



THE BULLSHEET

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

July
2006

The Texas DX Society, P.O. Box 540291, Houston, TX 77254-0291

The ARRL Honors TDXS Member Dave Topp, W5BXX



"David Topp, W5BXX was honored at the Annual Donor Recognition Reception at Hamvention in Dayton. Topp is the newest member of the Hiram Percy Maxim Society which honors donors whose lifetime giving has reached \$10,000 or more to any ARRL programs, including, but not limited to the ARRL Diamond Club, The ARRL Spectrum Defense Fund, the Education & Technology Fund and the W1AW Endowment Fund. " (from the August 2006 issue of QST by permission of the ARRL, ed.)

Congratulations Dave and Thank You!

July Program announcement - Page 2

The Great Armadillo Reunion of 2006, by Tom Taormina, K5RC - Page 3

The Prez Sez by Mike, N5MT - Page 5

Texas DX Society Officers

President	Mike Davidson, N5MT	n5mt@aol.com	
VP Membership	Steve Smothers, W9DX	cougar70@earthlink.net	
VP Programs	Arthur Alvarez, N5KTN	kingarthur@msn.com	
Secretary/Treasurer	Bill Frink, K5WAF	k5waf@arrl.net	
Contest Chairman	Don Daze, N5DD	n5dd@arrl.net	
Field Day Chairman			
Repeater Chairman	Glenn Anderson, WB5TUF	wb5tuf@earthlink.net	832-595-2855
DXpedition Chairman	Cal White, WF5W	cwhite314@sbcglobal.net	
Outgoing QSL Manager	Buzz Jehle, N5UR		
Webmaster	Steve Smothers, W9DX	cougar70@earthlink.net	
Bullsheet Editor	Paul Frantz, W5PF	w5pf@houston.rr.com	281-351-8930

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)
On Packet: Connect to **K5DX** direct or via **TDXS71** on 145.71MHz.
TDXS Reflector: To subscribe to the TDXS reflector, go to
<http://moonbounce.n5iq.org/mailman/listinfo/tdxx-list>

Malta 2006, a TDXS DXpedition

Cal, WF5W, Paul W5PF and the Team Malta members will present a discussion of the expedition to Malta. Included will be details of how the trip was organized as well as a few stories about the Malta experience from the team members. The Malta video, edited by Bill Denton, W5SB, from video taken by Keith Dutson, NM5G, will then be shown. Team members include Cal WF5W, Bill K5WAF, Madison W5MJ, Steve W9DX, Don N5DD, Keith NM5G, Mike K5UO and Paul W5PF.

The meeting will be 7:00 PM Thursday July 13th at the Tracey Gee Center, 3599 Westcenter Drive, Houston. The pre-meeting dinner will be at either Pappas BBQ (formerly Luther's) or La Madelaine. Check either the 2 meter (147.36) or 70cm (442.00) repeater to see where everyone is heading.

TDXS wishes "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" to these members born in July:

Tom Lay - AA5Y	Pat Sonnier - W5WMU	Dennis Alexander - W5KU
Tom Wheatley - K5CNN	Linda Walworth - KE5TF	Mike Davidson - N5MT
Bill Price - KE5IW	Tom Jakubec - N5ZR	Walter Schroeder - K5WS
Richard Neal - WB5LVL	Ron Marosko, Jr. - NN5DX	Wayne Rogers - W5KDJ

The Great Armadillo Reunion of 2006



Field Day is not intended as a contest or social gathering. It is an operating event for hams to hone their operating skills by conducting a national emergency preparedness exercise.

Over the last 48 years, for me, Field Day has also been a forum for renewing old friendships, making new ones, stimulating curious bystanders to become new hams and for lighting fires in those who have lapsed into inactivity. I had my first introduction to ham radio at a Field Day operation in 1958. The sound of the drifting signal of a Johnson Ranger in the 75A-3 receiver in a wet canvas tent on Jayne's Hill, Long Island, somehow got me hooked on ham radio.

Witnessing K2JOK running stations at 60 an hour on 20 CW started me in a relentless 47-year addiction to contesting. In the late 60's, that obsession got me involved with a group of like-minded rowdies in Texas and, for several years. I was President of the Texas DX Society (TDXS). With my merry band of fanatics, we continually searched for new horizons in contesting and pushed just about every operating envelope to some extreme. We won a number of SS Club Gavels, set Field Day records and had an extensive string of individual and multi-operator wins in a variety of contests in the 70's and 80's. We had an insatiable appetite to create a pileup or run stations at 90 per hour.



In one of our more creative moments, someone realized that there were 254 counties in Texas, and that most of the counties are conveniently bisected by paved roads. A theory evolved that, by placing a rig in one's vehicle and driving a prescribed route, you could be in a new county about every 35 minutes. If you entered a contest, such as the MARAC County Hunter's Contest, you would experience a new pileup at each new county line! In 1982 we gave it a test drive and N5JJ (SK) and NA5R (W5FU) commissioned an operating event that has become known as the Armadillo Run. In 1983, The Texas DX Society decided to make running armadillos a bit more challenging by activating all 254 Texas counties in one weekend. We did that. It was so much fun, over the next two years we activated every other county in the W5 call area. 1986 was the Texas Sesquicentennial, presenting us an obvious opportunity to pull off an event that was in keeping with the grandeur of the Texas ego. We decided to use our logistical and organizational skills to attempt activating every county in the USA. We also convinced the Governor that we needed our own county, so, for the duration of the Texas Sesquicentennial in 1986, Armadillo County was formed, activated and is now forever deleted. Check out April, 1986, QST, for the complete story of The Great Armadillo Run (we were the first club group to ever garner the cover of QST).

Over the last two decades, most of the original TDXS Rowdies have gone on to raise families and attend to the mundane activities of life outside of contesting. Many of us have moved to the far corners of the country, but are still bonded by the State Mascot of Texas, the Armadillo and by the indelible friendships we made in its name.

I decided that the 20th anniversary of the Great Armadillo Run would be the impetus we needed to get the old Rowdies together for a reunion. What more fitting weekend to do it than Field Day, 2006? I made some phone calls and put a web site together with enough Armadillo memorabilia to wake up the sleeping beast. The Great Armadillo Reunion was on and, of course, we had to make the weekend more than just a gathering of old friends. We were compelled to carry on the tradition of “pushing the envelope.” First, we applied for Special Events Call Sign K7A for the Armadillo Field Day weekend. Having grown past the need to erect eight or ten towers for Field Day (as we did in the height of the TDXS Field Day, K5DX, dynasty), we opted for a “gentleman’s” event using the existing towers and antennas of the K5RC contest station in Virginia City, Nevada. Next we discovered an opportunity to create a wrinkle in the Field Day rule book. Enter Rudi, K7RAW, who owns BioDiesel Solutions and is quickly becoming a national champion of off-the-grid energy independence and renewable energy. His company produces equipment to make diesel fuel from natural sources such as used cooking oil, soy beans and algae. He brought a 10KW generator to our site and we ran the entire 3E Field Day on biodiesel fuel, making us eligible for the natural power bonus. We ran the entire 24 hours on less than 17 gallons of biodiesel at a cost of about \$12.00. In other words, our 3,000+ FD QSO’s cost about half-a-cent per QSO!

In the inaugural Armadillo Run of 1983, the only one to work every one of the 254 Texas counties in one weekend was Jim White, K4OJ. Jim is now a silent key, so we took this opportunity to honor his amazing accomplishment. His mother, former ARRL Staffer, Ellen White, W1YL, made the cross-country trip and we did a memorial to one of our honorary Rowdies. We also dedicated the Sunday BBQ to the memory of one of our more-well known Rowdies, K5LZO. Chuck is also a silent key, but was remembered in photos and yarns of his contributions to contesting.

In all, over 45 members and friends attended the Great Armadillo Reunion and we made a respectable showing in Field Day, 2006. Old friendships were renewed and new ones made. At least half-a-dozen of those who have been inactive for 10 to 20 years were motivated to fix broken antennas and shop for new radios. Several had their first exposure to computer logging and have vowed to update their skills. Rather than just reminiscing and bragging, we have also committed to keep up our pioneering history by challenging other Field Day groups to follow our lead to operate using natural energy sources and to push the envelope of ingenuity in ham radio, even though our hair is gray and we no longer use Johnson Rangers and 75A-3’s.



By Tom Taormina, K5RC

Tom is a Life Member of ARRL, former editor of the National Contest Journal and holder of DXCC Honor Roll #1. He has written 10 books on business processes and leadership.

The Prez Sez:

Well, the year is now half over and our July meeting is coming up in a few days. I can only give you a few comments about our big event last month, Field Day. More precisely, the TDXS/NARS Field Day held on the west side of Houston. We started setup on the traditional Friday, with a lot more people than we had at Freeport last year. But most of them were NARS members with the TDXS members in the minority. Things went well for setup, the 400 pound tent went up without too much trouble but it takes at least ten people to lift it off the ground to put the legs on it, hi. Then you do the same to the other side, just more fun, but it was a nice place to setup the stations under. The only real problem we had was station/band interaction since the towers were withing about 300 feet of each other. The band filters at the HF stations were designed to do other things so more work for next year could help

The SSB station was hosted by our Keith who was also incharge of the FD for NARS. Keith had a nice radio setup and I got to operate it during the second time slot. There were twelve two hour time slots to cover the SSB station. The CW station had a similiar setup but not sure if possibly one slot was not taken. I remember that the total Q's for SSB were about 1175 but after dups were removed, the count came down to about 1100. Likewise with the CW station, the count at the end of the FD was about 888 but it came down with dups.

I also got to operate the six meter VHF station a few times. We finally had a few openings just about sundown and I had a Cuban station call me for a contact. At the time I did not think to call him back with my own call so I could log it for an all time new one on six meters for me. But I did not think about it until it was too late. We had a fine cook for the event, his name was Tom and sorry I do not remember his callsign. (KD5EIJ, ed.) Tom cooked all night Friday and Saturday until we had a fine BBQ meal with all the extras for dinner. All the stations kept operating while we ate and it was excellent BBQ.

The GOTA station was in a 5th wheel RV and they used the K5DX callsign for this station. The control operator was Paul Owen, N5NXS, an extra class during the entire weekend so we had no problems. The GOTA had about 175 contacts during the event. I know several of the kids were having a good elmer session when I visited them during the last ten minutes of FD, just before we turned everything off.

Dave W5BXX had his motor home setup on the west side of the FD site. The tower mounted on his RV was used by the SSB station setup under the tent but we did not put an operating position in the RV like in previous years. The RV was used for logistical purposes. Thanks Dave. Congrats to Dave for his award that he received at the Dayton convention!

The meeting this month will go over a lot more details about Field Day by Paul W5PF who was the TDXS FD coordinator person. So many thanks to Paul for all the work he did at FD. Other than Dave, and myself, TDXS members attending who are not also NARS members were Steve, W9DX, Don, N5DD and Amy, KC5DJL. I wish we would have had a better turnout with the people that did not go to the Nevada TDXS FD get together. I expect someone will write about the Nevada FD in this issue and my thanks to Tom K5RC for hosting that event.

Thanks to Cal and the Malta group for putting together a great DVD of the Malta trip. This video is to be shown at this coming meeting.

Steve W9DX will be in charge of the meeting this month. Good luck.