



The Bullsheet

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

The Texas DX Society, Houston TX K5DX@tdxs.net July 2017

This month is a dinner meeting which will be held at:

Silver Palace Chinese Buffet
405-H Bellaire Blvd.
Houston, TX 77025
Wednesday, July 12 at
6:30 pm.



Editor's Note by Allen N5XZ

FIELD DAY!

Well, Field Day 2017 is over and was a great success! We made a slightly higher score than last year, with lesser conditions. I attribute this to better antennas, almost all K3 radios and the fact that we hall all operating positions filled most of the time. I want to thank all the great operators for working hour after hour to fill the logs and the support personnel for setup/tear down, great food, and other forms of support. Special thanks goes out to W5VOM for manlifts again this year, KD5FBA, N5MT and N5VCX for "management", KD7THJ for great hamburgers, WB5TUF for computers and networking and of course the Pecan Grove Volunteer Fire Department for the accommodations. We could not have done it without each and every one of them. We had a first time Four club operation with TDXS, BVARC, KARS and Echo. Please read N5MT's article later in this newsletter for more details. If you didn't show up, you missed a great time!

As I write this, the IARU

Radiosport contest is also over. Conditions were marginal and the low bands were noisy, but great scores were made nonetheless. A number of TDXS operators participated, including K5GN, K5TU, K0NM, KJ5Y/MM0LID and others at Pat's new remote, using his new club call W5FMH, myself and K5WA operating as DP6M in DL land. One a personal note, I increased my last year's score by a third (1.2M vs. 900K).

Next I would like to discuss the subject of club participation in contests and ARRL club competition. There was some discussion about it last year, but there doesn't seem to have been any follow-through. I have not personally read all the rules, but it is my understanding that TDXS must submit each member's 6-digit grid square location to ARRL and a center location. Then in order to really compete, we need to submit at least ten logs from a contest to be considered a "medium" size club, and to get past the 35 mile radius of a "small" club. The issue is that many TDXS members are farther than 35 miles from anywhere in Houston. I have asked Jim

N5DTT to follow up with this and get the member locations submitted to ARRL. Next: WE MUST GET MORE TDXS OPERATOR PARTICIPATION IN CONTESTS AND THEN SUBMIT THOSE LOGS! Even if you have a small number, submit that log anyway! Hey, I'm as guilty as the next guy for not always doing so, but once we get "registered" as a medium size club, I will certainly do so. WILL YOU??

The last thing I think we need is to get someone to volunteer as a contest cheerleader, to promote upcoming contests, form club teams and to report results. This is something we need to get TDXS out there again! I would happily do it but I simply do not have the time. Maybe one of you retired folks out there? Hmmm??? Or how about we start a TDXS Facebook page and/or Twitter account? The DFW Contest Club does a GREAT JOB getting membership inspired to contest and promote internal team competition. Why isn't TDXS doing this also?

Allen N5XZ

Inside this issue:

The Prez Sez	2
TDXS Meeting Minutes by Doug Seyler WB5TKI	4
DX Chairman's Report by Orville Burg K5VWW	5
Contest Chairman's Report by Jim Burrough N5DTT	6
Where in the World is... by Ron Litt K5HM	7
TDXS Member Biography: Ron Litt K5HM	8
Field Day 2017 by Mike Davidson N5MT	11
Care and Feeding of your Field Day Generator by Kim K5TU	15
TDXS Board Members	16
TDXS Birthdays	16

The Prez Sez by Robie, AJ4F

The Prez Sez

July 2017

Well, Field Day has come and gone. Information I have received indicates that the exercise went very well with a total score that was better than last year. We will have information from Mike N5MT and AL N5XZ.

Museum Ships Weekend was June 3rd & 4th and Leslie AD5WB invited me to participate with a group operating from the Tall Ship Elissa on Galveston. We had 7 operators manning 3 stations operating in a semi-field day situation. The group consisted of Rick, KE5BZ; Richard, KF5FIB; Michael, K5WRN; Jeremy, KOJCC; Robie, AJ4F; Leslie, AD5WD and Tommy, N5DUX. One station was set up on the pier alongside the Elissa with antennas set up on the adjacent building. I thoroughly enjoyed putting the Elissa on the air using CW with the call N5E. It was a through back to a long-ago era! During the weekend, an interesting event occurred as state of the art ships from several eras/functions all docked adjacent to the Elissa. The **USS Gabrielle Giffords (LCS-10)**, an *Independence*-class littoral combat ship, docked and began prepping for her commissioning, and a bit later the Car-

nival Breeze docked and began preparing for the next cruise. This presented a unique opportunity to easily compare these impressive vessels!

I have recently been writing about my experience with digital modes on 6 meters especially JT65 using the WSJT-X program developed by Joe Taylor – K1JT. While the JT65 mode is very sensitive it is also very slow and typically very slow taking about 4-5 minutes per QSO. Joe just announced that Steve (K9AN) and he have developed a potential new mode for WSJT-X. We're calling the mode "FT8" (Frank-Taylor design, 8-FSK modulation). FT8 is designed for situations like multi-hop Sporadic E where signals may be weak and fading, openings may be short, and you want fast completion of reliable, confirmable QSOs.

Important characteristics of FT8:

- T/R sequence length: 15 s
- Message length: 75 bits + 12-bit CRC
- FEC code: LDPC(174,87)
- Modulation: 8-FSK, keying rate = tone spacing = 5.86 Hz
- Waveform: Continuous phase, constant envelope
- Occupied bandwidth: 47 Hz
- Synchronization: three 7x7 Costas arrays (start, middle, end of Tx)
- Transmission duration: $79 * 2048 / 12000 = 13.48$ s
- Decoding threshold: -20 dB (perhaps -24 dB with AP decoding,

TBD)

- Operational behavior: similar to HF usage of JT9, JT65
- Multi-decoder: finds and decodes all FT8 signals in passband
- Auto-sequencing after manual start of QSO

WSJT-X version 1.7.1 Beta has FT8 capability and has been released to the development group for on the air testing. A version for the rest of us will be released shortly.

The Texas DX Society has been a longtime sponsor of the first-place plaque for the Texas QSO Party Mobile Multi-Op category. Richard King (K5NA) has approached Keith Dutson (NM5G TQP Coordinator) and me requesting that Richard be allowed to take over sponsorship of this plaque from the TDXS. After discussion by the Board of Directors we agreed to support Richard's request. We felt that it is important for the TDXS to continue to support the TQP and sponsoring a first-place plaque is a good way to do this.

(continued)

The Prez Sez by Robie, AJ4F

The TDXS will now sponsor the TQP First-Place Texas Single OP CW plaque while Richard & Susan will sponsor the Texas Mobile Multi-Op Plaque. I received the following feedback from Richard, K5NA and Susan, K5DU. Please convey Susan's and my thanks to the TDXS membership for their graciousness and generosity for allowing Susan and me to sponsor the Texas Mobile Multi-op plaque.

As you know we had a long history of operating and winning that category in past years. Our operating team became known as the "Driving Burrito Brothers" and we developed a great camaraderie with each other.

Through our years of activity, the team consisted of K5DU (Susan), K5NA (Richard), K5OT (Larry), KI5DR (Scott), and W5ZL (Gary – silent key). It was after W5ZL died in 2011 that we decided to retire the Driving Burrito Brothers.

Our group worked hard to outfit 4 stations and antennas (plus spares) in Susan's (K5DU) 2004 Tahoe SUV. We drove thousands of miles, logged thousands of QSOs, and visited about 150 different Texas Counties. And we managed to stay friends all the while.

One moment that I personally remember was near the small west

Texas city of Plains Texas, when state trooper officer Robles pulled us over for doing 70 mph in a 30 mph zone. It was a long stretch of West Texas highway with no cars or buildings within miles of us. When he looked in the driver's window and was slightly puzzled; he said, "How many radios do you have in there"? After an explanation of the weekend's Texas radio celebration and our urgency to involve as many counties as possible, he shook his head and let us off with a warning.

The next TDXS board meeting is scheduled for July 22. The time and location will be announced at the next regular meeting on July 13. We need input on potentially changing the TDXS meeting day/schedule to increase attendance at our meetings by eliminating conflicts with other club meetings & various activities. Please take a few minutes to get your thoughts together regarding this topic and communicate to me or any other Board Member. We need your input on this issue before any decision can be made.

The Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2017 (HR-555) Update – As of 6/29/2017 this bill remains in the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation. I'll provide an update when one is available. If you hear of any activity please pass it along on the TDXS reflector.

Robie – AJ4F



TDXS Meeting Minutes by Doug Seyler WB5TKI

TDXS June 2017 Meeting Minutes

Field Day!

Date: June 23-25, 2017

Location: Pecan Grove Volunteer Fire Department, Richmond, TX

Our June meeting was, as usual, Field Day. As in the past few years, we joined forces with the Brazos Valley Amateur Radio Club (BVARC), in running this emergency preparedness exercise. Also joining us were the Houston ECHO Society and the Katy Amateur Radio Society (KARS).

TDXS members who participated in setup, operation and take-down were:

FRIDAY:

WB5TKI, N5MT, WG5H, K5GN, K9GEM, K0NM.

SAT:

N5MT, K5GN, WB5TUF, WB5TKI, K9GEM, WG5H, K5VWW, K4TY, KB4RM , K5HM, K5DD, KJ5Y, N5XZ, N5DTT, K0NM .

SUN:

K5GN, K0NM, WG5H, N5MT, K5HM, N5XZ, N5DTT, WB5TUF, WB5TKI, K9GEM, K5DD

Good food, great camaraderie and as much operating as you could want. If you missed Field Day, you missed a real blast!

73,

Submitted July 5, 2017

Doug Seyler WB5TKI

TDXS Secretary



DX Report by Orville Burg K5VWW

DX Report by Orville Burg, K5VWW

Are we at the bottom of the sunspot cycle yet?

The band activity has been atrocious other than during contests, and very little has been heard other than on 6 Meters. As Robie pointed out, the activity on 6M JT65 has been very good and DX has been active almost daily.

Propagation continues to stations in the Caribbean, Central America, EU and JA. I just activated the JT65 mode at my station 2 weeks ago and found chasing grid squares on 6M to be lots of fun learning the ropes of the new mode. Thus far, I have managed to work 98 US grid squares in the past 2 weeks plus beaucoup DX.

Glenn, WB5TUF, has been very active on 6M JT65 having worked EA1YV, EA6SX, EA8TL, G8BCG, JA9IPF, JE1BMJ, and JH0INP in the past week.

There appears to be several other club users of the JT65 mode and I have had the pleasure of often working K5TU, N5WW, K5NA, AC5K, and K7BV.

K5RK always provides us lessons on how to work DX on 6M as we sit here and listen to him work BA4SI, JA's by the handful, plus lots of eastern EU stations.

This past week was a milestone as K7JA, Chip, worked KV4FZ, Herb, for the first 6M California to Virgin Islands 6M QSO.

4V1G provided a lot of 6M QSOs from Haiti. They were active on CW, SSB, and JT65.

Conditions certainly appeared to improve for the IARU contest as lots of DX was active as evidenced by the numbers of zones by Nizar, KØNM. He worked 73 zones spread among 5 bands.

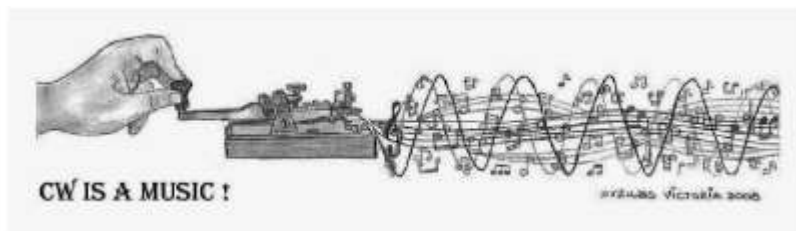
Kim, K5TU, was active from the "ranch" and in 12 hours worked 71 zones including YJØ and HL on 40M.

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (US FWS) announced the selection of The Dateline DX Association for a DXpedition to the Baker Island National Wildlife Refuge. The last time KH1 was active was back in 2002, and it now ranks #4 on the Club Log most needed list. No date has been set for the operation as of this time.

The announcement has been made that TDXS member Bob Evans, K5WA, has been selected to operate the WRTG competition 2018 with N5AW. Congratulations Bob!

Good DX,

Orville, K5VWW



Contest Chairman Report—by Jim Burrough N5DTT

Hello again. I said in last month's offering that the Ten-Ten International Spring CW Contest was a bust. I had set up the temporary 20-foot tower up in the garden with the three-element 10-meter beam in place. Logging software and interfaces were all set for action. Then, only six contacts the whole week-end! On June 16, I got an envelope in the mail from Ten-Ten International with two certificates; one for first place in the 5th call area and another for 7th place in the world. It demonstrates two things: it never hurts to try hard when others don't and Ten Meter propagation had to be really bad for me to win anything. I had fun. Isn't that why we contest?

Field Day

TDXS joined up with BVARC, ECHO and KARS for the Field Day week-end. While the weather was less than ideal Saturday morning for the final set-up, the groups were ready to go when the activities started at 1:00 PM. I saw a lot of great mentoring going on as the experienced contesters took time to help operators with less experience to get the most out of the radios and themselves. The final results are still being compiled but there is no doubt the week-end was a great success.

Some members participated in the ARRL June VHF Contest. As usual, Chuck, W5PR, did an outstanding job. Robie, Ron and I also reported scores. The 3830 reports are below.

ARRL VHF - June 8, 2017

Single Op HP

Call	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
W5PR	575	186		106,950	TDXS
K5LLL	176	112		28,000	TDXS

Single Op LP

Call	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
AJ4F	74	52		3,848	TDXS
N5DTT	37	31	9	1,147	TDXS
N5DTT	60	53	7	4,770	TDXS

Upcoming Contests

The IARU HF Championship Contest is coming up on Saturday, July 8, the second full weekend of July, beginning 1200 UTC Saturday and ending 1200 UTC Sunday. Both Single and Multi-operator stations may operate the entire 24-hour period. Except during WRTC years, this seems to be a rather neglected contest. This might be because it comes two weeks after Field Day. We all put a lot of effort into our Field Day and putting more work out a couple of weeks later for a contest might not be very appealing.

However, I have found this contest has a lot to offer, especially for the operator new to contesting. For one thing, it is a 24-hour contest so has the advantage of not taking up the whole week-end. Another advantage is the fact that many IARU countries field Headquarters teams that may be a great way for a new contesteer to collect another new country while sharpening contesting skills.

The last week-end in July (July 29) is the RSGB Islands on the Air Contest. According to the RSGB, the IOTA Contest is the most popular contest on their calendar and attracts entries from around the world. Like IARU, it's a great opportunity to pick-up a new country or, at least, a new island. Also, if you have a week-end place on an island on the coast, you might consider a multi-op effort for the contest. It sounds like it might be a great way to relive the best parts of Field Day with a closer group of like-minded friends.

If you participate in a contest, please be sure to report your score on the 3830scores website.

Hope everyone had a great time at Field Day!

Thanks and 73, Jim, N5DTT

PRELIMINARY IARU RADIOSPORT RESULTS BY N5XZ:

STATION	QSOs	ITU ZN	HQ STN	SCORE	STATION	QSOs	ITU ZN	HQ STN	SCORE
K5GN	2,419	122	115	1,880,595	K5TU	748	71	77	320,272
N5XZ	1,741	107	113	1,220,340	WG5H	290	32	28	50,160
W5FMH	1,621	83	99	898,534	N5DTT	107	20	10	8,430

(KJ5Y, MM0LID, KM4SII, WP3C remote station)

Where is the world is... By Ron Litt K5HM

Where in the world is . . .

Turkmenistan (EZ)

CQ 17 ITU 30

It stands 17th on Club Log's World's Most Wanted DXCC list. Turkmenistan is a country in Central Asia of almost 6 million inhabitants. Mostly desert, its western boundary meets the Caspian Sea. Most of the country is covered by the Karakum (Black Sand) desert, beneath which are some of the largest natural gas reserves in the world.



The country's shape follows the famous Silk Road of medieval times, eastward through Central Asia. Along the great caravan route, stood cities like Merv, one of the great cities of the Islamic world and an important stop on the trade route to ancient China.



Annexed by the Russian Empire in 1881, Turkmenistan became a republic of the Soviet Union and independent upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. Today, it remains one of the most autocratic regimes in the world, with its population impoverished.

Countries like Turkmenistan always seem to have leaders with unpronounceable names. For example, the current president, Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov has ruled Turkmenistan since 2007 when he succeeded life-long president Saparmyrat Niyazov. Following in his predecessor's footsteps, Berdimuhamedov has built a personality cult. Officially titled the "Arkadag" (The Patron), he is also prime minister and commander-in-chief of the country's armed forces.

es.

The traditional life of the Turkmen is that of nomadic shepherds, though some have been settled in towns for centuries. The country is known for its fine carpets (one is even featured in its flag) and horses.

Turkmenistan is one of just two Stalinist countries in existence (the other being North Korea) and the government is in firm control of nearly everything, although, surprisingly, tourism is welcomed as long as you don't discuss politics or the omnipresent police or military.

QRZ.com lists less than 150 hams in the country.
Reporting from the Dark Side, Ron, K5HM



TDXS Biography—Ron Litt K5HM

“I was born at an early age in Brooklyn, NY”

One day, an obscure uncle gave me a watch that didn't work. I became obsessed with watches and the mystery of time-keeping. I tried to carefully take it apart, but having only a hammer at my disposal led to disappointing results. My Dad, the Old Man however noticed my keen interest in things mechanical and decreed that I was to be an engineer. That led to a series of Yuletide gifts as I was growing up including electric trains, Chemistry sets, Erector sets electrical kits and such.

Fast forward to 1953. Parsons Junior High was a brand new school. It was there I met Burt. One day Burt mentioned this guy across the alley from him had a ham radio station and would I like to see it?



The next day, I met up with Burt on the way home. We walked across the alley and into the shack of K2DEM. There were twin Collins stations for father and son. I was hooked. After a few more visits to his shack, I found myself taking the Novice exam.

Thirty days later I got the letter in the mail. No stamp just “Official Business – Federal Communications Commission. I was assigned the call KN2KMA. Burt got KN2KLN. We took the test on the same day! I never understood how he got a call sign that was 12 letters earlier than me.

My first rig was a Hallicrafters S-38C and an Ameco AC-1 kit that I built. It put out about 5 watts.

I had an uncle who introduced me to my first elmer, Marty. Marty taught me how to solder. His favorite expression was, “listen kid, solder is not glue!”

I never made many contacts on the Novice bands; I was too interested in getting to my General. The Novice license was a dead end; only good for a year. I was really focused on getting my general, as it offered all current amateur privileges; was renewable.

Every day I studied the General portion of the license manual. I got the old man to spring for some code records, so I could pass the CW portion of the test. I studied code like a monk. Playing those code records over and over till I could copy 15 WPM.

(continued)



TDXS Biography—Ron Litt K5HM

The old man prized education above all, even though he was a high school dropout. One day he grabbed the license manual from my hands and flipped a few pages, then said, “Kid, If you can pass this test I will pay for your equipment.” I’m pretty sure he did not know what he was getting into but he was true to his word. In the end it cost him an easy \$1500.00.



Well, there was no turning back from that challenge and in a few months I was ready to take the test. I took the subway to the FCC office at 641 Washington St in Manhattan where I met Lurch the examiner. At least he looked like Lurch from the Addams Family TV series.

It seemed an eternity till my general class ticket arrived in the mail. Using my uncle’s connection with Harrison Radio in NYC I bought, or rather the old man bought a Viking II, Hammarlund HQ-140-X receiver and a Mosely 20 meter beam. The beam was mounted on a 30 foot pole atop out roof. Later I added a Harvey Wells z-Match coupler, a Heathkit Oscilloscope and a B&W 51SB SSB Exciter.

Being a General was the best. Even though initially I only had a single band in 1955, 20 meters was open all day and night. The QRM was righteous. It was like being in a bar fight, slugging it out with the guys running a full gallon. The U.S. phone band ended at 14200 KC. Most of the good DX was just below that great divide. We worked split back then, running full carrier double sideband AM, pushing as close to the band edge as we dared, calling for that rare station we needed. One late night in 1958, I worked Tom Christian, VR6TC (SK). It was the most memorable QSO of my ham career.

I tried my first contest in the 1957 Sweepstakes. To get more bands I added a long wire antenna and the Harvey Wells coupler. I pulled an all-nighter and wound up 2nd in the NYC-Long Island Section.

My contest career was cut short by the advent of college. In 1958, I entered New York University Engineering College. As a member of the NYU radio club, I was able to use the club station, W2DSC. What a great QTH; high on a hillside overlooking the Hudson river.

Too bad for ham radio but other factors began to interfere with ham radio; school, women, beer, career. Despite the high sunspot cycle, Amateur radio entered a period of low or no activity.



After graduating in 1963, I took a job with NASA as a telemetry engineer. JFK was president and we were chasing the Russians into space. Plenty of project money and no red tape. It was a great first job.

A year later I was called into the Army for two year hitch. I was stationed at Ft. Monmouth; the Army’s Signal School. The base MARS station, K2USA was right across the street from my building. Other than the MARS station, my operating ability was limited to two-meter mobile with a Gon-set Communicator in my trusty unairconditioned Mercury Comet.

TDXS Biography—Ron Litt K5HM

After a two-year hitch, I joined General Electric in Phoenix, Arizona as a programmer and worked on a joint project with Dartmouth College. During that time, I had the pleasure to work with Dr. John Kemeny, the inventor of the basic programming language. Fast forward to 2009; 2 marriages, 1 career change and three cats later, I am living in Plano. After a long period of inactivity, my original license had expired. I was watching the Dallas Cowboys one afternoon. Suddenly, a little voice popped into my head, “Why don’t you get your ticket?”. Six weeks later, I had my extra ticket with call sign, AE5NO.



Stepping into 20th century ham radio was quite a shock. All the different new modes, the internet and all the new tools it provided. I was as excited as I was when I was in 1954.

In 2011, I moved back to Houston and as the wife has decreed, “ here we are and here we stay. I am not moving again.”

In 2013, I got the vanity call K5HM, which I thought was a better contest call. I joined BVARC and TDXS soon after moving to Houston. My current station includes a K3 and a restored SB200. My antennas are a multi-band dipole about 70 feet up and a vertical to cover 40 and 60 meters.

In 2014 I had the chance to go to the ARRL Centennial celebration. I had a chance to catch up with “The Old Man” himself. We split a couple of beers. Another memorable QSO.



Field Day 2017 by Mike Davidson N5MT

BVARC/TDXS/ECHO/KARS 2017 Field Day by Mike Davidson N5MT

July 4, 2017

Happy 4th of July 2017 to everyone. I hope you were able to operate during the Field Day from home or at our special four club Field Day site at the Pecan Grove Vol Fire Station #1 grounds. The site was the same as we used last year but with several new HF antennas and a new partner with the Katy ARC this year. We enjoyed having the KARS members help with setup on Friday, operating FD on Saturday/Sunday and then take-down on Sunday afternoon. We had several planning meeting this year centered around the BVARC monthly Saturday planning meetings. The FD person for BVARC was Scott Medbury KD5FBA, who did most of the work with the GOTA station. I was the FD person for both TDXS and ECHO. The KARS group did not have a special FD person.

We planned to have our Field Day site similar to 2016 and use a meeting room on the first floor of the Pecan Grove Vol Fire Station #1 as our operating room. We had a BVARC member Bill Cordell V5VOM, rent two man-lifts so we would have a safe method of putting up two new tri-banders antennas and two forty meter beams near the Fire Station. The CW antennas were on the tallest man-lift in the parking lot so they would have our best signal and the shorter man-lift was about 250 ft out in the park next to the Fire Station. We planned to have the same number of transmitters as last year, 8A. We used 3 CW radios, 3 SSB radios and 2 Digital radio stations plus a free station for 6M/VHF/UHF. We had new tri-banders bought by TDXS members Nizar Mullani K0NM and Curt Fletcher WG5H with the intent of having fewer problems with our primary antennas this year. We were looking forward to a higher score on SSB this year as our score last year was poor due to antenna problems. Bill Cordell W5VOM also bought a short forty meter two element beam for CW. We used the old TDXS forty meter two element SSB beam for the SSB station. To keep coax to a minimum, we utilized several tri-plexer filters and passband filters to allow the tri-band beams to each have one feed line for the three bands. Each of the forty meter beams and a forty dipole for the digital station, had a high-quality feed line going to it. TDXS and ECHO both bought a total of 1500 feet of new LMR-280 feed line.

I was predicting that we would have a ten percent drop in propagation from what we experienced last year at FD. I did expect to have more SSB contacts with the better antennas so I was hoping that the gain in SSB activity would offset the loss that propagation might throw at us. The next most important goal I had, was keeping the site operating a full 24 hours but a thunder storm at 3 am on Sunday morning was too much of a safety risk so we shutdown operating for about an hour as the lightning past the Fire Station and no one was harmed. We utilized a sign-up sheet to keep all the stations with as many operators as we wanted. The late night times after midnight, were filled much better on SSB this year as compared to the past two years, so thank you to those that kept us making points during the early Sunday morning hours. More on the number of contacts later on in the details.

Our Technical Support person Glenn Anderson WB5TUF, did his magic in setting up about a dozen PC work stations to run the logging software N1MM and he utilized a large TV screen in the room to display a live FD score, so everyone could follow the progress of each band. The only info that the operators could not see was the progress with the Bonus Points. This year I had the job of trying to utilize all of the bonus options we could make happen for us at FD. Well we achieved 300 more bonus points this year than we had last year because we were able to put together more items were in the bonus group. On Saturday night, when things got a bit slower, I was able to put together 11 messages for posting and they were sent out using our FM free station, so we did not have to take one of the regular stations out of service to send all 11 messages. These messages gave us another 200 points that we did not get the previous year. We planned to do an Educational activity sometime during FD and we found the opportunity on Sunday morning when we were visited by a mom and her 5 year old daughter. We put together a demonstration activity with our satellite station outside as the 5 year old future ham watch the educational program. That gave us another 100 extra points and completed the last of our extra bonus points this FD. We missed only one bonus point category, the site visit by an invited elected official. (continued)



Field Day 2017 by Mike Davidson N5MT

On setup Friday, we started at 1 pm but we were delayed by rain showers that kept us from getting the any of the intended HF antennas up in the air including the 6M free station antennas. I had brought a good Ham4 rotator and feed line and we stacked the 6M 3 element beam above the rotator, then added a VHF 4 element beam with a 3 element UHF beam on the same boom. Since everything could rotate, it was the first time in several years that we could rotate an antenna stack from inside the operation room. Six meters was very slow in opening but we were able to make points with this free station. Likewise, we had very few VHF/UHF contacts from this free station on these bands. The GOTA station used a SteppIR Vertical which was setup by Bill Cordell W5VOM, who carefully put it into a Christmas tree stand and then placed it in the middle of the roof of the building. It worked fine without radials!

The setup on Saturday morning went together quicker since we had to be finished by 1 pm in order to start making contacts for the next 24 hours. We still had some rain but no lightning like on Friday. The big beams were put up after the 6 meter stack was finished. We had one hard Tech problem with the old 40 meter TDXS SSB antenna on Friday. The traps on the driven element were malfunctioning due to two corroded screws that held the traps on the driven elements. They were replaced Saturday and the antenna started working with a good SWR. It was a big problem on Friday afternoon until someone opened up the trap and found the bad screws but we ran out of time at sundown on Friday before the 40 could be fixed.

There were 8 or 9 K3 radios brought out by members, so many thanks for the radio support and those that operated at Field Day. We wanted to have two spare radios for backup purposes since we lost a radio in 2015 which made us loose time during the FD in finding a replacement CW radio. This year we had the spares ready to go at the start of the event at 1 PM Saturday. One of the spare SSB radios was used for 100 bonus points utilizing a battery that had the Solar energy stored in it. We took the main 15 meter SSB radio offline to make the Solar contacts on Sunday morning. I have a 15 watt Solar panel at my house that had been charging two batteries for weeks and captured the energy needed to power the Yaesu FT100 radio where it made eleven SSB contacts on 15 meters for the 100 points Solar bonus. The best luck we had during FD was a result of using this backup radio for the Solar contacts, because when I hooked the regular K3 radio backup on 15 SSB, I found no signal coming into the K3. I had to get the owner of the K3 to come fix a setting on the radio as the memory selected the wrong antenna input on 15 SSB. Whenever anyone tried to operate 15 SSB, there was no antenna coming into the radio. So the band was dead! We fixed the problem and started making contacts on the open 15 meter band and that was about 9 am on Sunday morning. So we lost points because of a radio setup problem. Next year, we will have one Tech check all the radios for this type of mistake so we can avoid a loss of points.

On Sunday morning, everyone kept looking at the summary N1MM display of our score by band and total QSOs without bonus points. We were making about 200 Q's and hour but we were going to be short a few hundred contacts this year. We ended up with 2195 valid CW contacts on all bands, we made 252 Digi contacts, we made 1040 contacts on SSB, 49 contacts on GOTA, 54 on the free 6M station and 1 Satellite Q. The QSO count was great since we were 318 contacts better than last year but this was due to the much better SSB contacts that we were making on the new antennas. Now remember that we get two points for CW and Digi and only one point for SSB. The total CW points was 4390 this year vs 5096 last year. The Digi points was 504 vs 554 last year. The SSB points was 1040 this year vs 348 last year. The total this year was 11,868 points plus 2190 bonus points for a total of 14,058 vs 13,886 last year!

The GOTA station was run/organized by Scott KD5FBA. We had three under 18 year olds visit the GOTA station and each made a QSO for some youth element bonus. Because Scott was elmering each student we got some extra bonus points for this activity as well. There were two adults that operated, Kelli Medbury KG5QJE and Mark KG5HRE. We logged 49 contacts with GOTA and they have to be broken up by who was operating for us to submit our score and points to the ARRL for credit.

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Field Day 2017 by Mike Davidson N5MT

More on bonus points. We were visited by ARRL West Gulf Division Manager – John Stratton N5AUS who paid us a visit about supper time Saturday afternoon. Thanks to Glenn Anderson WB5TUF for a great FM Satellite contact on Saturday. We had a nice ham radio information desk just behind the fire truck at our front door of our public access radio room at the Fire Station. We had a good size generator brought out by Al Brier N5XZ, it ran continuous start to finish on Field Day, as we refilled the gas while the generator was running to save operating time and keep the site with the lights on. Al also put together a twenty-four hour FD operating time slot signup sheet for each major station. Our operators had been able to sign up for two hours slots so we could possibly fill up the late night time slots as well as the CW and SSB time that needed high rates. We had setup some rules about not doing more than two hours on the same station, so you had to move to another station when your two hour time was up or just stop and take a break, etc. We had a Safety Officer Gerry Muller K9GEM, who watched over the site all three days, so thanks for keeping us safe Gerry. We had no accidents that put anyone into a med-emergency situation and we earned another 100 bonus points by having a safety officer.

Takedown Sunday 1 PM: The big CW tower came down first, the big man-lift operated by Bill W5VOM, was easy to operate by pushing a few buttons and it was on the ground and the three antennas were quickly taken apart. We then move the big lift to the 6M station and it came down easily as well. The SSB tower was owned by BVARC president Mike Hardwick N5VCX, and it came down, the SSB antennas were taken apart and coax rolled up as needed. Then we turned to taking down the GOTA station and to begin rolling up all the long coax runs. The other tower for RTTY came down last with the help of the man-lift. We were finished by 430 pm and left the site just like we found it on Friday.

The food was great. We had pizza on Friday evening while trying to setup and the Saturday noon sandwiches and the Saturday evening meal was grilled hamburgers by our cook David Elsner KD7THJ a BVARC member who brought out his grill. These burgers were at least one inch thick and tasted great. Several people brought breakfast on Sunday with breakfast tacos and donuts being ALL eaten up Sunday! I actually had a taco for lunch and breakfast. They were good, thanks BVARC.

Both the TDXS and ECHO contributed \$150 towards food and expenses for FD. BVARC also allocated some moneys for FD but do not know what their budget was for this year.

I downloaded a copy of the N1MM software and then imported the .Adi file of the FD log to see what some of the stats were like. The top 10 of the 39 operators by QSO count were the following: Dave K5GN 670 Q, 2nd place Al N5XZ 492 Q, 3rd place Nizar 416 Q, 4th Pat KJ5Y 346 Q, 5th John K5IZO 193 Q, 6th Jim N5DTT 142 Q, 7th Ron K5HM 145 Q, 8th Glenn WB5TUF 129 Q, 9th Curt WG5H 101 Q and 10th place was Orville K5VWW with 84 Q.

We logged 3551 contacts but we made 118 dups so the final count was 3434 QSOs. We did good working all but one of the ARRL sections, Northwest Territory in Canada, and we talked with 127 Canadians, 6 N. American countries, 2 S. Americans, 5 Europeans and 4 Oceania countries. We talked with 16 KH6 Hawaii, 9 KP4 Puerto Rico and 5 KL7 Alaska stations.

(continued)

Score: Note GOTA QSO are in with SSB. GOTA Bonus is below.

Total CW QSO 2195 pts 4390

Total Digi QSO 252 pts 504

Total SSB QSO 1040 pts 1040

Power Mult: 2 Total QSO pts 5934 = Claimed QSO score 11,868

Bonus Points:

800 Emergency

Youth Element 60 pts

GOTA Bonus 80 pts

Submit internet 50 pts

12 other 100 pts items 1200 pts

Total Bonus 2190 !

THIS put us OVER last years Score...by 172 points!

Total totals: 14,058 in 2017 vs 13, 886 in 2016.

Field Day 2017 by Mike Davidson N5MT

The logging program said that on 40 SSB at 9 pm we made our best hour with a 100/hour rate. I see 5 hours of more than 200 QSO/hour during the 24 hours we operated. Dave K5GN made 103 of the 313 QSO during the 9 pm peak period Saturday night. The highest CW rate was 89 on 20 meters during the first hour and the next best was the second hour with 79 Q on CW. The highest SSB rate was 58 on 20 SSB at the same time 40 had its high rate. Best rate on 15 CW was 57 at 8 am Sunday morning. I did not see the call sign of the largest group we worked which was 21D.

We kept a sign-in log at the information table at the front door of the radio room. We had 21 people sign in on Friday which was a few less than last year. We had 78 people sign in Saturday and 40 people sign in Sunday. Breaking it down by club: BVARC 65, TDXS 21, KARS 17, ECHO 2 and visitors 35. We had 72 amateur radio operators visit, sorry do not know how many did operate, we had 43 hams one day, 10 hams visit two days and 18 hams stay all three days!

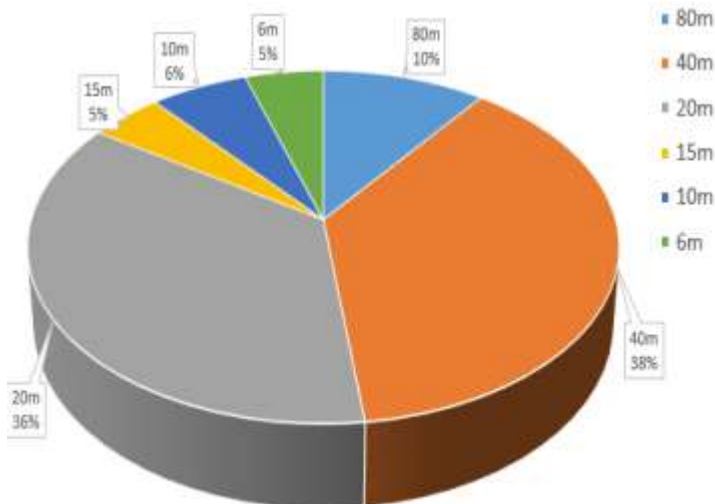
I have not had time to go through the N1MM log of all the contacts made by all that operated at FD so I do not have a breakdown of which operators did so many Q by band available. I appreciate all the FD help and work that you did in making the 2017 TDXS/BVARC/ECHO/KARS 2017 Field Day a success and a better score by 172 points!

Thanks. Best 73. Mike Davidson N5MT

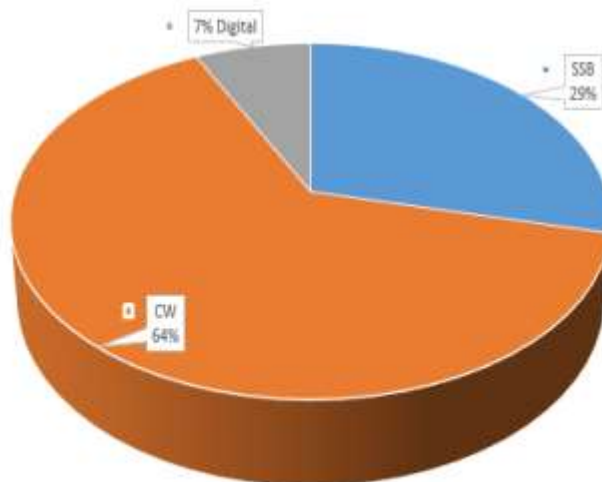
Jerry, KG5LRP put together some stats from the logs. Here are some of them:

	QSO's				Points				
	SSB	CW	Digital		SSB	CW	Digital		
80m	102	315	0	3.5	102	630	0	SSB	986
40m	372	586	159	7	372	1172	318	CW	2195
20m	357	790	86	14	357	1580	172	Digital	252
15m	45	353	7	21	45	706	14		
10m	61	151	0	28	61	302	0		
6m	49	0	0	50	49	0	0		
Total	986	2195	252	3433	Total	986	4390	504	5880
	SSB	CW	Digital						

2017 Field Day QSO's Per Band



2017 Field Day QSO's Per Mode



Care and Feeding of your Field Day Generator de Kim K5TU

I was preparing my generator for Field Day this year. I have a Honda EU-3000i inverter generator. It has ZERO RFI and is very quiet when running, which leads me to the problem. It wouldn't run. It's only 2 years old and has a total of 26 hours on it.

Now I know that this lousy gasoline we have with ethanol is not stable when sitting in an engine for an extended period. I put Stabil 360 in my gas to stabilize it. I also run the generator every 90 days to keep the battery charged and to move some fuel through those tiny orifices in the carburetor. I turn off the fuel valve and let the engine run until it is starved of fuel so there is no fuel left. (or so I thought)



It ran great at every 3 month test, except the one right before Field Day. I decided to take it to Honda and let them get it running again as I had too much to do already. The technician who checked it into service smelled the gas tank and immediately said "bad gas". I guess he has a bionic nose or something.

They called some 6 days later saying it was repaired and ready to be picked up. As we were loading it, I asked what caused the problem and how do I avoid paying him that big service bill again.

1. Old gas had caused the carburetor jet to be partially blocked. I got some really good advice on how to avoid the problem in your small engine generators, lawnmowers, edgers, power washers, etc. Here's what I was told:

Closing the fuel supply valve and starving the engine until it dies doesn't help. There is still some gas left in the float bowl (below the float) that can create gunk.

2. Use the right fuel. Ethanol free gasoline is preferred. Bucees in Waller is rumored to sell ethanol free gas. You can also get it at many boat marinas. Almost all general aviation airports sell 100 octane low lead aviation gasoline, which is ethanol free and has stabilizers to keep it in good shape longer than regular gas station pump gas. Some airports have a policy that requires a special (read expensive) container to transport the gas, so check first. The airport in Eagle Lake, for example, is unmanned and you can walk up to the pump with your credit card.

If you use regular automotive gas, only use 87 octane. Over 80 percent of all gasoline sold at service stations is 87 octane, so your chances of getting fresh gasoline are best with 87 octane. Treat the gasoline with a good stabilizer, like Stabil360. Only buy as much as you expect to use in 4-6 weeks.

3. Run the engine every 3 months if you are not using it weekly. Run the engine long enough to get it up to temperature so any moisture in the oil system is vaporized. However, do not run it with old gas. Before running the engine, siphon the old gas out of the fuel tank and replace it with fresh gas, then run it. Another easy way to remove the old gas is to pull the fuel line off the carburetor, and let it drain into a compatible can or tank. This keeps fresh gas in the system. You can burn the old gas in your car or truck because it has fuel injection and the gas is diluted into whatever is in your car's tank

4. Clean and re-gap or replace the spark plug annually. If equipped with a fuel filter, replace it annually, too. Check the air filter while you're at it.

5. When you put the equipment away, fill the gas tank with new, fresh gas. This minimizes water condensation in the fuel tank. Fuel tanks are often coated on the inside to minimize rust and corrosion, but that coating doesn't hold up too well (per the technician) and will eventually rust. Don't worry if it's a gallon or two in the tank. You can burn it in the car.

Carbureted engines are the most susceptible to this type of fuel problem. Fuel injected engines have pressurized fuel systems, so it's harder for gunk to cause a problem. Fresh gas is always best.

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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 July:

Please notify the Editor if I have missed anyone

Tom Lay - AA5Y
 Pat Sonnier - W5WMU
 Dennis Alexander - W5KU
 Tom Wheatley - K5CNN
 Mike Davidson - N5MT
 Bill Price - KZ5DP
 Tom Jakubec - N5ZR
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