



THE BULLSHEET

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Texas DX Society

An ARRL Affiliated Club

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The Texas DX Society, P.O. Box 540291 Houston, TX 77254-0291

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Announcements

SEE THE PREZ SEZ FOR THE MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT!

How to Reach Us

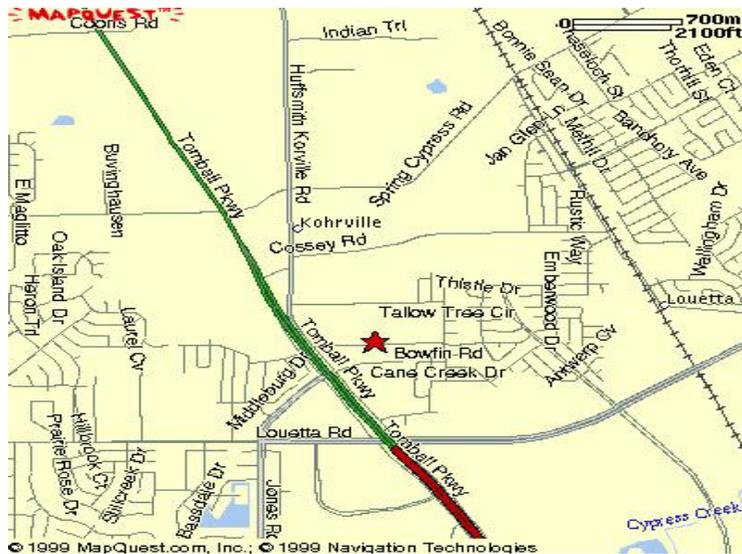
On the World Wide Web: <http://www.tdxs.org>
On 2 Meters: 147.96/36 MHz
On 70 Cm: 447.00/442.00 (103.5 Hz)
On Packet: Connect to **TDXS71** (145.71) then connect to K5LV
Reflector: Send to: majordomo@moonbounce.n5iq.org
In the body of your message only put: subscribe tdxs-list
do *not* include your email address, as the reflector will pick it up automatically. Put nothing in the subject line.

The Prez Sez- de Earl, N5TU

The March meeting will begin at the Valley Ranch BBQ at Spring Cypress and SH249 near the Compaq Campus. Take SH249 toward Tomball and exit at the Spring Cypress exit. Valley Ranch is in the strip center to your immediate right next to the Shell station. We have the banquet room reserved for our meeting. I didn't set up any thing to eat so you are on your own, but if you can't find something to eat here you really do have a problem. We have the room from 6-8 and I figure we will probably go over to the Emissions Control Lab some time between 7:30 and 8:00.

I think that we are making progress on the three initiatives I set forth in the February newsletter. We are having more meaningful meetings, there has been a movement to get involved with other clubs and recruit hams who are interested in contesting and DXing, but we still haven't made any progress on what we want to do for Field Day. That will definitely be one of the topics of our short meeting plus we also need to be getting the fund raiser underway before Belton.

See you at the meeting.



SEE THE PREZ SEZ ON PAGE ONE FOR DIRECTIONS TO THE MEETING

TDXS Contest Column

by Dale Martin, KG5U

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Sam Neal, N5AF, reports he received his 1999 ARRL DX CW Contest 10meter 1st place STX (or TX, Sammy?) award. Congratulations! Sam also reports NAQP CW with 49 Q's x 23 Mults = 1127., with the comment that "someone has to come in last."

No, Sam. I think those who come in last are those who don't run.

Bob Evans, K5WA (nee: N5DU), reports the following:

ARRL SS CW SO-LP 1,100 x 76

ARRL 10m CW-only SO-LP 1,500 x ? = ~800,000 pts

NAQP CW 550 x 198 = 110,000

NA Sprint CW TDXS team netted:

call	Name	State	Operator					
AD5Q	Roy	TX	AD5Q					
N5LZ	Don	TX	N5LZ	0	0	0		
N7FO	Oz	AZ	KN5H	237	47	11,139		
K1OJ	OJ	TX	K1OJ					
K5GN	Dave	TX	K5GN	365	52	18,980		
K5NZ	Mike	TX	K5NZ	316	47	14,852		
KG5U	Dale	TX	KG5U	209	47	9,823		
KU7Y	Ron	NV	KU7Y	214	43	9,855		
W5ASP	Joe	TX	W5ASP	226	45	10k		
WA8GHZ	Jack	TX	WA8GHZ	114	37	4,218		

NA Sprint SSB TDXS team fielded

W5ASP HP	270	51	13,515
KG5U HP	272	47+1	13,056 @W5RRR

Contest ing by Dale, KG5U

K5IID LP 200 47 9,400 WV

ARRL DX CW Contest TDXS (past and present) activity (as reported to 3830 reflector):

K5NA SOAB(A) HP 2044 440 2,698,080

K5KG SOAB(A) HP 2121 390 2,481,570

K5NZ SO40m 723 86 186,276

KG5U QRP 463 185 256,410

ZF1A (W5ASP) SO/SB 10m 2200 58 346k

Upcoming Contests this month include:

Russian Contest, Mar 18

CQ WW WPX SSB, Mar 25

Check <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestcal.html> more contest schedule information.

73,

dale, kg5u

DX Report by Buzz, N5UR

DX = Clipperton and a New One

For the first time in nearly 8 years this rare one is on. Be quick as

FO0AAA will end March 8. They came on March 2 and were easy to work on

many bands and modes. The website is <http://www.qsl.net/clipperton2000/>Planned operating frequencies are: 50115, 28475, 24945, 21295, 18145,14195, 7065 and 3795 kHz SSB; 50115, 28025, 24895, 21025, 18145,14025, 10106, 7005, 3505 and 1827 kHz CW; 21080 and 14080 kHz RTTY. The pilot station is Jay, W2IJ

(pcb4u@earthlink.net) The DXpedition will shut down late on 8 March and depart Clipperton on the 9th. QSL via N7CQQ either direct (John Kennon, P.O. Box 31553, Laughlin, Nevada 89028, USA) or through the bureau. They are running an amazingly good operation, be sure to work them.

<< TX0DX, CHESTERFIELD ISLANDS >>>

The amateur radio society of New Caledonia (Association des Radio Amateurs de Nouvelle Calédonie, ARANC) confirms that the Chesterfield Islands DXpedition remains on target for the window of 15 March through 1 April. The multi-national team has been issued the call TX0DX. They will operate on all modes and all bands with five stations (four for HF bands and one for 6 metres) from two sites, far enough apart to allow simultaneous CW and SSB operation on the same band. The list of pilots includes F6AJA, FK8CR, JH1KRC, K6GNX, OH2BN and VK3EW. QSL via OH2BN (for HF QSOs only) and JA1BK (for six-metre QSOs only). The TX0DX web site is under construction at <http://www.n4gn.com/tx0dx/>. Last but not least: the Chesterfields are “the next new DXCC entity”! These also count as IOTA OC-176. No ruling on DXCC status has been made yet, but I would definitely work them!

March is a big IOTA month. Here is my calendar:

DX by Buzz, N5UR

MAR4-19 AS-132 3W50K Cat Ba Island Vietnam
<http://www.okdx.cz/indexan.htm> QSL via the OK DX Foundation
(Bradlec 73, 293 06 Kosmonosy, Czech Republic)
MAR8-16 AF-067 5Z4WI Wasini Island Kenya, QSL via either direct G3SWH
(Phil Whitchurch, 21 Dickensons Grove, Congresbury, Bristol, BS49 5HQ,
United Kingdom) or through the bureau
MAR10-13 SA-027, DIB-46 PW5W (SSB) PR5L (CW) Arvoredo Isl DXpedition QSL
PP5LL All bands
MAR15 OC-176 TXØDX Chesterfield Islands FK8GM, FK8HC ETC.
MAR20-4 AF-NEW ZS31ER IOTA activity from Elephant Rock An
eight-operator team will be active on all bands 24 hours a day on CW,
SSB and hopefully RTTY
MAR AS-new HS New Thailand Island, no info yet, just rumors
APR 07-09 1800z WC6DX CA-10S Santa Barbara Island California. This
IOTA is on often, but this particular US Island has not been activated
before as far as I know.

The CE0ZY operation is over, but it will be remembered as a superior
operation. Check to see if you are in the log at
<http://www.qsl.net/ce0zy/news.html#log> Hope someone will do CE0X as
well one day. 9U5D remains active, best shot is the evenings between
0300-0430 on 30 or 40 cw. He also works 20 RTTY and SSB, 10 SSB and
there are occasional WARC spots on 12 or 17, but I still need him on
both those bands.

VP6BR should have wiped out the whole worlds need for Pitcairn by now,
and he has several months left on the island. His website for updates
is <http://www.qsl.net/oh2br/news.html> and for log checks is
<http://www.qsl.net/oh2br/logs.html> SO far no news on when or if he
will put the other two VP6 IOTAs on the air, Henderson and Ducie
Islands.

DX is great. I have worked JT on 10 thru 40 meters the past few weeks.
I only need Zone 18 on 80 and 10 for 5BWAZ, calls appreciated 713 464
6023 Ten has been staying open as late as 0300, with S2 HS 3W JT and a
bunch of other exotics making it into Houston. Even 160 has been good,
with The CE0 operations VP6 FO0 HC8 and a KH2 making it into local
logbooks.

Finally, G4ZVJ Andy T CHADWICK 5 THORPE CHASE RIPON NORTH YORKSHIRE,
HG4 1UA
ENGLAND - U.K. has been burning up the cw bands. A week as S21VJ gave
me that one on 40-10 then using Hiroo's call at XW2A again 40-10 (my
wire just doesn't quite make it sometimes on 80 160, and now he is at
ET3AA where I haven't worked him as yet but expect to add him on some
new bands. Good luck and good hunting. 73 Buzz N5UR

PS Sorry I Missed the last meeting, out of town. I will be there next
week to collect cards for the ARRL buro.

Contesting on Old Mexico, Part 27

de Madison W5MJ

Every trip to XA5T brings new adventures. For those of you who have yet to go there, or who think you have seen it all, I invite you to mark the middle weekend in February, 2001 on your contest calendar, because whatever will go on there next year will likely be something about which (up to then) you have only heard about from others. This year's recitation will take some time to tell, even though the actual experience did not last as long as the contest itself. We were home by Saturday midnight. The short version is that we set up, operated at an excellent rate for 18 hours, made 1000 or so Qs (thanks to the TDXSers who worked us!) and quit when the power failed. This, however, is not the full story. If you can take the time, here is the expanded version:

Our annual foray for ARRL DX CW was no exception to the new adventure syndrome, though this time the challenges were a little more than we could master. Our team of intrepid CW ops consisted of K1OJ, WA8GHZ, W5SB and W5MJ. Others expressed an interest in going, but were not able to clear the decks for the trip. Too bad. This year's new experiences were cultural, environmental, and technological.

Though we had had trouble making contact with Juan N5LNU prior to our arrival, I had informed him in January that we intended to be there on February 17. Once we hit repeater range of Laredo, he was on freq, however, and told us he would be at the Gigantica with Enrique's gate key. True to his word, he was there, not only with the key, but also with Enrique. Because Enrique had already promised some 200 young ladies whom he euphemistically described as Girl Scout the use of the main house from noon to midnight on Friday, we volunteered to set up at the vaquero's house and operate from there, at least on Friday night. (More on this later.)

We found the site to be much as we had left it when we arrived on-scene about 5 p.m. Thursday afternoon, though there was a definite shortage of RG 8. Because we were aware of an unfortunate night sky diving incident last summer from the center tower, we were apprehensive of modifications which might have occurred, but everything was pretty much in place, with the exception of the side-mounted 204BA, which was angled about 45° to the horizon. We unrolled the 80/160 wires, hooked up the coax to the 402CD, and proceeded to work small pileups from the main house on 40 CW, giving the unwashed a little rare DX ahead of the main wave.

The next morning we set out to correct the 204BA problem. We found that of the 6 bolts used hold the HyGain clamshell together, 5 were missing. The clamshell had split, of course, and slid down the tower leg until it wedged in place between the leg and one of the braces. At any rate, it held together until we were able to find one of the remaining bolts on the ground, secure the clamp to the tower, and put it in place. The rest of the bolts had apparently gone to bolt heaven, and why I did not get brained by the 204BA I consider an act of Providence, since there was almost nothing holding it to the tower.

Having conquered that obstacle, we proceeded to the 80 and 160 wires. As always, there is so much inductance from the nearby AM broadcast stations it is impossible to get a good reading on the resonance of the 160 wire. The 80 was right on the button, however, so we elected to stick to that for Friday night, and made a good rate with it for as long as we were able to operate Friday night.

The vaquero's place looked suitable (from a distance. After all, the vaquero and certain others lived there without discomfort. For a full telling of that tale, buy a couple of beers for N5RP and K5NZ, sit back, relax, and let them tell you about how the vaquero conducted his business in the olden days.) On closer inspection, we found there were only 2 light fixtures in the place, one on the porch and the other in the ceiling of the main room. Someone had removed the light bulbs, and the wiring was inadequate throughout, but we had brought along enough Romex to make our station on the air with the existing secondaries from the nearby power pole. (Clue No. 1.)

The wx there was the usual mid February fare: 85° days and bright sunshine, and pleasantly cool in the evening. Since it never rains there, except for frog stranglers once or twice a year, we thought setting up on the vaquero's porch would give us a pleasant breeze and have no downside. As it turned out, we were wrong. When we rewired our position, we found we had 210 volts across the legs, 130 volts on one side and 80 on the other. While low, we found in past years that it was enough to power the amp to about 600 watts, and concluded that, because of good SFI, we would be loud on the bands.

Mexico by Madison, W5MJ

Because the vaquero's place was too far from the 10/15/20 tower for our existing RG 8, we started the contest Friday night on 40. A beautiful red sunset came shortly thereafter, confirming that old saw, "Red sky at night, sailors delight." We settled in for the night. The rate was good, and it got better when we switched to 80. We were only a little concerned that the amp would kick off when we tried to give over about 75 watts input. (Clue No. 2) That meant we were only getting about 500 watts out. About 8 p.m., the wind picked up to about 10 knots (Clue No. 3), and we began to lose some of the amp's power. (Clue No. 4)

Although the promised Girl Scouts had not shown up by dark, we were not to be disappointed. About 9:30, several cars of young men and women arrived, moved into the ranch house, turned on all the lights, and began a loud party. While it did not affect us in the far cabin, we did note that turning on all the lights at the ranch house caused our output to drop even more (Clue No. 5) to about 350 watts max. We also noticed that the mercury vapor lamp on the pole near the vaquero's place would grow dim, and then go out for 10 or 15 minutes before miraculously reappearing for no apparent reason. One could tell, with no mercury vapor lamp, that the stars were gone. (Clue No. 6) Furthermore, when we would key the transmitter, the patio light at the ranch house would become noticeably brighter.

The party broke up about 1:30 a.m. By then, our rate on 80 was very good, even though our output was down to about 275 watts, even with all the lights in the ranch house extinguished. (Clue No. 7) By then, the wind had picked up to about 20 knots, and the temperature had dropped by 30 or 35 degrees from sunset. (Clues 8 and 9) As the wind kicked up, the tin sheets on the roof started banging, and the windmill (which apparently has not been used for years) began turning slowly. The moan from the windmill's dry bearing, together with the howling of the nearby coyotes, gave us an indication all was not well. (Clues 10 and 11) The wind continued to climb, bringing the wind chill below 30°. (Clue No. 12) Noise from the wind, clanging of the roof tin, banging of the boards on the windows, and moaning of the windmill were about 40 over 9, but we continued to keep the rate up. We found that we could continue to operate, even without being able to see the computer screen, if I moved the keyboard and chair inside the cabin. After about 30 minutes of this, the rig gave a continuous series of dits with no input from the keyboard. A quick check of the computer, rig and amplifier, still on the porch, showed that they were all suffering the effects of a steady, soaking rain propelled horizontally by the wind, which I would estimate at approximately 40 knots. We covered the equipment and suspended further operations at that point, awaiting frontal passage, which we should have anticipated, given Clues 6 and 8-12.

It quit raining about 6:30 Saturday morning. We moved over to the ranch house and immediately began operations on 20 meters. Although there was still 210 volts or so at the breaker box at the house, and 130/80 on the two legs, the most power we could coax out of the transceiver was about 80 watts; more than that would cause everything to quit. As the morning progress, the power continued to slide. When it hit a maximum of about 5 watts by noon, we determined we should let 6D2X claim the Mexican championship, and we began to pack things up.

In retrospect, it was, as always, a great experience. We have already taken steps to locate auxiliary power, and will not rely on the vagaries of commercial mains. We have determined that operating out of the vaquero's place will be satisfactory with a little preplanning, and should provide a good operating station for a multi-two effort. We left all of the antennas in good shape, and will have rotators up soon on two towers. One of the 15 meter beams has been overhauled, and the second should be ready next trip. With an eager crew, we will do well. Once again, many thanks to Enrique, Juan and the CRANTACers for making everything available. You should start making plans to be there next time.

(see photo on the following page)

Current Active Members

As of today, here are the paid members of TDXS. I would appreciate it if you would put a note to the effect that if someone has paid and is not on the list to please let me know. Also those who haven't paid to please do so. All bills are paid and we have approximately \$2100 in the bank.

K5GB K5GA K5UO W5SJS N5LZ NN5O W5BAK K1TU K5JV
N5MT KZ5MM K5WA K5LBU W5GCX K5NZ N5UR W5MJ
N5DC W5XYL KG5U K5PFE W5JWM N5TU N5RP K1OJ W5HNS
W9DX W5BXX KE5TF N5ET



Joe Staples, W5ASP

Here's an interesting tidbit from George, K5KG.

Here is a really clever way to automatically synchronize your computer's clock to a national time standard from NIST. It took me about a half hour to get it working, but it is really worth it:

Go to this web site: www.bldrdoc.gov/timefreq/service/nts.htm and follow these instructions:

- 1.) Download network time software - ZIP FORMAT (194k).
- 2.) Unzip the files into a folder of your choice. I set up a folder called C:\TIMESYNCH.
- 3.) Read these files: NISTIMEW.DOC and READ.ME for a full set of instructions.
- 4.) There are two executable programs: nistime-32bit.exe and nistimew.exe. On my Windows 98 machine, I found that nistime-32bit.exe worked and the other one did not.
- 5.) In Windows Explorer, double click on nistime-32bit.exe to run the program.
- 6.) Establish an internet connection on your PC. I do this by connecting to AOL.
- 7.) In the File Menu, select Update server list. This will install the NIST server list on your PC.
- 8.) In the File Menu, select Server and pick one of the 7 available NIST servers.
- 9.) In the File Menu, select Save Config.
- 10.) In the Query Server Menu, select Now. If you have a good connection to a NIST server, you will get back a message containing the exact time, and an option to adjust your PC's time to this exact time. At this point, you should experience a great sense of elation that you have done something really neat, and that you will conquer technology if it's the last thing you ever do! (I found that some of the servers I selected worked, and some did not.)
- 11.) With this accomplished, you can now explore the program's various options, including one to automatically synch the time every n hours of your choice. 12.) If you wish, set up nistime-32bit.exe on a desktop shortcut to make the program easily and quickly accessible.

Good Luck, and let me know how it works for you.73, George, K5KG
73, Joe, W5ASP