



The Bullsheet

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

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

A Look Back at Field Day 2008

Thursday June 11 , 7:00 PM
TDXS Meeting Night: Tracy Gee Center, 3599 West-center Dr, Houston. Pre-meeting Pre-meeting dinner get-together starts around 5:30/6PM at Pappas BBQ on S. Gessner & Westheimer.

The program will be a video retrospective by Bob WB5IUU of the TDXS Field Day 2008 operation.

Those who participated know that it was a week-end of fun, frustration and, most importantly, fellowship.

Don't miss it!



Editor's Note de Doug WB5TKI

This past weekend was the WPX CW contest. I trust that many of you had the opportunity to participate. Unfortunately for contesting efforts, this was High School graduation weekend, and I had a bunch of relatives in town to see my daughter get her diploma. As much as I wanted to, it would have been bad form to sneak away from the gathering to chase prefixes.

Field Day planning and preparation are well under way. In fact, on Saturday, June 6 a group met at Dave Topp's

house (W5BXX) to do a trial setup of antennas to identify early any problems. It turned out to be a wise choice, as some problems were found that can now be rectified before Field Day morning! It sort of takes away

some of the Field Day jitters. In addition to Dave were Bill K5WAF, Paul W5PF, KeithNM5G, Mike K5UO, Wayne W5KDJ, Scott K5DD, Frosty K5LBU and me.

See you at Field Day!



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The Prez Sez de Paul W5PF

June is here and so our thoughts turn to Field Day 2009. Bill K5WAF, Bob WB5IUU and Keith NM5G have been busy planning this year's effort. Bill has prepared an excellent PDF document with all of the details. Put June 26, 27 and 28 on your calendar and come out and participate in this year's effort. Help with setup on Friday the 26th and tear down on Sunday the 28th will be greatly appreciated.

This month's meeting will be a video presentation of TDXS Field Day 2008 put together by Bob WB5IUU. This should put us in the right mood for this year's event. We will also have an opportunity to clean up any last minute details for 2009. As usual the pre meeting dinner will be at Pappa's BBQ at Westhiemer and Gessner starting at about 5:30PM. The meeting will be at the Tracey Gee Center at 7:00PM. Directions can be found at www.tdxs.net.

Speaking of WB5IUU, Bob had a major rebuild on his right arm a few days ago and will be recovering and rehabbing for most of the Summer. Thanks Bob for keeping up with the program and Field Day duties while recovering from your surgery. I think this means he will only be able to supervise at Field Day so we will have to provide all the manual labor for him. Rumor has it the Astros are looking

for a good right arm, maybe you can help them out Bob.

Ham Com is also coming up soon. It will be June 12 and 13 at the Plano Center. It looks they have a good program put together. All of the indoor vendor and flea market spaces are sold out as is the DX Dinner. I will be there for the first time since they moved from Arlington, I hope to see a good representation of TDXSers.

Our Contest Chairman Cookie K5EWJ has been busy promoting the contests but I have not seen much posted on the reflector by our members. I have to plead guilty to a small participation in the CQ WPX CW, about 70 Q's, but then not posting it. It was good to see that Neil NG5NG has gotten his feet wet in contesting. Keep up the good work Neil and ask if you need help on your computer interfacing problems.

I received an email from Coy Day N5OK asking for input on the subject of Digital DXCC Awards. Coy is our representative on the DX Advisory Committee. Please read the letter which follows in this column and give Coy your input. Here is your chance to have your opinion heard.

We have actually had some sunspots in the past month with the flux all the way up to

74! There has been more activity on the higher bands so be sure to make some noise on 10, 12 and 15 when you get on. Speaking of noise on 15M, it's good to see that Jim NN5O has his SteppIR back in the air and has resumed operating the 21 Again Net. Get on and check in at 7:00PM Wednesday local time on 21.295.

I hope to see you at Ham Com and Field Day,

73, Paul W5PF

Letter From Coy Day N5OK

Gentlemen,

As your representative to the DXAC, I'm requesting your input.

The DX Advisory Committee has been tasked with the following:

---From Programs and Services Committee meeting, 4 April, 2009

Subject: RTTY and Digital DXCC Awards

Participants in the DXCC program occasionally ask about the existence of a separate award for the digital modes other than RTTY. The RTTY DXCC Award was created in July, 1976 as a non-endorsable award. QSOs could be used dated back to 1945. In July, 1984, the RTTY DXCC became endorsable. In December, 1993, the RTTY award became an Honor Roll award. Since the advent of newer digital modes after RTTY, ARRL has allowed any other digital modes to feed a RTTY DXCC record.

Today, with the seemingly ever-expanding use of new digital modes, we hear re-

quests for a new DXCC award to recognize modes other than RTTY. In a recent survey of amateurs asking about their digital mode preferences with respect to what modes W1AW should use, it is apparent that RTTY and PSK31 are far and away the most popular modes. With the long history and high standings and still rising popularity of RTTY, it is not likely that we could do away with the RTTY DXCC as it stands now and have it replaced with a separate award.

The Programs and Services Committee asks the DX Advisory Committee to consider possibilities for accommodating all the digital modes within the DXCC program. Questions that could be considered (but not limited to) are: The addition of a new award, either endorsable or not, for additional modes; the addition of mode endorsements for the RTTY award; renaming the RTTY award to Digital and leaving the rest unchanged; start dates for any new awards; impact of present and future awards on band planning and use; and impacts upon Dxpeditions.

While there will be administrative impact at HQ, please do not base any recommendations on administrative conditions.

We also ask that the DX Advisory Committee consider the time required to respond to the PSC. Principally, this would be a choice between delivering its response either before the summer Board meeting in July, or for the Board meeting to occur in mid-January, 2010.

Please send your comments on this directly to me:
n5ok@arrl.net

Coy, N5OK



From the Bullsheet Archives

Ten years ago this month President Earl, N5TU was congratulating Richard K5NA for making the cover of CQ magazine. He notes that K5WA (SK)

and N5RP have also “had their mugs on the cover.”

Dale KG5U has a lengthy and informative article about a new communi-

cations mode called PSK31.

You can find the Archives on the web site under [Newsletters](#).

Upcoming Contests and Operating Events:

[ANARTS WW RTTY Contest](#)

0000Z, June 13 to 2400Z, June 14

[All Asian DX Contest](#)

0000Z, June 20 to 2400Z, June 21

[ARRL Field Day](#)

1800Z, June 27 to 2100Z, June 28

Wayne W5KDJ is going to Madagascar as 5R8KD 1-15 July, CW RTTY 160-6M.



From the DX Chair de Cal WF5W

Looks like Wayne is off to the Islands anyway. Good luck with the local politicians, just keep out of their way hi.

Frosty and Co. are getting ready for Lesotho for a couple of weeks. We will await to hear their stories.

Your DX chair is going to Dobrovnic, Croatia this fall and seeking out members of the Croatian Telegraph Club, of which I am now a member.

You just might hear me from 9A this year or next....From what I have seen

and heard it is a beautiful place with very reasonable accommodation.

Upcoming TDXS Meeting Programs de Cal WF5W

The June program is a look back at Field Day 2008. Our Bubba Bob V/P for enlistments, shirts and toys is finally getting the video together

from last year and will provide what I know will be a stunning video show. If we equal the start of last year, we will surely be ahead of the game.....

2009 Dayton Hamvention Report by Steve W9DX

Well my 3 week and 7 states sojourn up north is finally over and I'm glad to be home again. Each May I usually head to my hometown in Illinois to help mother with a long list of "honey-do's" and hook-up with my 9-land buddies and caravan to Dayton. This year we had 5 carloads of hams, each with a different tenure in ham radio and varying interests. Many are active contesters with the Society of Midwest Contesters (SMC), top band enthusiasts, and DXpeditioners. Jerry WB9Z was just back from the K5D Desecheo DXpedition and had lots of stories to tell. As usual, many of us toured the Wright-Patterson Air Force Museum on Thursday. I'm not really an aviation enthusiast, but there's always something new to see and appreciate.

Thursday night Mike Hance K5NZ was spotted wearing atrocious attire at some wild festivities with some of the SMC guys at Hooter's on the north side of Dayton. About 75 rowdy ham patrons festooned in neon colored suits, plaid pants, and gaudy ties competed for the dubious "best dressed" awards. Apparently anything goes, and it did! My eyes are still hurting from the sight! That reminds me, I need to clean out my closet!

In spite of forecasted rain and stormy weather, Friday turned out to be beautiful, and I spent most of the day scouring the flea market for bargains. I attended the SWODXA's annual DX dinner which was packed. I sat next to Bernie W3UR who gave me a better understanding of how the ARRL's DX Advisory Committee works, the politics involved and how decisions are made regarding an entity's status on the DXCC list. The DX dinner's keynote speakers were John Stanley K4ERO, and his XYL Ruth WB4LUA. John is a technical advisor for the ARRL and has written for QST, QEX and the ARRL Handbook. As missionary engineer and support staff, they

have worked at a number of short-wave stations overseas including HCJB, Trans World Radio, Far East Broadcasting, Christian Voice, and ELWA. John helped design and build many of the transmitting arrays at these stations, and when not on the air broadcasting were occasionally used on the ham bands! A very interesting story indeed.

I'm sure I missed many, but among the Texas DX Society members and friends of TDXS spotted were: Mike Hance K5NZ, Don Butler N5LZ, Earl Morse N8SS, Frosty K5LBU, Tom Rum W5RUM, Nancy Kott WZ8C, Dennis Motschenbacher K7BV, and Lon Cottingham K5JV. Tom W5RUM was busy working the Tokyo Hy-Power booth and reported that sales were brisk. Nancy WZ8C was a regular at the FISTS booth in audio alley. Frosty gave a forum presentation on DXing from Africa. Ex-TDXS president Dennis K7BV was ever present at the huge Yaesu booth, and was very kind in offering TDXS some promotional materials to be used at Field Day. Dennis said he was about to return to San Andres as 5J0M and will be concentrating his efforts on 6 meters. Look for Dennis to be QRV June 17-28 from San Andres. See: <http://www.gth.com/k7bv/caribe2009/> for more details.

Fortunately the rain held off on Saturday till late in the afternoon. Believe me, there's nothing worse than being packed inside with a bunch of hams smelling like wet dogs after being in the flea market all day! Sunday turned out to be cooler, clear and nice for the wrap-up and ride home. Although the final attendance numbers were not announced, the organizers said it was slightly more than last year's figures of 20,000+. The flea market seems to shrink a bit more each year. Perhaps more and more goodies are showing up on eBay these days. I don't think I remember seeing so many nice looking

Drake L4-B's as this year.

One of the more interesting forums was CQ Magazine's announcement of a radically new contest category for the CQWW DX Contest called "Xtreme". This category embraces the newest technologies including software defined radios, remote stations, internet-connected remote receiving sites, multi-channel CW decoders (like CW Skimmer), and fully-automated "robot" stations all over the world. Single and multi-op entries will be allowed. The idea is to promote creative experimentation with internet-linked stations and other new technologies that are not currently permitted in any of the existing contest categories. You can have only one transmit location in your home country, but you can utilize any number of remote receiving stations via internet. Can you imagine working the world on 160m during our mid day? "Propagation? We don't need no stinkin' propagation!" That's one way to get 10 meters back again. The use of CW Skimmer, and callsign databases seems to allow a lot of log washing as well. No excuses now for busted callsigns. If you decide to try this, you must notify the CQWW Contest Committee one week in advance of your plans to enter this category with a brief description of the technologies to be employed and that you are compliant with all rules and regulations of the country in which the transmitter is located. For more details, see pages 32-33 of the June issue of CQ Magazine.

Does Contesting Cause a Stimulated Electromagnetic Emission Effect on the Ionosphere or is it Area 51 Plasma Discharge?

by Tom Taormina, K5RC

I love this hobby (obsession)! After 50 years, there continue to be new challenges and unanswered questions. In that vein, I throw down the gauntlet to those more learned than I to offer a credible hypothesis about a phenomenon I have observed over the last year or so. To wit:

It was a snowy April Saturday morning. The only reasonable use of my time was to fire up 20 meters and see if there was any activity. There were no stateside signals, a couple of very weak European signals and one fellow calling CQ SP. What the heck. I opened the SP Contest log in WinTest and answered the CQ'ing SP. I then moved up the band and gave a CQ Contest. An hour later I had logged 77 SP's in all 16 Districts. During the foray, I worked a 3B8, 3B9 and 6W1SJ (who was 10db over S9). Saturday evening, I worked another 28 SP's on 40, plus some Central Asiatic Russians calling in the pileup. Ordinarily this event would not warrant a second thought, but, there are NO sunspots! The Flux was 69 that day. A few weeks later, I had 303 QSO and worked all Florida Counties in 6 hours of the FQP, with no sunspots.

Fast forward to May 2nd, the 7th District QSO Party (7QP). We had a house full of company to celebrate my 50th year on the air by operating the 7QP (Photos of the event are posted at <http://k5rc.cc/>). The contest runs from 6AM to Midnight local time (1300Z to 0700Z). I had one station set up on SSB and another on CW. The strategy was to switch the two stations back and forth between 40 and 20 SSB and CW. These would logically be the only productive bands with no sunspots. 20 does not usually open here until 1500Z and it is dead as a doornail at 0200Z.

I drew the short straw and opened on 20SSB at 1300Z. We ran stations continually from 1300Z to 0600Z, when

we needed the station for 80M. We made 1,121 Q's on 20 SSB and 350 on 20 CW. That is a rate of 82 per hour for 18 hours just on 20M! Again, there were no sunspots!

I've been told that I create conditions with 6 over 6 on 20M. That's flattering but hardly scientifically accurate. We also made 70 QSO's on an absolutely dead 15M band with a 4 element tri-bandner.

There has been a long-standing theorem that contest activity has the appearance of opening dead bands. Yes, having many stations on a band will optimize the chances for two-way communications, regardless of the solar flux. On the higher bands this can be explained with random E clouds, ducting and scatter. None of these applies to 17 continual productive hours on 20M.

Aside from my personal experiences, contest scores continue to rise, records are still broken, the number of contest entrants continues to increase and there are no sunspots! Have we been mislead for decades about how the F Layer reflects radio waves? Are there other phenomena besides solar bombardment that causes sufficient density to explain the examples given above? Is there another dimension to the myth of global warming? Were Kennelly and Heaviside mistaken about the external factor (the sun) that causes ionization of these plasma clouds? Have we been following an incorrect assumption about the sun being the sole catalyst of the Heaviside layers as recently as the Second International Tesla Symposium in 1986? Have stimulated electromagnetic emission experiments (terrestrial high power RF exciting the ionosphere) actually produced some sort of morphing in the E and F layers?

Enough research theory. Is it possible that with the combined mega-

watts of RF energy emitted continually from the earth and from satellites (broadcast, cell phones, TV, satellite transponders) we have created sufficient stimulus to explain these propagation anomalies? Or are they anomalies? For the frequencies below 20MHz, are there forces at work that emanating from Area 51 to ensure we have global communications in the event of satellite communications failure?

I demand empirical answers! In the meantime, I refuse to pay attention to the Flux, A and K numbers and will continue to turn the radio on and make my own propagation.

Straight Key Century Club by Cookie K5EWJ

Several clubs for encouraging Morse code operation have been formed because the licensing requirements have first reduced then eliminated testing. One of the fastest growing clubs is the SKCC. It is only a little more than three years old and has grown to over 5500 members.

SKCC was organized in January 2006 when the founders discussed how much they enjoyed the ARRL Straight Key Night. They decided that it would be fun to continue straight key operation during the year and organized SKCC to promote activities using Straight Keys. They decided to assign numbers to those who joined and that a minimum contact would include exchanging member numbers, names and state, province or country. SKCC uses the internet for communications and newsletter. No dues are required to join, receive a number or maintain membership. Expenses are low and are covered by donations.

The basic rule of SKCC is that all club contacts should take place while using mechanical keying. Straight or Hand Keys are the basic tool. Examples are J-38 and Bencher RJ-1. Also allowed are Semi-Automatic Keys, a. k. a. Bugs, Cooties a. k. a. Side-Swipers and other types of mechanical keying. Not suitable are Electronic Keyers, built into the transceiver or outboard and various types of computer generated code. Basically, technology that was available in 1950 and before. Of course, this only applies to SKCC activities. Members can generate code in any manner they see fit for the CQWW or the ARRL DX contests, or for rag chewing or any other non-SKCC activity.

The core activity of SKCC is to QSO with as many other members as you can while using mechanical keys on each end. The basic award is for working 100 different members and is called Centurion. In the early days this was a formidable task, but now that we have over 5500 members it can be done fairly quickly by experienced CW operators. It is, of course, more difficult for newer hams who are gaining their first experiences with code. Operators who have completed the Centurion requirements should let their rank be known by appending their SKCC number with a C.

The second step is to QSO 50 different members who have attained C status to receive the Tribune award. This rank is shown by appending the SKCC number with T rather than C. All these QSOs must be after you have been awarded Centurion status. Many operators go on to work additional C/T stations to get multiple T awards for 100, 150, 200 etc. stations. Of course, the more active stations are likely to hold the C and T awards.

Most of us try to make these SKCC contacts longer than the basic exchange. It is satisfying to most of us to rag chew a bit after the exchange. Sometimes we stretch it out for quite a while and CW QSOs longer than an hour between members are not uncommon.

We hold two contests per month. The Straight Key Sprint last for two hours from 0000Z to 0200Z on the fourth Wednesday of the month (Tuesday night in USA). This activity involves the basic exchange between stations and usually brief pleasantries, so it is a lot more relaxed than the high speed sprints. We usually have about 60 to 65 entries and the high number of contacts is about 50.

We have a 24 hour Weekend Sprintathon (WES) on the second Sunday of the month. UTC times are used, so the WES start on Saturday evening and end Sunday evening USA time. We usually have less than 100 entries, but sometimes more and top number of contacts is from 100 to 200

These are not the intense contest that many of us usually enter. We take time for some pleasantries at the expense of more Qs. Things die down around midnight when we all get some shut eye. They are a pleasant break for some of us and a great way for operators who want to do a little contesting, but are not ready for the big ones to get started. Just about everyone will QRS to five words per minute to give a newcomer a contact. The max speeds that you will hear are around 20 wpm. The main objective of the sprints is for everyone involved to have fun, but it is also a great way for newcomers to CW to get their feet wet in a contest before taking on the 35 wpm 5NNTX type environment.

The demise of the Novice Class License along with the associated bands and restrictions eliminated many of the incentives and opportunities for learning Morse. An objective of SKCC is to help fill this gap so that operators who wish to become proficient in Morse have the opportunity. Many new hams and many operators who have stayed away from code for a long time still have the desire to learn. SKCC recruits these operators vigorously. Any that we identify will receive a lot of encouragement and plenty of volunteers to practice with. Many of us delight in providing a first QSO for a new ham or first CW QSO in a long time for long term hams that have not touched a key for years. In the little over a year that I have been active in SKCC I have seen quite a few newcomers develop into competent CW operators. The reward for both the Elmer and the Novice is priceless.

SKCC offers a lot of ham radio fun for the operator who is not able or does not desire to build a high power, big antenna station. Most members use reasonably priced antennas and low to moderate power. About 75 percent of the activity is with 75 to 100 watts. About 20 percent is QRP and only a few contacts require more power. Most of the activity is in the US and Canada, but we are actively recruiting DX stations. No doubt the DX activity will increase when better propagation returns to allow more intercontinental activity without big stations.

There is much more that I could say about SKCC, but the room in this Bullsheet is limited. You can find much more information at www.skccgroup.com on the SKCC web page. Joining only requires a desire to promote CW amateur operation and an email as described on the web page. We hope that you will join us.

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.tdxs.net> email address: k5dx@tdxs.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 June

Mike Anderson - N5MV

Grady Ferguson - W5FU

Kirby van Horn - K7EC

Bill Stein - WB5SJS

Don Busick - K5AAD

William Goins - K5WMG

Steve Smothers - W9DX

Bob Evans - K5WA

Paul Jaeger - KY5A

Wes Spence - AC5K

Alex Stalinsky - WA5UHT

Joe Brassfield - N5AQT

Cal White - WF5W

Al Loeckle - K5FK

Madison Jones - W5MJ

Larry Vehorn - W9AJ

Dave Topp - W5BXX

Paul Frantz - W5PF

Glenn Anderson - WB5TUF

Please notify the Editor if I have missed anyone.