

NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

August 2004

August Meeting – Weak Signal VHF

I have been asked to provide my bi–semi–sesqui–occasional talk to the club regarding weak signal VHF. Since I just worked Michigan on 2 Meters last night, I guess it is about time to once again try and convince the club members that VHF is not just for FM yakking.

Since the FCC has now determined that the entry skills for ham radio today do not require CW and HF, but now foist the newly licensed ham on VHF frequencies, I will again try to educate all to the possibilities that can be had on the world above 50 MHz. Turn off the thought that VHF is line of sight, unless you consider that you can see the moon. My longest Two Meter QSO was all the way from North Houston to Manville, but it was via the MOON! 239,000 miles each way! N5BLZ in Cypress last year received his DXCC on 2 Meters. That takes a bit more skill than on HF.

I'll try not to get into too much of the esoteric stuff that can be done on the bands, but technology is making great strides in enabling QSO's that previously were unthinkable. Come and hear what you can do while you're watching the A index destroy HF and the sunspots drop toward the 11 year minimum.
Brian N5BA

NARS 2004 Raffle

Raffle ticket sales are really picking up!! We have just over one month left to sell tickets since we will be selecting the winning ticket at the NARS meeting on Friday, September 17. So, please – SELL, SELL, SELL!!

Here are some quick stats:

- We are now on the profit side to the tune of just at \$750!!! Many thanks to all of you who have sold tickets!! And, there are plenty of additional tickets that are out and yet to be sold.
- The race for the top seller remains very tight. In fact, there is only one dollar of sales separating the top two sellers.
- At the July NARS, \$500 in raffle sales monies was collected!
- For those of you selling tickets, summary information is available on the club website: http://www.w5nc.org/raffle_inst.pdf
- At the end of the monthly NARS meeting, a report is given to the group regarding the total ticket sales. Please bring the monies and stubs you've collected to the next meeting!

One of the goals of the raffle is to raise enough profit to defray some of the costs of the banquet in January. Since the banquet is available to all club members, wouldn't it be appropriate for all club members to help with the selling of the raffle tickets?? If you need tickets, please let me know. I'll be happy to get them to you. With your help, we will be able to reach our goal! Thank you!

If you have any questions or need further information, please let me know.

Happy selling!
Laurie – N1YXU

Important Dates

Friday, Aug 20, 7:30 PM – General Membership meeting, Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church – Eyeball QSOs, 7:00 PM.

Saturday, Aug 28, 8:30 AM – VE License Exam Session, Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just South of Main).

Tuesday, Aug 31, 7:30 PM – Board of Directors meeting, Terra Nova Clubhouse, 5200 Woodville.

Saturday, Sep 4, 8:00 AM till noon – Tomball Tailgate Sale, Near Catholic Church on S. Cherry Street (in back); operational HF station for demonstration to public; free “Archie Ham Radio Comics” for the young prospective hams.

Contests

Aug 14–15 Maryland DC QP, WAE CW DX
Aug 21–22 NA QP SSB, NJ QP, SARTG WW RTTY
AUG 28–29 YO DX, Ohio QP
Sep 4–5 All Asian SSB DX
Sep 8–10 YLRL Howdy Days
Sep 11–12 WAE SSB DX, ARRL Sep VHF QP
Sep 12 NA CW Sprint
Sep 25–26 TX QP, CQ WW RTTY DX

Wednesday Lunch Bunch

Aug 18 Neal's Restaurant
Aug 25 Matthais' Restaurant
Sep 1 Hill Country Kitchen Buffet
Sep 8 Casa Imperial Mexican
Sep 15 Red Lobster

Wednesday Lunch Bunch – West

Aug 18 Charlie's Hamburgers
Aug 25 Cafe Express
Sep 1 Chili's
Sep 8 Fuddrucker's
Sep 15 Escalante Mexican

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

August 2004

Nominations being Accepted

As August comes around, it is time to start thinking about nominations for the 2005 NARS Board of Directors. My first article of this year talked about what you can do for your club by volunteering. This included being part of one of the many activities the club either sponsors or is involved in. Well, if you are ready to get involved, becoming a board member would certainly be a great way to do that. This year, you will be electing the following club officers:

- > vice-president
- > treasurer
- > secretary
- > director
- > director

In the past, the nominees were announced at the October meeting. This year, the October meeting will be a joint meeting between at least four clubs, (see the other half of my column) so the names of the nominees will be announced by email on the NARS reflector and in the November newsletter. Hopefully, most of the members receive one or both of these communications. At the November meeting, you will cast your votes for the 2005 NARS Board of Directors.

This is your club. Come forward yourself and volunteer for an open position. Nominate someone for an open position.

Coy Day to attend October NARS meeting

In October, we will have the honor of hosting Coy Day, N5OK, at our monthly general membership meeting. If you don't know Coy, he is the ARRL Director for the West Gulf Division. Since the opportunity to have Coy visit Houston and address our Club does not happen all the time, we have taken the liberty of extending the invitation to attend the meeting to some other clubs in the area. Because of the increased attendance, the Board is currently discussing having the meeting at a different location. When we have an idea about attendance, we will decide where to have the meeting and immediately communicate to everyone.

Keep October 15th open – I am sure it will be a GREAT meeting.

Bruce Meier
NILN

Public Service Events

Your Radio Skills Are Needed

Events officially sponsored by NARS include Buffalo Bayou Regatta (May), SIRE Ride–A–Thon (October) and Sunmart Texas Trails Run (December). Events supported by NARS members include Houston Marathon, MS 150 and Wings Over Houston.

Plan to help with one or more of these events in 2004.

VE Session Results

The NARS VE test session, held July 24, 2004, served seven candidates. The results were three new Technicians, and one upgrade to Extra.

The VE's in attendance were Keith Dutson WD5DXL, Walter Hock KK5LO, Jim Kirk KJ5X, Paul Frantz W5PF, Bob Walworth N5ET, Madison Jones W5MJ and Walter Holmes K5WH. We were assisted by Eddy Reynolds KD5QQH. Eddy has submitted his VE application to the ARRL/VEC and we hope to utilize him as a new VE, next session.

Thanks to all for your help. These sessions can't happen without you guys.

The next NARS VE test session will be held on August 28, 2004. We'll see you there.

Norm Covey K5OS
NARS VE Session Manager

Highlights from the NARS Board Meeting

The regular monthly NARS board meeting was held on July 27 at the Terranova Clubhouse. The following board members were in attendance: Bruce Meier, Tom Hoherd, Jerry Whiting, Paul Frantz, Terry Myers, Chuck Sanders, Lee Kinard along with the following guests: Joe Sokolowski, Laurie Meier, and H.O. Townsend. Highlights of the meeting:

- **Programs** – Terry reported that the August program will be a VHF program presented by N5BA, and September will be a presentation on Log Book of the World by Paul Frantz. He also reported that plans are being made for a special program in October by Coy Day N5OK, ARRL West Gulf Division Director. Regarding this special program, the following main concerns of the board were discussed: getting the word out and finding a proper location for the event. Bruce took an action item to contact several local clubs to determine their interest in participating and Jerry Whiting took an action item to check on a facility in the 1960 area. The Board is interested in hearing from any members having suggestions for a facility at which to hold the meeting. Stay tuned for more on the topic of this special meeting in future club meetings.

- **Voice Repeater** – Bruce reported that the new antenna from Force 12 has been received and is in the process of being prepared for the site. He also reported that work should be underway the week of July 26 or August 3 to mount the antenna.

- **Texas QSO Party** – H.O. reported that his efforts to recruit sponsors for the TQP plaques has met with great success as he currently has twelve sponsors that have come forward. He indicated TQP was beginning to be talked up on various e-mail reflectors that he frequents around the state so he is anticipating some excellent activity from within Texas. Next goal will be to start talking TQP up on some of the national and international reflectors. A slot is still open for anyone wishing to coordinate the NARS TQP Special Event operation. Recall from last month that this idea was introduced as a partial alternative to the cancelled Field Day. Much like Field Day, it could be a good social event as well as being as much of a contesting event as the participants want to make of it. The board is interested in hearing from anyone wishing to volunteer to coordinate this special event.

- **NARS Fund Raiser** – Laurie reported that the Cruise Raffle fund raiser is shaping up as a winner with the club finally breaking through the "breakeven point". She encouraged everyone to keep those tickets moving as we enter the final stages of the campaign.

On the last Tuesday of each month the board meets at 7:30 pm at the Terranova Club House to discuss club business and to set direction for the club. All members are invited to attend the board meetings and if interested should contact any board member if directions are needed or if they desire a specific item to be on the agenda.

C. W. Sanders, NO5W
NARS Secretary

Ham and “Sheez” News

Adopt-a-Platoon Update

Many thanks to all of you for your contributions to the July baseball care package! Since Houston was the site of this year’s All Star game, the troops will enjoy reading through the local newspaper information covering the game. They will also enjoy the many packages of drink mixes, beef jerky, popcorn, and gum. Your continued support in this effort is truly appreciated!

The theme for the August care package is two-fold. We recently learned that the troops are in dire need of drink mixes. We also learned that they are in need of socks. So, you guessed it, the two themes are drink mixes and socks. The suggested drink mixes would include Kool-Aid, Gatorade, or other powdered mixes. Single packages of sugar for the drink mixes would also be appreciated. The troops tend to carry the mixes and sugar and make the drinks in their canteens. As far as the socks, the recommendation is white athletic socks for both men and women.

If you would like to contribute any items toward the monthly care package, please bring the items to the NARS meeting on August 20. If you would prefer to make a donation toward defraying postage expenses, there will also be a coffee can for donations at the meeting. Please also remember to bring items that we can include in our weekly letters — newspaper articles, comic strips, postcards, drawings, etc. Thank you in advance.

July Activities

Our July meeting truly broke tradition. We decided to treat ourselves to a “chick flick”! Ten of us met and saw the movie, “The Notebook”. There were not too many dry eyes by the end of the movie. It was an excellent movie, and, yes, even the guys would like it! Gentlemen – If you haven’t used your coupon from the banquet (I’m sure you remember what I’m talking about), you may want to consider taking your wife/significant other to this movie.

Due to conflicting schedules, we did not attend the races at Sam Houston Race Park. That outing has been put on the “back burner” and will be scheduled probably for October. We will check the racing schedule and chose an appropriate Friday or Saturday evening to venture over to the park. More information will be available shortly.

Upcoming Activities

Several months ago, Desi Livingston hosted a truly terrific Bunko party at her home. She has graciously agreed to host the second (of I’m sure many) Bunko party. And, she has the absolutely perfect home for the party — if you don’t know what I’m talking about, you’ll just have to join us to see it for yourself. And, if you haven’t played Bunko before, don’t worry. It is incredibly easy and equally as fun! Please make sure that you join us on Friday, August 27. Directions and further information will follow shortly. You really don’t want to miss this evening.

In past updates, you have read that we have enjoyed learning how to make cards. At our August meeting, on Monday the 30th, we are going to continue the card making theme and work with Tere, a friend of Shannon’s, who is a Stamping It Up distributor. Tere will bring the supplies for each of us to create five individual greeting cards. The cost will be \$5 per person for all five cards. This is a true bargain since it is impossible to find a nice greeting card for only \$1. Be sure to mark down the date and join us. You will be very surprised at how fun and easy the cards are to make. Your creativity may also take you by surprise.

The second annual wine tasting party will be held at the Sinclairs (Thank you, Tina and Eddie!) on Saturday, September 18. Last year, the wine tasting party was truly one of the highlights of the year. Here’s a preview — each couple brings a bottle of wine and a finger food to accompany the wine. The couple also researches the wine and gives an

overview of some of the interesting facts — winery, wine making process, etc. Then, we all get to have a sample of the wine! The goal is to attempt to have a mini progressive dinner by making sure that some folks bring appetizers, some bring hors d’oeuvres, some bring desserts. More information will be coming shortly. In the meantime, if you are interesting in attending, please let either Tina or me know.

The program for our September meeting is still under construction; however, we are hoping to have a special guest. As soon as definite plans are known, they will be communicated.

Ladies — If you haven’t been able to join us in the past, please feel free to come to any meeting or monthly event. We really look forward to seeing you and enjoy welcoming new folks to the group!

Monthly Recipe

Chile-Glazed Pork Ribs (From the Campbell’s Kitchen) – Something quick and easy for the summer!

Prep Time: 10 min. o Cook Time: 1 hr. 15 min.

3 lbs. pork spareribs, cut into pieces
2 tsp. ground cumin
2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 jar (17.5 oz) Pace enchilada sauce
1/4 cup honey

Rub spareribs with cumin and cinnamon. Arrange in 13”x9” baking dish. Bake at 400°F. for 30 minutes. Turn ribs over and bake 15 minutes. Mix enchilada sauce and honey. Pour enchilada sauce mixture over ribs. Bake 30 minutes or until tender, basting occasionally. To serve, stir sauce and spoon over ribs. Serves 6.

Enjoy!

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

QUA* Jim McClain KD5WVE?

My first introduction to my newest interviewee was a few weeks ago before Field Day. I was listening to my voice mail and heard laughing at the beginning of the message and then one of the friendliest voices I have encountered in a long time. Jim McClain KD5WVE is in the middle of some health difficulties, but doesn't let the world know unless questioned by a sleuth such as myself. I also learned something new – maybe you will too.

Jim is a true native Houstonian. He was born in the old Methodist Hospital, which was recently torn down. He went to Reagan High School, where he met Hoyd King, who is now known as KC5RQB.

Jim's introduction to amateur radio was at a neighbor's house, Herbert roper. He and his son were both hams. Jim spent many hours at the radio with them in their teenage years. One afternoon they heard an interesting voice and finally contacted King Hussein of Jordan. He was a very friendly person and discussed his love for fishing with Jim. He even invited him to come to Jordan to fish!

But, believe it or not, even after that experience, Jim never got his ticket. The normal course of work, marriage, and children kept him too busy to pursue the hobby.

He was married to Betty for 40 years. She lost her battle with cancer six years ago. They have a son, Robert who lives in Katy, with his wife and Jim's grandchild, Nichole Cheyanne Dawn McClain (isn't that a great name!).

He recently renewed his friendship with Hoyd and his wife. He had been the best man at their wedding. She told Hoyd that he needed a hobby and we all know where that leads. . .

Jim started his career with Western Auto repairing almost anything they sold. He specialized in heating and air conditioning.

He has worked for National Oil Supply since leaving Western Auto. He began a new process called powder coat painting in 1977. (I've seen this mentioned on products before, but never knew what it meant – learn something new every interview!) This process uses dry paint and gives a positive charge to the paint and a negative charge to the object. The paint bonds to the surface. Their process is run through an oven. He is just now seeing items he painted in 1977 back for a new coat of paint! (If they did this on cars the paint would last longer than the vehicle!)

The company just received an award from the city for Excellent Water Treatment. Jim was responsible for setting up the testing and processing of their waste water.

He received the phone call about the award while at home recovering from back difficulties, which are much better. The only problem is that the back influenced a new knee problem. So, he now has plans for a knee replacement. We had discussion about bionic parts – I want a bionic eye – maybe someday!

KD5WVE received his license May 30, 2003, a few weeks after me! He has since been on the look-out for equipment and has found some bargains. An Icom 746, a Kenwood TS130S mobile, a G5RV antenna, a 706MK2G Icom and even a Heathkit tube radio he found through a HAM in Georgia.

Hoyd keeps bugging him about practicing code and he knows this is the next step to really use some of this new equipment. He has his spot picked out for a "shack" in the backyard. Together they work the Texas QSO party at Hoyd's.

Jim's life-long hobby is fishing. He won nearly every contest he entered as a teenager. It confounded many veteran anglers. He still has a rod and reel that he won in a contest in Louisiana. He now also buys and restores fishing equipment. (I have a "fish story" and if you ask at the next meeting I'll tell it.)

He also enjoys hunting. (I haven't found anybody who wants to go with me, so I don't have any hunting stories!) [ROTFL! – ed]

Through his church he is the secretary of an organization that builds apartments for seniors in the Independence Heights area. They just completed the paper-work on a 63-unit, two-story building, and have been maintaining and administrating another complex called Heights Tower. These seniors have lived in the mostly black community all their lives and their houses are in bad repair. They are very proud of their new places. One lady, when she sees a speck of dirt on the hall carpet, gets her vacuum cleaner and cleans the entire hall!

When I asked him to describe himself he said "I just do what the Good Lord asks of me and keep on going." Well, Jim we're glad NARS will have the influence of your positive approach to life.

*Schalee Lodge, KD5WLL
Ham & Sheez Reporter*

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

DX News

“For All the NARS DX News Fit to Print”

Hello DX Gang. The month of July was pretty uneventful at this QTH. Did manage one new one, OJ0J Market Reef on 20M phone. Thanks Martti. What a set of ears this guy has. A couple of cards trickled in for new counts.

5V7C Togo, worked March 04 17M phone. R1FJ Franz Josef Island worked March 04 on 20M phone.

What a deal, 221 now confirmed on phone with a vertical. OK enough from the peanut gallery; let's see what the big guns did.

Cal W5FW has an interesting report.

Haven't worked a thing. Did put up the Mosley TA33 Mini WARC on a push up pole (as we will have in Port Stanley) at WD5DXL's and it worked perfect. The antenna breaks down to about 50" and fits the ski box nicely.

All our Plane tickets came through this week, so we are good to go to VP8!!

Working on a tilt over, slide in framework, for my tandem trailer. It will hold 30 foot of Rohn 25 with 10 foot mast, 12 V electric winch to bring it into position. Getting it ready for that rare West Texas County for TQP 2005.

Two more cards came in for 80 – makes 98 in – now just two cards away from 5 band DXCC. Just have to keep breathing!!!

Well Cal, I think you will be breathing for a while longer. I do have the Falklands confirmed on the 10M band but like all, we will be trying to work you on 17 or 20M. 6000 miles and at least two hops or more across South America. We shall see. Gud Luck.

Bruce, NILN is still after them on 160M

>> Still inching closer to DXCC – 160:
As of June 29th: 103 worked / 89 confirmed
As of July 29th: 103 worked / 91 confirmed

added: DU9/N0NM – Philippines
3B9C – Rodrigues

As for new ones worked and other activity – pretty slow. I did have some fun on 20CW working many UAs from about 01:00 to 02:00 UTC. One night I had a constant group calling me for the entire time. Usually 4 – 5 (minimum) pile-up. I don't know what is rare about Texas to create the activity – but it was fun.

Bill N5LYG sent this in.

I did not get any new ones this month but did venture to Galveston to partake in the IOTA contest. We (N5LYG and KD5FTK) “activated” NA-143. Probably the best contact was 5R8FU (Madagascar AF-013) on 20m early Saturday (7/24/04 @ 13:58z) morning. We ended up working about 30 different islands and did not really work hard at the contest but we had fun.

Well Bill, Madagascar is not too shabby. Thanks for the report.

Collin KU5B is really getting into DX

Not as good a month as June but still a few new band countries.

T77C 20 CW, OJ0J 20 SSB, 3A2MD 20 CW, ST2T 20 SSB 6W4RK 20 CW, SU9BN 20 CW, 5B4AGC 20 CW 9Y4/KE9I 30 CW SX2004D 17 CW, ZC4CW 17 CW, YW6C 17 CW, CU3GD 17 SSB EA8AST 15 SSB, SX2A/29 15 SSB, ZL6QH 15 CW KP2/AA1VU 12 SSB, 9Y4/AJ9C 12 CW

170 worked multi-mode currently
39 confirmed multi-mode

FB, now to get all those contacts confirmed.

Lee K5AVY Has a good report for July.
Hey, what am I doing wrong; I never hear any of these stations.

QSL cards: LZ03KM, Bulgaria; YO2RR, Romania; 3B9C, Rodrigues Is.; LY2004R, Lithuania; V31XW, Belize; ZA/OH2BH (ZA1UT), Albania. Nice haul and DXCC at 98 now.

Stations worked: S5048AL, S50R, Slovenia; ZK1USA, Cook Is.; ZL1TM, ZL2UO, New Zealand; A35DX, Tonga, a bunch of Russians and a few of the ships on the air. Also had some fun with the IOTA contest. It's great when everyone in the world is on the air! Just zip up and down the bands and see who is next.

Lee, congrats on the LZ card. Took me years to get one. Mail theft or whatever.

From Mike K5UO

New and rare DX worked by K5UO: None. Waiting on a P5 to finish them up – again!

Only new band-counters:

1. OJ0J 7/2 14.026 0139Z 1st call w/ TennaDyne T-12 (must be working); 2. SV1ASP/A 7/11 14.169 00:30Z; 3. ZC4CW 7/14 14.010 00:23Z; 4. 5W0DL 7/14 18.072 1142Z

Well Mike, I think you've worked them all. How about WAA, Worked all appliances in your neighbors house. I know it's a challenge to get QSL cards from a microwave but that's the beauty of it all. Thanks for the report.

And last but not least from H.O. K5CX.

July 2004 DX was up and down. Really! On the up-side was the opportunity to log 39 countries. On the down side was the A index of 127. That basically means that the bands were dead for a while. Nothing like a CME to close the bands.

But again on the up-side were the 39 countries and 41 prefixes logged. Here are the prefixes: 3D2, 9A, CT, CT3, DL, EA, EI, EM, F, FG, FO, G, HA, HR, HZ, I, JA, JW, KC6, KH6, KP2, LX, OD, OE, OH, OJ0, OZ, P4, PJ2, PY, SV, T9, V3, VE, YI, YN, YO, YU, YV, and ZL.

QSOs by band went this way: 3 on 80-meters, 12 on 40, 46 on 20, 7 on 17, 5 on 15, and 2 on 10 meters. Yes, 10-meters!

Highlights were the 40-meter Qs: Portugal, Guadeloupe, Italy, Austria, Aruba, European Russia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Canada, and Romania. The 80-meter Qs were pretty nice especially logged during the summer. Here they are: Spain, Aruba, and Netherland Antilles.

For the last several years I've been trying to work the HQ stations during the IARU contest. This year I added a few more to the logged list. A couple of these I already have cards for: 8N1HQ Japan, 9A0HQ Croatia, GB5HQ England, IU2HQ Italy, IU7HQ Italy, OE9XHQ Austria, OZ1HQ Denmark, P40HQ Aruba, PJ2HQ Netherland Antilles, R7HQ European Russia, T90HQ Bosnia-Herzegovina, TM0HQ France, YR0HQ Romania, and YT80HQ Yugoslavia.

73 es gd DX, H. O. – K5CX

I guess that's it for this month. Hope to hear you on the bands.

73
Al Fritsche W5ADF

Welcome, Congratulations and Condolences

Condolences to the family of Lowell Good KC5UHW, SK.

NARS Resource List

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REPEATERS

2M: 146.060 / 146.660 (KA5AKG)
Tone: 141.3
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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