



The Bullsheet

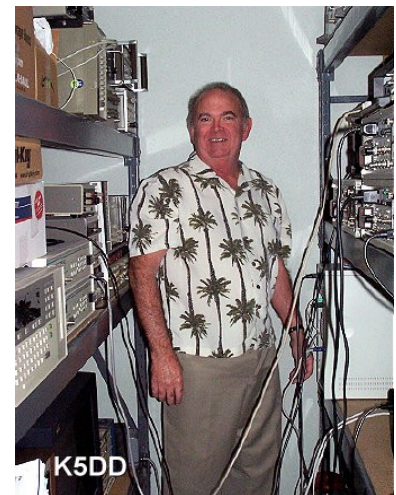
The Official News Bulletin of
The Texas DX Society
An ARRL Affiliated Club

The Texas DX Society, Houston TX K5DX@tdxs.net March 2011

Using the Flex-5000

Thursday, March 10, 7:00 PM
TDXS Meeting Night: Tracy
Gee Center, 3599 Westcenter
Dr, Houston. Pre-meeting din-
ner get-together starts around
5:30/6PM at Pappas BBQ on S.
Gessner & Westheimer. Pro-
gram by Scott K5DD on the

Flex-5000 transceiver and us-
ing N1MM logging software
with the "Logthenpop" fea-
ture enabled. Come and learn
about contest operating with
state-of-the-art gear.



Editor's Note by Jim N4AL

This month the Bull-
sheet welcomes the
return of two former
contributors from
prior issues.

Steve W9DX once
again provides his
popular "From the
Archives" column,
describing activities
of TDXS in years
past. This one in-
cludes a photo of
some dedicated OT
contesters from the
1980's. It's always
interesting to see
what TDXS was do-
ing in its earlier
years. BTW, Steve

maintains copies of
past issues of the
Bullsheel on the
TDXS web page.
That's an interesting
on-line visit for your
browser sometime.

Contest Chair Cook-
ie K5EWJ reprises
his column on cur-
rent activities of the
club's active contest-
ers. Without Cook-
ie's column most of
us would not know
about the impressive
scores attained by
TDXSers during ma-
jor contests. . Cook-
ie's XYL has had

some health prob-
lems which have in-
terfered with his
time available for
hobby activities. We
appreciate his efforts
for TDXS.

Cal WF5W de-
scribes an antenna
for the low bands
that he has used on
DXpeditions. This
article is based on
his program at a
club meeting a few
years back.

Please report your
updates to W9DX for
the web page.

Inside this issue:

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The Prez Sez by Doug WB5TKI

Here it is March already and the bands are beginning to heat up just like the weather. Lots of DX doings this month, with TDXS groups going to Nicaragua, Lesotho and Barbados. There is also a DXpedition brewing to the Amazon Basin! And then there are the contests. March has the ARRL International DX SSB and the CQ WPX SSB contests.

As related at the last club meeting BVARC has asked TDXS to hold a joint meeting and provide a speaker/speakers for the program. Several people at the meeting expressed interest in participating but to date Bob W5UQ has not had any firm volunteers. This is our chance to do an outreach to members of another club, to educate and perhaps to attract some to join TDXS as well. Please look through your past programs of Dxpeditions and contests and consider providing a portion of the April program at BVARC.

Back in November of 2009 TDXS had a presentation on RFI Remediation from Jeff Hoke of CenterPoint Energy's RFI Remediation Department. Recently I had the opportunity

to avail myself of Jeff's assistance. I have developed a very high noise level, sometimes topping S9. By turning off the power to my house I determined that it wasn't generated there. I live on the edge of my subdivision, next to a power line and I observed that, as I drove perpendicularly away from the line the noise rapidly diminished to zero. This sounded like a job for Jeff! I called him and, within two days he called back and said that indeed, there was a transformer nearby whose arborator was screaming out. Because repairing it would necessitate shutting down power for a portion of the neighborhood, he couldn't fix it, but he put in a trouble ticket for a repair crew. He called this week to say that the work had been authorized and I expect that, by the time of the next club meeting I will have blissfully quiet bands again. Thanks Jeff!

At the last meeting I brought up the topic of Field Day and asked for comments on the clubs level of commitment this year. As a follow-up, I sent out an email on the reflector asking for comments and received 10 responses. They

ranged from "not interested in Field Day this year" to "let's do something" to "let everyone choose a Field Day operation near their home to join this year and ask the sailboat teams to sign K5DX as the club operation". After reviewing all of the responses I will recommend at the next meeting that we follow the latter suggestion. I would have preferred to have our own effort but, with the lack of anyone stepping forward to lead the planning and the small positive response, it would not be a credible effort. One alternative that we could consider is running 1A CW only from Dave Topp's motor home. We can discuss this at the next meeting and come to an agreement then.

The March meeting will be a presentation by our Outgoing QSL Manager Scott K5DD on the Flex 5000 and the N1MM Logging software. It should be interesting and informative. Being the proud owner of a little Flex 1500 I am looking forward to learning about its big brother. See you at the meeting!

73 es gud dx

From the Bullsheet Archives by Steve W9DX

Ten years ago this month March 2001: The March meeting was held at Floyd's Cajun Kitchen at 1200 Durham. TDXS President Buzz Jehle N5UR reported that HamCom was shaping up to be a DX'ers dream with Martii Laine OH2BH agreeing to be the keynote speaker. The 3Y0C operation from Bouvet Island concluded with a few 5's making it into the log. It seems the 3D0CI operation from Conway Reef might not count since their permit allowed 150 watt transmitters, and they openly said they were using 3KW linears. Pratas Island BQ9P was expected to be QRV on 10-20m March 6-15. Earl Morse N5TU (now N8SS) reported that the 440 repeater was still not quite operational with the hard line completely water soaked. Madison W5MJ reported a great turnout and multi-single score for the ARRL DX CW weekend at XA5T. W5MJ, K5NZ, W5SB, W5BAK, W5IDX, W5PF, NX5M, and N5XJ were onboard to operate a multi-2 effort from XA5T for the SSB weekend. Packet Chairman N5DC reported that "loops" were the cause of recent cluster lock-ups.

Twenty years ago this month March 1991: The March meeting was held at St. John's School at Claremont & Westheimer and the program featured our ARRL West Gulf Division Director, Tom Comstock N5TC. DX Chairman Bob AK5B (now N5ET) reported on the

latest activities by TDXS'ers from XE2FU with 4152 Q's, 326 mults and over 4 Meg points for the CW weekend of ARRL DX Contest. VK9NS' application had been approved for his mid-March operation from Bangladesh S2. The ministry was sending Jim a "Telex of Invitation". Remember telex communication before the advent of e-mail? Yemen 7O1AA, and 7O8AA cards were being accepted at the DXCC desk. Ken NZ5I had a nice report on his ARRL DX CW efforts on 10m from NR5M's ranch, as well as giving a review of his new GAP Challenger DX vertical antenna. Ken KE5IV (now W5AAC) reported on the DX cluster health and upcoming expected traffic surge for ARRL DX Phone weekend with solar flux running over 300. Chuck KE5FI (now W5PR) apparently took the #1 USA spot for the 1990 CQWW WPX SSB, SO category on 75m.

Thirty years ago this month

March 1981: The dinner meeting was held at the Marriott Brookhollow and the program was presented by Kim K5TU and Al K5BZU (now K5FK) talking about computers. Apparently this computer stuff isn't going away! Ya think? Field Day plans were already underway for a 3A effort from the

Demney site at New Waverly, TX (same as last 2 years). TDXS Honor Roll listings with 318 possible on Mixed, K5AAD, K5DX (SK) and K5RC have 316. With 318 possible on Phone, Frank W5JWM takes top honors, with Sharp K5DX closing in with 315. The TDXS "outgoing QSL" service for members was proposed along with rules for using the service. One of the requirements included use of TDXS QSL cards. John K5JS and Dennis KA5CHW (now K7BV) listed a number of proposed amendments to the club's constitution. Lee W5DOZ (SK) was putting together a club member DXCC "need list" on his Radio Shack TRS-80 computer. Bill W5SG volunteered to handle the net control duties for the weekly Tuesday night 2m net. East Coast boys are trying to figure out how to beat K5RC M/S entries in DX contests. Dave N5JJ (SK) reports combustible ground cover at the base of his vertical in Hitchcock with an 8 inch circle of charred weeds!



TDXS Meeting Notes by Mike K5UO

TDXS Meeting Minutes

Date: February 10, 2011
7:00-9:00pm

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

Attendance: TDXS Members: Paul (W5PF), Cal (WF5W), Bill (K5WAF), Doug (WB5TKI), Mike (K5UO), Bob (WB5IUU), Wayne (W5KDJ), Bob (N5ET), Mike (N5MT), Bob (W5UQ) and Keith (NM5G), Buzz (NI5DX), Stan (K5STZ), Bob (WB5IUU), Steve (W9DX), Frank (W5JWM), Scott (K5DD)

- **President [Doug, WB5TKI]:**
 - **TDXS Leadership Opening:** The club is still looking for a few additional officers; (1) DX Chairman and (2) Field Day Chairman. Please consider volunteering. No responses.
 - **Field Day:** “No FD Chairman, no FD.” Possibilities besides our own FD: (1) Joint effort w/ NARS (2) Participation with the

sail boat operators. Sailboat FD ops still need additional 2 op’s. Mike (K5UO) volunteered if no official TDXS effort. TDXS would lose 5-6 members to the sailboat effort and Keith, NM5G to the NARS effort as he is NARS-President this year. Hardly leaves enough for a TDXS effort.

No FD arrangements have been made with Tomball Fire Chief, Randy Parr, as yet. Feel that it can be done on short notice, though. Cannot use the Klein Grocery parking lot, though, due to sale of property and no liability insurance. Need to maintain a minimum 5-600 feet station spacing. Perhaps park Dave Topp’s motorhome at far end of new church or on roadside.

- **Membership [Bob, WB5IUU]:**
 - **Membership Pins:** Membership pins are available for the new 2010 members. See Bob Mennell to pick them up.

- **Jackets:** Jacket similar in quality to NARS’s jackets but in a navy blue color and with TDXS logo and Member Call signs are being proposed. If interested drop a note to Bob Mennell. Given enough interest, Bob will get prices and set up an order.
- **Potential New Member:** John Firey, K5ZG has three of the four needed meetings. Missed this meeting due to a work-conflict. On track to join.
- **Repeater Chairman [Glen, WB5TUF] Not present.**
- **Program Chairman [Bob, W5UQ]**
 - Discussed possible TV station tour and dxpedition videos available.. Possible program by NASA representative.
 - Visits could coincide with months we cannot use Tracey Gee Centre for meetings.
 - **Excellent video on DXpedition to Peter I Island in 2006.**



Contest Chairman's Report by Cookie Cooke, K5EWJ

I have missed a couple of issues of the Bullsheet, so I have a lot of contest reports for this month. I have collected quite a few reports of contest activity during the past three months. I hope that I have not missed many reports.

Wayne Rogers, W5KDJ reports that he received a First Place Award for Single Operator, Mixed Mode, High Power in Zone 53 for last summer's **IARU Contest** during his DXPedition to Madagascar. Glen Anderson, WB5TUF, received the First Place Award for South Texas in the Jan. 2010 RTTY Roundup Contest with 38,766 score, 502 QSO's and 78 multipliers.

We had only one club entry in the **ARRL 160 Contest**, Dec. 3-5, with Cal White, WF5W, scoring 14,544 with 142 QSOs in the SO HP CW category.

The **10 Meter Contest**, Dec. 11-12 had four entries reported. Chuck Deitz scored 414,480 with 1884 QSOs in 110 multipliers in SO SSB HP category for a very competitive score from his fine station. Allen Brier, N5AX operated from Alaska for the 10 Meter Contest using KL5DX call for 40,592 from 212 QSOs in 59 multipliers in the All Mode, HP category. Allen's operation was restricted to the last day at the club station by a demo of CW for the Boy Scouts on Saturday. Steve Flannigan, W5HPQ, operated from his Santa Fe, NM QTH in SO All Mode LP for 36 SSB and 36 CW QSO's and 3960 score. Mike Davidson, N5MT, entered the SO, All Mode, LP-Assisted category but did not report his score. Allen Brier entered the Radio Amateur Canada Winter Contest using KL5DX from the KL7AA station and made 197 CW contacts in 15 Provinces for 15,570 score in the SO CW HP category.

Glen Anderson, WB5TUF, worked the **2011 ARRL RTTY Roundup** as SO LP this Jan. 8-9 and scored 421 QSO's in 77 multipliers for 32,417 score. Not quite as good as his 2010 MO LP effort, but maybe good enough? Glen also worked the BARTG RTTY Sprint Jan. 22-23 with 132 QSOs, 33 multipliers for 21,780 score. Ron Marosko, K5LLL entered the ARRL VHF Contest on Jan 22-24 from grid EM10 and made 146 QSOs in 75 grids for 23,475 score.

Allen Brier got his feet wet with a RTTY contest by entering the **Mexico RTTY Contest**, Feb. 5-6 using his KL5DX call and the KL7AA station to make 112 QSO's with 12 multipliers for 4,116 score. Glen, WB5TUF also entered the Mexico RTTY with 150 QSO's, 29 multipliers for 10,005 score.

Allen must have liked RTTY because he followed with the **CQ WW RTTY WPX Contest** Feb. 12-13 still using KL5DX and the KL7AA station but this time M/S HP along with AL2R, AL4S, KL0AR, KL3FE, KL5FK, KL7MM, KL7SB, N6SPP and N5XZ. They made 1171 QSO's with 463 prefixes for 1,351,497 score. Glen also entered the CQ WW RTTY WPX in the SO AB LP category and made 330 QSOs for 209 prefixes and 176, 605 score. Mike Bragassa, K5UO, also entered the CQ WW RTTY in SO AB HP for 222 QSO's, 149 prefixes and 90,890 score. Scott Patout, K5DD, entered the CQ WW RTTY in SO AB LP for 341 QSOs, 206 prefixes for 147,290 score.

The **ARRL DX CW Contest** was held Feb. 19-20. Cal White, WF5W, entered as SO AB QRP and made 165 QSOs in 57 countries for 38,151 score. Allen Brier, KL5DX entered from Anchorage and made 1050 SO AB HP QSOs in 89 countries for 278,481 score. Chuck Deitz entered at SO SB (160) HP and made 26 QSOs in 24 countries for 1,872 score while testing

antennas for the coming CQ WW 160 SSB Contest.

Club participation in contests is continuing at a fairly good pace. It seems that RTTY is drawing an increasing number into its fold. CW is also keeping a fair amount of interest as well. I hope that many are able to enjoy the upcoming contests.

Upcoming Contests

| | |
|------------|--|
| Mar. 5-6 | ARRL International Phone DX Contest |
| Mar. 12 | Idaho QSO Party |
| Mar. 13 | Wisconsin QSO Party |
| Mar. 13 | North American RTTY Sprint |
| Mar. 19-20 | BARTG HF RTTY Contest |
| Mar. 19-20 | Russian DX Contest |
| Mar. 19 | Oklahoma, North Dakota, Virginia QSO Parties |
| Mar. 26-27 | CQ WPX SSB Contest |

A DXpedition Antenna for 160m/80m by Cal WF5W

This article describes an easy to build and easy to transport inverted L antenna for 160 meters. A trap made of coaxial cable allows the antenna to operate as a vertical on 80 meters. Some users have also used it successfully on 40 meters with a tuner.

The design was developed by TDXSers Cal WF5W and Mike K5UO. It is based on the design of the "Battle Creek Special", an aluminum dual band vertical widely-used by major dxpeditions. This design has the advantage that it is made of wire, so it can be coiled and easily transported in a suitcase.

The trap separates the horizontal portion of the inverted L from the vertical portion. The trap also provides a convenient place to support the antenna from a tree. The antenna was used by the TDXS dxpeditions to San Andres in 2008 (5J0E) and 2009 (HKOCW).



This antenna, like any unbalanced antenna, requires a good ground system. The implementations on San Andres used ground systems made of chicken wire,

hence the antenna was dubbed the "Chicken Wire Special". A roll of chicken wire was purchased locally for a modest sum. Then the roll was spread out on the ground. A pair of wire clippers were used to divide it into two halves. Then each semi-roll of chicken wire was cut into successive halves until the semi-roll consisted of one leg about two feet wide and up to 100 feet long. (A leg was lengthened by successive dividing until it fit the space available.) Doing this with two semi-rolls allowed one to be placed on top of another, forming a large "X". After some tweaking of the wire element lengths, the antenna provided good SWRs on both 160 and 80 meters.

The chicken wire provided adequate ground for the length of our weeklong dxpeditions. But the chicken wire purchased in 2008 had rusted out by 2009 and had to be replaced.

Parts List

1. 4 inch PVC 5 inches long
2. 10 foot RG8X
3. (2) 4" PVC end caps (4" knock out test caps)
4. Black tape
5. Solder
6. Two pieces # 12 solid copper covered wire 18" each
7. One Strain relief Insulator (make one out of 3/4 in PVC coupler)
8. 45.5 foot # 14 stranded copper wire (with five foot pigtail) total length of 50.5 feet for vertical section
9. 58 foot # 14 stranded copper wire (with two foot pigtail) total length of 60 feet for horizontal section
10. One roll 36 X 25 foot chicken wire-conductor to antenna.
11. 400 foot roll of waxed twine.

Two - wire clips to bind chicken wire to braid and one to bind to center PVC, Cap covers, black tape solder, copper wire all available at your friendly big

box hardware store.

Chicken wire available at Tractor Supply. Waxed twine available at Academy.

Building the Coaxial Trap

1. Drill 1/4 "hole in PVC approx 1 Inch in from edge on one side.
2. Put the RG8X into the hole about 2 1/2 "
3. Tightly wind about 7 3/4 turns of RG8X on the PVC coil form
4. Note where 7 3/4 turns comes to on the PVC and then drill another hole there
5. Tighten the RG8X and pull it thru the new hole. Tape over the coax so that it doesn't slip.
6. Tie the braid end of the coax and the center conductor from the other end together, don't solder yet.
7. Check with a dip meter to see if it's about 3.5 MHz. If lower than 3.5 cut 2 inches at a time from the coax until it comes up to 3.5. Then re-drill your hole to accommodate the new position.
8. Solder the inside coax connection of braid to center conductor.
9. Drill holes 3/16" holes in PVC about 3/4 in down from each end to accommodate the # 12 wire.
10. Cut two pieces of # 12 solid copper wires at 18-20 inches. Skin the center of the wire about 1 " At the 8 1/2 to 9 1/2 area. Then slide the wire into the holes.
11. Solder the ends of the coax to those skinned areas.
12. Put PVC end caps on the trap.
13. Bend the # 12 wire together and twist several times to make a hook to cradle the trap, bottom end.

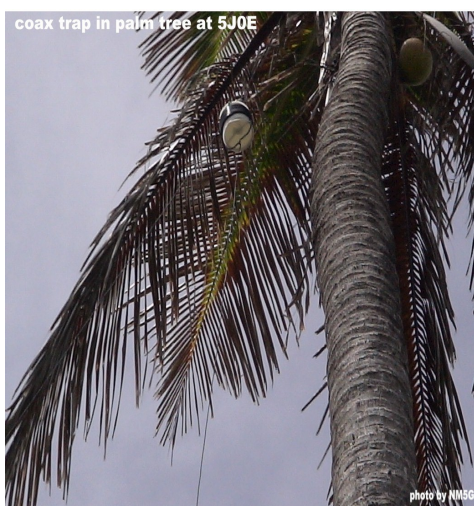
Solder the antenna wires to the trap, put in the end caps flush, then solder the 58 foot piece of #14 to the lower end of the trap. Solder the 50 foot piece to the upper end of the trap. Put a strain relief insulator in the upper end of the trap using the # 12 wire to hold it. Wrap the wire around the insulator and then twist the wires together making a solder connection for the 50 foot piece of # 14 wires.

A DXpedition Antenna (cont.)

Now you can paint the trap green/black or just wrap it with black tape, all in the interest of making it stealthy.

Assembling the Antenna

Solder the antenna wires to the trap, Put in the end caps flush, then Solder the 58 foot piece of # 14 to the lower end of the trap. Solder the 50 foot piece to the upper end of the trap. Put a strain relief



insulator in the upper end of the trap using the # 12 wire to hold it. Wrap the wire around the insulator and then twist the wires together making a solder connection for the 50 foot piece of # 14 wires. Now you can paint the trap green/black or just wrap it with black tape, all in the interest of making it stealthy..

1. Pull the acut it in two pieces so you have 4 pieces of at least 18" by 25 Feet. (If you're only up 40 feet, the wire will be Sloping), Pull the bottom of the antenna out to a slope where it is not sagging. Place the X of the chicken wire directly under this wire. Connect the coax center conductor to the vertical wire and the braid to the chicken wire. (Note chicken wire should be twisted at its corners to insure good connection with each other. Just use pliers to grab the sheets and twist...
2. Your coax to the radio should have an RF choke near the chicken wire. Roll 6 turns of the coax into a 6" cir-

cle and tape it together.

3. Pull the antenna up in a tree to at least the 40 foot level. NOTE the antenna will work at a full height of the vertical leg but we used the 40 foot level as it is more likely to be the height we will be able to reach on dxpeditions...
4. Put the other end of the 160 "L" section of the antenna into an adjacent tree at about the same height as the trap. (The antenna exhibits some directionality toward the opposite direction of the L.)
5. ntenna in the air at least 40 feet. IF you can go to 60 do it....then it will be truly vertical on the 80 meter section. (and your launch angle will be lower - nearer to 20 degrees)
Lay out your chicken wire - first

chicken wire will be available there. You can buy it locally and save the transportation costs and baggage space. When you're done, you can donate it locally.

IF you choose to use copper wire instead of chicken wire for radials, you will need at least 28 radials; 14 @ 66 feet and 14 @ 132 feet. They can be bent around trees and other obstructions, but they need to be out there to be effective. (Now you know why chicken wire is good for dxpeditions.) Software analysis suggests that the chicken wire is more effective and give a slightly lower of radiation pattern.

Get on the air and enjoy 80 and 160 with no tuner, full power and all within a small city lot, or on a desert island with palm trees. It's stealthy enough that neighbors will not see what you have done, guaranteed...

Using the Chicken Wire Special

When tuning the antenna with your radio or a meter, note the frequency where it is resonant. If needed, you can trim the "L" a few feet or lengthen it using the pigtail in order to get your desired resonant frequencies on 80 and 160.

You can put the chicken wire ground down in the grass before spring and pin it down. When it comes time to mow in the spring, the grass will have grown through the wire leaving it unseen and in place. You may have to replace it after 3 or 4 years but its cheap and easy to work with. In most countries where we hold dxpeditions, the residents have chickens. So



Texas DX Society Boardmembers

| | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| President | Doug Seyler, WB5TKI | djseyler at comcast.net |
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| DXpedition Chairman | open | |
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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 March

Al Bayer - WB5CFI

David Bean - W5ZQR

Bob Walworth - N5ET

Ed Seeger - K5EBS

Bill Frink - K5WAF

John Godwin - K5IUA

Buzz Jehle - N5UR

Ken Grabenstein - KZ5KG

Ed Sikorski - AA8PA

John Bonica - K5EC

Dave McCarty - K5GN

Steve Niles N5EN

Please notify the Editor if I have missed any-one.