



The Bullsheet

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

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

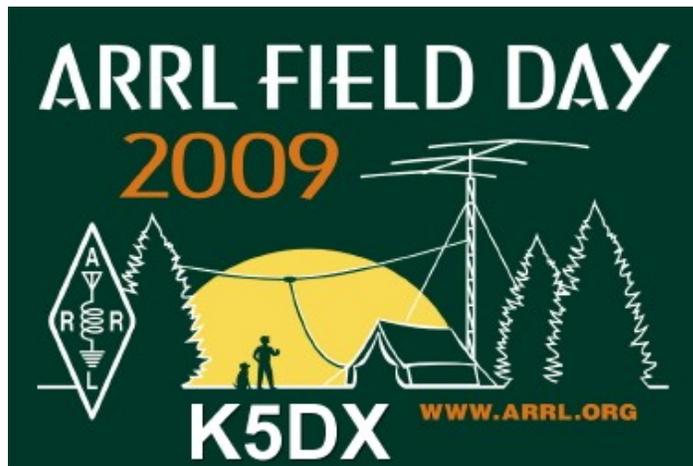
Plan For Field Day 2009

May 14 Thursday, 6:30 PM:
TDXS Meeting Night: [Los Tios Mexican Restaurant, 9527 Westheimer, Houston.](#)

A link to the TDXS Field Day home page is available on the [TDXS web site](#).

Last year was a blast and this year promises to be even better!

The program will be a discussion of Field Day plans for this year. We will be at the same great site as last year in Tomball.



Editor's Note de Doug WB5TKI

The Dayton Hamvention is next weekend, May 15—17 at the Hara Arena in Dayton, Ohio. They are expecting between 18,000 and 22,000 attendees!

We would like to say "get well soon and best wishes for a speedy recovery" to Evie Lane W5XYL.

Hurricane Season is just about upon us again, so thoughts should be turning to preparedness. Food, batteries, emergency power...hey,

there's something that I've been meaning to do. I've been wanting to have a solar power array big enough to handle low power HF radios, portable TV, lighting, etc. So I went to EBay and got a bundle of 108 3 x 6 inch, 0.5 V @ 3.6 A cells, which is enough for three 32-cell panels, with some spares for breakage (man, are these cells fragile!). That will give me about 16 V at 10 A. That should be enough to keep the

charge up on a deep cycle battery for normal operations. The ARRL has a great publication entitled Emergency Power for Radio Communications by Michael Bryce, WB8VGE, that covers all aspects of emergency power selection and utilization.

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The Prez Sez de Paul W5PF

April was a very busy month for me as far as playing radio goes. The first part of the month was the finish of the C91TX Dxpediton and shortly after that was an enjoyable trip to the International DX Convention in Visalia. There I saw presentations on several of the recent Dxpeditons and I got to visit with some TDXSers from the past. The only currently active TDXSers there besides myself were Bob, N5ET and Frosty, K5LBU. This month is the Dayton Hamvention and I am looking forward to reports from those that attend.

This month we turn our attention to Field Day. Our Field Day Committee Bill, K5WAF, Bob, WB5IUU and Keith NM5G have been busy making plans. We will use Spring Creek Park again this year after a successful event last year. Station captains have volunteered and most of the equipment we will use has been identified. Our meeting this month will be a discussion of the details and a finalization of plans.

The meeting will be a dinner meeting at the Los Tios Restaurant located at 9527 Westheimer. We will start around 6:30 PM. A map is available on the TDXS web page. Come and see what is planned and find out how you can participate in Field Day 2009.

I'm sure you have all seen the email message on the reflector from Mike Anderson, N5MV. Mike was TDXS President in 2004 but has been too busy to be involved much with TDXS since then. Please keep Mike in your thoughts and prayers. He is in Memorial Hermann Hospital in the Medical Center and contact information is in his email.

Recent indications are that Cycle 24 may finally be starting to move upward. The latest predictions are for a peak of 90 in 2013 which would be the lowest value since 1928. After the conditions of the last year or so any sunspots will be most welcome.

For all of you CW and straight key enthusiasts, don't forget the monthly Houston Straight Key Night on the second Tuesday of each month. That will be this coming Tuesday May 12th at 7:00 to 8:30PM local time. Check around 3.540 to 3.550 mHz for activity. Contact WF5W for details and a pep talk.

For those looking for C91TX QSLs, the logs have been uploaded to LoTW and I may also upload them to eQSL. There has been an increase in interest in eQSL since CQ Magazine has started accepting eQSL confirmations for their awards programs. Paper QSLs have been ordered and should arrive by the end of May.

See you at the meeting, 73,

Paul W5PF



From the Bullsheet Archives

Ten years ago this month President Earl, N5TU was congratulating TDXSers who locked up all of the individual categories for the South

Texas Certificates in the ARRL CW Sweepstakes. The Bullsheet had extensive coverage of the upcoming Texas QSO Party. The May meeting

was to be focus on planning for an upcoming fund raiser and Field Day. You can find the Archives on the web site under [Newsletters](#).

Upcoming Contests and Operating Events:

Worked All Britain Contest	1000Z—1400Z, May 17
Baltic Contest	2100Z, May 23 to 0200Z, May 24
SKCC Straight Key Sprint	0000Z—0200Z, May 27
CQ WW WPX Contest, CW	0000Z, May 30 to 2359Z, May 31
ARS Spartan Sprint, CW	0100Z—0300Z, June 2
Open Season Ten Meter PSK Contest	0000Z, June 6 to 2400Z, June 7

The May-June issue of The DX Magazine has a nice article on the recent K5D DXpedition to Desecheo Island. The team overcame problems with wind and waves to log a total of 115,787 QSOs.

Dani, EA4ATI/9M2TI will lead a team that will operate from Nauru Island from June 16—26 with the call C21TI. More information is listed on their website <http://c21ti.madrono.net/index.html>.

From the DX Chair de Cal WF5W

Out of breath. DX is alive and well.

The final chapter on "you can do a DXpedition" has been written and is currently on the [web site](#).

Where to next????? Who wants to

go???? First Wayne has been run off from a revolution in the far East. Madison, I and Paul also have been put off by a military takeover in the Pacific. So maybe what we all have to do is look for something easy in the Caribbean time....will tell.

The sun spot cycle doesn't seem to be making any differences in DXpeditions. Lots of them are out there and doing a great job with the qso's.

Upcoming TDXS Meeting Programs de Cal WF5W

We have a lively program set for May with the Field day fixings. June is field day and Dallas Ham Com, and JULY will bring a new program

whereby we all will become more at home with our point and shoot cameras....Nuff said for now, BUT be prepared to bring your little Point and

Shoot digital camera to the July meeting.....

Notes From the Contest Chairman by Cookie K5EWJ

When Paul asked me to consider the Contest Chairman task early this year I was taken aback. I did not know such office existed and I had no idea what a Contest Chairman could or should do. I have entered quite a number of contests over the years, but I don't consider myself a "Contest Expert". I have usually owned a modest station with one or two transceivers and a single tower with a multi-band beam and some wires. I am not sure that I am the best choice, but with the optimistic thought that I can't be worse than not having a Contest Chairman at all and with the thought that the TDXS would benefit from more contest activity, I accepted.

I am finding that some things that I thought that every member of TDXS already knows are perhaps known very well by some and not at all by others. A very important tool for contesting is a good computer logging program. Some essentials for a good program are:

1. It should know the rules and accommodate the contest you want to enter.
2. It should run on the computer platform that you have.
3. It should be affordable.
4. It should convert your log to Cabrillo format for Log Submittal.
5. It should convert your log to ADIF to transfer the data to your general log.
6. It should be simple enough to use that it does not distract you from the contest.
7. It should be fast enough that it does not slow your Q rate.

Some very nice things that it can also do:

1. It can send CW from the log input

data. Preferably by using the F keys.

2. It can communicate with your transceiver to automatically include band changes, mode changes and anything else you want.

3. It is nice if a single program can accommodate many of the contests that you like to enter.

I could go on for pages, but you get the idea. Add your own thoughts to the list.

Don't expect your contest logger to double as a general purpose logger, keep track of DXCC, WAS, WAC and other things we like to track. That is asking too much and if it existed would be too big and complicated to work well as a contest logger. If you only enter the "BIG" contests such as CQWW and ARRLDX you may be able to get by with a single program. If you also like Ten-Ten, SKCC, FISTS and some of the specialized contests you may want other special programs for these.

A good place to start looking is at <http://pages.cthome.net/n1mm>

This is a free for downloading, excellent program for the major contests and many of the others. It fills the needs for many of us and certainly should be reviewed by everyone who is interested in contesting. If you decide to use N1MM please download it and get familiar with the program several days or weeks before the contest. If you wait until the last minute to download and install you are bound to waste a considerable amount of contesting time while you figure out the program. An excellent way to learn the program is to take the paper log from a contest that you have entered and key it in to the program. Another way is to tune the bands and log the DX stations you hear and pretend you are in a DX contest. Or, if you have another com-

puter, you can listen to logrunner and log the stations that you hear.

Among the essentials are being able to write the log to a Cabrillo file and an ADI File. The Cabrillo is just a text file that nearly all contest organizers can accept by email and score automatically. This makes log submittal almost painless at the end of the contest. You don't need to copy your log or do a lot of checking, just take a quick look at the file to be sure that it has your station identification correct and that it identifies you as a member of the "Texas DX Society" and that it has the right log. Most everybody knows that Texas DX Society is the same thing as TDXS but their computers don't and the computer will be compiling the club scores.

Let me know your thoughts about improving our participation in contests of all types. What help do the members need? What kinds of contest interest you? Where do we need to go? I like the big ones, CQWW and ARRL DX, sometimes Sweepstakes. I also like the single band contests, ARRL & CQ 10 meter, ARRL & CQ 160, Stew Perry and some of the number club activities, Ten-Ten, SKCC, etc.

I will try to prepare something like this every month. Let me know what you would like more info about. If I get things almost right let me know your thoughts, if I get things just plain wrong set me straight quicker.

73, Cookie

The C91TX Story by Paul W5PF

Our most recent Dxpeditions have been relatively close to home. This time the trip was much longer. It took about 24 hours in the air and covered over 12,000 miles. And that was just to get to Johannesburg. We still had over 350 miles and 14 hours of driving to get to our operating site in Mozambique. Needless to say we were all pretty well beat when we arrived at about 8:00PM on March 26th. We had dinner and decided the best thing to do was to get some sleep and get started early in the morning.

Unlike our previous trips, all of the radio equipment and antennas were provided by African DX Safaris so that we did not have to carry a lot of gear with us. Tokyo Hy-Power loaned us one of their DXpedition amplifiers which we brought along and used throughout the trip with no problems. At first light we began to hook up our logging computers and interfaces and were on the air before long. There was quite a bit of work left to do to erect the 160/80/30 M vertical and deploy the radial system. Daniel ZS6JR had set up most of the antennas and radios before our arrival. He was the technical mastermind and directed the installation of the vertical and radial system as well putting the finishing touches on the entire installation.

Our first day of operating was Friday March 27th and one of our objectives was to operate in the CQWW WPX Phone contest. It started at 2:00AM local time on Saturday the 28th so we used the first day to check things out and get ready for the contest. Our first QSO was at 0821 utc on 17 M CW. We soon had two stations operating on 17 and 15 working Europe. We soon discovered that we had a lot of RF at the operating positions. This would cause erratic operation of the computers and the radio interfaces. One of the problems was that the power system ground wasn't grounded very well. We had about 50 volts between the power system neutral and our ground. That made for some interesting comments when

someone was changing antennas and touched a piece of equipment and the coax shield at the same time. Next time we will have a pocketful of ferrite beads to keep the RF out of the computers and interfaces.

The contest starting time was at 2:00AM local time. That meant we had to start on the low bands. Conditions on 160/80 were terrible. On 40M we could hear Europe working each other and NA. It was difficult to get them to hear us and of course holding a frequency was not possible so a disappointing number of Q's went in the log. Then came sunrise and the expectation that 20 and 15 would open. Just about that time everything went quiet. Too quiet, the power had gone off. After some inquiries we found out that the power company was doing some work on one of their transmission lines feeding the whole district and the power would be out for most of the day. The power came back shortly after 3:00PM local time and we got a run going on 15. We worked 15 and 20 as long as there was any activity because of the difficulty of working the lower bands. Unfortunately we had lost over 8 hours of good propagation on the higher bands.

Sunday was a repeat of Saturday except that there were only a couple of short power outages. We ended up with very disappointing numbers on the low bands and the higher band totals were significantly decreased by the loss of prime operating time. We had only 3 Q's on 160M, 9 on 80M and 47 on 40M. 20M was good for 695 Q's and 15 yielded 619 more. We managed 3 Southern Europeans on 10M. Our total Q's were 1376.

After the contest we settled in to a routine following the propagation. We tried 160/80 all night especially around our sunrise and looked at the gray line for other parts of the world. The conditions were never very good on these bands although from reports I have seen we were being heard better than we could hear. A receiv-

ing antenna might be a good addition in the future. We were fairly successful on 40M using the wire 4 square antenna that Daniel put on one of the towers. On 30M we had a multiband vertical that worked ok, but the best antenna was the big 66 foot vertical that we used on 160/80. Our total was down a little on 30 since the big vertical was primarily used on the lower bands.

The higher bands would begin to open shortly after sunrise primarily to Europe and Asia. 20 and 17 were busy during most of the morning and it was worthwhile to check 15 and 12 also. We had one good opening on 12 but nothing on 10. Midday was generally pretty quiet with things opening up to Europe and NA in the mid afternoon and evening.

We found that we could rarely find 3 different bands open at the same time so that we could operate all 3 stations at once. We had band pass filters for all bands that worked fairly well but with the grounding and RF problems we still had some interference between stations at times. It really makes you appreciate the planning and work that must be done by the big Dxpeditions in order to get all those stations on the air at one time.

The final day of operation was Saturday April 4th. Our last QSO was with EA8JB at about 9:30PM local time (1932 utc). We then packed up our computers, keys, headsets and interface gear in preparation for the early departure on Sunday morning.

As we were preparing to leave at first light on Sunday morning someone turned on the radio to listen to 160 and 80. Of course they were wide open with more signals than we had heard at any time during our stay. But we were off to visit Kruger National Park. Seeing the wildlife was very enjoyable, but that is another story.

The C91TX Story (cont.)

Here is our QSO count:

QSOs	10	12	15	17	20	30	40	80	160	
SSB	3		619	811	701		61	9	2	2206
CW	1	181	1680	2972	2402	976	1111	269	33	9625
RTTY			1	93	389		55			538
Total	4	181	2300	3876	3492	976	1227	278	35	12371



Texas DX Society Boardmembers

President	Paul Frantz, W5PF	w5pf at cebridge.net	
VP Membership	Bob Mennell, WB5IUU	bmennell at consolidated.net	
VP Programs	Cal White, WF5W	cwhite314 at sbcglobal.net	
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Contest Chairman	Willis "Cookie" Cooke K5EWJ	wrcooke at flash.net	
Field Day Chairmen	Bill Frink, K5WAF	WAFrink at msn.com	
	Keith Dutson, NM5G	kdutson at sbcglobal.net	
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Repeater Chairman	Glenn Anderson, WB5TUF	wb5tuf at earthlink.net	832-595-2855
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Webmaster	Steve Smothers, W9DX	cougar70 at earthlink.net	
Bullsheet Editor	Doug Seyler, WB5TKI	dseyler at dseyler.com	281-734-9221
DXCC QSL Card Checker	Bob Walworth, N5ET	rwalworth at charter.net	

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 April

Leon Pringle, Jr. - W5NA

John Guida - K5XA

Henry Schneider - W5HNS

Jan Carman - K5MA

Mike Mauldin - K5NU

John Whitney - AD5W

Kenny Manchester - NZ5I

Gregg Erlenbusch - W5IDX

Joey Clements - W5BAK

Please notify the Editor if I have missed anyone.