



The Bullsheet

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

The Texas DX Society, Houston TX K5DX@tdxs.net January 2010

Happy New Year! Let's Eat!

Saturday, January 9, 6:00 PM

[and maps.](#)

TDXS Annual Banquet at the Saltgrass Steakhouse, 8943 Katy Freeway (between Campbell & Voss), Houston.

Contact [Keith NM5G](#) if you plan to attend.

We need a firm headcount no later than January 6th.

[Click here for details, menu.](#)



Editor's Note de Doug WB5TKI

Well, 2009 is gone (good riddance), the sunspot numbers are slowly increasing, and a new year of contesting and Dxpeditions is upon us.

Speaking of which, I've committed to go on my first DXpedition in March, to Nicaragua for the ARRL International Phone contest. Anticipation, anxiety, uncertainty and excitement are all roiling right now.

I got a new toy for

Christmas, a Ten-Tec Model 715 RF Speech Processor. It sure seems to be giving me a lot more punch in my audio from self-monitoring on another rig. I'll let you know how the on-the-air experience turns out. It is traditional to formulate New Year's Resolutions, so here are mine:

- 1) I will lose weight (OK, that one's there every year)
- 2) I will operate more contests (is

the last season of "Lost" really that important?).

- 3) I will put a decent number of radials around the Big SteppIR (12 is really not a sufficient number in this soil).
 - 4) I will become proficient with my Father's bug (I gave him that Vibroplex Presentation model many years ago, and now I have inherited it).
- Happy New Year!

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The Prez Sez de Paul W5PF

It is hard to believe that 2009 is gone already. It was only last week that I was getting ready for the trip to C91. Field Day only ended a couple days ago. What a quick year it was. Now it's time to look forward to 2010. But before I do that I have been reflecting on the past year. More specifically on my time as President of TDXS.

I have been fortunate to have a great team of officers that has done most of the hard work. Cal WF5W has found a lot of good programs for our meetings. That goes a long way towards good attendance at our meetings. Bob WB5IUU has made arrangements for club shirts and vests to help foster team spirit. If you want to order any of the club apparel get in touch with Bob. Bill K5WAF besides taking care of the treasury has kept me in line by providing monthly reminders of the club business that needed to be handled at the meetings. They have all also taken on other jobs to make the club run smoothly. Cal is also the DXpedition Chairman arranging and promoting club DX trips. Bill and Bob put in a lot of work as Field Day Coordinators that resulted in a very successful operation. My thanks to all of them, most of all for agreeing to do it again this year.

Where would we be without the other members of our

Board of Directors? Steve W9DX has put in a lot of work keeping the web site up to date on our meetings, trips and other functions. The on line log lookups for some of our DXpeditions are very popular. Doug WB5TKI has stepped in and done a great job with The Bullsheet. He has coaxed some great articles out of our members and has put together some very interesting issues in 2009. Glenn WB5TUF has done an excellent job maintaining our repeater system. Unfortunately it doesn't get as much use as it could. I do occasionally hear someone use the IRLP or Echolink functions and I enjoy hearing Igor giving out the DX while I am out and about. If you haven't tried it lately get on there and make some noise.

Scott K5DD has taken over the Outgoing QSL Managers' position and has gotten a lot of business even though we have had no sunspots. Cookie K5EWJ has been working hard trying to stir up some contesting activity among members and has had some success. Quite a few members have turned in logs this year, If you aren't one of them there are a lot of opportunities coming up.

These are the people that make TDXS an interesting and fun club to belong to. I am very thankful for their help the past year and look forward to

working with them all in 2010. This year will be TDXS 40th Anniversary. Steve W9DX has been looking into possible ways to celebrate the occasion. There seems to be quite a bit of interest in an on the air operating event to encourage all TDXS members past and present to participate. If you have any ideas on how to celebrate our 40th Anniversary please let Steve or me know.

This year our banquet will be January 9th. It will be at the Saltgrass Steakhouse on the Katy Freeway between Campbell and Voss. Details and a map are on the web site. If you plan to attend please let Keith NM5G know that you will be there. This is a good time to visit with members and spouses so plan to attend.

See you at the banquet,

Paul W5PF

From the Bullsheet Archives by Doug WB5TKI

Ten years ago this month:

TDXS President Earl Morse N5TU (now N8SS) was welcoming in the new Millennium with the announcement of the upcoming FCC changes to the licensing program. This was the change to the code requirement that set the maximum required proficiency at 5 WPM. Earl opined that it shouldn't cause any congestion in the CW bands but should result in a dramatic increase in activity on the phone bands.

The banquet was to be held at the Confederate House at the end of the month. (It's interesting that, looking back at 10 and 20 years ago, the banquet price was always in the \$20-30 range).

Dave, K5GN, contributes this zinger: My favorite is the guy on CW who comes upon some DX and immediately sends "?". My Elmer taught me that this is the briefest abbreviation for "I am a lid".

Twenty years ago this month:

The officer slate was as follows:

President	Ken Grabenstein KE5IV
VP	Jim Lane N5DC
Secretary	Linda Walworth KE5TF
Treasurer	Chuck Coleman K5LZO
Contest Chair	Brent Levitt NT5D
Bullsheets	Bill Schrader K2TNO

DX Chair	Bob Walworth AK5B
Repeater	Jim Lane N5DC
Field Day	Bob Perring N5RP
Convention	George DeMontrond NR5M

The big event was the upcoming Annual Banquet at Brady's Landing. It was announced that there would be a door prize of a round trip to the bar in Jim Lane's wheelchair while operating 2m mobile (ed. Anyone know what that was about?).

Bill K2TNO announced that he was stepping down as Bullsheet editor, handing the reins to Joe Staples W5ASP.

Ham to Ham by Doug WB5TKI

I recently received this email message:

"Doug - although I'm not a member of TDXS, I know several of the hams who are members. Don't know if you can do this, but could you put a brief blurb in your newsletter that I still haven't been able to replace my Hurricane Ike - damaged antennas and towers. My quad antenna was destroyed by Ike and the wire antennas I have been using since then just don't seem to work well. The tower is still bent and tilted way over at

an angle. What I really need is someone to just eyeball the situation and draw up a replacement plan on how I could redo the antenna system at my house. My e-mail is ag5t@arrl.net and my phone number is 713-896-0060. Thanks.

Marty Blaise, AG5T, President, Houston ECHO Society"

It would be great if we could reach out to hams in need who are still trying to recover from recent tragedy. If you have some time or ideas please con-

tact Marty and let him know that TDXS cares.

Contest Chairman's Report by Cookie Cooke, K5EWJ

As another year of tough propagation draws to a close, things are looking a little better for DX. The past few weeks the flux has stayed around 75 to 80 which is not great, but far better than 66 or 67 that has been the norm. So, for those who have been waiting for better propagation to get back into contesting, it looks like you have waited long enough. The big contests for December have been the ARRL 160, ARRL 10 and the Stew Perry 160 meter distance challenge.

The ARRL 160 Meter Contest was held on December 5 & 6, which coincided with a Flyball Dog Race that my Dog Club entered so it looked like I would not be able to participate. Then our team captain

called and told me we would not run on Saturday because of the forecast slick streets, so I started the contest about an hour late. The band was in pretty good shape and I had 101 contacts by 0400 when the team called again and told me that racing was back on. I worked W5KDJ, K5WA, NR5M and K5NA from South Texas, a few Caribbean stations and all over the US. I am not sure how the other South Texas stations fared but things were looking good when I quit.

The ARRL 10 Meter Contest was the next week end, December 12 & 13. Saturday was pretty slow, both on the Friday night local time part and during the day on Saturday. I worked quite a few Texas stations within 200 miles of my

QTH and every now and then an E-skip would open somewhere, usually only long enough to work a station or two. I heard some openings that were only long enough to get a part of a call. I closed my N1MM log after the band closed to do some work with my regular log. The band started opening again a little before midnight local, but when I reopened N1MM I could not find my Saturday log. N1MM had put it in a directory where I did not expect it. I started a new log for Sunday but I could not Search and Pounce without making a lot of dupes, so I ran all day Sunday. I worked over 300 Qs on Sunday, so maybe all running is a good way. I only worked less than 60 Qs on Saturday.

Contests coming up:

Jan 1	ARRL Straight Key Night
Jan 2-3	ARRL RTTY Roundup
Jan 9-10	North American CW QSO Party
Jan 16-17	North American SSB QSO Party
Jan 29-31	CQ WW DX 160M CW Contest
Feb 6-7	Vermont, Minnesota, Delaware QSO Parties
Feb 13-14	CQ WW WPX RTTY Contest
Feb 26-28	CQ WW DX 160M SSB Contest

The scores were generally lower than they have been for the past few years, but several South Texas stations did very well and will be winners if the 3830 reports hold up. W5PR is looking good for SO SSB HP with NR5M running second. K5NA looks good for SO CW HP and K5FP is in second place for SO CW LP. NX5M in M/S HP of Somerville is running second to LT1A and only a few points behind. NX5M is looking real good for top US score for M/S HP. N1CC from Ma-bank near Dallas looks strong for best in US in M/S LP. Texas stations are leaders in every category except SO Mix HP and SO Mix LP.

Interestingly, I did not work a single GA, SC or FL station during the contest when I normally have a pipeline to that area. K5FP told me that he worked 25 FL stations in a row. K5FP is 209 miles west of me near Marble Falls. Strange propagation continues on ten meters, but perhaps 2010 will bring improvement and perhaps some east-west F layer skip.

The Straight Key Century Club held its semi-annual DX contest on December 19 & 20. This is an event to try to encourage more DX stations to participate in SKCC and to give some of the less well equipped and less

experienced operators to work some DX. F6HKA made the most QSOs with 118 and furnished the first France contact for quite a few. I estimate the total number participating at around 125 with 49 logs submitted.

The Stew Perry Topband Challenge is a favorite contest of mine, but with it starting on Christmas Day I could not participate this year so I don't know how it went. I would think that participation would be down this year.

I am still trying to tame my Windows 7 computer. I gave up on my USB to RS232 converter and bought a StarTech.com 2 Port PCI Express Serial Card to control my Elecraft K3. It seems to be working correctly. My WinKeyer USB causes some kind of fault with Windows 7 that makes it reboot if the computer goes to the sleep mode while it is connected to either N1MM or XMlog. I am able to leave it connected if I turn the sleep mode timer off. It is still a mystery why N1MM changed where it put the log and where it looked for the log.

I have heard that at one time TDXS had an ongoing competition to see who could work the most countries and zones in each calendar year. It sounds

like an excellent thing to do. We could use the CQ Marathon form to keep track, as it does that very thing. It does use the WAE European entities list rather than the ARRL list, but it is only a little different. Let me know if you would like to have such a competition.

Programs, Dxpeditions and Stuff de Cal WF5W

From the V.P., Programs:

Fellow TDXSers, I need your help this year. Have just about exhausted my list of volunteers to give programs. Think of something you want to hear about and let me know. Dave Topp, you owe us one meeting with a video. Your choice of meetings.

We have the Banquet, the Field Day, The DXpedition to Nicaragua and Dave's video. That leaves us with 8 open meetings to fill. HELP HELP>>>>>
E mails are solicited...

From the DXpedition chair:

Nicaragua in March. Doug, Mike, Keith and myself for the SSB Contest. Should be a good event, we are staying at the rent a shack of yn2n and he has assured us that all is well and ready. We plan on taking a 480 HX, the Tokyo Hi power amp and Keith's Vertical dipole to add to the stuff at his shack. Memories of Malta will be with us as it is the same contest as that historical trip (minus w5mj's chili).

We do have one IOTA that may be interesting to some. Its the Isla del Cona (NA 117) off the west coast of Costa Rica. It is like many of the others, a Fish and Wildlife reserve for that country. I have been told it has only been on the air in 1999 and not since. KF4TUG and partner were there.

Trying to find out what will be needed to get permission again. Hope they are a little easier than our own Fish and Wildlife group.

That's all that's on the table as of this time.

Some General Stuff from WF5W:

The Sea Pumpkin's neighbor in Kemah has recently taken his HF gear out of the boat to reset it and hopes to have a more robust signal when its all back together. Tom, KD5TIO is coming up on his meetings with TDXS and even for a rocket scientist, has a lot of ham radio gusto. Tom and I have talked to his friend, Jamin, a researcher in Antarctica, recently and expect him back in Houston in a few months to really get studying on his ham ticket. He has had a hard time convincing the ops at KC4 to let him get on the air, even had to beg the Aussies for some time. He will probably show up at a meeting later this year.

SKN Houston: The year is done and the best fist has been hands down chosen. To be revealed at the NARS banquet. Yes, he is a NARS member only. Lets see if we can get some additional participation out of TDXS for this year and bring the Christmas Key into our realm !!!!

The REAL SKN on New Year's

Eve, (I Put the Begali Camel-back on the air...). Know this is going to come out too late but I hope as many as possible did participate. It is one of the greatest contests of the year. Full of nostalgia and fun. IF you did not, at least put it on your agenda for 2010.

K9AY back up again, not as good as it should/could be. Suggestions are solicited.

Annual Straight Key Night:

I spent 10 hours: 78 QSO's, 29 States and 2 DX Countries. Mostly on 80 with some 40 and a little on 20. A Fun time.

That's it from this shack.

Cal White WF5W

TDXS December Meeting Notes

by Bill K5WAF

Date: December 10, 2009
7:00-9:00pm

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

Attendance: TDXS Members:
K5WAF, K5UO,
NM5G, WD5KCX,
WB5TKI, N5DD,
W5PF, WF5W,
WB5IUU, W9DX,
K5DD, N5MT, N5ET,
W5MJ and N5UR

Visitors: W5HPQ,
N5EN, K5STZ,
W5UQ, AD5Q

- **President [Paul, W5PF]**

- **Guests:** Paul acknowledged the great turn out of guests at the meeting and welcomed them all. Including this meeting, there is 1 (Steve Niles, N5EN) who now qualifies for membership with 4 meetings under his belt, 3 that that have now been to 3 meetings (Ray "Quack" Radlek, AD5Q, Stan Polak, K5STZ and Tom Campbell, KD5TIO) and 4 that have now been to 2 meetings (Jim Myron, KE5ILB, Bob Sherman, KE5OKQ, Steve Flannigan, W5HPQ and Bob Hardie, W5UQ).

- **Pre-Meeting Restaurant:** We have not been successful in finding an alternate restaurant for our pre-meeting meal. The consensus of the membership was that Papa's BBQ should continue to be the venue

unless a specific, better venue is identified.

- **2010 Dues:** Remember 2010 dues are coming up (5 members have paid prior to the meeting and 5 in attendance paid at the meeting).

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

- **Finances:** Bank balances are healthy and were discussed.

- **Membership [Bob, WB5IUU]:**

- **TDXS Logo Shirts and Vests:** The next order for shirts and vests will be placed in February. This will get us through the holiday period and give our members some time prior to the next order.

- **Name Tags:** TDXS name tags still are available in the traditional style through Alex Stalinsky, WA5UHT (TDXS Member #3) though we will be trying a new, larger design that will include the brass TDXS logo. Bob Mennell is getting a sample made via the Sign Man and will hopefully have it available at the next meeting.

- **DX Chairman [Cal, WF5W]:**

- **Nicaragua DXpedition in March 2010 [approx Mar 3-10]** Doug [WB5TKI], Keith [NM5G], Mike [K5UO] and Cal [WF5W]. There is room for 1 or 2 more!

- **Costa Rica Island:** Cal is also looking into an island off of Costa Rica that appears to be rare. More details to follow.

- **Other Business:**

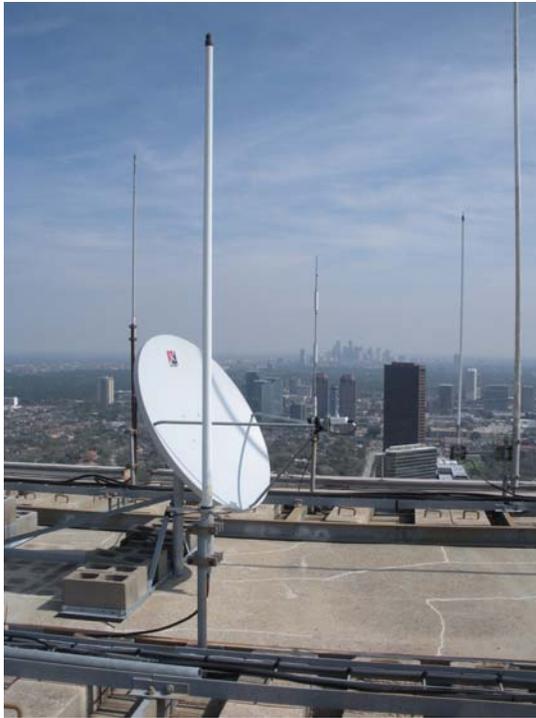
Xmas Party and Annual Banquet [Keith, NM5G]: Plans have been made with the Salt Grass Restaurant, 8941 Katy Freeway for January 9, 2010. The plan is to assemble and mingle starting at 6pm. Dinner will follow at 7pm. There will be 5 different selections on the "\$21" (really \$27 when you include soft drink, tax and tip) menu. The TDXS Treasurer will pay by single check but will be anxiously looking for everyone to give him their \$27/person personal check to cover the cost. Beer, wine and liquor will be on a cash basis from the restaurant. See the TDXS Website for more and up to date details.

Presentation: 2007 Scarborough Reef BS7H DXpedition video

Repeater Maintenance de Glenn Anderson WB5TUF

Here are some pictures from Nov 27 repeater maintenance session. In attendance were Glenn and Evan Anderson and Lance (WD5KCX) and Danny Rumfield. They were installing the TDXS95 packet node on One Houston center. The antenna is up about 700 feet. Note the safety harnesses.

Thanks guys for your dedication!



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.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 January

Barbara Coleman - WB5RUS

Lon Cottingham - K5JV

John Stevens - K5JS

Dale Martin - KG5U

Al Vasek - KN5A

Dennis Motschenbacher - K7BV

Bill Bradford - K5GA

John Duncan - WA5ZVE

Mike Hance - K5NZ

Allen Brier - N5XZ

Ben Worrell - NE5B

Ken Eckel Jr. - AB5A

Earl Morse - K8SS (ex-N5TU)

Doug Seyler - WB5TKI

Please notify the Editor if I have missed anyone.