

NARS NEWS



The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

June 2004

June Meeting - Batteries

Batteries - batteries - batteries everywhere. How do we care for them? What do we feed them? How do we feed them? What do we do to them for first aid and when do we give them their last rites? If you have ever wondered about any of these things, be sure to attend the NARS meeting on June 18. We will be enlightened by Doug Roberts of Interstate Batteries on the ins and outs of all kinds of batteries. Doug has been in the communication business, in a variety of ways, for the last 20 years. Doug isn't a ham but has always wanted to be one, but has been side tracked by restoring older muscle cars. Doug has just recently completed training on a new machine used to rejuvenate batteries that may otherwise have been headed to boot-hill. Join us for an enlightening evening on batteries.

NARS 2004 Raffle

Hopefully by now, you are familiar with the NARS raffle for this year. The prize is a \$1,200 gift certificate that is valid on both Royal Caribbean and Carnival Cruise Lines!! There is also a \$50 gift certificate or \$50 cash prize (winner's choice) for the NARS or Ham and "Sheez" member who raises the most funds through raffle tickets sales. The drawing for the grand prize will take place at our September NARS meeting. Further detailed information can be found on the NARS website. Additionally, for those of you who are selling tickets, please go to the following URL for information about the raffle:

http://www.w5nc.org/raffle_inst.pdf

Ticket sales are going very well. At the time of the writing of this article, approximately \$600 has been turned in to NARS and an additional \$150 in sales are known. This means that we have already covered over half of the cost of the grand prize!

At recent meetings, several of you have taken raffle tickets to sell. Please make every effort to sell the tickets and bring the ticket stubs and monies collected to the June meeting. A monthly report is given regarding the number of tickets sold and dollars collected. Thanks for your selling efforts!

The goal of the raffle is to raise enough profit to defray some of the costs of the banquet in January. With your help, we will be able to reach our goal!

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

Happy selling!
Laurie - NIYXU

Important Dates

Friday, June 18, 7:30 PM - General Membership meeting, Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church - Eyeball QSOs, 7:00 PM.

Saturday, July 24, 8:30 AM - VE License Exam Session, Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just South of Main). **NOTE: NO JUNE VE SESSION because of Field Day.**

Tuesday, June 29, 7:30 PM - Board of Directors meeting, Terra Nova Clubhouse, 5200 Woodville.

Contests

Jun 19 Kid's Day

Jun 19-20 All Asian CW DX, West VA QSO Party

Jun 26-27 ARRL Field Day

Jul 1 RAC Canada Day

July 3-4 Venezuela Ind. Day

July 10-11 IARU HF World Championship

July 17-18 CQ WW VHF

Wednesday Lunch Bunch

Jun 16 Neal's Restaurant

Jun 23 Matthais' Restaurant

Jun 30 Hill Country Kitchen Buffet

Jul 7 Red Lobster

Jul 14 Casa Imperia Mexican

Wednesday Lunch Bunch - West

Jun 16 Skeeter's

Jun 23 Charlie's Hamburgers

Jun 30 Cafe Express

Jul 7 Chili's

Jul 14 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

June 2004

Field Day:

By the time you are reading this column Field Day will be about 1 1/2 weeks away. It is now time for the many months of planning to come together. Many of you probably asked, "why do we start planning so early?" Well - if you were at the last club meeting you would have heard one good reason. At that time security for Friday night / Saturday morning was still an open issue. I am VERY pleased to update everyone that security is no longer an issue. To the best of my knowledge all major items are well covered and Mike and Marty are down to the details. Remember . . . as we say at work, the devil is in the details, so - we ain't done yet. The weather is still the biggest "DETAIL" and all we can do there is pray. Hope to see you all there and have the opportunity to spend more time wondering, talking, sitting, and yes - a couple of hours operating this year. Forgot one important item - EATING!! After all, this is NARS.

146.66 Update:

Have you had trouble getting into the repeater lately? Well, if you are like most of us the answer is YES!! The main reason for this is directly related to the height of the antenna. The building our antenna is on is for sale and the building management asked us to lower the antenna to make it invisible during the sale process. Well, that put it behind a very high (about 20' or more) steel reinforced cement tilt wall. As we are guests on this building we were quick to comply. If and when the building sells it will be up to the new management to determine if we are allowed to return the antenna to its original height or - even stay on the building. Time will tell. With that in mind we are exploring other alternatives. Believe me - they are few and far between and EXPENSIVE in some cases. We have all been very spoiled with the exceptional performance of .66 for many years and the current 'average' performance we all quickly define as poor. The solution is hopefully out there but will take time to locate, so . . . PLEASE BE PATIENT.

If you are going to HamCom at the end of the month I hope to see you there. If you aren't going to be able to make it - please join Lee Kinard and many others at the June NARS meeting on June 18th. Terry Myers has a great program lined up for you. I wish he could record it for those of us heading north. And - - keep selling those raffle tickets!!!

Until next month - 73.

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 May 22, 2004, served eight candidates. The results were five new Technicians, and one upgrade to Extra.

The VE's in attendance were Keith Dutson WD5DXL, Steve Smothers W9DX, Walter Hock KK5LO, Gregg Erlenbusch W5IDX, Jim Kirk KJ5X and Paul Frantz W5PF.

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

Remember, there is no test session in June.

The next NARS VE Test session will be held on July 24, 2004. I'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 May 25 at the Terranova Clubhouse. The following board members were in attendance: Bruce Meier, Jerry Whiting, Paul Frantz, Terry Myers, Chuck Sanders, Lee Kinard, Rob Nixon along with the following guests: Joe Sokolowski, H.O. Townsend, and Mike Lodge. Highlights of the meeting:

- **Programs** - Terry reported that the June program will be a presentation on batteries by the local Interstate Battery representative.
- **Field Day** - Co-coordinator Mike Lodge gave a brief status report on the Field Day plans reporting that the site and the tent have now been confirmed. Mike also reported that he was following up on the decision reached by the board to hire an off-duty policeman to provide site security.
- **Voice Repeater** - It was noted that problems with the repeater persist. Some brainstorming discussion was held resulting in some possible contingent ideas to explore while the club takes somewhat of a wait and see on how the sale of the building goes and the viewpoint held by new owners and possibly new building management.
- **Texas QSO Party** - H.O. reported that analysis of the logs indicates that 253 of the 254 counties in Texas were covered during the 2003 TQP and that the NARS mobiles alone had covered around 160 counties. He also reported on plans to have a rally of NARS TQP operators on Saturday July 10 to discuss antennas, route plans and explore questions related to the upcoming TQP. H.O. indicated that his solicitation of TQP plaques was going well with six plaque sponsors lined up.
- **VEC Exam Session** - It was reported that the recent exam session resulted in one new extra class and five new technician class amateurs.

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

Thank you very much for your continued support of the troops in Baghdad! Our last care package was filled to the brim with small bottles of suntan lotion, hand cream, lip balm, sun visors, frisbees, and other items that you donated. Although we have not yet heard directly from the soldiers, we are committed to continue our support and feel assured that our letters and boxes are being very happily received and appreciated. I will inform the entire club of the arrival of any correspondence as soon as it is received.

The care package theme for this month will focus on games and Ziploc bags. Let me explain -- We thought it would be a good morale booster to send small games -- for example, decks of playing cards, Uno, Pitch; travel games such as chess and checkers; and other small sized games that would be easy to mail and carry. We have also been informed that very useful items for the troops are Ziploc bags. All sizes of Ziploc bags are used and appreciated. For example, two-gallon sized Ziploc bags are especially helpful to hold folded uniforms and protect the clothing from getting sand-logged. If you would like to contribute any items toward the monthly care package, please bring the items to the NARS meeting on June 18. 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.

May Activities

In May, our traditional monthly meeting was actually “replaced” by the 3rd annual Memorial Day Barbeque at the Meier residence. Approximately, twenty folks attended the festivities, braved the heat and humidity, and had a fantastic afternoon/evening hanging out poolside. As I’m sure you could

guess (since this was a NARS-associated function), we had fabulous food and traded many stories -- some true and others questionable.

We also inaugurated a new annual event -- Team Championship Trivial Pursuit. It truly was a hoot! The basic rules go something like this -- multiple teams are formed; questions from a trivial pursuit card are read a few at a time; each team kibitzes, agrees on the answer to each question, and writes down the answer; after all the questions have been read and pondered, each team announces its answer for each question; the team who answers the most question correctly wins. Sounds pretty straight-forward, huh? Well, trust me, there was quite a lot of creativity and light interpretation of the guidelines. (This was especially true for one of the men’s team -- you know who you are!!!) For this inaugural season, the members of the championship team include Chuck Sanders, Mike Lodge, Mark Tyler, and Bruce Meier. Congratulations, gentlemen! But, be prepared for next year. . .

Upcoming Activities

June promises to be yet another very event-filled month! For the weekend of June 19, several of the ladies will be travelling north to the Dallas area to participate in HamCom. Some of us will work at the NARS table to spread the word about the Texas QSO Party and also actively sell NARS raffle tickets. If we’re not at the NARS table, chances are that you will find us hanging out at the hotel pool -- maybe even practicing team trivial pursuit for next year!! We look forward to seeing many NARSians at HamCom.

The ladies are also in charge of the Greeters Tent for Field Day. As in the past few years, we will greet folks as they arrive and have quite a lot of interesting information available. We will also be promoting this year’s raffle and our support of the troops in Baghdad. Please feel free to pull up a

chair in the Greeters Tent and visit with us. Also, please feel free to bring any items that you might want to display on the table -- pictures of your ham shack, pictures from NARS functions, etc.

Our June meeting will be held on Monday, June 28, at 7:00 at the Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church. Many of the ladies arrive directly from work and bring a dinner to eat. We tend to chat for the first half hour or so and really start the true meeting at 7:30ish. We will be packaging our care package for the troops and planning activities for the summer months. Ladies -- Please make sure that you mark your calendars and attend the meeting. We look forward to seeing you there!

Monthly Recipe

Crunchy Parmesan-Mustard Pork Chops - (Recipe from FoodFit)

Ingredients:

1 cup plain breadcrumbs
1 T melted butter
2 T Dijon mustard
2 T freshly grated Parmesan cheese
1 T chopped, fresh parsley
6 boneless pork loin chops, about 4 ounces each
salt to taste
freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 350. In a small bowl, mix the breadcrumbs, butter, 1 tablespoon of Dijon mustard, Parmesan cheese, and parsley. Season the pork chops with salt and pepper. Spread the remaining mustard on one side of each chop and place the chops (plain side down) on a baking sheet. Divide the breadcrumb mixture among the chops and pat them onto the mustard. Bake the chops until they are fully cooked and the breadcrumbs are nicely browned, about 20 minutes. Serves six.

Enjoy!

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

QUA* Willard Hood KD5EKA?

And I thought I worked hard to get my license! Until I talked with KD5EKA I had little comprehension of the effort that can be put into this hobby. Willard Hood's persistence has paid off. He met the challenges of Morse code and learning new concepts and proudly has his General class license. Willard, who's nickname is Bill, was born on February 1, 1954 in Texas City. His father joined the National Guard and they moved to Arizona. They also lived in Mississippi for a short time.

But, they eventually moved back to Texas - don't we all! They lived off the Gulf Freeway in a sub-division called Pecan Park. They later moved to their current home in Spring Branch.

Willard's family has three cats and he loves all animals, as Franny can tell!

He was born with 20/100 vision and, therefore was unable to get his driver's license or his pilot's license. His dad had a Mooney and let him co-pilot and taught him how to read the instruments. Like me, he is better at instrument flying because he has trouble distinguishing the horizon, but my reason was because I was too short when I was 12 to see over the cowling. His father also flew corporate jets.

He graduated from Spring Branch High School on May 23, 1973. He had attended Special Education classes, which makes his learning the amateur Radio material even more interesting.

He then had a part-time job at an Exxon service station. After that he worked at a machine shop where he met a gentleman who was a member of the Lion's Club.

Bill was involved in a hit and run accident while walking through his neighborhood. A cab driver found him unconscious and called emergency services. He had a concussion and a broken leg. While he was recovering

his machinist friend offered to take him to a Lion's Club meeting when he expressed interest. He took Bill to a few meetings and then sponsored him. He has enjoyed these meetings twice a month for twenty years.

He now works as a custodian at First Baptist in Houston. He is pleased to be able to contribute to God's work.

Bill had been involved in CB radio for a few years until his brother broke his radio. His call sign was KHR2540 and his handle was Green Knight.

He then became curious about Amateur Radio and was directed to Handi-Hams. They referred him to Hoyt King, who had learned Morse code under the instruction of Bob Helton. Bob and Hoyt met with Bill and explained the basics of HAM radio. He was interested and Bob began teaching him one evening a week in January of 1997. He was licensed in May of 1998. He passed his code first and then the theory. He now has his general license, after progressing through each of the classes from Novice forward.

Bill's math and physics knowledge was limited by his Special Education training, so Bob began first by teaching him the basics in each of these. He says that Bill works hard to learn, but once he learns it he can recall it quickly. He has the ability to remember the names and call signs of each individual he meets in the club. When Bob doesn't know someone he asks and Bill has never failed yet; see if you can stump him!

He also has the ability to determine the day of the week for any date. He says it was in the back of prayer book at church! (I know, sometimes I haven't listened to the sermons either!)

Bill's favorite band is 17 meters, but

will work any band that is open. He has contacted Vancouver, Australia, the USSR and Japan. He has also worked several states. He has a code contact of which he is very proud to display the QSL card.

He has a Ten-Tec radio with a vertical and a dipole. Last year he worked the Texas QSO party with Bob. He even contacted me while Laurie and I were traveling around the counties!

Willard enjoys reading Norman Vincent Peale and QST magazine. His other hobby is bowling. He has participated in the Special Olympics Bowling tournaments.

Willard stays very busy and loves meeting people. When I asked him my favorite question, to describe his life, he said, "I can learn anything - so I just go for it!" Bill, we can learn from you!

*Schalee Lodge, KD5WLL
Ham & Sheez Reporter*

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

Letter to the Editor:

Keith, this is Lynn Armstead, Harold Gage's daughter - Several of Dad's HAM buddies were at the funeral home to pay their respects. It was very nice to meet them. My mother wanted me to pass along to all of you her heartfelt thanks both for your calls, cards and visits to Dad, but especially for your friendship - it meant a lot to Dad. He enjoyed his breakfasts and lunches with all of you, and also with helping out on the runs, walks, newsletters, etc. that he volunteered his services for. He truly enjoyed his radio and the connections that he made with it. It added much joy to his life. Thank you all, from Earlyne Gage, and also from the entire Gage family.

Lynn Gage Armstead

DX News

“For All the NARS DX News Fit to Print”

Hello Fellow DX Fans

Well I thought May was a really bad month for DX, but from the following reports it might appear that my trusty R8 Vertical and I have reached the limit till the next cycle. Nothing new was worked in May, but did get a card from T30Z for Western Kiribati. That put me up to 217 Confirmed on Phone. OK that's enough of my pitiful report.

From Cal WF5W

ZS8 (on 20 SSB) last month. Only things on this month were CW 9v, (20 mtr) V63 from Ponapa (30 mtr) and loads of Russians. Ready to get my newly updated control box back for the ring. Then can listen/talk to someone else other than UA9/0's on 20.

Cal, I reported your ZS8 contact in the last newsletter. If you're trying to make us jealous you have succeeded. Hi

From Lee K5AVY

Lee took the time from his busy schedule to report.

I did do some cool DX this last month and got some good cards if I can remember what they are. All on SSB and most on 20 M.

DX worked: YO2RR, Romania; LY2004R, Lithuania; RN6BY, Russia-Black Sea; FO/F6CTL, French Polynesia; S52CK, Slovenia; YU1AB, Serbia & Montenegro; ZL2KOT, New Zealand; T33C, Banaba Is.; PA5A, Netherlands.

Cards RX: ZK1JD, Rarotanga; T32N, East Kiribati; S9SS Sao Tome; PA5A, Netherlands; J79WWW, Dominica; D44AC, Cape Verde; A35RK, Tonga; C5Z, Gambia; 5N6EAM, Nigeria; 5U7WP, Niger.

Thanks Lee

A very nice report from George K5VUU

I received a pleasant surprise in the mail last month - a card from YA8G! This was a dual event in that it was from Afghanistan in the first place and it gave me

confirmation number 300 as well. Now I can submit the next group of confirmed contacts to get the 300 endorsement sticker on my Mixed Band DXCC Certificate. As you know, the closer you get to 300 and thereafter for sure - the opportunities for new ones start to become few and far between.

Some of the more "interesting" cards in this submission are: Burkina Faso; Sable Island; Trindade & Martin Vaz Archipelago; Baker Island; Republic of Djibouti; Ducie Island; Mount Athos; Ceuta; Market Reef; Seychelles Islands; San Felix Island; Syria; Iraq; Ethiopia; Johnston Island; Pakistan; Central African Republic; Turkmenistan; Nigeria and Sudan. These were all worked with a 110 foot long trapped dipole in an inverted vee with the center at 35 feet and the ends at about 15 feet up - and a small footprint beam that is 8 feet above the peak of my roof which makes it 33 feet above the ground. Now the chase really gets challenging!

73 George K5VUU

George, congratulations on the 300, I hope someday I can do the same.

From Bruce NILN

Still moving closer to DXCC - 160:

As of Apr 29th: 103 worked / 82 confirmed
As of May 29th: 103 worked / 85 confirmed

New Country QSLs - (317 confirmed / 320 worked)

EA8BH - Canary Isl - 160 CW; 8R1PRN - Guyana - 160 CW; FY5KE - French Guiana - 160, 75, 40, 20, 15, 10 SSB; ZA1UT - Albania - 75 SSB

As for new ones worked: (all band countries) - - only made 5Qs from home all month.

Thanks Bruce

From Terry KQ5U

It was a slow month here at KQ5U. I did manage to get one 80M contact in the early morning around 6:30 and it was ZL4PO,

however it was all of the 80M work for the month as the band has become very noisy. I did manage to get a few band/mode countries this month: PZ5RA, SURINAM, 10SSB; 4U1UN, U.N. headquarters, 20SSB; BV2A, Taiwan, 20CW; BV4FH, Taiwan, 20SSB; 9V1GO, Singapore, 20CW; YO2RR, Romania, 20SSB; ES5QX, Estonia, 20CW and TF8GX, Iceland, 20SSB. In all this catching up on band and mode QSOs, I did manage to snag a single new country; Market Reef, OJ0VR and OH0I/OJ0 for a pair of CW contacts on 30M and 20M.

One event that was a bit surprising during the month was a contact with BV4FH, Paul. He asked me to pass along the best of wishes to our own N5ET and his wife Linda. Some of us just get known far and wide. Paul also said he was trying to get permission to land on Scarborough Reef for a DXpedition, but so far nothing has been granted. I'm glad to see someone is working on that as I sure could use the BS7. Paul said it would take up a year after he got permission to land before it could happen. There is hope.

I also notice 4U1UN has been fairly active, so strike while the iron is hot. The station has not been very active for quite a few years, but things seem to be changing.

Thanks Terry.

And last but not least from H.O. K5CX

Another terrific month of DX here at the K5CX shack! 41 DX contacts for a total of 33 countries. The spread went this way: 32 contacts on 20 meters; 6 on 17, 1 on 112, and 2 on 40 meters. The best Qs of the month were the Qs with VK4BEC on 40-meters; TJ1AD Cameroon, JD1YBJ/M Minami Torishima, SY8DX Mt. Athos, S79DF The Seychelles, and A61R on 20-meters; and VQ9MJ Chagos on 17-meters. It seemed like the latter part of the month was better than the first half. 73 all H. O. - K5CX

I should be so lucky.

Well, that's all for this month. Thanks to all and hope to see you at Field Day.

73
Al Fritsche W5ADF

Welcome, Congratulations and Condolences

Welcome new members Bruce Cline N5FD and Donald Ethredge.
Condolences to Earlyne Gage whose husband and long-time NARS member Harry AC5XD passed away.

NARS Resource List

General Help:

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VHF/UHF:

Brian Derox N5BA
281-894-5942

PC Programming and Operations:

Keith Dutson WD5DXL
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Interference (Basic Advice):

Mark Tyler K5GQ
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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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