

# NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

May 2001

## *Pot Pourri Meeting for May*

This month's meeting will be a mix of subjects. Likely topics include the trip to Grenada by Paul Frantz W5PF, Field Day 2001 preparations by O J Quarles K5OJ and Bill Denton W5SB, electronic newsletter distribution, current DX conditions and other topics raised from the floor.



*Paul Frantz and Dee Logan at their Grenada Shack.*

## **The Wired Choice – Implementation**

The April issue was the first to be distributed electronically.

So far we have 20 members who use the web site and 29 who receive the file via email. Web site users also receive notification via email. That leaves 123 persons still receiving the hard copy.

If you have not already done so, please send an email to wd5dxl@arrl.net with your choice for 1) web access, 2) email, or 3) regular mail. Thanks.

Visit the NARS web site at <http://www.w5nc.org>.

*Keith Dutson WD5DXL, NARS NEWS Editor*

## **Important Dates**

**Friday, May 18, 7:30 PM** – NARS monthly General Membership meeting, Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church – Eyeball QSOs, 7:00 PM.

**Saturday, May 26, 8:30 AM** – VE License Exam Session, Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just south of Main Street).

**Tuesday, May 29, 7:30 PM** – NARS Board of Directors meeting, Terra Nova Clubhouse, 5200 Woodville.

### **Contests:**

**May 12–13** – Oregon QSO and Nevada QSO Party

**May 26–27** – CQ WW WPX SSB

**June 2–3** – IARU Region 1 CW Field Day

**June 9–11** – ARRL June VHF QSO

**June 16–17** – All Asian CW DX

### **Wednesday Lunch Bunch:**

**May 16** – Brown Sugar's BBQ

**May 23** – Red Lobster

**May 30** – Strack Farms

**June 6** – Pepperchino

**June 13** – Original Pasta Co

**June 20** – Carlos Mexican

### **Notice:**

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

*Deadline for articles to appear in the June issue is Tuesday, May 29.*

## **BREAKFAST**

### **at Victors**

4710 W FM 1960

### **Saturdays**

### **7:30 AM**

## President's Corner

May 2001

When NARS was started 16 years ago, the importance of high quality programs for our meetings was well recognized. In order to attract membership participation interesting meetings are essential. With all of the competition for our time today our meeting programs are even more important. We have had some very informative and entertaining meetings in recent months thanks to the efforts of our Program Chairman, George Levandoski, KD5AYF, and the dedicated people who have prepared and presented the programs.

It is difficult to maintain high standards in any endeavor, and especially so in volunteer efforts. Ideas for new and interesting programs are hard to come by and it is even more difficult to find people with the interest and time to present the programs. We are looking for new and interesting topics for our meeting programs. Some of the most interesting recent programs have been on non-amateur radio topics. If you have any suggestions for meeting topics or know of someone who gives a program we might be interested in, please contact George or any officer or board member.

Field Day is only 2 months away!! Mark your calendar for June 22, 23 and 24.

*Paul Frantz, W5PF*

## *Grenada DX Vacation Yields 3,605 Qsos And Lots Of Fun*

During a 15 meter schedule almost a year ago, my long time friend and fellow NARS founding member Dee, W1HEO, suggested a mini-dxpedition and asked if I was interested. The answer to that was easy, YES! What Dixer wouldn't like the chance to be on the other side of the pileup? Over the next few months we worked out the details for our vacation/dxpedition. We had a blast, on the radio and sightseeing with our XYLs.

We rented a villa for two weeks starting March 30 and were licensed as J3/W1HEO and J3/W5PF. Our station was simple, but adequate. A two-element mini beam for 10-15-20 and inverted vees for 12 and 17 meters, plus a dipole for 40. We ran 100 watts from a TS-450S and FT-100. A cooperative landlord even helped us get a 30-foot pipe mast built to hold the beam.

Grenada is in the southern Windward Islands, not far north of Venezuela. It's 21 miles long and 12 miles wide, and is lush and tropical. Called the "Spice Island," Grenada is a major exporter of nutmeg, cinnamon and other spices. With lovely beaches and cobalt blue waters, it's popular with scuba divers and snorkelers.

Despite major solar flares that disrupted normal band conditions, we managed to make 3,605 contacts, some of them with our radio club members. Ten meters was the most useful band; we made nearly 1500 SSB contacts and 185 CW QSOs on that band. We also emphasized the WARC bands, making about 1100 contacts on 12 and 17. It was rewarding to give a new country to many, and on ten meters we worked several recently upgraded hams that expressed their appreciation for the Grenada contact.

*Paul Frantz J3/W5PF*

## **VE Session Results – April**

At the NARS April 28, 2001 test session we had 11 candidates. This resulted in five new Technician class amateurs, one upgrade to Extra, and one who passed three elements to become a new General.

The VE's were HO Townsend WA5MLT, Jim Kirk KJ5X, Norm Covey K5OS and Jim Minor N1GXQ.

Thanks to all for their help.

*Walter KK5LO*

# DX News

## “For All the NARS DX News Fit to Print”

“Get Well” Dick W5VHN. There’s more DX to be worked.

Now, think “Agalega & St. Brandon.” Here is where you use the long referenced antenna wax!

Flare. No flare. Flare. No flare. What a month of transition in the solar flux index and DX propagation in general. Where did my DX contact go? As mother earth continues to tilt, more and more daylight floods the Northern Hemisphere changing the general propagation. Alaska, for example, is fast reaching its dubious distinction as the “Land of the Midnight Sun.” Classically, this means longer and longer hours of operation for 20 through 10 meters. Let’s hope so since summertime typically brings more static (QRN) to both 75 and 40 meters.

The numbers for April look like this. The highest SFI occurred between April 2nd and 3rd. with a reading of 258; (just as Paul W5PF and Dee W1HEO were setting up in J3 land) and, the lowest SFI occurred between April 16th and 17th with a reading of 123. The highest (possible ever) A index occurred on April 1st with a reading of 131; and, the lowest A index occurred on April 30th with a reading of 3. Open higher than a cat’s back and close low. (Sounds like my Wall Street activities.) The highest K index occurred on April 11th with a reading of 8; and the lowest K index occurred on April 10, 21, 28, and 30 with a reading of 0.

The April cover of CQ Magazine refers to the current solar cycle as a “Solar Flip Flop.” The May issue suggests a “Solar Cycle Stall.” And in fair play, QST writes about the same. Personally, I don’t think we are in a stall, but a roller coaster ride! Button up them overhauls, dig in them spurs, and giddy up!

### Local Events:

Cal WF5W says April was a “Tough month for ‘DXing.’” Too many trips, lawn work, and one gets the feeling too

many honeydos! Plus valued time was spent tweaking the 2nd iteration, 5th mod to his screwdriver thanks to George K5VUU. Nonetheless, Cal did manage to sneak some new cards in from the mailbox: CE0CY, A92GE, and 3C1AG. He sent out 22 cards in February and so far 13 have returned. By the way, if anyone hears the EP station on, call Cal. He did work the Cocos–Keeling VK9CXF group on 12 and 80 meters. That makes 320 worked and 309 confirmed. Great numbers Cal.

Gerald W5BA enjoyed working Paul W5PF and Dee W1HEO from J3 Grenada. He worked Paul on 12 and 17M SSB and Dee on 17M CW and 15M SSB. Gerald sure wishes they had taken a little more wire for 160! He worked 9V1YC on 20CW at sunrise on 4/08 and missed the VK9ML group! Gerald came close on 10 meters, but they couldn’t get the call right. Gerald that’s as bad as getting the new QSL cards with no call on it! Good luck.

George K5VUU had a good month working the Mellish Reef boys on 10 meters SSB. To really top it all off, five new cards came in: HV5NAC Vatican City 10, VP8DCD Falkland Is. 20, S92TX Sao Tome & Principe 15, A71MA Qatar 20, A92GE Bahrain 20 Meters. All SSB contacts. George’s numbers look darn good also: 282 worked with 270 confirmed 5 away from 275 his next goal.

Jim KJ5X picked up a new QSL card from J28CDX in April. Jim worked the Mellish boys VK9ML on 10M CW and SSB for a new country. He also reports logging W1VX/KH4 and ZD7K on 40M CW and Pedro HK3JJH/HK0M on 40M SSB. Other than this, he reports various contacts on 20, 15 and 10 meters including 3XY6A, ZY0SAT, TX8G, EZ8CW (a couple of times but can’t seem to get EZ confirmed), And finally that much heralded and eagerly anticipated DXpedition to green and glorious Grenada by J3/W5PF and J3/W1HEO. He’s got’um in the log!

Great going Jim.

Ed K8EP sends greetings to all. Ed says that DXing from K8EP has been a combination of car and home with his travels. From the car, he logged 3D2AG/P on Rotouma for a new one on CW (4/9 1136 14CW), and 5R8FU for a new one on CW (4/9 1254 21CW). From home, ED worked VK9ML new one mixed on both CW and SSB (4/22 2256 28SSB and 4/23 0214 28CW). Ed is among the elite receiving his K5K CW multi–bands card and SU9ZZ for a new zone on 40M. Ed slow down, there’s DX to be worked!

John W5PDW notes that his DX traps have been as empty as my mailbox!! He thinks someone is getting here b–4–I him. [sure] April wasn’t a total disaster, he did work two new ones: Mellish Reef on 2 bands, and Saudi Arabia with a stateside manager no less! Now, John reports working my twin brother on Malpelo, but he already has this one confirmed. He reports dabbling in the Florida QSO party working several special event stations. John logged 35 DX stations for the month, pretty slim pickens (not the actor).”Let me clarify that, Slim wasn’t pretty, what I meant was, there wasn’t much on the bands. John is hoping May does better and the mailbox runs produce more. There goes more shoe leather! Good luck John!

Bruce N1LN had a good month receiving new cards, and working new countries and new band countries. Rumor has it he did the two–step to the mailbox. Bruce received cards from: K5K – Kingman Reef (160 – 10 meters), and OM3PA – Slovakia – 160 meters. He also worked the following countries for new band counters: TX0C – Chesterfield Is. – 40 meter – SSB, VP8SDX – Falkland Is. – 40 meter – CW, and SV9CVY – Crete – 40 meter – SSB. Bruce logged these new countries: HK3JJH/HK0 – Malpelo Is. – (20/17/15/10 – SSB), and VK9ML – Mellish Reef – (40 meter CW, 20 meter / 10 meter SSB). Outstanding Bruce!

*Continued on page 4*

## *DX News – Continued from page 3*

Pat KK5VN says he had a pretty good month for receiving QSL cards. Those received include: EA6SX Balearic Is., ZK1JD Cook Is., GD4PTV Isle of Man, YB0ECT Indonesia, PJ7B St. Maarten, 4N1DX Yugoslavia, KH0AC Saipan, HC8Z Galapagos, PJ4G Netherland Antilles, P40V and P40W Aruba, V73ZZ Marshall Is. and 6Y8A on 4 bands (10,15,20,and 40). Pat worked a nice variety of DX including: EM1HO Antarctica, 9K2GS Kuwait, T77C San Marino, 8R1AK Guyana, P29CC Papua New Guinea, VU2AU, India, V51AS Namibia, HH5/W5QW Haiti, and FO/DL7FT Austral Is. Keep the footswitch down Pat. Good going!

My question last month was, “Can it get any better?” We now know the answer, yes. Nonetheless, kept the faith dear DX worriers!

>From this Station:

Well, April didn't yield as many QSOs as March, but I'd still call it a good month all-around. I did manage to get 49 QSOs through the ups and downs of the propagation. The 49 QSOs consist of 5 contacts on 75, 4 contacts on 40, 25 contacts on 20, 10 contacts on 15, and 5 contacts on 10 meters.

Although I only made 49 QSOs, there were 32 countries in there along with 16 IOTA entries. I really enjoyed playing in the Marconi Day event on the 21st making 10 of the required 15 QSOs (no new wallpaper).

I am happy as punch to report, I think I out-foxed John W5PDW. Yep, six new cards came in this month: 1A0KM SMO Malta, BD4XA China, OY/DL8WAM Faroe Is., UK8IWW Uzbekistan, XW3ZNR Laos, and ZS8D Marion Is. The nightmare of all nightmares occurred on the 1A0KM

card. The first one came with no “Confirming QSO” on it! However, the QSL manager was kind enough to send another one along.

On top of all of this, new cards arrived for 6Y5/WO9Z Jamaica, HB9AUB “Fabio” Switzerland, JR3NZC Japan, and ZF2NT Little Cayman Is. all on 40 meters; CM6QN Cuba, EI6S Ireland, LA6EIA Norway, and YS1AG “Dr. Goens” El Salvador all on 75 meters.

Finally, William Plum “the foreign stamp guy” has a new gold plated tooth. I can't tell you how much I spent on foreign postage, but the cost per card so far is \$34.95 per card! Ha ha. But, the cards are gushing in!

### Scheduled DX Operations

Here are some of the scheduled DX operations for April.

- \* Apr 26–May 01 France TM5N
- \* Apr 26–May 01 Svalbard JW5HE
- \* Apr 26–May 01 Vietnam 3W7D
- \* Apr 26–May 04 Trinidad & Tobago 9Y4
- \* Apr 27–May 03 Chesterfield Islands TX0C
- \* Apr 27–May 04 Greece SV8
- \* Apr 27–May 04 Rotuma 3D2NV/p
- \* Apr 27–May 11 Guinea Bissau J5X
- \* Apr 28–May 01 Mariana Islands KH0
- \* Apr 28–May 03 Maldives 8Q7JY
- \* Apr 28–May 05 Cocos Keeling VK9C
- \* Apr 28–May 06 Corsica TK
- \* Apr 28–May 27 Japan 8J3EAG
- \* Apr 29–May 02 Micronesia V63LJ
- \* Apr 29–May 02 Western Malaysia 9M2DB
- \* Apr 29–May 04 Mayotte
- \* Apr 29–May 09 Bermuda VP9/AI5P
- \* Apr 30–May 03 Micronesia V63YV
- \* Apr 30–May 04 South Cook Islands ZK1

- \* Apr 30–May 06 France F2GL/p
- \* May 02–May 04 Guam KH2
- \* May 03–May 16 Agalega & St. Brandon 3B6RF
- \* May 04–May 07 Fiji 3D2NV
- \* May 04–May 11 Ukraine EM5QRP
- \* May 05–May 07 India VU
- \* May 05–May 11 North Cook Islands ZK1
- \* May 05–May 13 Ukraine EO56JM
- \* May 07–May 14 Bahamas C6A
- \* May 07–May 17 Ascension Island ZD8Z
- \* May 07–May 22 Crete SV9
- \* May 10–May 16 St Kitts & Nevis V47UY
- \* May 11–May 13 Belau T88LJ
- \* May 12–May 18 South Cook Islands ZK1
- \* May 12–May 19 Italy IA5
- \* May 16–May 29 South Cook Islands ZK1EFD
- \* May 18–May 20 Macao XX9TKW
- \* May 20–May 26 Guernsey MU
- \* May 23–Jun 03 Italy I
- \* May 24–May 26 Sweden 8S5T
- \* May 24–Jun 01 Fernando de Noronha PY0F
- \* May 25–May 31 Svalbard JW7FJA

Did anyone work the Seychelles last month? I never heard them! Again, there are several countries that stand out in the list among them Chesterfield Is. TX0C, Rotuma 3D2NV/p, Guinea Bissau J5X, and most of all Agalega & St. Brandon 3B6RF. At over 10,000 miles away, this is your antenna wax contact for May!

Thanks to Cal WF5W, Gerald W5BA, George K5VUU, Jim KJ5X, Ed K8EP, John W5PDW, Bruce N1LN, and Pat KK5VN. If you have DX info for the column, e-mail to wa5mlt@arrl.net.

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

# MS150 Bicycle Ride Support

I can best summarize my 2001 Houston–Austin MS150 bicycle ride ham support role as rewarding, exhilarating, exhausting, scary, and boring. In other words, I had a great time, and can't wait until next year.

I was the third man of a three–man crew, the radio op, riding in the jump seat of Ambulance Three.



On Saturday, 4/21/01, we were constantly in motion during the morning, transporting down and injured riders to the hospital. This was one wild initiation for me; I had to really focus on my task, as I was seated just inches from injured riders who were abraded, bleeding, bruised, bones and joints dislocated or broken, in pain, incoherent, or having trouble breathing. The first transport was the hardest, as the patient was a 15–year old girl – I imagined what terror the parents would be going through upon receiving the phone call that their

daughter was taken by ambulance to the Katy hospital ER.

I had never before ridden “hot” (lights and sirens) in a public service vehicle. Running at 80 MPH in a large, high–profile vehicle with gusty crosswinds was an experience I won't soon forget. I cannot believe that drivers just flat–out refuse to get out of the way of an ambulance. I had some choice words for those people at the time.

We responded to the accident described in the Sunday's Houston Chronicle (4/22/01), where a rider was critically brain–injured in a fall. Latitude / longitude information from an APRS box on Ambulance Three allowed the Critical Air rescue 'copter to come directly to the accident site, without having the hunt up and down country roads. The bird came directly over the coordinates given, which were accurate to 0.1 seconds of arc (about 10 ft). Another victory for Amateur Radio.

After Saturday morning, the duty was fairly boring. Lots of sitting on station waiting for calls, lots of napping on the stretcher in back. I ran into friends who were making the ride, and also socialized with other hams – men & women from Houston, Austin, and

in–between.

Without denigrating the other public service events that NARS participates in, and which I will participate in the future, I would have to say that MS150 is definitely in a league of it's own, and I strongly recommend that NARS as a club or NARS members individually come out for next year's MS150.

You will work harder and longer (one or both days) on MS150 than you will for other events, but you will reap more rewards – you will help more people, alleviate more pain and suffering, and really put your Amateur Radio license and skills to a high–profile good use.



*Peter Wang KF5ND*



**George DiLetto, KDORW**

President

Exit 68 I–45 North  
181 Cypresswood Drive  
Spring, TX 77388

800–471–7373  
281–355–7373  
Fax 281–355–8007

# Welcome, Congratulations and Condolences

Welcome new members Chris Chance K5WCC and Edward Kent KD5NWU  
Our wishes for a speedy recovery go to Dick Rooney W5VHN who broke his hip.

## NARS Resource List

### General Help:

Bill Stietenroth K5ZTY  
281-893-3901, k5zty@juno.com  
Allen Majeski WA5REJ  
281-353-8652, wa5rej.tx@netzero.net  
Bill Denton W5SB – Antennas  
281-469-8331, w5sb@arrl.net  
O J Quarles K1OJ – HF  
281-955-1555, k1oj@ditdit.com  
Larry McCain KN5Z  
281-469-6709, kn5z@arrl.net  
Madison Jones W5MJ  
281-350-4330, w5mj@houston.rr.com  
Bill Rister W5CYP – ATV  
713-694-6074, brister@hal-pc.org

### Satellite:

Deral Kent K5WNO – RS 12/13  
281-548-7476, k5wno@juno.com  
Dick Rooney W5VHN  
281-288-8424, dickrooney@usa.net

### Electrical Design, Troubleshooting:

George M. Carlson KC5RCC  
281-376-8307, geotek@wt.net

### Packet:

Don Bedell KA3BKU  
281-370-6576, DonKA3bku@aol.com

### VHF/UHF:

Brian Derx N5BA  
281-894-5942, n5ba@arrl.net

### Computer Operations:

Bob Argo KC5JZO  
281-288-7430, rargo@houston.rr.com

### Computer Programming:

Keith Dutson WD5DXL  
281-351-7683, wd5dxl@arrl.net

### Interference (Basic Advice):

Harry Gage AC5XD  
281-370-7488, hjgage@aol.com  
Mark Tyler K5GQ  
281-587-0256, k5gq@juno.com

### Card Checking Awards Managers:

Bob Walworth N5ET – DXCC  
281-363-0209  
walworth@worldnet.att.net  
Brian Derx N5BA – WAS, VUCC  
281-894-5942 n5ba@arrl.net  
H O Townsend WA5MLT – CQ WAZ  
281-376-7416 wa5mlt@arrl.net

Brian Derx N5BA – WAS, VUCC  
281-894-5942, n5ba@arrl.net

### NARS Public Information Officer:

George Levandoski KD5AYF  
713-895-0700, kd5ayf@arrl.net

## NARS Information

### PRESIDENT & BOARD CHAIRMAN

Paul Frantz W5PF  
281-351-8930, kf5sb@arrl.net

### VICE PRESIDENT

George Levandoski, KD5AYF  
713-895-0700, kd5ayf@arrl.net

### SECRETARY

Keith Dutson WD5DXL  
281-351-7683, wd5dxl@arrl.net

### TREASURER

Tom Hoherd KK5YU  
281-370-2941, kk5yu@att.net

### DIRECTORS

Steve Niles, N5EN  
281-580-6080, N5EN@wt.net  
Bill Denton W5SB  
281-469-8331, w5sb@arrl.net  
O J Quarles K1OJ  
281-955-1555, k1oj@ditdit.com  
Walter Hock KK5LO  
281-350-6633, kk5lo@arrl.net

### ACTIVITIES CHAIRMAN

George Levandoski, KD5AYF  
713-895-0700, kd5ayf@arrl.net

### ADMINISTRATIVE AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Joe Sokolowski, KD5KR  
281-353-2196, kd5kr@arrl.net

*Send address, phone, email and other  
changes to:*

NARS  
PO Box 90387  
Houston, TX 77090-0387

*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  
281-376-7416, wa5mlt@arrl.net

### NARS REFLECTOR

NARS@qth.net  
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:

Editor: Keith Dutson WD5DXL  
281-351-7683, wd5dxl@arrl.net

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

ARRL Club No. 2120