



Contest Connection - Field Day '96

Field Day 96 has to be declared a great success. The weather was good except for a while on Sunday when the skies opened up. We all got a little wet tearing down but we didn't seem to mind since rain has been a little scarce around here these days.

I'm sure we had record crowds for setup and tear down and plenty of folks were there to operate one of the 7 stations. It was good to see a lot of interest in the packet station and the novice station.

The novice station under the direction of AB5TV scored an amazing 1000 QSO points. They were not slowed down by either of our two power failures. A pair of jumper cables connected from the TS-50 and someone's Ford provided the power for them to keep on going. Great job!

Speaking of power failures, the old reliable "genny" that has powered many field days past gave up on a couple of occasions but gave us the opportunity to prove how we hams can improvise in time of need. In addition to the novice station running on jumper cables, the CW guys switched to the solar power supply that had been used to collect the bonus points. The phone guys had a little different twist. Since the rig we were using was AC powered, back up power could not be provided. WA5REJ drove his pickup close to the tent and connected the coax from the A-3 to the back of his mobile TS-140 and continued to call CQ FD and kept the points coming in while a crew attended to the "genny".

We had good attendance for the Bar-Be-Que on Saturday evening. KK5WK provided some good watermelons and conversation. It was also good to see so many visitors. At one time late Saturday night I saw what appeared to be a tour bus unload. Many of the visitors that came were from the Compaq club.

A special thanks to all the support crews. Without them it would be very difficult to put on what many consider as one of the top field day operations in the country. People came just to help set up and tear down and do what was necessary to get every thing up and running. Putting up all the antennas and stringing the thousands of feet of wire was a snap with that crew.

Continued on page 2

Important Dates

Friday, July 19, 7:30 pm - NARS monthly General Membership meeting, Cypress Creek Presbyterian Church, 6000 Spring-Cypress Road - Eyeball QSO's, 7:00 pm

Tuesday, July 30, 7:30 pm - NARS Board of Directors meeting, IHOP, 5790 FM 1960 W, just West of Champions Forest Dr. All members are invited to attend.

Wednesday, July 31 - NARS News deadline for articles to appear in August issue.

Friday-Sunday, August 2-4 - ARRL Texas State Convention, Wyndham Southpark Hotel, Austin

Saturday, August 24, 8:30 am - VE License Exam Session, Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just South of Main), **NO SESSION IN JULY!**

Notice:
NARS membership dues is \$25 per year, renewable on anniversary of last year's full payment.

BREAKFAST

at Bleachers

2318 W FM 1960

Saturdays

8:00 AM

To thank you

for your kindness and sympathy

at a time when it was

highly appreciated.

6/10/96

*The guys -
I had you for
remembering such a personal
so important to him & to
all of you.
You know all the
heat & most important part
of his life. You gave him
joy - pleasure. What
there can be given to
anyone?
I had joy & pleasure
with you at the
I received your hospitality.
Thank you again
from a grateful Sgt.
with love.
Ana Edwards
& W5BHX*

President's Corner

July 1996

Field Day 1996 has come and now is gone. What a marvelous experience.

It began when about 20 people gathered at Valley Ranch Bar-B-Que around 11:00 a.m. on Friday. We had a big lunch then rolled out to Fritsche Park. The towers went up, coax was laid, ladder line fed dipoles strung up, radios set, computers networked, and the generator fired up. Fritsche Park turned into a giant emergency communications center. It all went so well like a large symphony orchestra with all the individuals together as one.

Every rig was tested, the cobwebs blown out of the microphones, and the keys dusted off, all before meeting time. The only thing left to do was wait for the clock to reach 1800 U.T.C. June 22. At the meeting I passed around a Bar-B-Que sign up list. We then had a pep rally and marveled at how the looks of the park had changed.

I went home to get some rest but somehow it didn't work out; I guess the excitement about making all those QSOs on the RS-12 satellite was too much (HI HI). Saturday morning there was a light and late bunch at Bleachers. Some of the Field Day crew spent the night at Fritsche Park. I arrived back out at the site about 11:00 a.m. and things were all a-buzz with vocal and fist warm ups. All of the assignments were made and anyone could jump right in and do the same, if they so desired. The contest kicked off as scheduled and RF was everywhere. The only thing that didn't cooperate was propagation and we know we can't do anything about that. Well, better luck next year.

The contest went very well and then the rains came. Everyone stayed through it all and there was plenty of help to take it all down. In an hour and a half it all came down and was on the road to somewhere. It'll all be back next year for Field Day 1997.

I want to thank Bill WA5DWX and Bill KSZTY for being the coordinators this year. The BIG thanks go to all the ones who did the work, and NARS could not have done it without you. The most important factor of Field Day is that we all had FUN doing it.

July's meeting topic will be about packet radio, as explained by Paul N5NXS. I am looking to see y'all there.

By Walter Hock KK5LO

Field Day from Page 1

Many thanks also to all that furnished radios, computers, antennas, and support equipment from their shacks, brought snacks and especially Joe KD5KR for all the good coffee. And most of all, a very special thanks to *all* who came and were a part of NARS FD96.

One final thought . . . Our president KK5LO and his crew of thousands feverishly assembled their version of a satellite station. With antennas that resembled clothes lines and mega dollars worth of radio gear, they called CQ FD for hours until finally I heard the shouting from the satellite tent. They had made a contact. Walter came running down the road with his shoes off claiming the contact, and bragging that they did it bare footed. I have the picture to prove it.

Thanks to all.

FD96 Scores:

Phone 1585 Q's
CW 1083 Q's

With multipliers and bonus points we had a grand total of 8502 points.

The novice station had 58 CW Q's and 884 phone.

The CW score also includes 27 packet contacts.

The six meter crew had 167.

This score is quite a bit less than in years past. Some of it was due to only having 45 Q's the first two hours on phone and only averaged 42 for the 24 hours. The CW station averaged 41 per hour. We would have to have at least 50 per hour to be in the top group. The extra effort at the novice station gave us a real boost.

73 Bill WA5DWX
bdenton@tenet.edu

See Field Day Photos on pages 4 and 5!



by Keith Dutton

Field Day was a blast, except for one thing...we did not get a good score on HF phone.

S
O
A
P

B
O
X

I'm afraid I'll have to take the blame. I had my rig set up just the way I like it, but this did not work well with the other operators.

During early Sunday morning I readjusted the audio to sound a lot like the Kenwood TS-830S and voila, the QSO rate improved to well over 100 per hour on 40 meters. Evidently this sound is common to most contest stations and is easier to copy for most operators.

Oh well, I'll let somebody else try their hand at it next year.

Special Notice

Lost Laptop Computer

We have been asked by Ann Edinborgh, wife of the late Ken W5BKK, to help her locate a laptop computer that belonged to Ken. Someone borrowed it a few weeks ago and it has not been returned. We believe it to be a 486 Toshiba with a color screen.

If anyone knows the whereabouts of this computer please get in touch with one of the NARS board members or Ann. Not only is this computer worth quite a bit, it's the computer her daughter is using in college and she would like very much to have it returned.

DX News

DX NOTES -- *"I sit beside my lonely fire, And pray for wisdom, yet, For calmness to remember, The DX I didn't get..."*

The solar flux index continues to linger in the doldrums as sunspots become less numerous. After reaching into the 70's it has fallen back into the high 60's where it is at this writing. The SFI has spent part of June in the mid-to-high seventies, and has not fallen below the record low of 66. An exceptionally high A index, in the 20s, occurred when the SFI was around 72. During the last eight days of May, there were NO visible sunspots at all. George Jacobs, W3ASK, says that the absolute bottom of Cycle 22 may have occurred last month (in May). The US Dept. of Commerce says that the bottom will likely occur during the end of 1996. Since there are three different ways of measuring the bottom of the cycle, it is very possible for three different bottoms to be defined. The result of such an occurrence is that the experts gather together and decide when the official bottom occurred. Note this is all done AFTER the bottom has clearly passed, usually by six to twelve months. All of this notwithstanding, it is clear that we are very near, if not already past, the bottom of the cycle. The worst case is that a year-end bottom means that we are likely no more than a year away from improving conditions. All of these factors notwithstanding, it remains possible to work some good DX right now.

Dick (W5VHN) scored by working 3V8BB on SSB.

The September NARS meeting is tentatively scheduled as a DX meeting, with an excellent video of a recent expedition to a rare island DXCC country.

DX Worked: 4J3M (Azerbaijan); JW8GV (Svalbard Is.); V85BG (Brunei); BV9BC (Taiwan); XX9KC (Macao); BV3CD (Taiwan); 9K2MU (Kuwait); SV3AQR (Greece); 4X1FQ (Israel); 3V8BB (Tunisia); CY0AA (Sable Island); FK8GM (New

Caledonia); AH8K (AM. Samoa -- Field Day QSO). Other DX heard: EA9KP; 5V7HR (Togo); 4S7EA (Sri Lanka); A61AM (Dubai); 9N1ARB (Nepal); BV7GA (Taiwan); ZS8IR (Marion Is.).

A rare DX opening on ten meters occurred on June 12 in the afternoon. Conditions were terrific, with good signals coming into the Eastern half of the USA from all over Europe. Later in the evening, 20-meters opened up into No. Africa, the Middle East and Southern Europe from the middle of the country. Shades of things to come!

Bad news from North Korea! Information from correspondents there tells us there is NO CHANCE WHATEVER of anyone getting a license soon, and no one will even talk about getting permission to operate from North Korea. Frequently-heard grumblings often say that North Korea should never have been added to the list when it was. Perhaps so, but who knows? The decision followed the rules in effect at that time. Using conventional 20-20 hindsight, it appears the decision may have been premature. However, Albania, Burma and China were essentially off the air for thirty years or so, and they were not deleted or removed from the list. As is often the case in DXing, patience is a virtue; usually a very necessary virtue. (more follows)

The Ukrainians who operated from 5A1A now have a U. S. QSL manager for USA hams. N4AA will handle the chore. It should be noted that this is for the Ukrainians' operation only, and does not include contacts with locals, such as Ali, who operated 5A1A after the Ukrainian boys left Libya. There is rumored to be some help in the wings for contacts with Ali if people who worked him have not received their cards by July 15.

Dick Rooney, W5VHN, has recently completed working 100 countries via satellite to qualify for satellite-DXCC. This is a neat accomplishment, and one way of overcoming poor HF propagation conditions. When asked what his next goal may be, Dick replied "CW DXCC!"

IK8JAF is in Yemen and has a license to operate, starting June 16. He expects to be there for a month, and will probably return to Yemen in the Fall. He has a 100-watt transceiver, dipoles, and cannot operate split frequency, -- soooooo, he "may be difficult to work." For those who need him, give it a shot!

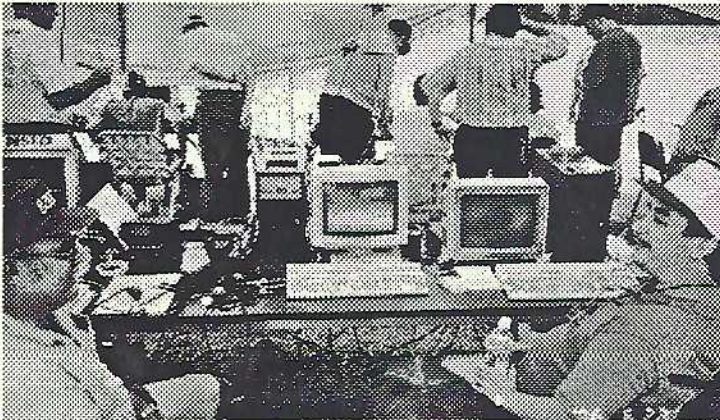
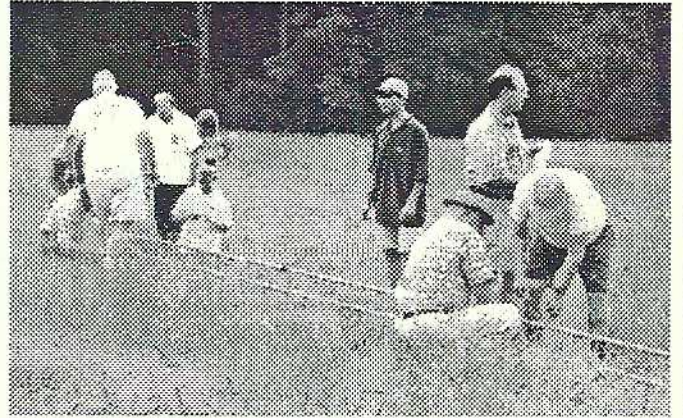
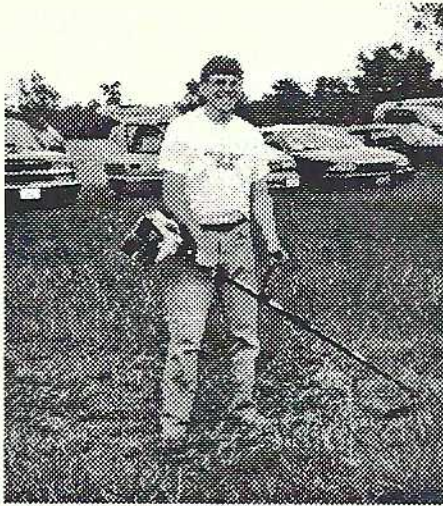
The best news I have seen or heard (DX-wise) is that a "substantial operation will take place from Scarborough Reef (BS7) later this year after the typhoon season." If that does occur, I have no plans to pass it up like I did the one in 1995.-- K8CSG

Don Bedell's Birthday

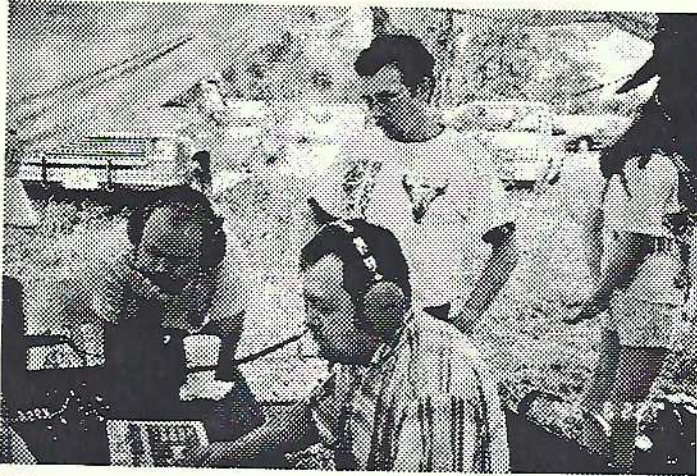


Don Bedell KA3BKU celebrated his 80th birthday with a group of about 40 friends at the Klein Methodist Church. Walter Hock KK5LO presented a Plaque prepared by Marian Denton to commemorate the event.

Field Day '96



Field Day '96



SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG) IS A SUCCESS?!

There are currently 16 active SIG List members (Sid George, AB5XU and Doug Hudspeth, KC5NRR have disconnected phone numbers). All sixteen have a grand total of 482.5 years experience and training ranging among military, commercial and amateur electronics backgrounds to draw upon. Thirteen of the SIG List members each have 24 or more years experience:

SIG Member	Years
Bill Stietenroth	35
Bill Rister	38
O.J. Quarles	24
Deral Kent	38
Bill Denton	38
George Carlson	30
Allen Majeski	28
Don Bedell	66
Larry McCain	29
Keith Dutson	25
Madison Jones	38
Jerry Smith	49
Bill Gary	48

The remaining 3 SIG List members are: Bob Argo, Joy Smith and Brian Derx with a total of 6.5 years.

From February to June 1996 the SIG List has helped at least 126 members and non-members with problems.

I was amazed when I ran the numbers after interviewing the SIG List members to get data for this article. They certainly are a very talented, knowledgeable and experienced group doing a very valuable volunteer service for members and some non-members as well. And the price is right - it's free!

That's a key thing to remember - that they offer a volunteer service that consists mainly of advice and counsel given over the phone or on the repeater - sometimes in person. The intent is to offer members advice that motivates some self help on the part of the member with a problem to run tests where possible, and give the results to the SIG member who can analyze them and in turn suggest a solution. Often the solution may be for the member to get his rig to a shop for repair. This should be no surprise given today's technology - it's specialized.

Very few hams are equipped with the instruments and knowledge in these days of solid state technology to dig into the guts of their rigs through layers of boards with a very small soldering iron and large magnifying glasses - it takes a good specialist.

A few words should be said about the "General Help" classification you see on the SIG List. For instance, it doesn't mean that a SIG List member will rush over to your house - dig a hole in your backyard - lay in concrete, stick your antenna mast in the hole and guy wire it until it sets. Or that he will come over to move equipment for you from one location to another, etc. That's not the

intent and motivation of those on the SIG List. The main intent is to provide technical advice.

It does mean they will give advice and counsel over the phone or on the repeater concerning problems you may have ranging from HF to VHF to computer operation, antennas, etc, in general helping you to help yourself. However, when a problem exists that they deem to require a physical visit to your shack they will schedule a visit to analyze and diagnose and offer their best opinion on how the problem should be solved. It's then your option to take their advice or not - personally I'd take it.

It should be noted that our President, Walter Hock KK5LO, placed the idea of a SIG List before the Board of Directors and they approved. The idea based on the stats so far has proved to be a great success. However, members with a problem should phone the appropriate SIG Listee and get the benefit of their knowledge and advice. Some SIG people had only a few contacts - you can rectify that by calling with your problem.

As a club we are fortunate indeed to have such a group doing a great job. Aside from the SIG List we are also fortunate as a club in having so many general members that are also talented, knowledgeable and experienced. For instance - over 50% of our current membership is composed of Extra and Advanced class hams - a nice accomplishment for a small club.

If you need help - call a SIG List member and get started on taking their advice - you'll be glad you did.

(Note: The SIG List appears in each issue of the NARS News)

73 Harry Gage N5WIZ

NARS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Mark Condit, KC5OFE 550-5659

FOR NARS INFORMATION CALL

Marian Denton, 469-8331, for General Information and Bill Gary, 537-9240, for VE Exam Information or send E-Mail to nars@houston.net

NARS BREAKFAST every Saturday

8 AM at Bleachers Grill, located at 2318 W FM 1960 (@ Kuykendahl).

Informal ragchew.

Special Interest Group (SIG) List

K5ZTY, Bill Stietenroth
893-3901, General Help

WA5DWX, Bill Denton
469-8331, General Help, Antennas

WA1YIA, OJ Quarles
955-1555, HF, General Help

WA5REJ, Allen Majeski
353-8652, General Help

WA5SAJ, Larry McCain
469-6709, General Help

AB5TV, Madison Jones
350-4330, General Help, CW

K8CSG, Bill Gary
537-9240, General Help, DX

KC5EZQ, Bill Rister
537-8596, 694-6074

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KA3BKU, Don Bedell
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N5BA, Brian Derx
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KC5JZO, Bob Argo
288-7430, Computer Operating,
Win'95

WD5DXL, Keith Dutson
351-7683, Computer Programming

W5NKZ, Jerry Smith
444-4491, HF, Advanced OSCAR,
Antenna

KB5DTB, Joy Smith
444-4491, HF, Advanced OSCAR,
Antenna

NARS NETS

NARS RAGCHEW - MONDAY 8:00 PM
28.444 MHz

NARS INFO - WEDNESDAY 8:00 PM
146.06 / .66 MHz
Net Coordinator OJ, WA1YIA

NARS REPEATERS

2 M - 146.060 / 146.660 MHz

70 cm - 449.375 / 444.375 MHz

Digipeter - 145.71 MHz

Call (W5BKK) Alias (NARS)

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