



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 2012

Screwdriver Antennas

Thursday, March 10, 7:00 PM

TDXS Meeting Night: Tracy Gee Center, 3599 Westcenter Dr, Houston. Pre-meeting dinner get-together starts around 5:30 to 6PM at Pappas BBQ on S. Gessner & Westheimer. Program by George Edwards K5VUU on his screwdriver an-

tenna design. Come, enjoy a barbecue meal and some good fellowship, and acquire some hints on installing and using this versatile mobile antenna.



Editor's Note by Jim N4AL

It is good to have Cook- ie's contest column back this month. TDXS has some active and devoted testers and many of us don't know about their accomplish- ments without the col- umn. .

Ron K5HM has sub- mitted his first article for the Bullsheet. I think he intended it for last month's issue, but

it got here a little late. If you are tired of wait- ing for a new DXCC entity or a new IOTA island to appear, he has suggested some other operating awards that you can pursue. For de- tails on how to apply for one of these awards, contact K5HM. Thanks Ron! We hope you will do it again.

The DXpedition to

Yemen is creating quite a stir. As the pileups thin out, I may give them a shout. I worked Yemen back in the 90's but this is a new island for me.

Please report any changes in your DXCC status to W9DX so he can update our web page.

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The Prez Sez by Doug WB5TKI

Well, Spring was sure short. We went from a week of nice weather to SUMMER. And summer in Houston is sweaty.

As I write this column, I am banging away at the pileup on 15m CW trying to work 7O6T. I finally worked him after a couple of hours of calling. WOW, you'd have thought that he was on Mars! All of the bad behavior was exhibited. Repeatedly calling on his frequency. Calling CQ on frequency. Tuning up. Over-zealous split cops. Four letter words. What is the hobby coming to? For lots of us with modest setups, it's a real challenge. And to have these knuckleheads deliberately QRMIing the DX station does not reflect well on our hobby.

Currently, we are not planning a June meeting. Instead, the Field Day effort on Texas City Dike will suffice. Dave, W5BXX, has graciously agreed to spearhead the event again this year. We will coordinate by email to plan this event. If it becomes necessary, we can plan a get-together ahead of time to meet face to face. Last year's FD was a blast, so I hope that you can attend this one.

The May meeting will feature George Edwards K5VUU, who will give us insight into his screw-driver antenna design. Unfortunately, I will not be in attendance, as I have to be at a company meeting in London. That's cold, rainy London, even in May. I hope that you can attend, and eat some BBQ for me!

73 es gud dx,

Doug WB5TKI



TDXS Meeting Notes by Mike K5UO

Date: April 12, 2012

Location: Sugarland Community Center, Sugarland TX (Joint meeting w/ Brazos Valley ARC)

Attendance: K5UO, N4AL, WB5IUU, K5DD, WS5H, K5LBU, N5XZ, W9DX, N5MT, W5UQ, WB5TUF, WD5X, WB5TKI, K5HM

Visitors: Norma, KE5NDN (XYL/WS5H)

TDXS Business: President (Doug WB5TKI):

1. Presented the *Frank Montgomery, W5JWM Memorial Award Program* in which the club will pay for the ARRL plaques for new DXCC Honor Roll or DXCC #1 Honor Roll to any "current January paid dues full member". Funding for these plaques hopefully will not come from the club's general fund but will be funded by donations. The memorial currently has two nice donations to start and at this time solicits any and all donations. The program will be administered by the club treasurer.
2. Field Day 2012, chaired by Dave Topp, W5BXX, will take place at the end of the Texas City Five-mile Dike, at the same place as last

year. It will be the same FD category. Volunteers are again solicited to help set up, operate and tear down. Please, please help out in this fun project.

3. TDXS won \$30.00 as a BVARC door prize at the meeting.
4. Membership (Bob, WB5IUU): Present and nothing reported.
5. Repeater Chairman (Glenn, WB5TUF) Present and nothing reported.

Program Chairman (Bob, W5UQ)
Another outstanding program by Chairman Bob:

1. WD5X, Lance, Debbie, N5DSR (Lance's XYL) and W5UQ, Bob, presented their seven day group cruise trip with two active ham radio HF stations on board touring the Caribbean. Numerous technical and legal recommendations were given for anyone anticipating a cruise with ham radio operations planned. It is very achievable but not like driving to your local park and setting up operations. They have another Caribbean cruise planned February 10-17, 2013 to depart Galveston.

2. Allen, N5AEV operated from 170 grid squares via cruise ships with a handheld radio via satellite as a single operator.
3. Kirk, KK2Z, operated from cruise ships as a single operator along with his XYL. Kirk had some interesting tales of his operation especially with a "TSA" type of official on one ship who had confiscated Kirk's equipment, even though Kirk had all of the necessary paperwork. He spent an hour or so in a storage area in the very lowest, sub-sea, deck of the ship waiting for this inspector to clear his equipment for use.

All presentations were first-class. Thank you gentlemen!

Submitted to record
Mike Bragassa, K5UO
Secy/Treas



Contest Chairman's Report by Cookie, K5EWJ

Contest Activity for the Club has been pretty slight for the last two month for the club. Chuck Deitz has tried to keep us in the game, but he has had to fight nature in addition to the propagation gods. A small tornado took a bead on one of his towers and dropped a limb on his tower guys. Chuck lost a 75 ft Tower with one rotatable 6 element 10 meter beam and two fixed four element beams just before the CQ WW WPX was to start on March 24. Chuck did some work on his other tower and beam and entered anyway. He managed 974 contacts in 445 prefixes for 910,470 points all on ten meters in the SOSB/10HP category. Chuck used his W5PR station with the call KZ5MM to give a better prefix. Chuck also entered SOSB/10HP in the ARRL DX Contest SSB contest on March 3&4 with all his antennas and made 645 contacts in 88 countries for 170,181. Chuck gives us far more details than I have space to repeat, so in Hee-Haw fashion, you won't catch us repeating details, so read em close the first time! Thanks for your efforts Chuck!

If you are not reading the ARRL Contest Update you are missing a lot of good information. Again, they are very large and very timely, so trying to summarize or repeat them here is not a worthy idea. You can find this document at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/update>

and sign up to have it sent to your email.

Coming Contests and Events

- May 5 & 6 Ten-Ten Spring CW Contest
- May 5 & 6 7th Area QSO Party
- May 5 & 6 Indiana QSO Party
- May 5 & 6 New England QSO Party
- May 26 & 27 CQ WPX CW
- June 2 & 3 Museum Ship Week End
- June 23 & 24 ARRL Field Day

Little-Known Operating Awards by Ron K5HM

WAZ, DXCC, WAS, IOTA; certificates of achievement that are clear testimony to your operating prowess. Chasing awards is a niche segment of amateur radio; some might call it a cult, to aspire to capturing every possible certificate.

After extensive research, I was able to identify some other lesser-known awards that are available to the active DXer.:

WOTA – Wal-Marts On The Air. Requires proof of QSO's with amateur radio stations operating from at least 400 Wal-Mart locations. Individuals or clubs may activate an individual Wal-Mart location at any time and notify WOTA authorities by registering the activation in the WOTA world wide database. The WOTA committee will issue a unique WOTA number for the location. Each QSO submitted for credit must be a current activation at the time of contact. There are over 6,600 Wal-Mart locations worldwide. Good Luck. Contact with Sam's Club locations do not count for WOTA credit. The WOTA committee is contemplating offering a separate award for Sam's Clubs On The Air (SCOTA) later this year.

FFOTA (Fast Food On The AIR) To be announced in 2013. There will be special endorsements for MDOTA (McDonalds On The Air), JIBOTA (Jack In the Box On The Air) and KFCOTA (you can probably figure this one out for yourself). Details to follow later.

Academy Award Award – Given for contact with hams in cities where a movie filmed in that location won the Academy Award for Best Picture. The same city cannot be used multiple times. Only one city per film. Sorry, extraterrestrial locations such as Remulak, Vulcan and other mythical locations cannot be used for this award. In addition to the certificate, each award includes a package of microwave popcorn.

Special 70th anniversary Commemorative Casablanca Award – Commemorates the 70th anniversary of the Humphrey Bogart film. The award is earned for contacts with hams in the area of the former French Morocco whose first names are: Rick, Ilsa, Victor, Louis, Heinrich, Sascha, Carl or . . . Sam (as in "Play it again Sam")

Ring of Fire Award – This award is given to hams who have contacted portable operations located on the rim of at least five active volcanoes. Considering the element of danger for the expedition operators, this is the only award in the world that is reciprocal. A person may earn this for themselves by going to five different volcanoes and contacting at least one other amateur before running for their life. Note – There is no power limit for this award although Ring of Fire expeditioners favor light-weight QRP gear in order not to hinder their need for a rapid departure!

And, my personal favorite:

The Next Year Award – This is the most prestigious of all amateur radio awards because the standard of achievement is quite high. Off hand, I can't recall a single person, who has actually won this award. It is given to amateurs who have delayed, put off or deferred making or completing any changes in their equipment, operating skill, club participation or license class. The amateur eligible for the award must apply for themselves. Of course, by doing so, one is automatically disqualified for the award, having accomplished something in the process.

Museum Ships Weekend by Cookie K5EWJ

**0000Z June 2, through 2359Z
June 3, 2012**

We are again getting ready for the Museum Ship Week End operation. This takes place the first weekend of June each year. Amateur radio operators around the world operate from Museum Ships and Ship Memorials around the world. We try to contact as many other amateurs as we can to allow them to know about the ships and encourage them to tour ships near them or their vacation destinations. All types of ships are eligible, not just war ships. World War II vintage ships are most prevalent, but other ships are displayed as well. We have Aircraft Carriers, Battleships, Cruisers, Destroyers and Submarines from the World War II era and some that date back to World War I. We also have Liberty Ships, Light Ships, Bulk Carriers, Passenger ships, Tugs and others. Most of the ships are in the USA and fairly easy to contact, but other countries are represented and some are DX. At this time 87 ships have registered for the 2012 event. The club at the Battleship New Jersey handles the national registration and awards issue. Their web site is www.NJ2BB.org where you can see the listing of ships along with type and location. You can also review the rules and awards issued.

Operation by all amateur modes are acceptable and encouraged, but this is sort of like field day in that the equipment is limited and the antennas are either the ones permanently installed on the ships and those that can be temporarily installed in a public place. The ships are publically or privately owned and are displayed primarily for the education and enjoyment of the public, so radio operations need to enhance or at least not be a detriment to the primary purposes. Some of the operations will be with original equipment, but the age and condition of the original equipment along with the mode limitations of antique equipment is a limitation. Most of the operations are done with modern amateur transceivers and antennas. Some are from the Radio Rooms and some are from stations set up like for field day in adjacent parks. A lot of the operation is on 20 meter SSB. Other bands will be used as propagation and interest allows. CW is used when operators are available and interest allows. We usually make at least a few satellite contacts and contact a lot of stations on 146.34/94 FM repeater. Most antique radio operations take place on CW. Only a few of the newer ships were equipped with SSB.

Operation on any amateur frequency is allowed but most ships make

an effort to operate in the General portion of the band most of the time.

There are four local ships that you can work or visit. It only takes 15 ships to qualify for a certificate and some contacts including Pelican Island count for two ships. The Battleship Texas is moored at the San Jacinto Monument. The operation there is by the Battleship Texas ARS and anyone who wishes to operate there can look at www.NA5DV.org for contacts and information.

The Submarine, USS Cavalla and the Destroyer Escort, USS Stewart are displayed near the water on Pelican Island, north of Galveston. They are displayed at Seawolf Park, named for a World War II Submarine that was sunk near Midway Island, possibly by friendly fire. We have access to the radio rooms there and at least one antenna on both ships is available. Most of the operation usually happens in the picnic area because a number of operators have difficulty with the ladders on the ships. Both Radio Rooms are air conditioned, but the AC is not very effective on the Stewart. The gray metal is not the best insulator and the door has a grate in it. Last year we had a small beam and a vertical in the park for antennas. The event at Pelican is sponsored by BVARC

Museum Ships Weekend (cont.)

and most of the operators have been supplied by them, however they welcome members of other clubs, particularly TDXS and TARS. This year the organizers for BVARC are WS5H and K5HM are the main organizers. Bill and Ron are members of both TDXS and BVARC. I was recruited by Bill for the group primarily because I like CW and am good with a hand key. I will not be able to participate a great deal if at all because of my personal commitments this year, so we are in need of CW operators. The speeds are much slower than normal contest speeds, so high speed capability is not a requirement and operation is pretty relaxed. On the plus side, you may get to hear some WW II equipment in operation. If you want to participate you can contact Bill or Ron on the TDXS reflector. BVARC likes to use their club call KK5W for the MSWE event and they furnish QSLs and some refreshment for it. Unlike Field Day, most of the contacts are at their home station and many would like commemorative QSLs for their contacts. Bill handles that for the event and the Battleship New Jersey ARS issues certificates to the operators who participate.

This year some members of Tidelands ARS have signed up to operate the Tall Ship Elissa using N5E.

I think they will have trouble finding the radio room on an 1877 Barque, but I expect they will find some place to set up. The contacts there are Jeremy Conn, K0JCC jc.comm@gmail.com and Leslie Bartosh, AD5WB@yahoo.com. They have a spread sheet for sign up, but the URL is so long that I don't want to try to get it right here. You can find it on Tidelands@yahoo.com. The Elissa is berthed only 2 miles from Cavalla and Stewart with almost 100% salt water path, so we may have some fun this year.

John McMichael is the Curator at the Museum and Park. He is a retired Master Chief Petty Officer and prefers to be called Chief of Boat to Curator. John is very knowledgeable about everything mechanical on a ship after a lifetime as a Machinist Mate. He welcomes a little help with Electrical and Electronic things which I try to provide. John would like to see some of the old equipment operating on the ham bands and the ships manned as often as we can. The annual Museum Ship Week End is great, but it is not enough. John would like to hear CW ringing through the hull more often. We would like to man the radio rooms for Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Veterans Day and other significant days. We would also like to get some of the old

equipment into operation again. Some has been restored and most of it seems to be intact and complete. Several of us have worked on some antennas and cleaning the areas, but there is a lot of work to do. We formed a club, Cavalla Historical ARC and I am trustee for the club call N5BPS. The original Navy call sign for USS Cavalla was NBPS is the reason for selecting this call. I have posted copies of the license in both radio rooms.

I would like to promote operation from the ships if any of you are interested. The MSWE activity is conducted with the BVARC club call, KK5W and I have agreed for that to continue as long as BVARC desires and John agrees. For other activities N5BPS is available for use. I do ask that you log all contacts and get a copy of your log to me in ADIF format. If you are interested in helping with operating and or restoration, please contact me.

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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 May.

Leon Pringle, Jr. - W5NA

John Guida - K5XA

Henry Schneider - W5HNS

Jan Carman - K5MA

Mike Mauldin - K5NU

Mitch Whitney - AD5W

Kenny Manchester - NZ5I

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Joey Clements - W5BAK

Please notify the Editor if I have missed anyone.