



NARS NEWS



The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

April 2007

Important Dates

VU7RG Laccadive Is. DXpedition



The program for the NARS April General Meeting will feature Madison Jones, W5MJ/VU3JMB, telling the story of his participation in the January 2007 VU7RG DX pedition. The Laccadive Islands (Lakshadweep) were one of the top 5 most wanted DXCC entities so the pile ups were huge and it was hard to pull out those elusive W5's. Madison will give us the details of the trip and will tell a few stories of what it is like on the other side of those pileups. Don't miss this one!

Friday, Apr. 20, 7:30 PM – General Membership meeting, Cypress Creek Christian Community Center - Eyeball QSOs, 7:00 PM.

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

Tuesday, Apr 24, 7:30 PM - Board of Directors meeting, Ponderosa Fire Station, 17061 Rolling Creek drive.

Contests

All Year 2007, CQDX Marathon
Apr 28-29 Florida QSO Party
May 5-6 1010 Spring Contest, CW
May 5-6 Indiana QSO Party
May 5-6 New England QSO Party
May 26-27 CQWW WPX, CW

Wednesday Lunch Bunch - North

Apr 18 Baker Street Pub
Apr 25 Sweet Tomatoes - Willowbrook
May 2 BJ's Restaurant & Brewery
May 9 Casa Imperial Mexican
May 16 Strack Farms

Wednesday Lunch Bunch - West

Apr 18 Fuddrucker's - 290
Apr 25 Fajita Willie's - 290
May 2 Jason's Deli
May 9 Goode Co. BBQ
May 16 Skeeter's

Wednesday Lunch Bunch – Medical Center

Apr 18 Buffalo Grille
Apr 25 DJ's Old Timey Hamburgers
May 2 Marco's Mexican Bar & Grill
May 9 Silver Palace Chinese Buffet
May 16 Pappas BBQ

Monday "Tail Draggers" Lunch Bunch

11:00 AM Aviator's Grill, Hooks Airport

Notice

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

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

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BREAKFAST
at Denny's
7720 Louetta
Saturdays
7:30 AM

President's Corner

The March winds have passed and we are looking forward to the many ham activities up coming. The first is the MS 150 Bicycle ride from Houston to Austin April 21st & 22nd. This is a huge event and is always in need of Volunteers. Our club contact is Bill Stietenroth K5ZTY.

As Field Day get nearer we are still looking for some Tents similar to 10' x 10' to house our different stations. We are not going to have the large red & white as in the past years. We know that the weather is going to be good but also we must be prepared for the unknown elements. Your contact is Bill Denton W5SB or myself.

I must report that the May 20th 1 Day Ham Cram course has been canceled. We are still considering a ham class for the future that will have more substance in the roll of being a true "Ham". Along with this we will be interested in Volunteers that will help in teaching different aspects of ham radio to the class. We are also open to your input **and** suggestions for this course. I will keep you updated on the progress.

Remember this Years Club Motto
"What can you do for NARS Club"

Jerry KB5VGD

Buffalo Bayou Regatta a Big Success

NARS has been participating in the Buffalo Bayou Regatta for many years. In fact the first time we were involved it was called the Reeking Regatta. A lot of improvements have been made along the Bayou especially in the Downtown area. This year the finish line was moved to the Sabine Street bridge at the west end of the Sabine to Bagby Promenade. Along with the Sesquicentennial Park makes Buffalo Bayou a very pleasant refuge in Downtown Houston. Thanks to all those who helped out this year, ask them how much fun they had. Their names and calls are listed in K5ZTY's Public Service column. I already have two locations spoken for in the next edition of the Regatta.

Below are some pictures courtesy of Dale Martin, KG5U.



Several Participants



Finish Line Haul out Area

Paul W5PF

Public Service

The Buffalo Bayou Regatta has come and gone for another year and apparently NARS did a good job again as all of the canoers made it from start to finish without losing anyone. The NARS team this year included: Coordinator, Paul Frantz, W5PF, Terry Myers, KQ5U, Mark Janzer, K5MGJ, Catherine Janzer, KI5TTY, Jerry Whiting, KB5VGD, Brad Nelson, WD5GNI, Doug Seyler, WB5TKI, Bill Veerkamp, K5NS, James Veerkamp, KD5TPH, and Dale Martin, KG5U. Bill Denton caught some video of the event with NARS Hams in action. A short video of the event will be shown at an upcoming NARS meeting.

On the same day, there was a Northwest ARES general membership meeting held at the Harris County EOC in the Transtar building on Old Katy Rd. There were eighty six attendees counted and I'm sure, some that weren't counted. The big attraction was Bill Rimmer, N5LYG. and his crew who were taking photos and creating our official ARES badges. These badges have been almost 2 years in the making and many members were glad to finally get them. Jerry Reimer gave a talk on the ARRL national response plan that has just been announced by the League. Jerry gave a good overview of the plan. It is evident that the ARRL has decided to make Amateur Radio a resource that will be taken seriously by national emergency responders. Some training and discipline has been prescribed. They haven't signed on to background checks yet, but that may become a future requirement. There was a presentation on the workings of the Airmail program, Alan Issachsen, KB2WF, talked about the D-Star program and also programmed a half dozen radios with the area repeater frequencies. There were tours of the Transtar facility and Bill Denton was there with his video camera. A video clip of the meeting and facility will be shown at a future NARS meeting.

By the time you receive this newsletter, the MS-150 will be here. April 21 and 22. The Monday and Wednesday evenings before the event, April 16th and 18th, Mike Hardwick, N5VCX, will hold organization and information meetings at the MS-150 office at 8111 N. Stadium Drive near Reliant stadium. Participants don't need to attend both. They are the same meeting given on different nights to accommodate participants schedules. We receive assignments, event shirts, repeater and simplex frequencies that will be used, maps of the route, sleeping accommodations, and most any other information we will need. Questions are answered and everyone should be ready for 4:30 Saturday morning when they leave the meeting. Speaking of getting ready, I need to get out my go list and start rounding things up. Here is what I take for the two days on the road: 35 watt dual band transceiver, power cable, speaker, earphone, spare fuses, spare dual band transceiver, dual band gain type mag mount antenna, dual band HT with spare battery and charger cord, operating manuals for all radios, flashlight, loose leaf binder for route maps, pen and paper for logging, bed roll, pillow, towel, one change clothes, watch, book to read, shaving and bathing stuff, hat, cell phone and charger cord, light jacket, ear plugs, and emergency snack bars. All of this stuff in two duffel bags. The sleeping stuff in one that goes in the equipment van and the radio stuff that goes with me. Each year is an adventure. Weather conditions affect everything about the ride. It's hard to know what to be ready for, so we try to be ready for everything then do the best we can with what we have. That is what Hams do that makes them so well suited for emergency communications.

Speaking of repeaters, which we weren't, did you know that NARS has a 70 centimeter repeater? It is on 444.375 Mhz with a + 5 Mhz offset and a 103.5 sub-audible tone. It has great range, is static and interference free and has no traffic on it. If you have a dual band mobile, program it for the NARS repeater and let's use it. Your hand held will hit it from many locations. We are wasting a great repeater by not using it.

Only about two percent of licensed Hams participate in public service events (I'm glad to say that NARS has a much higher percentage than that) but every Ham uses the public service message to sell his homeowners association, city, state and federal government on how valuable he is to the community and therefore should be allowed to put up that tower, be exempted from driving restrictions, obtain call sign license plates, obtain new frequencies and retain old ones, not have BPL in his neighborhood or any other cause that interferes with his enjoyment of the hobby. If you haven't volunteered to help out with a public service event, don't you think you should, soon?

Become Active!

Bill, K5ZTY

Results of the NARS 2007 Meeting Program Survey:

Date of Survey: March 2007

Number of submittals: 35

Question

1 – How would you rate the programs over the past few years?

Good: 24 Bad: 0 Indifferent: 11

2 – Would you like to see more Ham related topics?

Yes: 27 No: 8 Mix: 1

3 – Would you like to see more non-ham related topics?

Yes: 11 No: 19 Mix: 1

4 – What subjects would you like to see more of?

Technical: 3 Tech help: 1 Satellite: 1 Member Activities: 1
Electronic Basics: 3 New Modes: 1 Hands on stuff: 2 Weather: 2
Electronic kits: 2 Ham basics: 3 Contesting Software: 2
DX: 2 QRP: 2 Awards: 2 Digital comm.: 3
Antennas in HOA: 3 RC planes: 6 6 & 10 Meter: 3 Op. modes: 2

5 - What subjects would you like to see less of?

Anything not Ham: 4 Logging software: 1 Contesting: 2 Silent Auctions: 1
Computer related: 3 Backyard nature shows: 2

6 - Would you like to have 3 short programs of different topics?

Yes: 14 No: 6 Sometimes: 9

7 – Would you like to see short video topics of local interest?

Yes: 22 No: 8 Maybe: 7

8 – Do you feel it would be helpful to have a mic. & speaker system at every meeting?

Yes: 30 No: 2

9 – Do you read the NARS Newsletter?

Yes: 26 No: 2 Sometimes: 4

10 – Suggestions on programs:

Local TV weatherman, Starting in APRS, Volunteering for public service, More show-n-tell nights, Different contesting software available, DX, Building, Theory, QRP, operating modes, QSLing, In-depth programs on antenna modeling & construction, Mobile antennas & proper vertical antenna installations, Views of other ham shacks, DXpeditions, operating events, Technical how-to's, Bringing in young hams, Antennas in HOA restrictive areas, Repeat some of the better former programs, Anything George Carlson would be willing to present, Awards, Basic operating knowledge, HDTV, plasma screen vs. LCD, What HT's in use & why, How does one submit a log using logging programs, How do you use ARRL reporting of QSO's, ARRL QSL Bureau, pictures of local HF & VHF outside antennas, More basic electronic theory for the new hams, simple kits they can build, Self help programs like tower raising, safety stuff with towers, Digital communications, RC controlled devices, 6 & 10 Meter topics, weather men from local TV stations,

11 – Do you have a program to present?

Chuck Sanders: Mysteries of Iambic Keying
Terry Myers: Working on one for future use.
Virgil stamps: Effects of antenna resonance & tuning.
Virgil Stamps: Presentation on electronic projects & portable antennas
George Edwards: Mobile setups.
Unknown: Tower climbing safety, 3YOX DX-pedition (video)
Unknown: VP2V
Bob Walworth: My Scotland Radio Trip.
Jim Kirk: Can speak on various subjects.

12 – Comments or suggestions:

Do we want to offer a printed copy of NARS News for an additional charge?
Best programs in past were the annual show-n-tell and George Carlson presentations.
Would like to see new hams assimilated into group by establishing a mentor program.
Any hope of having a 2 meter repeater away from the downtown area?
Doing projects and lectures on basic electronics would help me in learning the hobby.
Provide a list of possible programs and have the membership indicate which they prefer.

Survey notes: As you can see, not all questions were answered by those that participated. Many of the comments and suggestions were edited to eliminate redundancy and reduce their length. We regret any omissions of comments and/or suggestions that may have occurred. Compiling a survey of this type was not an easy task, and can (and probably will,) result in an error factor of plus or minus 10 percent. The 35 submittals of this survey represent about 19 percent of the NARS membership.

Joe Sokolowski
Administrative Secretary

QUA * Brad Nelson WD5GNI

My latest interviewee missed my first call because he had his headphones on making a contact...and I thought only Michael could ignore me! WD5GNI, Brad Nelson and I swapped stories for a couple of hours this evening. Very seldom have I met someone who has lived more places and had so many similar experiences.

Brad was born in Lawrence, Kansas. His mother was a librarian at the University and his father was in the Army. He has lived for short periods of time in Nebraska, Missouri, Carmel, CA, Boston, MA and Dallas.

And those are just a few of the places he mentioned.

He attended what is now a campus of the University of Nebraska, in Carney, and his step-brother was attending flight school. They would commute back and forth to see family in his brother's plane. He was accumulating hours to qualify for his commercial pilot's license. Brad would also join him when he was crop dusting and learned the phrase "white knuckle flying". He knew most of the nearby airports, so when his father drove to Lincoln, NE without his brief-case. He called Brad who found a pilot and plane and ended up landing in a Nebraska crosswind to deliver the information. I know those crosswinds all too well.

We then began comparing harrowing experiences and he experienced an earthquake as a child on the top bunk in San Diego. He ended up on the floor...Ouch!

He received a Liberal Arts Degree and once he was out of school he figured he better enlist or he would be drafted. He joined the army in Communications. He was sent to Viet Nam and then flown to Japan for additional training. He flew back into Viet Nam the day the Tet Offensive began. He spent one more year in country and then the next two in Virginia maintaining equipment. He was offered a large bonus to stay for two more years, but decided he had had enough close calls and would return to civilian life. His daughter was born just prior to his tour and he wanted to spend time with his family. He took off from Saigon in 90 degree weather and landed in Nebraska at 0 degrees in short sleeves!

Brad and Patricia met in college and have a daughter, Michelle and son, Michael. They have three grand-daughters.

He moved them to Phoenix and began working at a couple of A/V companies. He then found a position at Motorola working with the CMOS design team. It was a fascinating job until the bottom fell out of the auto industry and Motorola laid-off 17,000 people.

He then found a position in The Woodlands with a start-up cable company called Woodlands Cable. They were unique at the time because they provided two-way cable service. In addition to cable they also provided alarm monitoring and community polling as well as aggregate viewing preferences. He was with them for eight years.

He then began working in the Houston School District in Technical Services. At one time he provided support to every school in the district, but services have become more specialized and was split into Hardware and software. The hardware has since been outsourced and he is currently in Network Services for two schools in the North part of the district.

They have one black long-hair cat named Rocky and Patricia has an almost five pound toy poodle named Freddie. He isn't afraid of anything and would chase labs like Sarge away from his yard. I have warned Sarge to watch for stowaways when Brad walks into the next NARS meeting.

WD5GNI has a Kenwood TS140S with a 45 foot antenna and a dipole. He has just purchased an ICOM 821 for satellite communication. It is so new he hasn't even set it up.

Brad enjoys coming home from work to 20 meter rag chews. (Which explains the missed phone call!) He also participates in our community events such as the MS 150, the Buffalo Bayou Regatta and especially Wings Over Houston.

Brad has begun genealogical research on his family and found that they have been in the Lawrence, KS area since the 1850's. He also enjoys woodworking and astronomy. His wife says he needs to reduce the number of books he collects. His favorite novelist is Tom Clancey.

Brad enjoys learning and considers it a lifelong ambition. His children, family and hobbies have added much to his life. Brad is right and NARS is special because we keep encouraging each other and make life more interesting.

By Schalee Lodge, KD5WLL

*QUA - "Have you news of ..."

Welcome, Congratulations and Condolences

Best wishes for a speedy recovery to Keith Dutson, NM5G; Mike Bragassa, K5UO and Linda Walworth, KE5TF

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VHF/UHF:

Brian Derx N5BA
281-894-5942

PC Programming and Web Design:

Keith Dutson NM5G
281-351-7683 keith@dutson.net

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281-587-0256 k5gq@juno.com
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REPEATERS

2M: 146.660/146.060 (KA5AKG)

Tone: 141.3

70 cm: 444.375/449.375 (KA5AKG)

Tone: 103.5

MEETINGS

Monthly General Membership

Third Friday each month 7:30PM

Cypress Creek Christian Community Ctr

6823 Cypresswood Dr

Saturday Breakfast

Denny's 7720 Louetta 7:30AM

Wednesday Lunch 11:30AM

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

NARS NEWS is published monthly by the Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Send all articles and materials for the Newsletter to:
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Northwest Amateur Radio Society is a Special Service Club affiliated with the American Radio Relay League.

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