

NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

March 2003

March Meeting – Cell Phones

This month's program takes a little turn away from Ham Radio. Mike Wheat N5F will join us and discuss an industry that is known to most of us, cellular telephones. They are not just telephones any more.

Mike got his early education in electronics at a ripe old age of 17. He worked as an assistant engineer at Radio station KQTI AM in Edna, Texas. In the US Navy he was a Fire Control Technician for Missile Systems aboard the USS Carl Vinson. Mike dabbled in the two way radio business for a while and eventually went to work as an RF engineer for a cellular system in Tyler and Longview Texas. In 1988 he came to Houston and is currently the Director of RF Engineering for Cingular Wireless. He is responsible for RF design, performance and Growth Management for several markets in Texas.

Come and listen to Mike talk about the current state of Cellular phones. He will also talk to us about how Ham Radio antennas and the cellular system can interface. He has some good stories how cellular towers can be hidden and blended into the surroundings and become invisible to the general public.

See you at the meeting, Bill W5SB

QUA* Bob Helton K0DQW?

As roving reporter for the Ham and Sheez QUA, (look it up. . . I did!) I thoroughly enjoyed visiting with K0DQW, AKA Bob Helton. He has many interesting stories and I hope to whet your appetite to get to know him better. He was patient with my questions and graciously answered with aplomb.

First, let's cover the vital statistics. . .

Bob was born in Salinas, KS and moved as an infant to Greenburg, KS, where he attended High School. He then graduated from Ft Hayes College and began teaching High School. During this time he developed an interest in astronomy and aeronautics. Wanting to further his education, he received a degree in Aeronautics from Miami University in Ohio. This "launched" a career with NASA. During this time he was a liaison between NASA and the public. Bob has traveled with NASA all over the US and Europe and even worked for a time in Langley, VA. He has received other degrees as well, but is more interested in the pursuit of knowledge than the letters after his name.

In the mean time, he met and married Darlene, a native and proud Houstonian. They were married in a Constellation (aircraft) with as many friends as they could bring along to Mexico. It was a great party! Together they had three daughters and now have added several grandchildren. They currently share their home with Caruso the rescued cat and Holly, a terrier.

Now, on to the technical things. . .

Bob's interest in HAM radio started with a friend in High School who had a short wave radio. They used to listen for hours together.

A college professor asked the class to which 10 periodicals they would subscribe. He thought back to those days listening with his friend and purchased QST. The rest is history!

He was first licensed as a Novice in 1958 and then upgraded to General in 1964. He still spends much of his time just listening to other conversations and learning about other places.

The most interesting contact he remembers is a man in New Zealand who wanted to know everything about Texas: annual rainfall, size, agriculture, and average temperature. They talked for an hour and half and Bob was surprised at how much he actually knew!

The most difficult contact was getting Vermont for his WAS.

He has an ICOM transceiver and operates at 100 watts. His antenna is a 60-foot crank up with a beam and he works 10, 15 and 20 meters.

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Important Dates

Friday, March 21, 7:30 PM – General Membership meeting, Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church – Eyeball QSOs, 7 pm

Saturday, March 22, 8:30 AM – VE License Exam Session, Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just South of Main).

Monday, March 24, 7:30 PM – Board of Directors meeting, Terra Nova Clubhouse, 5200 Woodville.

Contests

Mar 22–23 Oklahoma QSO Party

Mar 29–30 CQ WW WPX SSB

Apr 11–13 Japan International CW DX

Apr 19–20 Michigan QSO Party, Ontario QSO Party

Ham Fest

Apr 5 Ham Expo, Belton, Temple ARC, PO Box 4511, Temple, TX 76505.

Info: Mike LeFan WA5EQQ, 254-773-3590, expo@tarc.org, www.tarc.org

Wednesday Lunch Bunch

Mar 19 Lasagna House II

Mar 26 Jason's Deli

Apr 2 Charlie's Hamburgers

Apr 9 Woodlands House

Apr 16 Brown Sugar's BBQ

Wednesday Lunch Bunch – West

Mar 19 Skeeter's

Mar 26 Fast Eddie's

Apr 2 Cafe Express

Apr 9 Chili's

Apr 16 Fuddrucker's

Monday "Tail Draggers" Lunch Bunch

12:00 Noon Aviator's Grill, Hooks Airport

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

Deadline for articles to appear in the next issue is the last day of this month.

BREAKFAST

at Victors

4710 W FM 1960

Saturdays

7:30 AM

President's Corner

March 2003

No report this month.

Gregg Erlenbusch
W5IDX

QUA Bob Helton K0DQW? Continued from page 1*

If you get a chance, ask him about. . .

- Bob has many hobbies and interests, of which only one is HAM radio.
- He has a passion for Indian artifacts, which started as a child after the dust bowl blew the topsoil away in Kansas and his family picked up many buried treasures.
- He had a pilot's license and owned a couple of aerobatic planes. And designed and built a couple of man-powered planes, as well.
- He can get lost in family genealogy.
- His artistic side designs cuts and creates stained glass windows.
- On a visit to his tropically planted backyard a young girl said it was like being in a jungle, complete with topiary monkey hanging from the tree limb!

His final comment was. . .

I have more fun than anybody and you can quote me on that!



Schalee Lodge, Ham and Sheez QUA reporter

* QUA: "Q" signal meaning "Have you news of. . .?"

Public Service Events *Your Radio Skills Are Needed*

Plan to help with one or more of the upcoming events in 2003.

The next scheduled event is the March of Dimes WalkAmerica. This is usually held in April.

Other events officially sponsored by NARS include Buffalo Bayou Regatta (May), SIRE Ride-A-Thon (October) and Sunmart Texas Trails Run (December).

VE Session Results

At the NARS VE Test Session held February 22, 2003 there were seven candidates. The results were five new Technicians, and two paper upgrades to General. Elements administered totaled five with five passed. WOW! 100% success rate.

The VE's were Paul Frantz W5PF, Bob Walworth N5ET, Norm Covey K5OS, Steve Smothers W9DX, Madison Jones W5MJ, Steve Niles N5EN, Walter Holmes K5WH, Gregg Erlenbusch W5IDX, and Bill Denton W5SB.

Thanks to all of the VE's for their help.

The next NARS VE Test session will be held on March 22, 2003. See ya there.

Walter Hock KK5LO
NARS VE Session Manager

Ham and “Sheez” News

February Update:

How does that saying go? – “When some of the men are away in Mexico, the ladies will stay home and play.” On the Saturday evening of the ARRL DX CW contest, the ladies gathered at the Meier residence for a chick flick night. We started the evening with the comedy, “My Big Fat Greek Wedding”. If you haven’t seen the movie, take our advice and be sure to watch it. We’re sure you’ll enjoy it – it really is hysterical! Since the night was young when the comedy ended, we decided to watch a second movie called “Dinner with Friends”. Great munchies, drinks, and friends made the evening truly enjoyable.

Our February meeting was held on Monday the 24th at Zebos Coffee House in Tomball. Many thanks go to Pat White for arranging the evening. Gina Giadrosich joined us and brought several pieces of amber jewelry. If you’re not familiar with amber, let us share some interesting facts. Amber is organic and derived from the sap of trees fossilized millions of years ago. Amber jewelry dating back to 3700 B.C. has been found in Estonia. At one time, amber was second to diamonds as the most popular gem in the United States. It regained a lot of popularity when the movie, “Jurassic Park” was released – remember the beginning of the movie and what was found in the amber? As amber ages, its color changes from its original color eventually to white. Ninety percent of the world’s amber comes from

the Baltic Sea. This is where the amber we saw originates. Gina and her husband visit Poland to replenish their inventory. Other than learning about amber and seeing several hundred pieces of amber, we confess we purchased a few pieces of jewelry! BTW – If you’re ever in the mood for a sinfully delicious dessert, look no further than Zebos. Their desserts are absolutely wonderful and so is their coffee.

Upcoming Meetings & Activities:

March: Our first March outing will be on Sunday, March 16. We will be attending the closing show at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. Alabama will be the performing band that evening. The rodeo finals will also take place that afternoon. We’ll be sure to let you know about the first closing show at the Reliant Stadium.

Our March meeting will be held on Monday, March 24, at Tina Sinclair’s home. We will be making Easter baskets, filled with some munchies, for some of the folks from the Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church and other selected people. We hope to bring some smiles to their faces as a result of our work. Please come to the meeting and help make the baskets.

Our second March outing will take place during the last weekend in March. We will be heading to the outlet malls in San Marcos on Saturday, March 29, and will return on Sunday, March 30. Be sure to

join us for this very fun outing. Bring walking shoes on the trip and, a week before we leave, start practicing the motion of swiping your credit card! Information about carpooling and hotels will be communicated shortly.

Monthly Ham Recipe:

Skillet Ham with Ginger–Peach Glaze (from Weight Watchers cookbook)

1/4 cup peach spread
1 T water
1 T grated peeled fresh ginger
1 T dark brown sugar
2 t whole grain Dijon mustard
4 (3 oz) slices 33% less sodium lean ham
Cooking spray

Combine first five ingredients, and set aside. Coat both sides of ham slices with cooking spray. Place a large nonstick skillet over medium–high heat until hot. Add ham slices, and cook 1 1/2 to 2 minutes on each side or until lightly browned. Transfer ham to a platter. Reduce heat to medium–low. Add peach spread mixture to pan, and cook 30 seconds until peach spread melts. Add ham slices, and cook 2 minutes, turning frequently to glaze. Yield: Four servings

Enjoy!

*Best regards,
Laurie Meier – N1YXU
936–271–1096
nlyxu@arrl.org*

DX News

“For All the NARS DX News Fit to Print”

The input from the local members was just great this month. The SFI was on the weak side, but nothing is weak about the DX reports from the membership. If you have some input, please email me at KQ5U@arrl.net and put DX Column as the subject. Your information will be included in the next column.

February local activity:

The first report in this month was from Brad, WD5GNI, who reported he has a new rig and is building a mobile setup for his car. During testing of the new rig he made his first HF mobile DX contact. That contact was with RZ9IZ who is in Strezhevoy. I hope we will be hearing many exciting DX reports from Brad.

Bruce, N1LN, reported that he had a slack month for DX. He wishes he could report a new country, but it was not in the cards this month. I think with the contesting weekend in Mexico as 6D2YFM and racking up about 8 million points bit into his DXing. He said he got a few new band countries, but I'd say he reported an impressive list of band countries. This is his report: PZ5RA – Surinam – 80CW; 5R8FU – Madagascar – 80CW; 5H3RK – Tanzania – 80CW; 9M6NA – East Malaysia – 80CW; V51AS – Namibia – 80CW; ZK1CG – South Cook I. – 75SSB; AH3D – Johnston I – 160CW; ZS6UT – South Africa – 160CW; HH6/DL7CM – Haiti – 160CW; PJ5/k3RGD – Saint Maarten – 160CW; T31MY – C. Kiribati – 30CW, 40CW, 75SSB; 3A2MD – Monaco – 40CW. I guess the reader will just have to decide whether it is a few or an impressive list of band countries. Either way it is a very good list.

Lee Kinard, K5AVY, reported that he has really gotten active and has decided to report what was going on in K5AVY shack. His report does reflect that he has a preference for phone operations a change from the brass pounders. The report follows: KM1CC – Marconi special event station – 20SSB; (This is a real nice and informative QSL card anyone will be pleased to receive.) EA8BWW – Canary I. – 20SSB; XT2ATI, Burkina-Faso (new geography for me!) – 15SSB; AH3D – Johnston Is. – 10 & 15SSB; JH0HQ – Niigata, Japan – 10SSB; T31MY – E. Kiribati – 10SSB; PI4COM – Netherlands – 10SSB; JH1AGU – Tokyo – 10SSB. I am learning more about our world's changing

geography. I also heard Serria Leone but couldn't get through the pile-up with my <100 watt FT-747 and R8. My cool QSL cards are: VK4AAR, ZL3/N2WB, N0WBV/J3, OK1DRQ, HC8A, HC8N, FM5BH, VP5T, KH6IBA, KH6/N0HJZ, KH7R, PJ7/K7ZUM, and an older one celebrating the Queen's Jubilee; XL7DP. Now that Lee has joined the active list we can expect many more neat DX contacts and QSL cards. We are waiting for the list to grow and hear stories of fantastic DX catches in the K5AVY shack.

Al Fritsche, W5ADF, reported he had hit the jackpot. His report went like this: New DX worked; AH3D – Johnston Atoll on 10M and 15M; 5R8FU – Madagascar on 10M; 6W1RD – Senegal on 15M; ZY0T – Trindade & Martin Vas Is. for a new country. The ZY0T was a great catch Al. He was only there for a few days and the signals were not very strong at my QTH. He received several really nice cards: TY7Z, Benin; LZ2KV, Bulgaria (Finally); ZK2TO, Niue Island; N4BQW/KH9, Wake Island; KH6GMP/KH3, Johnston Atoll; 8N1OGA, Ogasawara Island; A22HH, Botswana. My confirmed count now stands as 190. From this report it looks like Al is almost two-thirds of the way to the DX Honor-Roll. Here's hoping you will be able to report reaching the 200 mark by the next column.

KJ5X, Jim, the banjo player reported he "was out of town for more than two weeks in February, so not much DX. But did get a new one: LU1ZA, South Orkneys for #322. Thought I'd never get him. New ones are tough gettin' these days. Also worked AH3D on 10, 15 and 20M, T31MY and 3B9FR on 20M. Still looking for 9N, S2 and a about a dozen more of the rare ones. Call. Reward." This sounds to me like Jim could use a little help to get over the final hump. Now I know how important this is for Jim since he is one of the lucky ones who worked the P5. He has a good shot at getting them all and remember he is offering some kind of a reward.

K5CX, ex-WA5MLT, and known far and wide by H.O. had a really good month. I just wonder if it had anything to do with that new call. The K5CX report is: "No complaints for February 2003 at the K5CX shack. 49 DX contacts found their way into the log. Some Qs for multi-band

contacts. The LU1ZA South Orkney was a new country! YeeHaw. Qs by band went like this: 1 on 10, 11 on 12, 8 on 15, 6 on 17, 6 on 20, 2 on 40, and 15 on 80 meters. Having watched the DX cluster and after talking to a few of our local DXers, I'd say we all agree that entering the low portion of the sunspot cycle, the 15 Qs on 80 meters is to be expected. I think the 12-meter activity was an anomaly.

In the log: 33 prefixes; zones worked: 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 17, 25, 27, 31, 33, and 37; and countries KL7HSB Alaska, VY1JA Canada, XF1K Mexico, W4BD/TI8 Costa Rica, TI9MOT Cocos Island, V31DK Belize, C6AMM and C6ANI Bahamas, CO6XN Cuba, HH6/DL7CM Haiti, J3/DJ7RJ Grenada, J69MV St Lucia, V25WX and V26EW Antigua; Barbuda, VP2V/K1COW British Virgin Islands, VP5/K9SG Turks & Caicos Islands, ZF1DZ Cayman Islands, YV5SSB Venezuela, PP5OW Brazil, ZP5MAL Paraguay, LU1ZA South Orkney Island, CU2CE Azores, F6CTT and TM9R France, G3HUA, G3WYN, G0WGP, and G3WXX England, HB9BYZ Switzerland, UA9AYA Asiatic Russia, D88S South Korea, JR2BJE Japan, T88RH and T88CQ Belau, AH3D Johnston Island, T31MY Central Kiribati, CN8TW Morocco, EA8BH Canary Island, S07V Western Sahara, and 5X1DC Uganda."

K5JDB, Jim, had 52 DX contacts logged in February. Most interesting were CN8VW Morocco, 5R8GZ Madagascar, T88CQ Rep. of Belau, and 3B9FR Rodriguez. Received several needed QSL cards. Honorable mention were TY4DX Benin, 4L4TL Rep of Georgia, 5N6NDP Nigeria, S9SS Sao Tome & Principe, PJ2/N1UR Curacao, S07L Western Sahara, ZK1ASQ and ZK1USA Cook Islands, North and South, and HI3HN Dominican Republic. Looks like the DX is going to be more difficult in the coming months. I will still be in there plugging." It looks like Jim has been having a good time on the bands. He got a card from 5N6, which has been difficult for some of us.

Here at the KQ5U shack things seemed to be pretty productive on 80M. I worked 25 new band countries this month. Of course when one starts with only about a dozen that number of countries comes easily.

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DX News – Continued from page 4

Some of the better catches were: AH3D – Johnson Island; PZ5RA – Surinam; DU9/N0NM; 8P9NX – Barbados; IV3RLB – Italy; PA3FDO – Netherlands; CS6V – Portugal and V31DJ – Belize. Forty meters produced 11 new band countries for me and the better ones were: JY9QJ – Jordan; DS1CUU – Korea; CN8YR – Morocco; 5T5PBV – Mauritania and 9Y4/IV3IYH – Tobago Island. I was even lucky in the new countries category with 7 new ones. They were UN7JJ – Kazakhstan; 5T5PBV – Mauritania; SU9NC – Egypt; D2GG (SSB) & D2BB (CW) – Angola; 5X1DC – Uganda; EK6TA – Armenia and 5N6EAM – Nigeria. QSL cards arrived confirming a few new countries by mode or band. They were K1B – Baker Island (CW&SSB); 6V6U – Senegal (20CW); ZS1EL – South Africa (40CW); FH/DL5CF – Mayotte (20CW); ZB2FK – Gibraltar (10CW); AP2IA – Pakistan (15SSB); 3B9FR – Rodriguez Island (20SSB); 8Q7OA – Maldiv Island (20SSB) and GU3MBS – Guernsey Island (10CW). Now the Guernsey Island card is one of those I have worked many times and never gotten an answer to my QSL cards. I was happy when it showed up. Last years DX report sent to the ARRL in October 2002 was returned boosting my total to 199 countries. 34 additional countries have been confirmed since the report was sent. A surprise #10 envelope arrive in the mail this month from CQ Magazine containing a neatly folded certificate for “First Place 2002” QRP/p SSB in the World Wide WPX Contest for Single Op – 21Mhz United States – 5th District. Kind of neat wallpaper if you can get it ironed out.

Other news:

Inquiring minds want to know “Has anyone received a K1B QSL?” The answer may well be that it needs to resubmit to K4YL since there has been a real mess with envelopes missing. Seems things did not go well at the Russian address used for the SSB cards. K4YL has the logs and is working to get the mess cleaned up. The CW cards were in the mail last August and all should be well with the CW cards. However, K4YL has both the CW and SSB logs and will do both at the same time. Turnaround is fast, about two weeks.

Last month the SFI was fairly high in first two weeks of the month and then dropped to the level about 110. It then hovered around this mark for the last two weeks of the month. The forecast for the next 27 days from NASA shows the SFI perking up during the first two weeks of March and

then dropping nearer the 100 mark. However the SFI for the ARRL DX contest was 138. The forecast is below.

#	27–day Space Weather Outlook Table				
#	Issued 2003 Mar 04				
#	UTC	Radio Flux	Planetary	Largest	
#	Date	10.7 cm	A Index	Kp Index	
2003 Mar 05	155	15	3		
2003 Mar 06	155	12	3		
2003 Mar 07	150	10	3		
2003 Mar 08	150	12	3		
2003 Mar 09	145	12	3		
2003 Mar 10	145	10	3		
2003 Mar 11	140	12	3		
2003 Mar 12	135	8	3		
2003 Mar 13	130	15	3		
2003 Mar 14	125	15	3		
2003 Mar 15	120	15	3		
2003 Mar 16	115	12	3		
2003 Mar 17	110	15	3		
2003 Mar 18	115	12	3		
2003 Mar 19	115	15	3		
2003 Mar 20	115	15	3		
2003 Mar 21	110	10	3		
2003 Mar 22	105	10	3		
2003 Mar 23	105	10	3		
2003 Mar 24	110	10	3		
2003 Mar 25	110	12	3		
2003 Mar 26	120	15	3		
2003 Mar 27	130	15	3		
2003 Mar 28	140	10	3		
2003 Mar 29	145	15	3		
2003 Mar 30	150	15	3		
2003 Mar 31	150	20	4		

9N – Dov, 4Z4DX will be active (on 160–6 meters CW and digital modes) as 9N7DX from Nepal from 21 April to 15 May. QSL via home call.

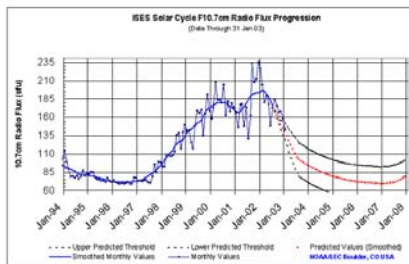
OY – Ronald/PA3EWP, Dick/PA3FQA and Rob/PA5ET will be active from the Faroe Islands (EU–018) from 24 March to 3 April. They will have two stations with amplifiers and will operate on 10–160 meters CW, SSB, RTTY and PSK31 with some SSTV. The call signs will be OY/home call, but they have also applied for a local call sign to be used on 80/160 meters and during the CQ WPX SSB Contest. QSLs via PA5ET (Rob Snieder, Van Leeuwenstraat 137, 2273 VS Voorburg, The Netherlands). More information can be found on the Low Land DX–pedition Team’s web site (<http://www.qsl.net/lddxt>).

CT3, MADEIRA. Operators Rosel/DL3KWR and Hardy/DL3KWF are to be active as CT3/homecall from Madeira (DIP MA–001), March 6–20th. Their activity will be mainly CW on the WARC bands. QSL via their home call signs, direct or via the bureau. Bureau QSL requests are available via E–mail at: dl3kwr@dar.de.

J2, DJIBOUTI. Karsten, DL2LAH, is expected to be active from here between the end of February and the beginning of June. Currently his call sign is unknown. His activity will be on the HF bands and 6 meters. QSL via his home call sign. Cards will be answered after his return home.

ST, SUDAN. Gerben, PA5NT, states that there is a possibility that he will be active from the Sudan again after March 16th. The latest details and the final announcement will be available via his web site. ADDED NOTE: The ST2X story is now available on Dan’s Web site and can also be downloaded in PDF format (as well as the JWOPK story). Dan’s Web site is at: <http://www.dx.to/>

T8, PALAU. Seiji, JH6RTO, will be active as T88FS from March 13–17th. He will operate on 80–6 meters and on CW/SSB/RTTY. He points out that there is wrong QSL information on the Web clusters for both his 2001 and 2002 activities. The correct QSL route is via JH6RTO. His address can be found on the QRZ.com Web site or use: Seiji Fukushima, 1182–2506 Hase, Atsugi–city 243–0036 Japan.



From the foregoing graph it looks like the days of 200 SFI numbers are a thing of the past and we will be waiting until the next peak before there is any hope of seeing that number again. However, the DX is still out there and they will be still looking for us and we for them. We just need to look in different places and different frequencies. On a personal note I seem to do better when the SFI is changing 20 or more points either up or down rather than when it is at an elevated level.

From the various DX resources, here is some DX that will be active this month:

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8Q – Ivan, 8Q7VR has been active from the Maldives (AS–013) since 16 February and will be there until May. QSL via UR9IDX.

SUDAN, ST. Dr. Nadir, ST2NH is usually QRV on 10 meters using SSB around 1000z. QSL to home call. Meanwhile, ST1MN is QRV until June 30. QSL via IV3OWC.

SABA ISLAND, PJ6, NA–145. Klaus, PJ6/DJ4SO, is active in CW/SSB/RTTY on 6–40m (perhaps also on 80/160m) between Feb 18 and Mar 12. QSL via DJ4SO.

SUDAN, ST. Marco, ST1MN, is a new station in the Sudan. He will hit the airwaves from Feb 28 until June. Marco has no pile up experience at all, so please be patient with him! Claudio, IV3OWC, will join him by the mid of March and will sign ST1C for one month. A participation in the CQ WPX SSB Contest is planned as well. QSL via IV3OWC.

A3, TONGA. Five German operators (Irina/DL8DYL, Reinhard/DL8YRM, Thomas/DL5LYM, Wolfgang/DL4WG and Ralf/DL9DRA) will be active from March 17th through April 5th. Their call signs and bands/modes of activity were not provided. QSL Manager is DL8YRM. QSL via the bureau or direct.

This month I would like to reflect on the DX Clusters and how they can help your DX country count.

DX being a lifelong quest is like all long-term things. It changes. In the beginning it was tune and listen, tune and listen. Then maybe at some ham get-together, on the air or face-to-face, some of the things learned from all that tuning and listening was shared with fellow DXers. You know the stuff: "I worked xx0xx on 40."; "I have heard 5C3XXX on 14.195 every night at 02:00 this week." and "Maybe if you try the long path at 13:00 you will hear the 9v4xx that I have been hearing." These kinds of comments although they are helpful were the only thing available in the early days.

Then the telephone came of age and the sharing of information became a bit more current and the topics of interest were spread rapidly in near real-time. One Dixer could call another Dixer to tell him he just worked 9N3xx on 15M at 21.007 on the short path. So started the telephone fan-out of the hot DX. The jungle drums were now working on twisted pair and

spotting of DX was born.

Next came the two-meter spotting networks that were simplex and they worked well. The phone didn't wake everybody, but sometimes it was the only way and it still rang from time to time. Two meters soon had repeaters and the spotting became more efficient and accessible to more and more hams. The same information that was passed in the old days was being passed with modern technology.

The trend continued through the linked repeaters and then the packet systems. The packet systems are now linked to the Internet and the spotting is no longer local, but global in nature. The spots can be monitored by computers connected to the Internet or a TNC.

For those new to DXing, I should point out the easiest and least expensive way to monitor the packet cluster in this area and then expand to more elegant means of doing the job.

The least expensive way is get an old scanner or 2M rig and tune it to 145.710 KHz, operated by the TXDXS. The output is then fed to the soundcard in your computer. On the computer you may use any of a number of free software packages to decode the packet information. I use Hyper-Terminal. It is included in the Windows OS. With this setup you are in business and you are not tying up the phone so the local static will be a little lower. The drawback of using a scanner is that you will not be able to post any of the fine DX you spot or work, but the plus side is the scanners are cheap and they are everywhere. I guess the same could be said of older two-meter rigs and HTs. Also it is possible to use a TNC that is already in the shack with the communication package that is in the OS you are using rather than the soundcard software. These methods work but there are no bells or whistles.

If you have a chance to use the phone for dial up service for longer periods of time, you may want to try one of the following. Perhaps late at night after most of the household has gone to bed or gotten wrapped up in the TV. Oh! Yes. There are some lucky hams that have broadband access as well. For those of you in this category there exists a freeware program called "DX Monitor" that will connect you to the Internet site of your choice (It comes pre-configured to go to DX Summit.) This program will allow you to set alarms for

DX you need to work, to only see spots from those only in the local area and many other fancy features. This is a real deal.

Using the modern smoke signals, like the information from DX Summit, you should become much more efficient at bagging the DX. The URL to DX Summit is <http://oh2aq.kolumbus.com/dxs/> and the URL to download the "DX Monitor" program and a soundcard program for packet, "Hamscope," is here <http://www.qsl.net/k7hg/software.html> and it is free.

Al, W5ADF, says he does it another way. "For getting DX spots I use a freeware program called RXCLUS. The way I have it set up is using my IC–2100H mounted on a piece of cherry wood for a base and an external switch to go from TNC to Voice mode using the external speaker jack on the rig. Of course I can't log in with this configuration but I find that most times someone is always logged in at 145.71 anyway. It has no logging function but you can keep track of your DXCC or IOTA status with it. Hey, what do you want for free? It requires Windows and it is a 32-bit program. For us retired poor folks not having DSL, it is a good tool. <http://rehalmas.users.ch/>. For a really good tool, try TRX-Manager, complete control of your rig with logging and beautiful displays, click on spots and the rig goes there. I believe for most Yaesu's, Kenwood's and Icom's. I have the demo and it really is great; now to get my YL to buy it for me for my birthday. It can be found at www.hosenose.com." Thanks Al for the great input, but do you think I could get my birthday on her list as well? One can always hope.

Now there are many more programs that will watch the packet clusters and many of you with the current logging programs will attest to their ability to monitor the DX Cluster as well as produce spots. In fact when using the new programs one must be careful or every entry logged will be posted to the cluster. These programs do require dollars and they are beyond the scope of this article. However they are very nice and that subject will be investigated in the future. The programs for monitoring the cluster are free and they work well with the old standard #2 word processor used with Big Chief, older logging programs, text editors, spreadsheets or any other similar software.

*Gud DX
Terry, KQ5U*

Virginia Young Radio Amateurs Association

The Virginia Young Radio Amateurs Association (VYRAA) has started a youth HF Net. Since that name was a bit long to say we have named it the North American Youth Net (NAYN). The net is sponsored by the VYRAA and by Steve Traylor KF4ZGD in Virginia. The net meets every Friday night at 6pm CST (0000Z) on 14329.0 + or -. Sam Szarka AD6XS in

Colorado has been a very "loud" net control and I, Colin Jenkins, KD5TMF, have done the Back-up. This net has blasted off and encourages all youth hams or the young at heart to check in and discuss any topic of interest. So stop by on Friday night to check in to the North American Youth Net. We do encourage any Techs to check in with a higher license class ham as control op,

as well as third party youth check-ins. Hope to hear "y'all" on the NAYN soon! The web page is <http://www.hamquick.com/youth/>, and any changes to frequency or updates will be added there.

73,
Colin Jenkins KD5TMF
"The youth is the future of ham radio"

ARRL DX CW and SSB

Another Mexico adventure has come and gone. This year we sent two teams down to operate ARRL DX CW and SSB as 6D2YFM. Both operated Multi-two. At the current time both are in second place behind two good Caribbean teams. VP5LP CW and PJ2T SSB.

Scores
CW 6847 Q's 7,993,636 points

SSB 9824 Q's 9,692,222 points
CW Crew: N6MU, N5DO, K5NZ, W5MJ, K5ZTY, W5SB, NO5W, N1LN

SSB Crew: N5DO, KE5OG, W5IDX, W5SB, W5PF, KA5AKG, KD5BXZ, KK5LO

Dave N5DO and Bill KE5OG are from the Big Bend Radio Club in Alpine. Both are very good ops. John N6MU

joined the CW team from CA.

Tom KD5EIJ cooked for the CW crew and Ken KA5AKG was the camp cook for SSB. We ate VERY well on both events.

It was wet and cold both weekends.

Bill W5SB

RF Interference Article Update

Harry Gage offers the following update to the article on RF Interference published in the August 2002 issue of NARS News.

Information about toroids and ferrite split-beads may be obtained by writing to Palomar Engineering, Box 46-2222,

Escondido, CA 92046. The company can supply you with a catalog and data sheets.

ARRL has a number you can call for help guidance, 860-594-0333, although they do prefer that you go for help at the local level. At the local level

we have Center Point, a division of Reliant Energy. Arthur Johnson heads up the radio shop at Center Point. His crew makes house calls to check for power interference. Arthur's number is 713-945-6304.

Harry AC5XD

Annual Picnic 2003

During the February Board meeting it was decided that NARS would have a picnic this year. I offered my QTH since there is plenty of room for parking and two previous successful picnics were held here. The date is set for Saturday, April 26, 11:00 AM until 5:00 PM.

Plans are underway to line up tables and chairs, food and equipment for various games and other activities. Volunteers

are needed.

Someone with a truck will need to pick up the tables and chairs from the rental company. Also, food will likely be BBQ from the Rib Tickler in Tomball, and someone with an SUV can pick it up.

If you have equipment for a game such as horseshoes, badminton or softball,

please let me know. There is plenty of open space available.

Mark your calendar now for this fun, informal get-together. Full details will be published in the April newsletter. Contact me if you are interested in helping. Thanks.

Keith WD5DXL, keith@dutson.net
281-351-7683

Welcome, Congratulations and Condolences

Welcome new members Larry Crawford KI5BA, Joe Milstead KD5UTO, Kevin Paxson NI5O and Bob Wall.

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

Satellite:

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

Web Authoring:

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

Packet:

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

VHF/UHF:

Brian Derx N5BA
281-894-5942, n5ba@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, n5et@arrl.net
Brian Derx N5BA – WAS, VUCC
281-894-5942, n5ba@arrl.net
H O Townsend K5CX – WAZ
281-376-7416, k5cx@arrl.net

NARS Public Information Officer:

Peter Wang KF5ND
281-550-3864 kf5nd@yahoo.com

PC Programming and Operations:

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

NARS Information

PRESIDENT & BOARD CHAIRMAN

Gregg Erlenbusch W5IDX
281-970-6860 W5DIX@qsl.net

VICE PRESIDENT

Bruce Meier N1LN
936-271-1096 n1ln@arrl.net

SECRETARY

Bob Walworth N5ET
281-363-0209 n5et@arrl.net

TREASURER

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

DIRECTORS

Danny Richards N5BE
281-999-4481 n5be@arrl.net
Terry Myers KQ5U
281-443-6042 kq5u@arrl.net
Rob Nixon KD5BXZ
281-890-7074 kd5bxz@arrl.net
George Levandoxki KD5AYF
713-895-0700 kd5ayf@arrl.net

ACTIVITIES CO-CHAIRMAN

Terry Myers KQ5U
Danny Richards N5BE

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

NETS

10M Ragchew: Mon 8:00 PM, 28,444 ssb
Coordinator: Jim Kirk KJ5X
281-376-0718 kj5x@swbell.net

WEB SITE

URL: <http://www.w5nc.org>
Webmaster: H.O. Townsend K5CX
281-376-7416 k5cx@arrl.net

NARS REFLECTOR

NARS@mailman.qth.net
Coordinator: Peter Wang KF5ND
281-550-3864 kf5nd@yahoo.com

TEXAS QSO PARTY

Coordinator: H.O. Townsend K5CX
281-376-7416 k5cx@arrl.net

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)

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Editor: Keith Dutson WD5DXL
281-351-7683, keith@dutson.net

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