, and reduced the temperature to 350°. I set the timer on the microwave to 40 minutes, then we went to the front room. It was still dark outside but there was light from the kitchen and street lights from town. The moon had set.

So did we, on that couch, me first because Sue washed her hands in the kitchen. She sat down close, touching. We only had thirty something minutes; that alone made it safe. My heart was pounding anyway, not paying attention to my brain. In fact it was just the opposite. One's brain can be notoriously unreliable. Sue rested her hand on mine, and I let her in my palm. She said, "You can cook."

"You too, and you knew I could, or at least might have suspected it."

"No, what you cooked at Brenda's could have been something you have done many times. Today you made a souffle, and clearly knew exactly what you were doing. You even knew there would be nothing to watch while it cooked." I added, "No, I knew if you do disturb it at first there is a real danger it will collapse."

I knew that, generally, electric ovens are better regulated than gas ones, have much quieter air inside, and even if I could look at it there is nothing to be done. I also know it is almost impossible to burn a souffle because of the way the bubbles of air insulate it, which is also why it takes so long to cook. I have cooked duck before but it never came out as good as those did, and the orange-raspberry sauce was invented there. I had often wondered if it would work, and it did. Anyway, today you knew what you were doing too. You even turned the oven down to 350° without asking or being told. I understand the science, the chemistry and physics, but you have an enviable knack for the art."

This was an excellent way to defuse a tense, perhaps slightly dangerous, situation. "I would have added freshly grated nutmeg instead of cayenne." "Yes, that would have been good, but I thought it would not be breakfast-like. Anyway I couldn't find it." For a few minutes no one said anything. Then she asked what Marie had for dinner. "She asked for pasta. I couldn't find pastry flour and I don't like it with the coarser white flour, so I used ready-made linguine from the pantry. I sent Mae out to get five pounds of tomatoes, a cup of fresh basil, a bell pepper, red if possible, and lettuce for a salad. She helped, not as automatically as you did today. By the way, there is cooked pasta and a pint of the sauce in the icebox." The timer sounded from the kitchen, so I retrieved my hand and went to the kitchen to remove the collar from the souffle. It was perfect. No matter how carefully you cut it you make a mess. "You can have the whole thing but that's a lot of food."

"No, fetch plates and we'll share."

It was good enough. It seemed to hold up better to being cut than usual, probably because the eggs were fresh, having been laid yesterday. Or perhaps Sue knew how to cut a souffle. We

ate about two-thirds of it. I thought maybe Mae would finish it when she got up in an hour. It was lightly raining outside.

“Yesterday I fell asleep before you could do your laundry. You could do it now.” Sue again told me my ID badge opened the door. I went upstairs for my backpack. When I came down she had a laundry basket for me with a few kitchen towels in it, including the linen napkins we had used last night. I told her the dishes in the machine were rinsed last night but not washed, and that I’d add today’s when I returned.

The rain wasn’t much. The laundry was well lit with two front-loading washers and a big dryer. I put everything in one, found the detergent and added that, started it on regular and left. If you closed the door it locked automatically. I found that was standard all over the compound except the small barn door.

It was light, about 730, the first of Sue’s employees arriving. Sue had put the dishes in the machine and cleaned the work space. The souffle, what was left of it, was in the warming oven at 100°. With clean clothes all I wanted to do was go back to sleep. I left a note for Mae about the souffle. It would be a good breakfast for her, much better than for me and possibly Sue. In the note I told Mae to do what Dr. Owens said, which I’m sure was different from what I told her. Mine was just a first approximation, based on only what I would have done, but these were different times.

Connie called. She wanted Mae, and I said I knew of the problem, was on her side, and could relay any message, but Mae was not up yet. She said she recognized my voice. She told me to destroy any notes I took after I had relayed the messages to Mae. The message was she had engaged a private investigator in New Iberia who would work with two of her team that broke the sex scandal in Lafayette. They could easily pass for 16, and were one female, one male. It was all set for them to be transferred to the New Iberia school, probably starting this morning.

She wondered if Mae would wear a wire. If so, there was one in the mailbox down by the road, with a recorder she could leave anywhere in the school she thought wouldn’t be searched but definitely not her locker. Connie said she would be in court most of the day, but if Mae chose to not wear the wire to put the flag up on the mailbox and it would go away. She said she would call between noon and 2. Connie said there was a remote chance Mae was in danger, but definitely not in legal danger. She said I should be proud of her. She had never had a client of any age who handled English as well. Before she got off she gave me two numbers, the PI’s office and his cell.

I got it all down and told her I had it. I said, “You are after the whole system aren’t you? Good.”

She just said tell Mae. I was wide awake now. Mae was coming down the stairs, so I disposed of the souffle note and waited to see how she was. She told me she was hungry, and I told her about the just-made souffle, brought her a plate and some OJ. I left to go down the blacktop road to the mailbox and fetched the wire. When back in the kitchen I unpacked it and told Mae what it was. I told her Connie had called and left instructions. I thought it silly to tell her about the new students, but did tell her about the wire. She was all for it, and she had a

teacher, her English teacher, who would put the sound-activated recorder in a place unlikely to be searched, and that she wouldn't tell anyone where, not even her (Mae) where it was.

The only problem I could see was what if they grabbed her at the door and searched her stuff (probably not her person) there, so I suggested I leave the Civic parked near the school with the recorder locked inside. It had an LED which blinked green when it had a good two-way connection to the wire, red when it was recording, and alternated that with yellow when the battery was weak at either end. If there were no lights at all then the connection wasn't working or the battery at one end was dead.

There was also a switch and volume control for monitoring anything being picked up at the other end whether recording or not. According to Connie, both had new batteries that were easily good for two weeks. However, it could not send voice to the wire. Mae said there was a church across the street from the school with a parking lot students often parked in, and I could park near the school, put the recorder behind the visor, and walk home.

There were specifications with the device that said the range was a thousand feet inside and two miles outside a building, so I thought there was a good chance it would be heard in the car from anywhere in school. It worked at 2.4 GHz and was digitally encoded. My plan wasn't perfect, but was better than risking having the remote recorder found in Mae's stuff. That might have been explained but it was better if it didn't need to be. I wouldn't need the car. Anyway, with off and on rain it was natural to take Mae to school.

I asked her if she had a driver's license but she said no. That was a pity. She could have driven herself. I asked Mae to be absolutely sure there was nothing in her purse or books that a mean person could make look like something which could be used against her.

Mae went upstairs to get ready. She had finished eating the souffle. I put the rest of the dishes in the dishwasher and started it. Sue came downstairs and I told her I needed to go out and, since it had been raining, I would drop Mae off at school. She told me that was good because she had some work to do that could no longer wait and that she couldn't play with me (her words) this morning. Mae heard that. She didn't know how we had been playing and of course the word meant something different to her. Sue intended that.

On the way to school I thought about the fake students and decided Mae might need to know, that it wasn't silly and wouldn't hurt, so I told her. She said, "Thanks. I would wonder who they are and might ask. Now I won't, and you know I won't tell either."

At school I got a good parking spot, nearest the school except for an SUV between to shield my activities. I turned the sound on the recorder so I could hear everything. I wanted to know, for one thing, that my paranoia was not silly. I could hear background noises of a busy school, then heard someone, a female, tell Mae to stop. (The red light was flashing now.) The voice told her they were checking at random, and commanded Mae to empty her purse, turn out her pockets, and hand over her books. Mae hung onto her purse, said she had no pockets, and if you want to inspect the contents of my purse I want Linda here to watch. Linda was just next door in the office and had well-known skill at spotting something fishy. She is the one who found out the 3-6 grade math teacher was drinking on the job, although some of the older kids knew it.

Mae got her way on that one, and (I learned later) Linda watched while Mae's belongings were emptied out and the purse, which was made of light canvas with one inside pocket (empty) turned inside out and inspected. There was nothing more dangerous than a mechanical pencil (with which you can kill someone with one jab), enough money for lunch in a coin purse, a tube of chap stick, and a small spiral notebook. The woman started to read Mae's notebook but Linda objected.

Mae said, "No, it's OK, just class assignments, with a few phone numbers I might need in an emergency. I always have it with me." So Mae could take care of herself (which I thought I knew) but also knew some of the darker sides of humanity (such as planting contraband on another person). Mae told the inspector person, "I would like to leave my bag with Linda today, and have both of you come with me and inspect the contents of my locker. In fact I insist on it, and right now. You know you can do that without my permission, but I want it inspected and sealed. I know what this is about, although you two may not."

The woman, not Linda, tried to seem offended and started to tell Mae she could not talk like that, but Mae cut her off: "Just what part of 'insist' do you not understand? If you are not speaking for yourself then I must have the person who has ordered this outrageous invasion of privacy. Now! I am prepared for anything."

Mae told me later that they had attracted quite a crowd, mostly upper level students. Mae's voice was full of confidence. I had little to do with it but it made me feel good about what little I had done. I wondered what Connie had told her to do. They talked long enough to cover a contingency like this.

The woman asked to have the custodian brought to Mae's locker and to seal it without opening it. Mae said, "No, I want it opened now and the contents inventoried and published, then I want it to be sealed."

The locker was empty. The custodian arrived, photographed the inside, sealed the locker with a stainless steel braided wire and a lead clasp which he embossed with his special tool containing his mark, not easy to duplicate, photographed the job from two angles outside, and left. He had been involved in several drug cases in which this tactic had been used against a student. Courts had ruled it was admissible. Anything found in that locker would now be, but would be on Mae's side.

Everything was quieter now. One in the crowd was with the high school newspaper, and she wanted to know, but everyone, Mae included, said, "No comment." I waited until Mae was in class, turned off the sound, locked the Civic, and left. Mae had done well. Of course I was itching to tell someone, even Sue, but couldn't. My only problem was with Linda, but I didn't think Mae's judgment was faulty and it was clear—well, almost clear—that she knew nothing.

To Be Continued

TEX / RN5 Mailbox:

Please send in your feedback, gripes, and suggestions. The mailbox was pretty empty this past 2 months for TEX and RN5 business.

From Scott, N7NET, 15 April:

GM Steve, Thanks for the boost with the FB publishing of your newsletter with "The Lights Of Edmonton". I lost my wife, kc7bsy, in March. After 59.8 years I'm adrift.

Condolences on the loss of your dear partner, Scott. May she Rest in Peace.

- . . . -

From Jerry, N9TU, April 17:

I received sad news indeed on the evening Indiana Traffic Net. Larry Jones, WB9FHP, passed away.

Larry was a major digital hub for many years and much of the traffic that came to TEX in 2012 to 2017 was from his digital station. So sorry to learn he lost his battle with pneumonia. His obituary is at:

<https://www.mcadamsmortuary.com/obituary/Larry-Jones>

and his website is still available at <http://www.wb9fhp.com/>

Rest in peace, Larry. 73, Steve

- . . . -

JW, WB8SIW, May 11:

Hello Everyone:

The Radio Relay International Board of Directors has issued a letter to the traffic handling community. We respectfully ask that our RRI Registered Radio Operators share this open letter with your fellow traffic operators, net managers, STMs and others interested in traffic handling.

Thank you,

James Wades (WB8SIW)

Board Chairman

Radio Relay International

See:

<http://radio-relay.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Open-Letter-to-the-Traffic-Community-2022-5-9-F-A.pdf>

- . . . -

Jim, W5FEA, June 6

My Dad and Mom were both Hams. She wasn't really active but he was. I got my license in Laredo, Texas. My Dad had an 813 rig. He was strictly CW, had a Meisner VFW, but before that he used crystals and we had a bunch of them around the house....used to grind a crystal thinner to move frequency.

My first radio that I built had a 6L6 providing my novice power, Later on built a rig with an 807 in the final. There were two switches on the rig, one for filaments and one for higher voltage, and of course I once accidentally nearly killed myself reaching in to remove the 807 plate connection with the high voltage switch still on.

I think we had an SX-71 receiver. My grandpaw lived in Iowa and he was a Ham also, W0REH.

Going on the early experience, it's a wonder I survived a lifetime of being a RadioTelephone First Class License Holder and working with much much higher plate voltages in broadcast transmitters.

Take Care, Jim W5FEA

Thanks for the story of your early operation, Jim. I hope others will also send in a short description of how they got started and who else in their family was licensed.

. . . .

TEX Net Topics

The TEX Duty Schedule and Roster are shown below. If you are willing to take any of the open positions, please advise so the schedule may be updated. Now with K5GM leaving for TN, we are missing coverage for 4 NCS slots and 3 RN5/1 and 2 RN5/2 slots. The roster was not updated. Note that early RN5 has now moved to 40 meters (7108). Note also that Sam, W5CU, is in Colorado for the summer.

TEX CW Net Weekly Schedule

Local	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
NC 1	W5FEA	N5RL	W5FEA	W9VE	N5RL	No Net	Open
Backup	Open	Open	K5GM	N5RL	Open	No Net	W5FEA
NC 2	Open	K6JT	K6JT	K6JT	Open	No Net	Open
Backup	W5FEA	W5FEA	KZ5Z	KZ5Z	KZ5Z	No Net	W5FEA
RN5 1	N5RL	KZ5Z	Open	KZ5Z	Open	No Net	Open
Backup	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	No Net	Open
RN5 2	W5CU	K6JT	K5RG	K6JT	Open	No Net	Open
Backup	Open	KZ5Z	W5CU	KZ5Z	Open	No Net	Open

TEX/1: **3541**/7106/3593 at 19:00 CT; TEX/2 **3541**/3593/1841 at 22:00 CT

RN5/1: **7108**/3567 at 19:30; RN5/2: **3567**/7108/3598 at 21:30 CT

TSN: **3570** - 19:45 CT; CAN: **7052**/3552/3590/7108 - 20:30 CT; WAN: **7052**/3552 - 22:30 CT

RN5 Backup: K5GM, K5RG, N5RL, KZ5Z

NCS Backup: W5FEA, K5GM, K5RG, N5RL, W5DY, KZ5Z

TEX Roster

Call	Name	Location / Notes	Call	Name	Location / Notes
KW5AS	Skip	Victoria	NM5M	Eric	Plano
N5BA	Brian	Houston	N7NET	Scott	Crossett AR
WA5CAV	Dick	Pineville LA	* KB5NJD	John	Duncanville
W5CU	Sam	Edmond OK, /0 CO	K9NY	Bill	Now Wisconsin
N5CXX	Steve	Richardson (K6JT)	K1PKZ	Paul	Silent Key May 2020
W5DAE	Don	San Angelo	WA5PRI	Don	Thibodaux LA
W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	* K5RG	Ken	Houston
W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	N5RL	Randy	San Antonio
* W5FEA	Jim	Graham	KD5RQB	Jason	Atlanta
K5GM	Pete	Austin (soon TN)	W5TMO	Mike	Austin
KM0I	John	Hattiesburg MS	K5TSK	Hank	Retired
KA9IKK	Bill	Katy	KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville
K5IX	Dave	Brackettville	W9VE	Don	Dallas
K5JFB	Jim	Fort Worth	WB5VIH	Dave	Merkel
K6JT	Steve	Plano	WB8WKQ	Jeff	Silent Key Feb 2022
* W6LFB	Jim	Denton	KZ5Z	Jon	Springer OK
WA5MS	Marty	Argyle			

* Capable of 160 meter operation

Statistics:

April 2022:

Don, W5DAE, took first place with 51 (98%), Jon, KZ5Z, was 2nd with 49 (94%), and Jim, W5FEA, was third with 47 (90%). Thanks again to all who checked in.

Visitors: None

The complete list of stations and traffic / liaison totals are shown in the following table. Note there were 52 sessions reported out of a possible 52 (no Saturday nets). Traffic averaged 1.2 per net session (2.0 last month). Net time averaged 12.0 minutes per session (13 last month). Check-ins averaged 6.4 per session (6.4 last month).

TEX Net Statistics (April 2022)

Call	Name	QNI	Total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	TSN
N5BA	Brian	3	6					
		3						
W5CU	Sam	8	18	3	5			
*		10		5	10			
NA5CW	Dave	1	1					
	Hockley	0						
W5DAE	Don	26	51					
		25						

Call	Name	QNI	Total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	TSN
W5DY	Rodney	20	41					
		21						
W5FEA	Jim	24	47	6		24	1	
*		23				23		
K5GM	Pete	7	24		5			
*		17		8	4			
K5IX	Dave	8	18					
		10						
K6JT	Steve	0	9					
*		9		9	6		9	
W6LFB	Jim	1	1					
*		0						
K5RG	Ken	1	4					
*		3			4			
N5RL	Randy	22	45	10				
*		23						
WB5VIH	Dave	1	1					
		0						
W9VE	Don	15	16	4			15	
		1						
KZ5Z	Jon	24	49	3	11			
		25		4	3	1		
Totals		331		52	48	48	25	0
				100%	92%	92%	48%	0%
QTC 1		7	63					
QTC 2		56	Sessions:		52			
Time 1		316	624					
Time 2		308						

May 2022:

Don, W5DAE, was 1st with 49 (94%), Jim, W5FEA, was a close 2nd with 47 (90%), and Jon, KZ5Z, was a very close 3rd with 46 (88%). Thanks again to all of you who checked in.

Visitors: Benny, K5KV from Star, TX

The complete list of stations and traffic / liaison totals are shown in the following table. Note that there were 51 sessions reported out of a possible 52 (no Saturdays). Traffic averaged 1.0 per net session (1.2 last month). Net time averaged 11.8 minutes per session (12.0 last month). Check-ins averaged 5.7 per session (6.4 last month).

TEX Net Statistics (May 2022)

Call	Name	QNI	Total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	TSN
N5BA	Brian	2	4					
		2						
W5CU	Sam	1	6	1	1			

*		5		1	4			
W5DAE	Don	24	49					
		25						
W5DY	Rodney	19	38					
		19						
W5FEA	Jim	24	47	7		24		
*		23				23		
K5GM	Pete	7	23		3			
*		16		8	4			
K5IX	Dave	8	10					
		2						
K6JT	Steve	0	12					
*		12		12	8		12	
K5KV	Benny	1	1					
		0						
K5RG	Ken	0	1					
*		1						
N5RL	Randy	21	38	6	1			
*		17						
WB5VIH	Dave	1	1					
		0						
W9VE	Don	14	14	4			14	
		0						
KZ5Z	Jon	22	46	7	17			
		24		5	9			
Totals		290		51	47	47	26	0
				98%	90%	90%	50%	0%
QTC 1		6	52					
QTC 2		46		Sessions:		52		
Time 1		316	600					
Time 2		284						

Operating:

Early RN5, CAN and WAN have now moved to 40 meters and are expected to stay there for the remainder of the summer. Conditions seem to have settled down for 80 meter operation later in the evening.

Field Day is coming up the last weekend of this month. Since TEX and RN5 do not operate on Saturdays, there are no special plans for additional coverage. That said, if there is some interest in holding a TEX and RN5 session (amid all the QRM) to help those regulars who want to pass some FD-related traffic, feel free to start the net at the regular times.

You may have noticed fewer greeting messages to new hams. That is because Glenn, VE3GNA, has relocated from Ontario to Nova Scotia and is using his original callsign of VE1IJ now. He is still working on his antennas and is not very strong here in Texas.

Here are the composite reports for the last 2 months for traffic handled at the region and above levels. April was consistent with March, but May was much lower.

Central US Nets Activity for April 2022

Net	Sessions	QTC	QNI	QTR	Rate
Day 5 th Call Area	13	29	66	78	0.372
Cycle 2 9RN*	13	243	83	76	3.197
Day 10 th Call Area #	12	22	52	59	0.373
Night 5 th Call Area**	48	98	201	448	0.219
Night 9 th Call Area	55	360	200	372	0.968
Night 10 th Call Area	54	42	130	268	0.157
Day Central US	13	114	75	177	0.644
Night Central US @	30	434	152	447	0.971
Day Inter-Area Traffic	39	90	37		95%
Night Inter-Area Traffic	62	205	59		95%
Total Voice/CW Nets		1637	1055	1925	
DTN Digital \$\$			Received	Sent	
KE5YTA Central Area RN5		611	317	294	
N9VC Central Area 9RN/TEN		1522	457	1065	
Digital Stations (12)		571	280	291	
Total DTN Digital		2704			
Total Central US		4341			
* Not Radio Relay International affiliated					
\$\$ See times and frequencies following the next month's data					
@ Manager resigned, nominations open. Composite from NCS reports received					
** Nominations open for manager - thanks to NCS stations for statistics					

Central US Nets Activity for May 2022

Net	Sessions	QTC	QNI	QTR	Rate
Day 5 th Call Area	12	9	56	71	0.127
Cycle 2 9RN*	13	189	72	74	2.554
Day 10 th Call Area #	12	17	44	55	0.309
Night 5 th Call Area**	49	45	151	409	0.110
Night 9 th Call Area	48	178	158	300	0.593
Night 10 th Call Area	50	84	106	245	0.343
Day Central US	13	114	89	178	0.640
Night Central US @	29	268	150	410	0.654
Day Inter-Area Traffic	39	61	37		95%
Night Inter-Area Traffic	38	90	38		100%
Total Voice/CW Nets		1055	940	1742	
DTN Digital			Received	Sent	
KE5YTA Central Area RN5		415	206	209	
N9VC Central Area 9RN/10RN		1626	593	1033	
Digital Stations (14)		428	225	203	
Total DTN Digital		2469			
Total Central US		3524			
* Not Radio Relay International affiliated					
@ Manager resigned, nominations open. Composite from NCS reports received					
** Nominations open for manager, thanks to NC Stations for statistics					

DTN Access:

\$\$ KE5YTA Pactor 1700-2400 CDT M-F, 24 hours Sat / Sun

\$\$ Center Frequencies: DTN 3591, 7103, and 14098; RMS Winlink 3.589 and 7.1024

\$\$ N9VC Pactor + VARA 24/7 except when on HF Nets

\$\$ Center Frequencies (both Pactor/VARA) 3591.9, 3593.9, 7102.4, 14110.4

Keep sending your TEX net reports and inputs for this Newsletter to me, either on the air on TEX or RN5, via Winlink, or via standard Email.

Happy Summer to all.

73, Steve K6JT

TEX Newsletter Editor and Statistician

TSN Corner

Texas Slow Net (Tuesday - Friday) 1945 CT 3570.0 KHz +/- QRM

Website: <http://www.k6jt.com/tsn/>

Net Manager: Jason KD5RQB, fallishere2@hotmail.com



Photo Courtesy of VE3UU

Greetings From Northeast Texas

Jason, KD5RQB, has been calling the net when he is able. Help is needed for more support of TSN. Jason tries to call up the net Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Please look for him.

Net Control Stations

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
(No Net)	(No Net)	(KD5RQB)	(OPEN)	(KD5RQB)	(KD5RQB)	(No Net)

TSN Activity Reports

Month	QNI	QTC	QTR	Nr. Operators	Sessions
April 2022	13	0	78	1	13
May 2022	12	0	72	1	12

TSN Roster (January 2019 to Current Date)

Callsign	Name	QTH
KX5C	Ron	SILSBEE, TEXAS
W5DAE	Don	SAN ANGELO, TEXAS
W5ESE	Scott	DRIPPING SPRINGS, TEXAS
KK4HCF	Sam	MARYSVILLE, TENNESSEE
KD5RQB	Jason	ATLANTA, TEXAS
N5XGG	Joe	ROCK ISLAND, TEXAS
WB8YLO	Steve	TOLEDO, OHIO
KD5ZCQ	John	ATLANTA, TEXAS

Stop by any evening Tuesday through Friday on 3570kHz at 7:45 p.m. CT and start the net if you do not hear anyone there. 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!!

73, Jason KD5RQB

RN5 Corner

RRI Fifth Call Area Net (Daily) 1930 CT on **7108** and 2130 CT on **3567**

Alternate Frequency 7052 or 3598 when conditions warrant

Serving TX, OK, LA, AR, MS, TN, AL, and NFL

Due to Frank W4DLZ becoming a Silent Key

Nominations are still open for Net Manager

Hello all and welcome to Edition 84 of the **RN5 Corner**.

Thanks to everyone who is supporting RN5 and especially to the NCS stations for their reports. Most nights continue to be covered and reported (other than Saturdays, which remain optional).

Early RN5 has switched to 40 meters (7108) but late RN5 remains on 3567. This seems to be working all right although band conditions in general have not been great and frequent thunderstorms add to the QRN and weak signals.

Sam, W5CU, is now in Colorado but continues to support RN5 and CAN. 40 works well for him early and so far his signal on the late net has been outstanding. Pete, K5GM, is off the air as he relocates to Tennessee (which is still in region 5).

Jack, K5WNU, was off the air for many days due to a problem with his fire/burglar alarm system being triggered when he would transmit. Finally got that resolved and Jack is back.

Following is a list of the stations sending NC reports for April and May (in order from earliest date station first reported that month). Thanks to everyone for supporting RN5 and especially to Jon, KZ5Z, who continues to check into many of the nets. We can really use CAN liaison help – there are a lot of empty slots.

April: K6JT 6, KZ5Z 12, W5CU 13, K5WNU 17

May: KZ5Z 29, W5CU 9, K6JT 8, K5WNU 2, W8IM 1

Thanks to all for your support of RN5, especially regulars WA5CAV, W5CU, K5WNU, KZ5Z, K6JT, and K5RG. John, KC4FL, continues to regularly check in from FL. Ben, KZ8Q, and Dean, W8IM, check in from FL some nights.

Please continue to pass AR traffic to the TEX liaison station to take for the 7290 Traffic Net. If there is no TEX liaison, these may be sent to the 7290 Traffic Net manager, KA5AZK at Winlink dot org (also see below for subject line restrictions). OK traffic can now be sent to Jon, KZ5Z, who is checking in regularly and has the 2 Sunday night NCS slots. Jon also checks into TEX so TX traffic can be sent to him if no other TEX liaison.

TN traffic can be sent to Jim, WA4VGZ, who is the manager of cycle 2 RN5 and located in TN. Use WA4VGZ at Winlink dot org. For Winlink addresses via E-mail, be sure to put //WL2K as the first 7 letters (including space) in the subject line. AL traffic can be handled by sending it to Don, WV5Q at Winlink.org. Don is a digital traffic station located in MS, but he has connections with AL SSB nets for passing traffic.

(Schedule, statistics, and roster on the next page)

RN5 Duty Roster

Local	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
NCS #1	K5WNU	K5WNU	W5CU	K5WNU	K5WNU	(No net)	KZ5Z
NCS #2	K5WNU	K6JT	W5CU	K6JT	K5WNU	(No net)	KZ5Z
CAN TX	Open	Open	W5CU	Open	Open	Open	Open
CAN RX	Open	Open	W5CU	K6JT	Open	Open	Open
DRN5	Open	K6JT	K5RG	K6JT	Open	Open	Open

2022 Statistics

MONTH	APRIL	MAY
SESSIONS	48	49
QTC	98	45
QNI	201	151
QTR	448	409
AVG QTC	2.0	0.9
AVG QNI	4.2	3.1
AVG QTR	9.3	8.3

The following roster shows stations coming to RN5 in the past 4 years and their states.

Region Net 5 Roster

Call	Name	State	Call	Name	State
WB5BNV	FRED	MS	WD5JTZ	MIKE	LA
WA5CAV	DICK	LA	KZ8Q	BEN	FL
W5CU	SAM	OK / CO	K5RG	KEN	TX
W4DLZ	FRANK	(SK)	N5RL	RANDY	TX
W5DY	RODNEY	TX	W4SU	JERRY	(Retired)
W5FEA	JIM	TX	K5TSK	HANK	(Retired)
KC4FL	JOHN	FL	K4VIZ	TOM	AR**
K5GM	PETE	TN	WB8WKQ	JEFF	(SK)
W8IM	DEAN	FL	K5WNU	JACK	MS
K6JT	STEVE	TX	KZ5Z	JON	OK / (TX)

** K4VIZ is only marginally active. Send AR to the TEX station for the 7290 net (do not use DRN5 since there is only an occasional AR liaison station there).

73, Steve K6JT
Newsletter editor and RN5 statistician