



The Bullsheet

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

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

*Thursday November
12, 7:00 PM*

TDXS Meeting Night:
Tracy Gee Center,
3599 Westcenter Dr,
Houston. Pre-meeting
dinner get-together
starts around
5:30/6PM at Pappas
BBQ on S. Gessner &

Westheimer.

The program will fea-
ture Jeff Hoke from
CenterPoint Energy
on RFI Mediation tech-
niques. I know that I
could use some point-
ers.

See you there!



Editor's Note de Doug WB5TKI

Wow, November al-
ready! Here comes
Turkey Day and
CQWWDX CW. I
made a pretty pitiful
showing for the
Phone contest — 94
contacts and 48 mul-
tipliers — as I was in
College Station for
most of the week-
end. I did get a
chance to see the
Aggies wup up on
Iowa State, so the
weekend wasn't a

total loss (my
daughter is now an
Aggie, so I became
a default Aggie fan).
I just looked, and
was sort of surprised
at the number of
ham radio subscrip-
tions that I have. My
list is QST, CQ,
World Radio
(through CQ), DX
Magazine, The Key-
note (FISTS), QRP
Quarterly, AMSAT
Journal, and Ham-

Mag (French web-
based magazine).
Plus several profes-
sional journals,
Smithsonian, Sci-
ence News, and two
newspapers. That's
a lot of time spent
reading instead of
operating. I need to
simplify!

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The Prez Sez de Paul W5PF

I have just returned from a two week cruise from Ft. Lauderdale to Los Angeles via the Panama Canal. It was our first ocean cruise and was a very pleasant and relaxing experience. I have a lot of catching up to do with what has been going on in the world of ham radio.

Last meeting Buzz N5UR agreed to try to come up with a new venue for our pre meeting dinner. Apparently there are some very divergent opinions as to what is an acceptable location so no consensus was reached. The pre meeting dinner is a long standing TDXS

tradition which I would not like to see come to an end. Time is short so we will continue to meet at Pappas' for this month and see if we can come up with an agreement at the meeting. If you have any suggestions please share them with us.

Election of officers is also this month. This year's elected officers have agreed to serve for one more year, but it is not too late to volunteer or make a nomination. Please come to the meeting and participate in the election process.

Our Secretary Bill K5WAF has sent out an email ballot to all

full members. It concerns the 3 amendments to the TDXS constitution that have been proposed. Please return your vote to Bill by Nov. 10th so we can announce the results at the meeting.

We have a lot to talk about at the meeting as well as an interesting program on how CenterPoint is working with amateurs to resolve RFI problems. That's all I have for this month, I hope to see many of you at the meeting.

73,

Paul W5PF

From the DX Chair by Cal WF5W

Had to put out some more radicals on the HyTower for the 160 season. 30 more of them, so ought to do something.

The membership should be thinking if they are interested in coming along to Nicaragua. We will have an update on that at the November meeting.

Lots of DX out there on the low

bands. Listen to our old mentor K5UO as to the hows and whens.

Hopefully everyone likes this month's program. This tall guy is very helpful and his full time job is to get the noise out of our hair. He was at my shack last month and also down at the Sea Pumpkin.

Not much else doing. Just waiting for 160 to be a little more open. Worked EU last night, but couldn't hear the Down Unders as yet. No Beverages here. That's what it takes this early on.



From the Bullsheet Archives by Steve W9DX

Fifteen years ago this month

November 1994: President N5RP reported that TDXS was featured in 3 sections of QST this month. QST published the 1994 Field Day Results and TDXS took 1st place in the 3A category (see page 126) with 15,410 points. Praises all around for FD Chairman Bob Burns W5SJS for all his time and use of his ranch near Brenham to make FD a success. Sid Leach's K5XI super-station hosted another die-hard team of TDXS'ers in CQWW-Phone including K5XI, K5GA, W5ASP, K5RC, N5RP, and KB5YVT. Houston area flooding derailed Texas QSO Party efforts for many including Bob & Linda Walworth (N5ET & KE5TF) who's home was flooded. Most need DXCC country was A5 Bhutan, followed by VU4 Andaman. TDXS was preparing to host the "Gulf Coast Amateur Radio Swapfest and Used Equipment Auction on the 13th of the month at the Houston Farm & Ranch Club.

Twenty years ago this month

November 1989: President Ken Grabenstein KE5IV (now KZ5KG) announced that this month's club meeting would be

held in the TDXS hospitality suite at the local Ham-Com convention. TDXS was raffling off a Kenwood TS-140 rig, and George DeMontrond NR5M was hustling the crowds for ticket sales. Clarence Sharp K5DX and XYL Erma narrowly escaped with their lives when their home was destroyed by fire. Sharp wasn't even able to grab his wallet on the way out. Their home was a total loss. A lifetime of memories, pictures, contest awards, DXCC plaques and QSL cards all up in smoke. DX'ers eagerly awaited the start of operations from Bouvet in December, while Lloyd and Iris Colvin were about to commence operations from Burkino Fasso XT, and Niger 5U. Repeater Chairman K5VMX was contending with "unbelievable intermod" at the Greenway site, and had installed a backup site in Jersey Village with a phased array pointing southeast.

Twenty five years ago this

month November 1984: Bullsheet editor Kim Carr K5TU announced the candidates for 1985 Officers of TDXS: Bill Schrader K2TNO for President; John Duncan WA5ZVE and

Frank Wyatt KC5M for Vice President; Dave Busick N5JJ, and Tom Shapiro KD5SP for Secretary, and Mike Davidson KC5CP (now N5MT) and Orville Burg K5VWW for Treasurer. George Wagner K5KG gave a report on HZ1AB's move to new facilities and upgrades to equipment and antennas courtesy of the U.S. Army. Members of the Crantac Radio Club in Nuevo Laredo (hosts for our XE2FU shenanigans) wrote KZ5M (now K7BV) to thank TDXS for the kind hospitality during their stay in Houston to attend the Ham-Com convention, and tour the Johnson Space Center.

Contest Chairman's Report by Cookie Cooke, K5EWJ

The fall contest season is in full swing. The Texas QSO Party was a great success again this year and the CQWW-SSB marked the first DX contest of the new cycle. Fifteen meters was open most of the daylight hours and ten meters was open all afternoon of both days. The low bands were open also, but

storms over north Texas and Oklahoma made them pretty noisy. Chuck, W5PR had a great time on ten single band, single operator and I, K5EWJ enjoyed all band, single operator. The NR5M crew kept all bands hopping with their multi-multi effort. Al, N5X was part of the multi-multi crew at

KL7RA and enjoyed some Caribou stew along with a bit of ribbing about being from the little State in the lower 48. I am not sure where the rest of you were. Maybe you were resting for the Sweep Stakes or the CQWW-CW.

Coming up!	
November 7-8	Ukrainian DX Contest Sweep Stakes CW
November 14-15	WAE RTTY JI DX SSB OK/OM CW Contest
November 21-22	LZ DX Contest Sweep Stakes SSB
November 28-29	CQ WW DX CW
December 5-6	ARRL 160 meter Contest
December 12-13	ARRL 10 meter Contest
December 19-20	Straight Key Century Club DXtravaganza

Do you ever get a bit bored waiting for a big DXpedition to P5? Well Cal is having a bit of a hard time getting accommodations and licenses arranged for that. So, while we are all waiting, maybe we should consider the CQ Magazine DX Marathon. It runs every year from January 1 to December 31 and the goal is to work as many countries (entities) and CQ Zones as you can during the year. It is a great adjunct to the DX contests as it give you an additional incentive to get in there and work some DX when

you don't think you have the station, incentive or drive to win a plaque or even some paper. <http://dxmarathon.com/> will get you all the rules and allow you to download some nifty Xcel spread sheets to track your progress. It is not too late to get started for 2009. You can log your DX accomplishments so far in 2009 and start looking for fills. The winner for 2008 was OM3EY with 289 countries and 39 zones. The best US was W9KNI with 288 countries and

40 zones. These two had the same score with 328 points. I suppose the tie breaker was the most countries, but it is not stated. Pictures of these guys and their impressive antenna farms were published in the June 2009 CQ Magazine and are shown under 2008 results at the above URL. The best with a 5 call with a QTH in 5 land was WC5M with 204 entities and 39 zones. No club members that I recognize, either active or not submitted. Those of us in the Houston area suffered some Ike related set-

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

backs in addition to the poor entities list is not exactly the plus the ARRL list for the other general conditions. I managed same list as the ARRL DXCC continents. to work 122 entities and 28 list. This holds for the other zones in 2008, but didn't get in CQ contest such as the CQ The sun spots are back, at my entry. January was a busy WW, WPX, 10 meter and 160 least to some extent, so fix the month for me and my beam meter contests. Sicily, African antennas, send the XYL to visit was down for three months Italy, Shetland Island her sister and let's all work with storm damage. In 2007 I (Scotland), Bear Island some DX! managed 63rd place with 206 (Svalbard) and European Tur- entities and 38 zones. So far key (Crete) are additional enti- this year I have worked 175 ties. CQ Magazine has entities and 38 zones. adopted the Worked All It is worth noting that the CQ Europe entities list for Europe

Reward Offered!

A REWARD OF 500 MICRO-FARADS IS OFFERED FOR THE INFORMATION LEADING TO THE ARREST OF HOP-A-LONG CAPACITY. THIS UNRECTIFIED CRIMINAL ESCAPED FROM A WESTERN PRIMARY CELL WHERE HE HAD BEEN CLAMPED IN IONS AWAITING THE GAUSS CHAMBER.

HE IS CHARGED WITH THE INDUCTION OF AN 18 TURN COIL NAMED MILLI HENRY WHO WAS FOUND CHOKED AND ROBBED OF VALUABLE JOULES. HE IS ARMED WITH A

CARBON ROD AND IS A POTENTIAL KILLER. CAPACITY IS ALSO CHARGED WITH DRIVING DC MOTOR OVER A WHEATSTONE BRIDGE AND REFUSING TO LET THE BAND-PASS.

IF ENCOUNTERED, HE MAY OFFER SERIES OF RESISTANCE. THE ELECTROMOTIVE FORCE SPENT THE NIGHT SEARCHING FOR HIM IN A MAGNETIC FIELD, WHERE HE HAD GONE TO EARTH. THEY HAD NO SUCCESS AND BELIEVED HE HAD

RETURNED OHM VIA A SHORT CIRCUIT

HE WAS LAST SEEN RIDING A KILOCYCLE WITH HIS FRIEND EDDY CURRENT WHO WAS PLAYING A HARMONIC.

TDXS October Meeting Notes by Bill K5WAF

TDXS Members: K5WAF,
WD5KCX, K5UO,
NI5DX, N4AL,
WB5IUU, K5EWJ,
N5KTN, WB5TKI,
W9DX, WF5W,
KG5U, NM5G, W5PF,
N5MT, K5DD, N5UR,
Visitors: N5EN (Steve
Niles), KB4KBS/5
(Scott Straw)

DX Chairman [Cal, WF5W]: Nicaragua! Cal proposed we reconsider this DX Grenada, Nicaragua and had a few hands up during the meeting. It would be coordinated with the ARRL DX Contest SSB is on Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 March 1020 – so lets say for 5 days total starting Thursday March 4 for arrival and leaving on the Tuesday March 9. Frosty said earlier that he would negotiate with Continental for air fares. Ed said he could probably do a deal for a group rate at the hotel. We can put up 2 rigs, three antennas and with a good crew have a fresh face on the radios every 2 or 3 hours. Nobody will get over done and you will have time to spend with the XYL's on some tours. And nightly we can have a TDXS Dinner where we all get a little better acquainted and gain some of that something "special" that some of the previous DXpeditions have had.

As before, if we have enough guys/XYL's who want to go, we need to start doing the planning now. So check out what the XYL says, check your calendars and let Cal know.

- **Treasurer [Bill, K5WAF]:** No report
- **Membership [Bob, WB5IUU]:** Not sure it was well announced in the last meeting, but Neil Gardner, NG5NG, has been elected as a new member (#174). It becomes official once our Treasurer successfully pesters him for dues!
- **Other Business:**
 - **2010 Meeting Location:** It was agreed to continue meeting at Tracy Gee in 2010. The demographics of our Full and Associate membership put this facility close to the center of our club.
 - **Xmas Party and Annual Banquet:** A vote was taken and passed to combine the Christmas Party and Annual Banquet into a single event in early January. Keith, NM5G, agreed to organize the event.

TDXS Constitutional Changes: A final reading was made by the TDXS President, W5PF, of the 3 constitutional changes regarding:

- (1) Full Membership Requirement -- modified and empower the Board to waiver in the 4 meeting requirement for Full membership for a member who is actively and substantially supporting TDXS and petitions the Board for such a waiver on an annual basis. The idea here is that we want members who are active with the club but at the same time understand that there are circumstances where fulfilling the 4 meeting requirement is not possible. Waivers again are on a case by case basis and only for the one year at a time.

- (2) Appointed Officers: Add

QSL Manager as a Board Position. As we have discussed occasionally at our meetings, the QSL forwarding service provided by TDXS via the QSL Manager consumes a significant portion of our annual budget and is a valued service by our members. I therefore it seems to the current Board that the position of the QSL Manger should be on the Board.

(3) Election of Officers: Modify Election Procedure for when there is only 1 candidate. In the last couple of years, we have only had 1 candidate per position and in effect have been electing them by acclamation. This modification is to bring the Constitution up to date with recent practices.

An e-mail ballot will be sent to Full members within the next week; responses are requested by the end of October.

- **2010 Dues Recommendation:** Per the TDXS Constitution, the elected officers 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. The recommendation was made at the meeting with the understanding that it would be voted on by the membership in the November meeting.

- **TDXS 40th Anniversary in 2010 [Steve, W9DX]**

- ✦ Dinner – No. Initial responses have suggested that it would probably not allow us to draw a

TDXS October Meeting Notes by Bill K5WAF (cont)

large group of inactive members.

✦ QSO Party – Yes. The idea of having a QSO party to commemorate the 40th is getting a good reception. A lot of work is needed to make this a success.

TDXS Logo Shirts: TDXS polo style logo shirts are available again for \$25. Bob Mennell WB5IUU is taking orders. If you missed the last meeting, you can mail in your order with check or MO. Two colors are available: Forest Green and Dark Navy Blue. Price includes embroidered name and call sign. Shirts are 100% cotton. [An e-mail with photos and an order form were sent after the meeting] If you need a size not listed on the order form, contact Bob for availability and pricing. Now is a good time to order shirts for the whole

family. It is just in time for Christmas. Questions? Contact Bob at bmennell@consolidated.net

○ **Wings Over Houston:** This event held at Ellington Field is in need of Ham volunteers. Several TDXS members in the past, including Doug, WB5TKI and Arthur, N5KTN have participated. See e-mail messages for details on how to volunteer.

○ **Pre-Meeting Dinner:** A suggestion was made to change the pre-meeting dinner away from Pappas BBQ. Suggestions and recommendations should be made to Buzz, N5UR, who will consolidate, make a selection and get it to Steve, W9DX, for inclusion on the TDXS web page.

○ **Officer Nominations for 2010:**

The following were nominated/volunteered during the meeting:

✦ **President:** Paul Frantz, W5PF

✦ **VP Meetings:** Cal White, WF5W

✦ **VP Membership:** Bob Mennell, WB5IUU

Secretary/Treasurer: Bill Frink, K5WAF

Additional nominations are sought prior to the November meeting.

Photography 101: A presentation was made by Dale, KG5U on photography basics that should help with DXpeditions.

Ham Radio Funny by Steve W9DX

Funniest exchange overheard occurred on Sunday (CQWW DX SSB), when a Florida station called a European super-station that was really running them. It went something like this:

DX: "QRZ contest"

FL: "Kilo Foxtrot Four xxx" (suffix omitted)

DX: "Kilo Foxtrot Four xxx, you are 5-9-14"

FL: "(DX call) this is Kilo Foxtrot Four xxx, you're 5-9 and my number aahhhh, zero zero one"

DX: "No, no, I need your zone number, your zone number!"

FL: "My zone number is 4, since my callsign is Kilo Foxtrot Four xxx"

DX: "No, no, I need your CQ zone number, your CQ zone number. What state are you in?"

FL: "My QTH is Florida - Florida! ...and my name is (xxxx)."

DX: "Okay QSL Florida. That's zone 5, QSL?"

FL: "Negative, negative...Florida is in the 4th call district. I'm in zone 4.

Florida has always been in the 4th call district!"

DX:(long pause), "QRZ contest!"

Ham Radio Toolbar From 425 by Bill K5WAF

If you have a dedicated computer for your station, you might want to consider downloading [http://425.ourtoolbar.com] and installing the “425 Toolbar” to your internet browser (MS IE, Firefox or Safari using Windows 2000/XP/Vista).

Frankly, as a rule, I stay away from browser toolbars because of the collateral issues with them and the fact that some can not be removed once installed (not the case with this one). But for some reason, I tried this one and it actually is pretty good. It is a tool bar that spans a full row with several icons that lead to useful and in some cases unique links – some that I had not seen before.

Here are a couple of observations:

Search: The toolbar includes the typical search dialogue box but this one also has a setting just to the right of it where you can select several different search or special interest sites. Of course QRZ.com and HamCall is there but so is 425 Bulletin, DXwatch, DXzone, eHam, eBay, etc. It was interesting putting in my call in the search box and then seeing what came up with each one of the sites.

425 Info: You can easily get to 425 bulletins, calendars and magazines through a “headphone” icon. Frankly, I had not seen all the info available on 425 prior to this, other than of course the 425 bulletin which Steve, W9DX sends out weekly.

DXWatch Icon: A small “globe” icon gives you the quick option to select any band to see current spots.

Links: There links “gear” icon actually seems to be the one I use the most. Out of the 25 links, there were a couple of links that I had not seen before. The “IOTA on the Web” link has been particularly useful as it includes a calendar where you click a date and it show details of the IOTA’s being activated on that date. This works really good when you put this info into VE7CC alerts.

Other notable links included information **Feeds** (like from ARRL, RSGB, etc), **Time** (in UTC), **Propagation** and **Gray Line** – they are small, easy to get to links with no digging or searching.

Ones I probably won’t use but are included in the tool

bar are **Chat** (with several topics), MSN and Yahoo **Messenger, Tools & Gadgets**, and **Facebook**

News Feed: They have included a small audio player in the toolbar that I almost ignored but my curiosity got to me. So I hit play. It turned out to be an audio recording by RSGB with ham related news. Kind of interesting! I don’t know how often it is updated, but the one I listened to was only 1 day old.

The good thing though, is that this toolbar can be removed if you either get tired of it or don’t like it. In any event, I hope this short write-up helps and if it sounds interesting, you’ll give it a try.

73 Bill K5WAF

Consider the Lowly Soldering Iron de Madison W5MJ

You have a couple or three of them, and they do the jobs you want pretty well. But have you ever thought about how difficult it is to do certain tasks – like putting on a PL-259 or trying to get that board repaired – and how easy it might be if you had the proper equipment? Well, read on, because I learned something recently I want to share.

My new car is RF noisy. Not really bad, but it could be better, and I am still struggling with getting the screwdriver antenna to tune properly. I scrounged up some braid, which is just the ticket to establishing a proper ground and getting rid of some of the hash which shows up when you roar down the road.

Braid is really nice because of its excellent noise reduction properties, and it cuts to size with a pair of scissors. The problem is that it becomes frazzled when you cut it, and if you try to screw it into a metal component it will not hold [or do the electrical job you wish for it to do] without using something like a fender washer to keep it in place.

Enter the soldering iron. I have had a soldering station, a Solomon SL-20, worthy of 50 watts or so]. I also use a Weller 100 watt gun and a butane torch/pencil for the bigger stuff. I tried all three on the braid: the Solomon, the Weller and the butane pencil just didn't have enough punch to heat the braid, and the torch burned it up, even at lowest settings. Just using a fender washer and hoping for the best did not cut the mustard.

That led me to the internet. Because I am building up my courage to do a surface mount receiver, because I did not have any really small tips for my iron I went to the A-1 Parts website

[<http://www.a1parts.com/solomon/index.html>] - I have no connection other than I own a Solomon] to see what was available in small tips for my soldering station.

I did find what I wanted there [more on that in the next installment] and I also found – Ta Dah!! – a 100 watt iron for \$19.20 USD with the description, “**Designed for major soldering work, such as bus bars,**

stained glass, and large cable connectors. 100 W.” I was impressed enough to include it with my tip order. The package arrived shortly thereafter from Toronto, where A-1 is located. I learned that, as I had expected, the Weller gun does not put out anything close to 100 watts and that the Weller tip is too small to transfer much heat to large surfaces. On the other hand, my new 100 watt iron is wonderful! It transfers heat perfectly. I can now tin the braid so that I can drill a mounting hole in it [though I still use a fender washer], and I can also install PL259s in a flash without the fear of melting the insulator.

Lesson learned [yet again]: having the proper equipment makes the job easy. Not having the proper equipment makes the job irritating and/or impossible. So get on the internet, find yourself soldering equipment which will fill your requirements, get finished with those old projects which have been cluttering your work station for forever, and get on the air!

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	
Secretary/Treasurer	Bill Frink, K5WAF	WAFrink at msn.com	
Contest Chairman	Willis "Cookie" Cooke K5EWJ	wrcooke at yahoo.com	
Field Day Chairmen	Bill Frink, K5WAF	WAFrink at msn.com	
	Keith Dutson, NM5G	kdutson at sbcglobal.net	
	Bob Mennell, WB5IUU	bmennell at consolidated.net	
Repeater Chairman	Glenn Anderson, WB5TUF	wb5tuf at earthlink.net	832-595-2855
DXpedition Chairman	Cal White, WF5W	cwhite314 at sbcglobal.net	
Outgoing QSL Manager	Scott Patout, K5DD	K5DD at arrl.net	
Webmaster	Steve Smothers, W9DX	cougar70 at earthlink.net	
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DXCC QSL Card Checker	Bob Walworth, N5ET	rwalworth at charter.net	

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 November

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

Please notify the Editor if I have missed anyone.