



The Bullsheet

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

The Texas DX Society, Houston TX K5DX@tdxs.net December 2009

2007 Scarborough Reef BS7H DXpedition

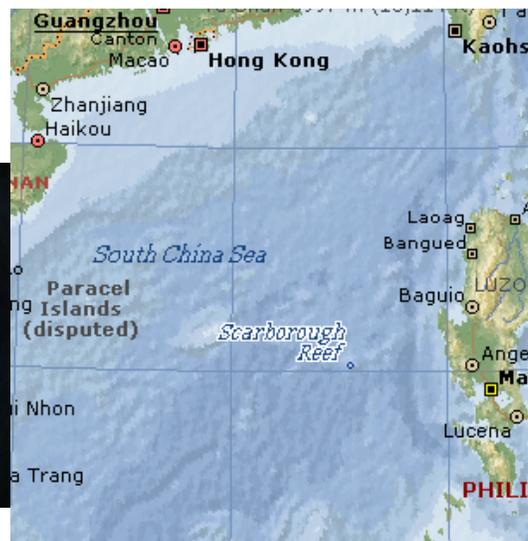
*Thursday December
10, 7:00 PM*

TDXS Meeting Night:

Tracy Gee Center,
3599 Westcenter Dr,
Houston. Pre-meeting
dinner get-together
location has not yet
been decided.

The program will be a
showing of the 2007

Scarborough Reef
BS7H DXpedition
video.



Editor's Note de Doug WB5TKI

Wow, it's already
December. This
marks the end of my
first year as Bull-
sheet editor. As I've
not heard of anyone
clamoring to take
over the job, I guess
that I'll stay on a bit.
I want to thank eve-
ryone who contrib-
uted articles and
columns for the Bull-
sheet throughout the
year. You are what

makes the Bullsheet
worth the read.
Santa came early
this year, in the form
of a Ten-Tec Model
715 RF Speech Proc-
essor. None of my
rigs have any sort of
speech processing
capabilities (except
compression) so, as
soon as I read the
review in the De-
cember CQ I knew
that I had to give it a

try. After all, Gordon
West WB6NOA
wouldn't lead us
astray!
I wish you all the
best of the holiday
season! Don't forget
ARRL Straight Key
Night on New Year's
Eve. It's a fun and
safe alternative to
dodging the partiers
on the roadways.
QLF!

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The Prez Sez de Paul W5PF

Another year is almost gone, they seem to go by much more quickly these days. Let's hope that the sunspot drought is also behind us. With so many spotless days during the year it was refreshing to hear some of the high bands open at night during the last month. I worked TX3A on 10 and 12M at about 10 PM local and on 20M Rtty at midnight. The group of sunspots that created those openings is gone and we are back to zero spots again. I hope the sunspot number finally starts consistently upward in 2010. 2009 saw quite a bit of activity by TDXS Dxpeditors. The big operation was C91TX in March and April. Even with the poor propagation the gang managed over 12K QSOs in 9 days of operation. W5KDJ made the trek to Madagascar in July to operate as 5R8KD for about 2 weeks. K5LBU and W0MM went to Lesotho in July and August as part of a very successful 7P8 expedition. NN5O popped up from several locations during the year including his usual trip to Ireland. Thanks to all these folks for providing some good DX and giving us something to look for on the bands.

On the contesting front, K5EWJ has been trying to get more participation and has had some success. WB5TUF has been doing the RTTY contests and even WF5W submitted a log for CQWW CW. I'm sure there are others that have done some contesting but have not posted their results on the reflector. The December issue of CQ Magazine has the results of the 2009 CQ WW DX 160 Contest. In the club results it shows TDXS as having submitted 30 logs totaling over 3.6 million points. Either a lot of folks didn't put their results on the reflector or CQ may have combined our scores with another club. I couldn't find that other DX and Contest Club to our west listed at all. Hmmm? The Winter and Spring contest seasons should be good so get on the air and pump some rf into the ionosphere. At the last meeting Bob, WB5IUU, had samples of the TDXS shirts and vests. He will send in an order after the next meeting so if you want either please get your order to Bob. The shirts are \$25 and the vests \$35. We have sent out pictures on the reflector but if you want more info contact WB5IUU or

me and we will answer your questions.

Keith, NM5G, has been working on the combined Christmas/Winter Banquet. It will be held at the Saltgrass Steakhouse on Saturday January 9, 2010 at 7:00PM. We will have further details and discuss menu options etc. at the meeting. Make your plans now to attend.

Speaking of the meeting, it will be on Thursday Dec. 10th at 7:00 PM at the Tracey Gee Center. Pre meeting dinner is still being discussed. The program will be a video of the Scarborough Reef DXpedition, BS7H.

This is also the time of year that the annual dues are collected. As approved at the last meeting the dues are again \$25. Send your checks to Bill, K5WAF, or see him at the meeting.

73 de W5PF

From the Bullsheet Archives by Steve W9DX

Ten years ago this month December 1999: The December meeting was held at Ryan's Steak House on 34th at 290. TDXS President Earl Morse N5TU (now N8SS) had a nice report on his trip to Taiwan where he operated one of the local club stations BV0DX with the help of BV4FH and BV4AS. DX Chairman Buzz N5UR reported that conditions were wonderful on 10 meters and he worked all continents simultaneously during CQWW contest, and that 12 and 15 meters were lots of fun. Zone 23 had been heard here on 75m during our mornings. Madison W5MJ was finalizing preparations for the January 2000 banquet at the Confederate House. Dale KG5U was lamenting the decline of contest activity within the club, and set out some goals for everyone to work on. Henry W5HNS was pointing out some pros and cons of continuing to host the Texas QSO Party another year, and asked that it be put to a vote the following month. Jim N5DC gave details of the soon to be upgraded DX packet system to be installed at NR5M's dealership to use a T1 line, and new tower. Ed W5GCX gave a report on his and Frosty K5LBU's CQWW Phone entry from Nicaragua as YN2EJG with

1869 Q's, and 1,533,192 total points with 10 meters being the most productive band.

Twenty years ago this month December 1989: Not much news to report as preparations were being made for the January banquet at Brady's Landing. Bill Schrader K2TNO announced that he was stepping down as Bullsheet editor, and that Joe Staples W5ASP would be taking over. TDXS President Ken Grabenstein KE5IV (now KZ5KG) had the TDXS Packet Cluster DX Bulletin Board up and running on 144.95 in Hempstead, with a digipeater on the north side of Houston. Ken also added a second TNC with a beam pointed south to Houston on 144.91. Those with 2 meter beams on their towers could connect direct without the delay of going through a digi.

Thirty years ago this month December 1979: TDXS President was Clarence Sharp K5DX. TDXS was preparing for a "great big gala Christmas banquet" at the Greenwood Forrest Club at FM 1960 and Champions Forest Drive. TDXS's participation in the 1979 ARRL West Gulf Division Convention brought in some

much needed funds with clubs that gave seed money getting three times back, plus \$1000 gained on raffle prize ticket sales. Special thanks to Bob Sorace WD5CHY for his bar-keeping skills in the TDXS hospitality suite, and Ken Martin K5YCP and Orville Burg K5VWW for putting the DXCC QSL card display together. The annual TDXS Competition started Dec 1st with the goal of chasing zones instead of countries this time. Entry categories for the club competition is single band and multi-band 80-10m. The "unofficial" TDXS DXpedition to XE2FU last March was so successful (# 1 World Multi-Single CW) that discussions were underway about doing ARRL Phone from there next year. Plans were underway for 15-20 participants, and an exploratory trip was to be made after Christmas. Bullsheet Editor Tom K5RC announced that TDXS member Randy Thompson K5ZD assumed the editorship of the National Contest Journal starting with the December issue.

Contest Chairman's Report by Cookie Cooke, K5EWJ

The CQWW CW 2009 is now history. It was a fun contest as usual, but conditions were just fair. We had no sun spots again and the flux was around 74 for the week end. Twenty did the heavy lifting with forty not far behind. Fifteen was just fair and ten had only the usual South and Central Americans. Eighty and One-sixty were not so good here because of some local line noise, but Mike, k5UO had a couple of good nights on eighty.

Some scores from members:

NR5M, Multi-Multi, George with K5GA, Bill, NM5M, Eric, W0MM Laurent, K5RT, W5OV, K5PI NX5M, N5NU, N1XS, WM2H, N5XJ, K5NZ Mike, WM5R, XE1KK & KZ5KG, Ken. 5,438 Qs for 13,408 pts & 800 mult for 10,726,400 reporting Central Texas Contest Club

K5ZD, Randy who moved 1500 miles closer to Europe made a fantastic SOAB-HP score of: 3,979 Qs for 11,378 points & 612 mult for 6,963,336 reporting Yankee Clipper Contest Club

K5RC, Tom as W7RN as SOAB-HP and 1500 miles closer to Japan says he still has it with:

927 Qs for 2,521 points & 479 mult for 1,207,559 reporting Northern California Contest Club

K5EWJ, Cookie as SOAB-HP scored: 494 Qs for 1,348 points & 295 mult for 397,660 reporting **Texas DX Society**

WF5W, Cal probably as SOAB-HP scored: 441 Qs for 1,123 points & 284 mult for 318,932 reporting **Texas DX Society**

W5PF, Paul probably as SOAB-HP scored: 307 Qs for 818 points & 246 mult for 201,228 reporting **Texas DX Society**

N5MT, Mike as SOAB-LP assisted scored: 188 Qs for 485 points & 181 mult for 87,785 reporting **Texas DX Society**

K5UO, Mike as SOSB scored: 73Qs for 194 points & 45 mult for 8,730 reporting **Texas DX Society**

W5MJ, Madison sent his Cabrillo file with about 50 Qs on 40 meters. Not bad for cliff dweller with a stealth antenna. I will leave his score for the

program that can break down the Cabrillo file.

Project: I bought a couple of QSK kits from AD5X, Phil Salas a couple of months ago for my Dentron Clipperton and my Ameritron ALS-600. The article appeared in the June 2009 issue of QST. The relays are tiny and I had qualms about installing them for 600 or 700 watts of RF, but Phil insisted they were big enough. They sure stood the use and abuse of the CQWW and QSK is really nice. The relays don't make enough noise that I can even hear them over the normal fans and shack noise. They are a super good value for medium power amplifiers. You might want a little bigger relay for the 1500 watt monster amplifiers, but for the 1000 DC in retro-models, they are great.

When I installed N1MM for the CQWW-SSB I came to the realization that I needed more RAM in my computer for today's programs. So, I bought a HP Pavilion with an AMD Quad Processor, 8 GB of RAM and 686 GB Disk Drive. I am busily trying to tame this new computer and get everything work-

Contest Chairman's Report (cont.) by Cookie Cooke, K5EWJ

ing with the logging programs. Needless to say, this task and Windows 7, 64 Bit system is presenting some challenges. I am learning quite a bit about the up to date systems and the serial connections to devices. I will try to get my thoughts organized enough that I can write a few recommendations. I am also learning about features of N1MM that I was not aware of. It is an interesting challenge.

Speaking of challenges, I have become intrigued by the CQ Marathon. So far this year I have logged all 40 Zones and 200 countries for the Marathon. It is an interesting activity that lasts all year long. I kind of wrecked the effort last year, but it will be interesting to see where I wind up this year. I added New Caledonia this morning.

Everybody keep on hitting those contests and be sure to turn in your logs for **Texas DX Society**. It is harder to hang in there for the all nighters than it was 20 years ago, but it is still fun! However, I have discovered that 55 years of pounding the brass will make your hair gray and make a lot of it fall out.

73, Cookie, K5EWJ

Coming up!

ARRL 160 meter , Dec 4 thru Dec 6, www.arrl.org/contests

ARRL 10 meter, Dec 12 & 13, www.arrl.org/contests

PSK Death Match, Dec 12 & 13, www.mdxa1.org/deathmatch.html

Stew Perry Top Band Distance Challenge, Dec 27, jzap.com/k7rat/stew.rules.txt

South Dakota QSO Party, Dec 31, www.w0blk.org

ARRL Straight Key Night, Jan 1, www.arrl.org/contests

ARRL RTTY Roundup, Jan 2&3, www.arrl.org/contests

CQ 160M DX CW Contest, Jan 29&30

CQ 160M DX SSB Contest, Feb 26-28

CQ DX Marathon-2009, Logs due by Jan 31 (As many Zones and CQ countries as you can)

CQ DX Marathon-2010, All Year

CQ Diamond Jubilee, Nov 1, 2009 to Dec 31, 2010 (work all 40 Zones)

From the DX Chair by Cal WF5W

CQWW CW was the big deal this month....working the piles.....Its harder on this side of the pond.

So. Getting ready for YN2. More later on that.

Just stuff, Got the rig finally working on the Sea Pumpkin. Would you believe it was oxi-

dation on the terminals? Don't think our stuff is meant to be near the water..... When cleaned up, works well. So now we can get after it at the docks as well. RE the noise, found it on the pier. Two other boats (to remain un-named) were the dirty emitters. When their power was shut down, noise went away. (We shut down all

the boats one at a time to see.) So, I guess we will have to remember to turn their power back on when leaving the area(hopefully they won't notice).

c u on the bands

cal wf5w

TDXS November Meeting Notes by Bill K5WAF

Date: November 12, 2009
7:00-9:00pm

Location: Tracy Gee Center, 3599 Westcenter Drive, Houston, TX 77042

Attendance: TDXS Members: W5PF, WF5W, WB5IUU, K5WAF, K5DD, K5EWJ, W5JWM, W9DX, W5PR, N5ET, W5GCX, W5BXX, NM5G, WB5TKI, WD5KCX, NI5DX, N4AL, N5DD, K5UO, N5MT, and N5UR

Visitors: K5STZ, W5UQ, W5HPG, N5EN, AD5Q

- **President [Paul, W5PF]**

- **TDXS Constitutional Changes:** Final results of the vote on the 3 constitutional changes are as follows:
 - **Amendment #1:** Full Membership Requirements:
19 For, 4 Against, 1 Abstain, 2 no vote – PASSED
 - **Amendment #2:** Appointed Officers (adding QSL Manager):
20 For, 2 Against, 2 Abstain, 2 no vote – PASSED
 - **Amendment #3:** Election of Officers:
22 For, 1 Against, 1 Abstain, 2 no vote – PASSED
- **2010 Dues Vote -- \$25/year PASSED:** Per the TDXS Constitution, the elected officers during last months meeting reviewed the current TDXS financials and agreed to recommend keeping the 2010 dues at the current level of \$25/year – due on January 1, 2010 and delinquent on January 31, 2010. A quorum of Full Members was present and the vote was unanimous to keep the Club dues at \$25/year.
- **Officer Election for 2010:** No additional nominations received prior to the meeting. With only one candidate nominated per position, a unanimous acclamation elected the following as the TDXS 2010 officers:
 - President: Paul Frantz, W5PF
 - VP Programs Cal White, WF5W
 - VP Membership Bob Mennell, WB5IUU
 - Secretary/Treasurer Bill Frink, K5WAF

- **Secretary/Treasurer [Bill, K5WAF]:**



TDXS November Meeting Notes by Bill K5WAF (cont)

- **Bull Sheet Project:** Hard copies of past TDXS Bull Sheets have been secured, with a few exceptions, cataloged and are in the process of being digitized in a size and form that can be displayed on the TDXS website.
 - **Finances:** Bank balances are healthy and were discussed. Remember 2010 dues are coming up (3 members have paid to date).
 - **Membership [Bob, WB5IUU]:**
 - **TDXS Logo Shirts and Vests:** Our shirt guru, WB5IUU, has agreed to make another order for shirts. If you missed the last meeting or simply delayed making an order Bob will be glad to take your order and check. There is also a TDXS vest available. Details will be on the reflector before we make a final order.
 - **DX Chairman [Cal, WF5W]:**
 - **Awards Certificates for TDXS DXpeditions were received:**
 - **ARRL International DX Contest – SSB:** 1st Place (San Andres Island) – 5J0E
 - **CQWW 160 Meter DX Contest:** 1st Place (San Andres Island) – 5K0CW
 - **A Nicaragua DXpedition is still in the planning for March 2010 [approx Mar 3-10]** and will be aligned with the ARRL International DX Contest – SSB on March 6-7. Cost is anticipated to be about \$1,000 per person [\$90/day for lodging and about \$600 for airfare]. 4 TDXS members raised their hands to participate – Doug [WB5TKI], Keith [NM5G], Mike [K5UO] and Cal [WF5W]. There is room for 1 or 2 more!
 - **Field Day Chairman [Bill, K5WAF]**
 - **2009 TDXS Field Day Results:** The ARRL published the 2009 Field Day results in early November. TDXS improved over 2008 results [#105/2612 in US, #28/441 in US 2A, #5/142 in Texas and #3 in STX]. Field Day participation nationally increased in 2009 by 10%.
 - **2010 Field Day is in the Planning Stage:** TDXS is planning on setting up at the Tomball Fire Dept in 2010. It offers a public place with plenty of space and air conditioning!!! AD5Q did offer a couple of other “winning” alternatives – Firtche Cemetery Park and Knights of Columbus Hall off of Sawdust Rd, east of the Woodlands. Both have trees for 2 element yagi wire antennas pointed in an optimal direction.
 - **Other Business:**
 - **Pre-Meeting Dinner [Buzz, N5UR]:** A suggestion was made to change the pre-meeting dinner away from Pappas BBQ – results were non conclusive for this meeting but Buzz will continue to look for alternatives.
 - **Xmas Party and Annual Banquet [Keith, NM5G]:** Plans have been made with the Salt Grass Restaurant, 8941 Katy Freeway for January 9, 2010 @ 7pm. We will have our own private room as well as one check for dinner – drinks will be on a cash bar basis.
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TDXS November Meeting Notes by Bill K5WAF (cont)

- **CenterPoint Energy on RFI Remediation by Jeff Hoke:** A great presentation was made by Jeff Hoke on RFI and its remediation. Key notes from the presentation were:
 - *If CenterPoint Energy is the cause, they will fix it! But they can not go past the meter.*
 - **Procedure:**
 - *Don't call Customer Service!!! They know electricity, not RFI!*
 - *Call Jeff Hoke directly at:*

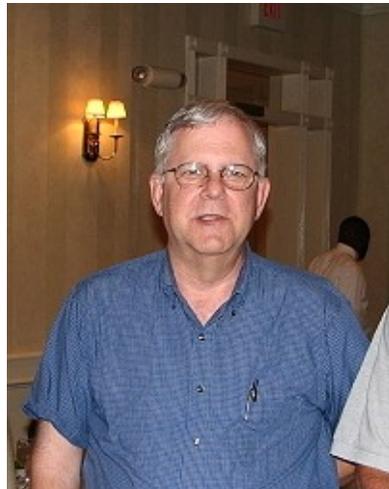
RFI Dept: 713-945-6697

Alt 713-945-6304 [Jeff Hoke's phone]

713-945-6555 [Radio Department]

E-Mail: Jeff.Hoke@CenterPointEnergy.com

A Christmas Story by Steve W9DX



After all these years, K5WAF is still hoping Santa will bring that elusive Red Ryder BB Gun.

Be careful Bill (aka Ralphie Parker)... "You'll shoot your eye out!"



Spray Painting Galvanized Steel by Michael Frink, son of Bill KSWAF

Many of you know that spray painting galvanized steel a shade that your wife will tolerate is nearly impossible. I did some research on the topic and here are my findings.

What is galvanized steel?

Galvanized steel is steel with a zinc coating to improve the corrosion (rust) resistance. Most galvanized steel is created by a process called hot-dip galvanization and a common characteristic of these steels is their display of Spangle. Spangle is just a fancy word for visibly large crystalline grain size. Small amounts of lead and other impurities will increase the size of the spangle and make it more noticeable. You can see the spangle in the galvanized steel guard rail below.



Other galvanization processes usually do not produce noticeable spangle but instead have a dull gray finish. These processes yield less corrosion protection than hot-dipped galvanization. In order of decreased corrosion protection, these processes include hot galvanized, mechanically galvanized, and electro-galvanized.

How does the zinc coating work?

The zinc coating provides corrosion protection by reacting with the atmosphere to form a thin, tough, inert layer of zinc carbonate to prevent the steel from rusting. The zinc coating will also provide cathodic protection if the underlying steel is exposed (such as in the case of a scratch). While the zinc will always provide cathodic protection, it takes time for the tough zinc carbonate to form. First, the zinc rich coating will react with oxygen in the air to form zinc oxide (0 to 48 hours). Second, the zinc oxide will react with oxygen and moisture to form zinc hydroxides (24 hrs to 2 years). Third, the zinc hydroxides will react with oxygen, moisture, and carbon dioxide to form zinc carbonate (8 months to 2+ years). Depending on the atmospheric conditions, the time required for each of these layers to form will vary. Galvanized steel exposed to the elements will quickly form zinc carbonate (within 8 months) whereas galvanized steel located indoors can take more than 2 years to do the same. As the transformation advances, the surface will start to appear duller with a slight brown tinge, but the spangle of the surface will not be lost.

Paint Preparation

The zinc oxides and zinc hydroxides do not adhere well to the surface and can easily chip off. Zinc

carbonate bonds well to the underlying zinc and provides an excellent painting surface. More in depth details on the surface preparation can be found on the American Galvanizers Association (AGA) website (see link at end). Rubbing the galvanized surface with a damp, lint-free cloth is likely all that is required for the average DIY'er. Oils can be present on the surface from manufacturing processes. However, items for indoor/home use should not have these oils. Mineral spirits, turpentine, or vinegar can be used to remove any surface oils, but these will leave a residue. Be sure to thoroughly rinse the surface to remove the residue if you choose to clean with one of these solutions.

Why can't galvanized steel be spray painted?

Alkyd-based spray paints will react with the zinc in a process called saponification. This process occurs very fast on virgin galvanized surfaces, and takes longer on weathered galvanized surfaces. The alkyd-base interacts with the zinc to form a soap at the interface. This will result in poor paint adhesion and paint peeling. Cold galvanizing spray paints will adhere to galvanized steel because of their high zinc content. However, top-coats of regular spray paints still will not adhere.

Spray Painting Galvanized Steel by Michael Frink, son of Bill K5WAF (cont)

What's the solution?

Many brush-on paints exist to cover galvanized steel, but no spray paints are designed for this purpose. However, **Krylon's H2O Late** spray paint is an acrylic latex-based paint. Acrylic latex will adhere to galvanized steel with minimal surface preparation and will not chemically react with the galvanized surface. The spray paint is available in 21 colors, so, one is bound to get thumbs up from the wife. The spray paint costs the same as your average spray paint and since it is a latex paint, it is more environmentally friendly. Krylon's H2O Latex is difficult to find in stores. I had luck at Ace Hardware, and you can also find it from online retailers. This spray paint is less viscous than the average spray paint, so use multiple light coats to prevent the paint from running and pooling on your project. DO NOT try to cover it in one coat. The paint dries in about 15 minutes, however, the paint will not fully cure for about 7 days. Also, do not use the Krylon H2O Latex primer. It is alkyd-based (thus not a latex spray paint) and will not adhere to galvanized steel, just like any other standard spray paint.

More Information

For more information and a more in depth explanation, visit the AGA website and check out their

free publications on painting galvanized steel. For general painting of galvanized steel, below is an excellent list of paints and their compatibility with galvanized steel. This table comes from "Duplex Systems: Painting over Hot-Dip Galvanized Steel" which is available on the AGA's website.

Paint base...Compatibility...Notes

- **Aliphatic Polyurethanes****Yes**..... Excellent top coat when used with polyamide epoxy primer
- **Bituminous**.....**Yes**.....Used for parts that are to be buried in soil
- **Chlorinated Rubbers****Yes**.....High VOC content has severely limited their availability
- **Epoxy-Polyamide Cured****Yes**.....Has superior adherence to galvanized steel
- **Latex-Acrylics**.....**Yes**.....Has the added benefit of being environmentally friendly
- **Portland Cement in Oil****Yes**.....Has superior adherence to galvanized steel
- **Vinyls**.....**Yes**.....Usually requires profiling, high VOC's have severely limited their availability
- **Powder Coating**.....**Yes**.....Low temperature curing powder coatings work exceptionally well over galvanized steel
- **Acrylics****Sometimes**.....If the pH of the paint is high, problems may occur due to ammonia reacting with zinc
- **Coal Tar Epoxies****Sometimes**.....Rarely used, only if parts are to be buried in soil
- **Epoxies**.....**Sometimes**.....If paint is specifically manufactured for use with galvanized steel
- **Latex-Water-based****Sometimes**.....Consult paint manufacturer
- **Oil Base**.....**Sometimes**.....Consult paint manufacturer

- **Alkyds**.....**No**.....The alkaline zinc surface causes the alkyds to saponify, causing premature peeling

- **Asphalts**.....**No**.....Petroleum base is usually not recommended for use on galvanized steel

- **Silicones**.....**No**.....Not for use directly over galvanized steel, can be beneficial in high temperature systems w/ base coat

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Texas DX Society Boardmembers

President	Paul Frantz, W5PF	w5pf at cebridge.net	
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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)

DX Cluster—On Packet: Connect to **K5DX** on 145.71 MHz or telnet via IP address 75.148.198.113

TDXS says "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" to these members with birthdays in December

Arthur Alvarez - N5KTN

Mike Young - W5RRX

Sid Leach - K5XI

Please notify the Editor if I have missed anyone.