



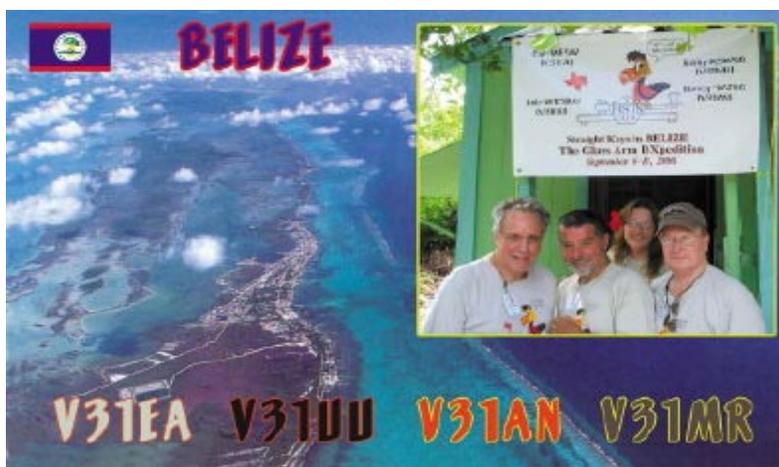
THE BULLSHEET

Official News Bulletin of the
Texas DX Society
An ARRL Affiliated Club

November
2006

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

Monthly Meeting Thursday November 9th The Boys from Belize Present the Glass Arm DXpedition



Cal WF5W, Eddy K5WQG and Bob WB5IUU will present a video and slide show of their recent TDXS-FISTS DXpedition to Belize. They will also tell some interesting tales. Don't miss the story of this TDXS sponsored trip. The meeting will start at 7:00 PM at the Tracey Gee Center.

Also on the agenda this month is the nomination of TDXS officers for 2007. See the article by Mike N5MT in this issue. We have multiple nominees for some offices for the first time in several years, see Mike's article for details.

The pre meeting dinner will be at Pappas' BBQ on Gessner just south of Westheimer. Dinner will start around 5:30 PM.

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How to reach US

On the World Wide Web <http://www.tdxx.net> email address: k5dx@tdxx.net
On 2 Meters: 147.96/36 MHz (100 Hz) On 70cm: 447.00/442.00 MHz (103.5 Hz)
On Packet: Connect to **K5DX** direct or via **TDXS71** on 145.71MHz.
TDXS Reflector: To subscribe to the TDXS reflector, go to
<http://moonbounce.n5iq.org/mailman/listinfo/tdxx-list>

Condolences

TDXS extends it's deepest sympathy to Jim Carmody NN5O and his family. Jim's mother passed away while he was in Ireland for the CQWW SSB contest.

Congratulations

TDXS wishes "Happy Birthday" to these members with November birthdays:

Bob King - K5IY	Keith Huges - KA5F	Joe Staples - W5ASP
Charles Brues - N5AM	Robert McWhorter - K5PFE	Chuck Dietz - W5PR
John Davis - KN5T	Bill Eckenrode - W5SG	Jim Carmody - NN5O
Bob Chmielewski - N5PJI	Tom Ashworth - N5EA	Bruce Meier - N1LN
Ed Gerber - W5GCX	Chuck Hornburg - K5IX	Don Mayhall - N5DM
Don Daze - N5DD	Matt Thomas - WX5S	Max Maxwell - K5PP

The Prez Sez by Mike N5MT

The TDXS board met at a local restaurant to discuss the establishment of a written set of guidelines for the Topp DX funds and what we expected the members to do with these funds. We had some help from the Northern Cal DX Foundation as we used some of their guidelines as ours and modified a few to fit the TDXS mold since the funds are presently restricted to support TDXS members at the present time. The decision by the board was basically that TDXS members need to furnish most of their transportation expenses and the DX funding would help out with other expenses. Some funding may be used for transportation at the discretion of the board in certain situations where the event is rare or maybe to an IOTA where you might need to hire a boat to get to the island, etc. Once the guidelines were agreed upon by the board, we reviewed the request for funds for the YN trip that was to take place for the CQ WW SSB contest in October. The board agreed on a set amount of funding and after the meeting was completed, the treasurer and those going to YN were advised of the decision by the board since all of these people were not the meeting.

Since that board meeting, we received another request for Topp DX funding from Madison W5MJ who is going to be one of the operators for the second VU7 DXpeditions in December. The request for funds from Madison was forwarded to the board for discussion. The board members were polled and an amount was set for funding. Madison was advised accordingly and he said he is ready to go and appreciated the help from the Topp DX Fund.

Our last meeting was held at the Tracy Gee Center and we had twenty members and one guest. Most of the TDXS officers were at the meeting but our Treasurer Bill K5WAF was out of town again with his job requirements. I have since found out that Bill will miss all of the remaining meetings due to work for the remainder of the year. So those that may need him will need to do so by email unless you catch him at home on a weekend. Most of the old business was having to do with the Topp DX funding and what the board had decided at the special meeting earlier in the month. We discussed what actions the board had taken at the special meeting. The guidelines will remain an internal document and will not be put on the website. Funding for the YN2 and the VU4 trips was announced to the members.

The next new business discussed was the upcoming election of 2007 TDXS officers. It has been many years since we have had two people wanting to run for an office and this year we will have our first email ballot! Opening nominations brought out one for Charles Frost K5LBU, who was not at the meeting, and one for myself Mike Davidson N5MT to run again for President. Nominated for VP/membership was Steve Smothers W9DX who is presently in that position. Nominated for VP/programs was Arthur Alvarez N5KTN who is presently in that position. Nominated for Sec/Treasurer was Bill Frink K5WAF who is presently in that position but Bill was not at the meeting to accept the nomination. No others were nominated at the meeting but since then I have received two more nominations and one rejection.

Nominated for VP/membership was Ed Gerber W5GCX who will be running against Steve W9DX. Nominated for Sec/Treasurer was Keith Dutson NM5G. Declining a nomination was Bill Frink K5WAF.

Since this election is our first in many years, I have decided not to send out the ballots on November 7th but to wait and announce these changes at the meeting on November 9th. Likewise, anyone that wants to run for an office can nominate at the meeting. But if the person nominated is not at the meeting, you must have some written email saying that they will accept the nomination. I do not want to drag this process, so I want it to be finalized at the meeting so the Secretary can put the ballots into electronic mail and start the process of the election. Likewise, no stuffing the ballot box as the Secretary knows who gets to reply to the vote. Results at the next meeting which might be our Christmas Party?

The program for the meeting was a nice video of the W1AW/5 operation by the Central Texas Contest group which contained a few of our members operating in the video. Sorry, I do not remember all the names of members in the video.

Recap of TDXS officer nominations for next year:

President: Mike N5MT vs Frosty K5LBU **VP/Membership:** Steve W9DX vs Ed W5GCX
VP/Programs: Arthur N5KTN **Sec./Treas.:** Keith NM5G

It Seems to me... Steve Smothers W9DX

Over the past few years, I've heard a few people say that TDXS isn't what it used to be, or is a shadow of its former self. While our traditions and history are important, I think it's more important to think of what can be, rather than merely what has been. A club is always going to be a revolving door with members coming and going, and a club's interests and personality will reflect the currently active membership. It was that way in the beginning, and it's that way today.

TDXS has always been a fraternal organization (with YL members too) rather than a club. Membership is by invitation only to those who share an interest in DXing and contesting, and who are compatible with the membership. When I started going to TDXS meetings in 1984, it took years of attending meetings, participating in Field Day, club contesting efforts, and getting to know every member before being nominated. It's a lot easier today to become a member, but I think we've weakened the "bonding" process. Sometimes current members don't have a clue who the nominees are. Due to the level of participation in club events, past prospective members really went through a "right of passage" that meant something special when they became a member. The relationships forged with other members during that period made many lifelong friendships that last to this very day. How well do you know your fellow members and their interests? Why are some new members disappearing after a year or two? Why aren't strong personal relationships being formed?

I think there are several factors. In the first place, we don't communicate daily with each other like we used to. In the not so distant past, the repeaters were humming with activity all day and especially during the commute times. We also had a weekly 2-meter net. We really got to know each other, share ideas, help one another with projects, and form personal bonds. I can't tell you how many times I've had to pull over because I was laughing so hard at someone's joke or funny remark. I'd give anything to have tape recordings of some of those early repeater episodes. Today, we don't even hear much repeater traffic on a club meeting night. Why not? I know the same thing is happening across the country but can't quite put my finger on the problem. Some blame cell phones and internet usage, but do we really call each other on the cell phone, or exchange e-mails every day? If we did, would it be the same? I don't think so. Glenn has done an excellent job on the repeaters, so let's try to use them more. If you haven't heard from someone in a long time, make contact by phone, personal visit, or e-mail and keep the connection alive. Most of our members' e-mails have hyperlinks on our Member Nr webpage. If you need a current roster, contact our club secretary for a copy.

As far as contesting activities are concerned, we're not the force we once were. We no longer have the big multi-multi contest stations active in every contest and manned by teams of club members. Many of our formerly active testers have moved away, retired, started careers and families, or just don't have the time to devote to contesting anymore. That doesn't bode well for building teamwork and forming the personal bonds that contesting can do. However it certainly doesn't preclude every member with any aluminum in the air from making some contest Q's and listing Texas DX Society as the club affiliation. Every little bit helps. Who knows, maybe you'll "get the bug". At the very least, get on the air and give your fellow TDXS member a contact for points when it counts. Another 20 or 30 QSOs from club members can make a huge difference in a contest score.

DXing is another challenge for the membership when many members have Honor Roll status, 5BDXCC, and don't have many "needed" countries left, if any. We once had an active "Need List" and whenever someone heard a DX entity that someone needed, a phone call would go out no matter what time of day or night alerting the member that a station he needed was on. I'm sure we have a lot of members still needing a fair number of countries to get on the Honor Roll or #1 DXCC. If anyone is interested in this, we should discuss putting this together again.

It seems to me... continued

One important activity that combines contesting and DXing is the number of recent club sponsored DXpeditions we've made in the past year. I think this is a very positive step for the club and give us a lot of exposure through website visits. It sharpens members' operating skills, fosters teamwork, and certainly helps form some lasting relationships. I know for a fact that those that have participated in some of our past DXpeditions will be friends for life. If you have the opportunity to go on one of these trips, sign up. You won't regret it!

Every member has talents the club can use. Even if you don't hold a club office, volunteer to help someone who does. It would be great if each year's election ballot had 3 or 4 names running for every office. That's probably wishful thinking, but it doesn't preclude you from volunteering to help those who do hold an office or appointed chairmanship. We always need meeting program ideas, and speakers. Volunteer to give a program. If it's interesting to you, it's going to be interesting to others as well. If you can't give a program, help find someone from the outside who is willing to give a presentation. Our Bullsheet editor can certainly use more input for the monthly newsletter. Send him your thoughts, ideas and articles. We also need more volunteers to help organize the annual Christmas Party and January Banquet. Maybe some XYL's of members could help with this. Try to attend more than the required minimum meetings to maintain full membership. You miss a lot when you're not there. Be sure to introduce yourself to meeting visitors and make them feel welcome. Better yet, bring a visitor, especially young hams.

It's your organization. Every member must be a contributor rather than a spectator for an organization to survive. The load is light when many hands are helping. Clarence Sharp - K5DX (SK) once said to put God, family, and career before our beloved hobby. It seems to me that he found the right balance while making lasting and memorable contributions to TDXS. What will your legacy to TDXS be?

Steve Smothers - W9DX
VP - Membership

Tomball Field Day 2006 Cal WF5W

The Tomball Bunch Field Day operation was held 0001 4 November to 2400 same date. It started with lunch at MELS for Cat fish, then on to the site. Plenty of help put the trailer tower up with the TA33 and the newly acquired 40/80 vertical of TDXS. IT was cold cold at night and the crew deserted by 11 PM. (with the exception of WF5W and W5PDW) At about 11:20 NM5G arrived with two trays of cinnamon rolls that were to die for... Some were saved and were gone early the next morning.

Highlights. Sean, KE5KFY, our newest ham (and New NARS member), age 10, came out with his mother and worked his first QSO with W5MF. Marty then arrived at the site shortly there after. W5PDW took photos of Sean and his first QSO partner. Wouldn't we all like to have had something like that to remember our first QSO??

Logs are on paper and in possession of W5PDW so don't have the call sign in hand but ART from North Dakota answered a CQ on 40 CW with a really good fist. In the chat it was learned that Art is 96 yrs old and has been a ham for 75 years....WOW.

Mike K5UO was kind of the equipment man and man of the hour for our call sign. He advised just in time that he had obtained the call sign K5T for our special event.

Thats it for this year.

YN2EJ CQWW SSB 2006

On Wednesday, October 25th Ed, W5GCX and wife, Frosty, K5LBU and Mike, K5UO headed south to Granada, Nicaragua to operate the CQWW SSB Contest. We left Houston on Continental Flight 1774 and arrived at the Managua airport about 8PM. The van picked us up and drove us with luggage and HF2V to the Alhambra Hotel in the central square of Granada. All the luggage plus the antenna were carried up to the third floor to operate out of room 314, which adjoins the laundry/water tower area.

Granada is the oldest city in the western hemisphere. It was founded by the Spanish conqueror Francisco Hernandez de Cordoba in 1524, constituting one of the oldest colonial settlements of Central America. Francisco named Granada after his home in Spain. The architecture in Granada is typical of southern Spain. The houses encompass the property line and a large open space is located in the center of any house.

The Alhambra hotel has a large “flat” roof above its third floor, which makes putting up antennas much easier than the other hotels in the city. There is also a water tower with a ladder welded to the middle, which allows use as an antenna support. We had planned to support the HF2V with a small tripod that was brought five years ago when we last operated there. When we got onto the roof we found that one of the tripod legs had been cut off so, that option was no longer available. However, a 12-foot tower section is bolted to the roof supporting a small communication dish. So the HF2V was strapped to one of the top legs of the tower with pipe clamps previously purchased at one of the local hardware stores, Ferretaria Lugo.

Next it was time to find a spot for the 160-meter dipole that Mike had brought. Mike and Frosty strung it from the water tower ladder to the front of the hotel where there is a cement wall and brought the extra portion back to another support. Ed was busy stringing the coax cables into the hotel room from where we would operate. By lunchtime Thursday these two antennas were up.

Ed's cousin brought the 8-inch plastic pipe with the 3-element mini-quad to the hotel along with a small suitcase, which contains the antenna coils, RG-8X and rotator cable. Thursday afternoon Ed went back to the hardware store and purchased three 2-meter sections of 1-inch galvanized pipe with thread and collars. These were used to support the mini quad and rotator to be located above the water tower.

Friday after breakfast, the min-quad was put together. However, this was the first shot by “Murphy”. One of the director coils had gotten wet during the five years of storage resulting in part of the end where the aluminum stubs are connected being partially corroded. So, we set up the beam as a two-element as it was used during earlier years. By lunch time Friday, the beam was up and coax and rotator cable brought into the operating room.

The SWR was checked on all antennas with the MFJ antenna analyzer. The HF2V needed slight adjusting on 75. 40 Meters was fine resonating around 7100 KHz. 80 meters was resonant below 3700, which was low for SSB work. So, Frosty adjusted the coil slightly. The mini-quad was indicating low swr on around 14.155, 21.09 and 28 was flat.

YN2EJ CQWW SSB 2006 *continued*

Frosty and Mike started the contest on Friday night with Ed returning from Managua around midnight. Right at 12 midnight the power went out. Frosty was able to operate since the hotel's 7.5 kW generator powered the room lights and some electrical outlet but not any of the hotel air conditioners. Frosty started a run of JA stations after the hotel generator kicked in. The hotel management brought up a portable fan, which kept the air moving. The 40 meter band was very quiet, practically no noise, as there was no power in the entire town.

Around 3AM Ed started operating working JA stations on 40. Mike grabbed the chair around 7AM. We continued to rotate operators every 3-4 hours. Murphy stuck around until 1PM Saturday as the power went out again but this time for 3 ½ hours. We tried operating as the hotel generator was humming away next to room 314 wall. However, the voltage fluctuated too much, tripping the IC-7000, then the IC-746 PRO and the amplifier. So we shut it down and took a rest. Around 4:30 pm the power came back on for the rest of the contest.

Sunday was a good day as even 10 meters opened to the states and South America. After running the pile-up on 10 (yes the rate meter even hit 230), we moved to 15 and finally to 20 until 4 PM on Sunday afternoon. In the meantime Frosty and Ed took down the vertical and the 160-meter dipole. At 4PM we stopped and brought the beam down, packed it up and pulled the station apart. Yes, the sun sets around 5:30PM.

Monday at 4:45 AM the driver and van showed up and we headed back to Managua airport. On the way the horizon showed up around 5:15 AM.

The country has presidential elections this Sunday so maybe next year?

73 & DX

Ed, Frosty and Mike



CQWWSSB 2006 Scores and Comments

YN2EJ Time on the air about 40 hrs

BAND	QSOs	ZONES	COUNTRIES
160	7	5	5
80	220	16	29
40	691	23	60
20	374	19	38
15	356	15	36
10	285	10	15

Totals 1933 88 183 Points 1,159,067

CQWW SSB - Oct 2006	Category	Q's	QSO Pts	Zones	Cty	Points
W9DX (Steve)	SOSB/15 LP	410	1,011	28	101	130,419
W5PR (Chuck)	SOSB/10 HP	421	850	22	63	72,250
EI2VNO (NN5O)	SOSB/20 LP	184	280	13	50	17,640
VK4UC (W6KNC et al)	M/M	3,453	9,757	143	339	4,702,874
K5NA (K5NA et al)	M/S - HP	2,434	5,653	148	509	3,714,021

Another CQWW and another great weekend. Saturday was terrific on 10M and I was surprised by how many European multipliers we were able to hear and work. That one day was better, multiplier wise, than all of last year on 10M. But on Sunday, someone pulled the plug and conditions were really poor, especially on 10M. But the other bands were affected greatly too. We plugged along here and did the best we could. Congratulations to K1KI and their terrific M/S score. They must have been operating on a different planet than we were on. Also congratulations to K5TR and their excellent effort to win the battle of Austin.

73, Richard - K5NA

My luggage was over 100 lbs for this past trip, with 82lbs plus carryon of another 20 or so. Couple of comments: I have both my antennas (BB7V and a homebrew vertical with radials using the MFJ 32' fibreglass pushup) to the point where they are absolutely flat on my band. So, next time I will take no tuner stuff. Am thinking about a QRP effort if they have a 10W category. Before my BB7V got fritzed out with the incoming N. Atlantic tide (thought I has taken the tide into consideration but missed it by about 4") 15 was really alive. Taormina taught me that 15 was the best band for a pipsqueek in EU. My OK, GU, and 4 EI dxpeditions in CQWW have proven him correct. POSSIBLY, I will have time to get my CQ up for a QRP effort. Hope TDXS did well elsewhere and otherwise.

Jim NN5O

Our operation had four stations and five operators. There were only two towers, although there were two beams on each. Rotational control was a important management issue. It helped that we were all old friends! My station is a good SO2R (and perhaps a M2) setup which we had to cobbled-up (with a lot of coax switches) into this temporary MM station (sort of!). The main thing is we had fun and now there will be a meaningful VK MM score to go into the record books!

John W6KNC