

NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

February 2001

DXPedition Video Showing at February Meeting

The Wired Choice – I Need Your Response

Are you wired? No, I'm not talking about electrical circuits. The term "wired" is used to describe the ability of a person to connect to the Internet, send and receive email and so forth. If you are reading this article from a piece of paper, and you are "wired," please continue reading.

NARS News is now available in electronic form, specifically a PDF (Portable Document Format) file. This file may be opened and read using Adobe Acrobat Reader, version 4, a FREE download from Adobe's web site (<http://www.adobe.com>). It is produced using Adobe Acrobat 4 (not free). Once the file is opened, you will see pages just like the one you are now reading, except it is on your PC monitor, and in full, living color! Instead of seeing photos in gray scale, you see them in color, with much greater detail. You can see last month's issue right now if you are wired and have downloaded Acrobat Reader. Go to <http://www.w5nc.org> and click Newsletter near the center of the home page. Voila! The ARRL logo at the top of page one is in COLOR! You can zoom in and out to make the print as larger as you please. No need to get out the reading glasses. Need to take the news with you on a trip where you will not be able to get Internet access? If you have a printer attached to your PC, you can print directly from the PDF to get a hard copy. Works on color inkjet as well as laser printers.

Okay, enough selling. If you are a member of NARS, it's time to choose how you want to receive future copies of NARS News. You may not be wired, yet, so you will want to stay with the mailed hard copy. Actually, you have three choices:

1. Web Access – The easiest way is to just visit our web site often. It will always have the latest issue.
2. Email – You can have the PDF sent directly to your email account. This is nice if you have email, but no Internet access.
3. Snail Mail – Continue to receive a mailed hard copy.

The choice is yours.

If you are wired and thinking of keeping the mailed copy, please reconsider. Mailing out the hard copy is a major task. By going electronic, you will help save a lot of time and energy now being donated by fellow club members. We will also save printing and postage costs, and be able to put these funds into other club activities.

You will need to contact me with your selection. The best way to do this is by sending an email to me at wd5dxl@arrl.net. Or, call me at 281-351-7683 on weekends or weekday evenings. If you have not contacted me by the end of this month, I will be contacting you.

Keith Dutson WD5DXL

Awards Banquet Pictures see pages 3, 4 & 5



Important Dates

Friday, Feb 16, 7:30 PM – NARS monthly General Membership meeting, Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church – Eyeball QSOs, 7:00 PM

Saturday, Feb 24, 8:30 AM – VE License Exam Session, Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just south of Main Street).

Tuesday, Feb 27, 7:30 PM – NARS Board of Directors meeting, Terra Nova Clubhouse, 5200 Woodville.

Contests:

Feb 17–18 – ARRL CW DX

Feb 23–24 – CQ WW 160M SSB

Mar 3–4 – ARRL SSB DX

Mar 10–11 – RSGB Commonwealth CW

Mar 17–18 – Bermuda, Russian DX, BARTG Spring RTTY, Virginia QSO Party

Wednesday Lunch Bunch

Feb 14 – Carlos Mexican

Feb 28 – Charlie's Hamburgers

Mar 7 – Jason's Deli

Mar 14 – Woodlands House

Mar 21 – Brown Sugar's BBQ

Notice:

NARS membership dues is \$20 per year, renewable on anniversary of last year's full payment.

Deadline for articles to appear in the March issue – Wednesday, February 28.

BREAKFAST

at Victors

4710 W FM 1960

Saturdays

8:00 AM

President's Corner

February 2001

NARS Starts Millennium with Big Bash!

If you missed the annual NARS Awards Banquet, you missed a great evening. Over 110 people attended. They were treated to some great food, collected some nice door prizes, applauded the efforts of the many hard working NARS members who received awards and were subjected to the Willie Huges Old Timey Radio Show. Then to cap off the evening the drawing for the Icom 706 MKIIG was held. The lucky winner was one of NARS' founding members and long time big supporter, Kirby Van Horn, W7SV. Congratulations Kirby!

Many folks worked hard to make the banquet a success. George, KD5AYF, was the coordinator with help from Joe, KD5KR, and Keith, WD5DXL. George, K5VUU and Steve, N5EN, did a great job arranging all of the awards. We had some generous door prize donors including, Houston Amateur Radio Supply, Victor's Restaurant and Deli, City Electronic Supply and EPO at Willowbrook. Several of our members also donated door prizes, Bill, K5ZTY, Dick, W5VHN, George, KD5AYF and the Hudspeth's, KC5VSF & KC5NRR, who also printed up the special nametags. Thanks to all for your efforts, it made this occasion a very enjoyable one.

The NARS Outstanding Service Award was given to Walter Hock, KK5LO, for his many years of contributing his time, effort and expertise to NARS in many ways. Deral Kent, K5WNO, his long time friend, presented the award. Thanks Walter and Deral.

And how could we forget the headline attraction, The Willie Huges Old Timey Radio Show? George, K5VUU and Jim, KJ5X, had us laughing 'til our sides hurt with their re-creation of the show from KLID. Thanks for a glimpse of "The Good Old Days."

I think that the banquet was a perfect example of what NARS is all about, a lot of people working together to make our hobby as enjoyable as possible. I am looking forward to the coming year because I know that with this kind of participation we will be able to continue to sponsor many events and have a lot of FUN!

Paul Frantz W5PF

I Married a Ham

When I first met him, he said he spent a lot of time in his shack. Shack? What shack? I could only picture some little run down hovel out in the woods. Later I learned that a shack was in fact a room of the house dedicated to ham radio. Boy was I relieved! He said he spent a lot of time, sometimes all night, on the radio. What could a person do all night on a radio and whom could he possibly be talking to? They speak a different language you know. QTH, QRZ, QRQ and so on. Some even drive cars with really ugly antennas.

We all have expectations of what a marriage should be, but little did I know! In each marriage there is a little 'his-hers-yours-mine' but they can all be shared. Some men have Monday night football or Thursday night poker. Owen has Ham Radio. It is not just a hobby but it becomes a part of your life. There are lots of operating events. Owen is very competitive and likes to operate in contests. There are lots of different contests in both CW and Phone. During the winter months, there is even a Fox Hunt. It is nothing like getting on a horse and hunting for a bushy tailed fox as they do in England.

While riding in the car with Owen, one of the first things I noticed about Ham Radio was the names, voices, and stories told by some of the local Hams. There was the 'Old Timer', affectionately called because he has been a ham longer than most can remember. When I first heard someone called 'Captain Kirk', I thought of the TV program Star Trek. But as it turns out his name really is Jim Kirk! Uncle Zed was another name I later found out referred to a call sign once held by Bill's father.

A couple years ago I took a novice class given by the Northwest Amateur Radio Society. There were several other wives in the class. We never discussed very much why we were really taking the course. One of the ladies, Stella, was there because her husband made her an offer to retire one year early if she got her license. The class was interesting because we learned the language, which our husbands were speaking. There were a great many aspects of ham radio, which related to my profession in radiology. There were also some very technical aspects of ham radio dealing with antennas. The wives kidded that if the need ever came along to put up an antenna or install a radio, we would have to lend out a husband.

A couple years ago, my husband and a couple other hams, drove all over the state in a contest called the Texas QSO Party. They had a blast and I said next year I'm going to drive you around to the different counties and you could operate the contest. I don't mind driving and I thought about seeing parts of Texas I had not seen. The main thing was that I would be spending some time with my husband doing the things he enjoyed. As it turned out, I was quickly hooked on this contest plus I learned a little more about my husband. I have since driven for him in this contest a few times. The most recent time I too had my license. I have become most competitive in this contest and each time I want to get through more and more counties. This year more wives joined in and drove for their husbands. We all had a great time. After the contest was completed, everyone got together for dinner and to exchange stories of the adventure. The more the stories are told, the bigger they get!

Wherever you may work for a living, everyone shares the same profession. But with Ham Radio, there is a whole world of engineers, doctors, lawyers, husbands and wives that share one common hobby. Someone said you had to be an extravert to be a Ham. That is not true. This is a hobby of warm, friendly, wonderful people to meet, talk with, and help you. I am certainly glad I got involved with Ham Radio and I think most women would also enjoy the hobby and sharing hobby time with their husbands.

By Margarita Quarles K5MSQ

Dit Dit



Awards Banquet Pictures



Awards Banquet Pictures



Awards Banquet Pictures



DX News

Opening:

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Bouvet! January started out about average when looking at the solar numbers. The month opened with an SFI of 170, an A index of 1, and the K index at 0. The numbers seemed to have peaked on the 14 when the SFI reached 184 with the A and K indexes at 5 and 1, respectfully. The low occurred four days later on the 18th when the SFI dipped to 152. The month closed sorta mixed as the SFI clawed its way back up to 165.

What does all of this really mean? I don't have a clue! But, according to the big dawgs, you look for trends. One of the algorithms they use to study in the trend thing is called the "Smoothed Sunspot Number" or SSN. Anyway, when analyzing the SFI data, we are at, or near the beginning of the downhill slide of Cycle 23. This would seem to add up when considering the low for the previous cycle occurred somewhere between mid 1995 through mid 1996.

The ARRL propagation report advises us "to take advantage of the excellent worldwide propagation opportunities on the higher bands — 15, 12 and 10 meters — while you can."

One thing I think we can all agree on is the excellent band conditions on 10 meters from around 1300 through 1700 UTC. Spinning across 10 meters sounds more like 20 meters in the summer. What great conditions we have experienced especially on the weekends. Reality says it will change.

Local Events:

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Jim –KJ5X has smoothed a bunch of us. He reports that "for all the DX news that's fit to print," he has worked D68WL Comoros on three bands. Further, he has received cards from VK9CQ and VK9XV confirming numbers 299 and 300 for DXCC. Congratulations Jim.

Seems like Bruce – N1LN has worked everything that's fit to work on 20 meter SSB. Just look at this list: D68WL and D68BT – Comoros, A52GJ and A52YL – Bhutan, VR2MY – Hong Kong, S21YJ – Bangladesh, XW3QBR – Laos, then XW3ZNR – Laos – on 17 meters! Ok you say, that's pretty good, well Bruce

wasn't idling on 160 or 40 meter CW either bagging the following: JA0MVW – Japan, OM3PA – Slovak Rep., HK6KKK – Colombia all on 160 meters. For 40 meter CW he logged WH0V – Marianas, BA4DW – China, T20CK – Tuvalu, JT1CO – Mongolia, and then S21YT – Bangladesh on 20 meters. YT1BGD – Iraq is in his log on 10 meters SSB. I did mention earlier that 10 meters seemed to be in pretty good shape. Way to go Bruce!

After seeing Bruce's success, I'm thinking I need 40 more feet of tower. Apparently, I need more than that. ED –K8EP recently received QSL cards for working BA4DW – China on 40 meter CW and VU2LE – India on 20 meter CW, MOBILE for heaven's sake. Ed has the best 100-watt ICOM 706 and Comet multiband antenna on the planet. China is 7,700 miles away and India is 8,700 miles! Good grief and good going ED. Is any of this equipment for sale? Can it be borrowed on the weekend?

George – K5VUU has three new countries in the bag. Nice ones at that: ZB2FK Gibraltar, ET3VSC Ethiopia, and A71MA Qatar. George, ask Bruce or I to tell you my story about QSLing Claudio ET3VSC. (I really pulled a good one.)

Three new QSL cards found their way to K5VUU's mailbox: J5Z Guinea-Bissau, VK9CQ Cocos-Keeling, and 4W6GH East Timor. Like many others in this column, George really prefers to work DX in both modes, CW and SSB.

At the time of George's note, he was gunning for two new countries: the Comoros and Bouvet. To quote our fine friend K5VUU, "have heard both of them working Japan and West coast, but not 5's. Ain't it frustrating?" Y E S! Despite this, George has 258 countries confirmed with cards out for another 30 or so. "Haven't had much time this last year to really push on my next goal which is 300 confirmed." Deer in the headlights? No. DXCC Honor Roll, yes!

Gerald W5BA reports that band conditions have been generally good to Europe from his QTH. He enjoyed a 'roundtable' recently with a number of chaps in Great Britain: G0REK,

M0CTN, and M0BZQ. This occurred just prior to their sunrise (0520Z) on the 11th on 75 Meter SSB. Gerald also worked LZ2AB earlier in the month at 0347Z on 75 meter 'fone.

"Those who have not yet worked 3Y0C (present) may have a more difficult time doing so. Recent info posted on WD4NGB's web page indicate that the last round of 120MPH winds finally destroyed the HexBeam that Chuck was using, and he will be using wire antennas only for the remainder of his stay which appears like it will be cut short as well. Continued generator problems and an early return of the supply ship, originally scheduled for later in March, but now moved up to March 2, or perhaps even a couple of weeks earlier, mean this one will become even 'tougher' to catch in the little time left especially since his amp is now reported to be 'officially dead' as well." Keep a stiff upper and tight ... the Brits say! Thanks for the reality check Gerald!

Steve – N5EN is in the lazyboy these days with a fresh peanut butter and jelly in one hand, and a warm glass of milk in the other. Simply put, he has worked number 300 – 3C1AG Equatorial Guinea! A mere 10-meter CW contact. Forget the 3C1, I'm really interested in the sandwich. Congrats!

Our good friend and NARS rep to the Magnolia (Texas) DX Foundation, John – W5PDW has one heck of an idea. He claims he put out "DX traps" all around his QTH and had been waiting and waiting with his camo bibs on and then, there he was, Norm – K5OS (some 5–6 miles away). John claims he got Norm on the first call, the second time, the line was busy. Pa dum!

With that said, John snagged two new ones: 3Y0C on January 28th at 0230 UTC 14.195/14.230 first call, and then D68BT the Comoros on January 14th at 1952 UTC on 21.295/21.313. Very nice John, very nice. Finally, John says that one of these DX stations was heard to say to the pack, "wish you all had signals like the guy in Texas." I hate to even think this, but the DX station must have been referring to Ed – K8EP's mobile activity.

Continued on page 4

DX News – Continued from page 3

Dick – W5VHN reports working the following in January. PY3MM Brazil, January 10th on 14.197 at 0043 UTC, HP1/LU2ODR Panama, on the 12th on 14.215 at 0314 UTC, D68WL the Comoros, on the 15th on 28.495 at 1600 UTC, and D68WL again the next day on 14.195 at 0120 UTC, A22DX Botswana, on the 17th on 14.260 at 0235 UTC, JT1CO Mongolia, on the 18th on 21.298 at 0113 UTC, 9K2ZZ Kuwait, on the 22nd on 14.192.7 at 1710 UTC, and JW5DW Svalbard on the 22nd on 14.260 at 2252 UTC. The really nice thing is that Dick didn't NEED any of these. Dick certainly covers the bands. Actually as you know, Dick doesn't need too many more to have them all worked! Thanks Dick for the nice info.

From this Station:
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I had the privilege of working 76 QSOs consisting of 47 countries. There were two new ones in there thank goodness: 3Y0C Bouvet, and S21 Bangladesh.

Several of these were new bands for me such as three 80 meter contacts: LA6EIA Norway and EI6S Ireland on the 4th at 0452 UTC and S52RU Slovenia on the 7th at 0501 UTC. After working these, I got real brave and tried my hand at two new 40 meter contacts: LZ1ANA –

Bulgaria, on the 14th at 0052 UTC, and V51E – Namibia, also on the 4th at 0357 UTC.

DX Heard not worked:
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As I mentioned earlier, 10 meters has been jumping. Too many honey dos had me off running on the weekends during this time. I can only hope these conditions continue for a while longer.

In the middle of the month, I heard a lot of good grayline propagation to Europe and South Africa. I have my February airtime cut out for me.

New Postal Rates and QSL'ing Stuff
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As most of you know, U. S. Postal Service rates went up in early January. For First Class Mail the 1st ounce costs \$0.34, each additional ounce is \$0.21. Postcards are \$0.20 each. Foreign Airmail cost \$0.80 for the 1st ounce (not half-ounce). For Canada and Mexico, the cost is \$0.60. IRC's are \$1.75 each! Ya might consider Bill Plum's stamp service. Fax: 908-782-2612. Thanks for the reminder Paul – W5PF.

In addition, if you use or are thinking about using Les Bannon's "WF5E" QSL

Service, he has revised fees as well. They include: 4 QSL cards for \$1.00, or 4 QSL cards for 2 IRC'S. Check out his website at: <http://www.qsl.net/wf5e/> for the latest details. This is not an ad for Les, but it's meant to ease your pain!

You may ask why use Les's service. Well, not all IARU countries are served by the League's "Outgoing QSL Service." This means that licensed Ops and DXpeditions from these countries use QSL managers or they QSL direct. See: <http://www.arrl.org/qsl/qslout.html> for a list of specific non-participating outgoing QSL service countries.

Scheduled DX Operations
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For scheduled DX operations for February, see last month's column. And, don't forget May is Antenna Wax Month!

Thanks to Jim KJ5X, Bruce N1LN, Ed K8EP, George K5VUU, Gerald W5BA, Steve N5EN, John W5PDW, Paul W5PF, and Dick W5VHN for their input. If you have DX info for the column, wa5mlt@arrl.net.

*73 es gd DX to all ...
de H. O. WA5MLT*

VE Session Results

Four candidates took advantage of the NARS / Compaq test session at the Tomball Community Center on January 27th. One new Technician was licensed and two upgraded from general to extra. Participating VEs were KK5LO, N5ET, KJ5X, W5SB, WA5MLT and K5ZTY from NARS, and W5WH from Compaq. The next test date will be February 24th.

Bill Stietenroth K5ZTY



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George DiLetto, KDORW
President

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Welcome, Congratulations and Condolences

Welcome new members Todd Buchholz KD5MNY and Vince Connor KA2GRD
Congratulations 2000 raffle winner Kirby Van Horn W7SV

NARS Resource List

General Help:

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For general information call one of the Club
Officers or Board Members.

NETS

75 M Ragchew: Mon 8:00 PM, 3861KHz
Coordinator: Jim Kirk KJ5X
281-376-0718, jrkirk@wt.net
2M Information: Wed. 8:00 PM, 146.66MHz
Coordinator: O.J. Quarles, K1OJ
281-955-1555, k1oj@ditdit.com

WEB SITE

URL: <http://www.w5nc.org>
Webmaster: H.O. Townsend WA5MLT
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Coordinator: O.J. Quarles, K1OJ
281-955-1555, k1oj@ditdit.com

REPEATERS

2M: 146.060 / 146.660 (KA5AKG)
70 cm: 449.375 / 444.375 (KA5AKG)

MEETINGS

Monthly General Membership

Third Friday each month at 7:30 PM
Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church, 6000
Spring Cypress Road

Saturday Breakfast

Victor's Restaurant 7:30 AM

Wednesday Lunch 11:30 AM

Various locations (Info on 146.660 and listed
on front page in Important Dates column)

NARS NEWS is published monthly by
Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Send all articles and materials for the
Newsletter to:

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Northwest Amateur Radio Society is a
Special Service Club affiliated with the
American Radio Relay League.

ARRL Club No. 2120