

NARS NEWS



The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

February 2007

Important Dates

Changes are Coming to NARS!

First - NARS regular meetings, beginning with the one February 16th, are moving to a new location at the Cypress Creek Christian Community Center, 6823 Cypresswood Dr. (across the street from the Harris County Precinct 4 Courthouse just East of Stuebner Airline Rd.).

While the Cypress Creek Presbyterian Church has served us well over the few years, the Church has grown and although they invited us to remain, our presence has caused increasing conflicts with their functions. Our Board has located the new facilities that they believe will suit our needs well. At CCCCC we will be meeting in the Annex Building Music Room 20/21 on the second floor of the facility facing the Court House. An elevator is available if you need it. Parking is available on the street, in the Court House lot (in the evenings) and in a large lighted lot at the rear of the facility. For more information call Joe (KD5KR) at 281-353-2196 or Jerry (KB5VGD) at 281-583-5588.

And that's not all! As we've become more comfortable and complacent in recent years we've become a little lax in extending ourselves to visitors and new members. To improve our welcome to these important people we encourage everyone to wear a name/call sign tag and if you don't have one not to worry; Uncle Joe says they will come with the coffee. Extend you hand and welcome those you don't know or have maybe forgotten.

And there's more! Bill (W5SB) is developing plans to improve our monthly programs too. He will be augmenting the regular programs with a video presentation of recent activities of our Club, our members, and general Ham activities of interest. He captured our activities at the recent Houston Marathon where about 35 Hams kept several races through over 26 miles throughout the city coordinated beginning at 5AM (yawn). Those who know Bill's passion for photography will recognize our gain.

And foremost! At the February meeting Cal (WF5W) will present a video of the FISTS DXPedition to Belize in September 2006.

Why the name FISTS? You guessed it and this was the first straight key DXPedition in 50 years. Come let Cal show us why and how CW is alive, well, and fun. Join the excitement of excited people. See you Friday, February 16th.

Friday, Feb 16, 7:30 PM – General Membership meeting, Cypress Creek Christian Community Center - Eyeball QSOs, 7:00 PM.

Saturday, Feb 24, 8:30 AM - VE License Exam Session, Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just South of Main).

Tuesday, Feb 27, 7:30 PM - Board of Directors meeting, Ponderosa Fire Station, 17061 Rolling Creek drive.

Contests

All Year 2007, CQ DX Marathon
Feb 24-25 CQ WW DX 160M SSB
Feb 24-25 REF SSB, UBA CW
Feb 24-25 NARTTY QP
Feb 25-26 NC QP
Mar 3-4 ARRL SSB DX
Mar 24-25 CQ WW WPX SSB

Wednesday Lunch Bunch - North

Feb 14 Jason's Deli
Feb 21 Baker Street Pub and Grill
Feb 28 Sweet Tomatoes
Mar 7 BJ's Restaurant & Brewery
Mar 14 Casa Imperial Mexican

Wednesday Lunch Bunch - West

Feb 14 Willie's Grill 290
Feb 21 Fuddruckers 290
Feb 28 Fajita Willies 290
Mar 7 Jason's Deli
Mar 14 Goode Co BBQ

Wednesday Lunch Bunch – Medical Center

Feb 14 Fred's Italian Corner
Feb 21 Jason's Deli
Feb 28 Buffalo Grille
Mar 7 DJ's Old Timey Hamburgers
Mar 14 Marco's Mexican Bar & Grille

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.

BREAKFAST

at Denny's

7720 Louetta

Saturdays 7:30 AM

From the presidents Desk

The New Year started out with a successful Banquet with good food and lots of good comradeship. NARS being 1 of 2 Special Service Clubs in the district, we have a lot to live up to. As a Special Service club we have many activities and tons of specialized talent to keep that honor.

This year we plan to continue to support the events that make up the requirement to stay a Specialty Service Club, I.E. Ares events, Buffalo Bayou, Sunmart, MS150, Wings over Houston, an of course we have already supported the Houston Marathon of 2007.

In the area of promoting the hobby of amateur radio we are planning to hold two special technical class-training sessions, conduct introductory presentations to the public and to the local Boy Scouts. Our continued support of the LABRATS Redd School radio club is on going project.

We also are planning for a fun filled Field Day at a new location in the Tomball area. This will be more convenient to our membership base in the Northwest area

Now you ask where is this all leading. All of these events require people to volunteer time to make them successful, so I now ask as someone has before:

Ask not what NARS can do for you but what you can do for NARS and the hobby of Amateur Radio.

On the backside of this news letter there are numerous names with phone numbers. Contact any of these people and they will put you in contact with the right people or if all else fails call me 281-583-5588, cell 832-483-5773

de Jerry KB5VGD

NARS to assist scouts in obtaining Radio Merit Badge

Well, NARS has made a commitment to promote amateur radio, and one way to do it is to get to the younger generation. We were asked by a Boy Scout group from Wells Intermediate School to assist them in obtaining the coveted Radio Merit Badge. We agreed that this project is just what NARS needs to complement our commitment to attract new people into the world of amateur radio

You may recall in the October issue of the NARS News an article announcing that our club had become a charter member of the New Ham Promo Project, created by one of our founding fathers, Dee Logan, W1HEO. This project was formed to reverse the slowing growth rate of the amateur service. As you might expect, getting a project such as this requires a lot of planning and participation of the membership. NARS entered this arena in 2006 by sponsoring two Technician Self Study sessions. We plan to do more in 2007. The merit badge program is just a start, and is planned for sometime in late February or early March. In June, we're conducting a program on amateur radio at the Barbara Bush Public Library, and more Tech. sessions are also in the works. But that's a story for another day.

The merit badge lesson plan is in now the development stage. We're planning a video presentation along with a lecture on basic radio theory and operation and some "hands on" displays. We could use a little help in all this. The program will probably be on a Saturday and will require a few hours of your time. You won't necessarily have to do any lecturing, just be there to help field questions and maybe help with a few contacts on 2 meter demonstrations, and in general, helping put it all together.

How about it? We can really use the help! Give me a call or send me an email and we'll talk about it. 281 353-2196 or kd5kr@arrl.net

New Texas QSO Party Coordinator

At the annual NARS banquet, H. O. - K5CX announced that he is stepping aside, as the TQP coordinator. After four years, H. O. has turned the duties over to Chuck Sanders NO5W.

Chuck's support, dedication, and enthusiasm is a real asset to NARS, and to the Texas QSO Party program. Chuck is not only the obvious choice, he is the perfect choice. In the last couple of years, Chuck has met with a number of out-of-town clubs promoting the Texas QSO Party. In addition, he has made presentations at several hamfests encouraging folks to participate in TQP.

H. O. said, he wanted to thank each one of you who have joined in the fun of participating in TQP. Thanks for your support and the fun the last several years.

Your continued support of TQP and Chuck will be a really cool move.

73 - H. O. - K5CX

PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

The Houston Marathon is behind us for this year. For the fourteenth year, Paul Owen, N5NXS was the voice of Main Course Net. Ham Radio volunteers provided communications for three different race courses, the race officials, police and medical agencies, water stops, VIP cars, supply trucks, timing vehicles, media vehicles, transport vans, start line, finish line, and Harris County EOC. It all went pretty well except for the primary repeater failing, one ham not showing up for his assignment and one runner having a stroke. We handled it all and most everyone was home by early afternoon. Bill Denton, W5SB, brought his video camera along and got some footage of hams in action. There should be a short clip shown at the February meeting.

There was a Weapons of Mass Destruction drill in Harris County on January 23 and 24 in which a plane crashes into Reliant Stadium during a game and a dirty bomb is on board. It was mostly a table top drill at Reliant but the Harris County EOC and Houston EOC were activated and some traffic was passed between Reliant and the agencies. Some of the outlying EOCs and emergency responders activated and checked in on the Transtar net but other than checking equipment and networks there wasn't much traffic. One bit of the plan is beginning to work out. Harris County Judge Robert Eckels is the Emergency Coordinator for all responses in Harris County. Transtar is his communications center. The 147.000,+, 103.5 repeater is Transtar's information outlet for Amateur Radio. This was a small event communications wise but the information flowed in and out of Transtar on the 147.000 repeater very well. Put that one in your memory bank and keep it for future response information.

Besides being ready with all of our radio gear, Hams need to be ready with the proper attitude. Our attitude may be more important than our radio skills. We will be working beside trained professional emergency responders who are already wary of untrained volunteers. Police and medical personnel don't trust anyone not in uniform because they have already seen the problems that can be caused by untrained wannabees who do dumb stuff and get in the way. Part of our training must be about how to look and act the part of a trained responder. Authority is described as the right to act on behalf of a person, department, agency or jurisdiction. WE DON'T HAVE ANY AUTHORITY. We don't need gold badges or flashing lights. We are helpers. The only decision we make is about our own welfare and safety. We don't originate messages, we just pass them in the appropriate manner. However, don't confuse not having authority with not being important, they need us, and the job we do supports the whole operation. Part of your attitude is demonstrated by how you dress. I saw one ham show up for an event in his bathrobe. Sloppy appearance denotes irresponsibility. In most cases we will be working along side professional responders who dress in a professional manner and we need to dress appropriately to be taken seriously. In the hospital, police station, fire department, ambulance, shelter, Emergency Operation Center, or even the water stop in a bike race, you are part of the operation, dress accordingly.

The next big event will be the MS150 bike ride coming up on April 21 and 22. We will provide communication support for 13,000 riders, 5000 volunteers and uncounted spectators over two days between Houston and Austin. It is time for you to be thinking about volunteering your radio services for this one. There will be some warm up rides between now and then to hone your skills and test your go kits and I will provide info on them as they come up.

The Buffalo Bayou Regatta has been scheduled for March 24th this year after being called because of flooding two of the last three years. This is a NARS communications event and is part of the commitment to our Special Services Club status. Now is the time to contact Paul Frantz, W5PF, and sign up to cover a station along the bayou.

There will be an ARES general membership meeting on Saturday, March 24th at the Harris County Transtar building on Washington Ave. If you are not working the Buffalo Bayou event, plan to attend the ARES meeting and become familiar with the radio station and emergency procedures at Transtar.

We need some more volunteers for our hospital emergency communication groups. We need four more for the Methodist Willowbrook group and Terry Myers needs several for Houston Northwest Hospital. You would need to live within a few minutes of the hospital. We would want you to commit to the hospital first before any other response group and be willing to participate in the group planning and training meetings and the hospital drills. If you want to help contact me or Terry for more information.

Become Active!

de Bill, K5ZTY

DX NEWS
“For All the NARS DX News Fit to Print”
January 2007

DX IS! Yes...

DX IS...what you, yourself, make of it.

Do it!

Member Reports:

1. **John (“Juan-Burrito”), W5PDW:** “*certified Know Code ham*”. Pretty soon, John, should be sporting a 2 element 40 meter Yagi and 70 foot tower. Watch out 40 meters DX; here comes the terror of Montgomery County. John claims he missed three ‘new-ones’ this past month: VU7RG-heard... weakly, but not worked; S21 and 9N; neither heard. I don’t think anyone in this hemisphere worked/heard those two groups. Seems that all of the “S21” cluster-spots came from Europe.

Bands not known, but John did work these critters: XT2C, Burkino Faso; KC4/K2ARB, Antarctica; 5N6EAM, Nigeria and EA8BWW, Canary Isl. All were worked using his trusty ‘ole J-38 straight key!

2. **Bruce, N1LN** (a.k.a. “*NC4KW*”) picked up four new band-countries with his marginal and temporary antenna’s: ZL1BYZ, New Zealand on 17 CW; YN4SU/9, Nicaragua on 17 CW; XT2C, Burkino Faso on 30 CW, 40/75 SSB and VU7RG, Lakshadweep Isls. 80/40 CW.

Bruce was able to experience his first east-coast (“*right-coast*”?) 160 meter CW contest as a lead-off guest-op. First three hours: 133 Q/hour and ++200 Q/hour for 10 minute bursts. They submitted 58 sections ...and...56 countries! 56 countries was excellent as the number one complaint being heard was ... “*No DX*”. But then maybe they weren’t on the “*right coast*”?

To quote Bruce: “*Location-location-location*”.

3. **Madison, W5MJ** (a.k.a. *VU7MBJ*) reports that his DX activity report is a bit different than in any prior time. As we know, Madison was one of the guest-op’s in the VU7RG operation from Lakshadweep Islands. Madison was on Agatti Island, a part of the Lakshadweep group of islands. During nine days of operation, he worked 5000 or so contacts, all CW. He reports about 75 QSO on 20 meter SSB.

According to Madison, “A good time was had by all, but you had to have been there...”

4. **Cal, WF5W**, was able to snag VU7RG, Lakshadweep, on 40 meters with the new HyGain Hi-Tower antenna. He has been planting radials for the HiTower for some serious 80 and 160 meter activity. Additionally, Cal worked: 30 CW- YI9KT, 5R8GZ, VP8/LZ1UQ. On 40 meters CW- VU7RG, DU1/NZ7X, ZB2FK, XT2C and of course, JA1NUT (Hasn’t everyone?). On 80 meter CW- FO/N6JA, T32MO, DS5USH, SM6BGG, ZS6HA (SSB), ZS6CCY (SSB) and BX0ZR. On 160 meters- GM3POL.

Lots on nice band QSO’s.

5. **H.O. K5CX** (self-proclaimed “*closet-wanna-be DXer*”) reports a fair amount of DX activity out of the woods at his place: 20 DX QSO’s on 20 meters; 11 DX QSO’s on 17 meters; 6 DX QSO’s on 15 meters and 3 DX QSO’s on 80 meters. Various prefixes worked were: 1A0, 6W, 8R, 9A, C5, C6, CN, CT3, EA, F, HK, I, KP2, LX, OE, PA, T32, UT, VP8, VU7, XT, ZD7 and ZS. The VU7, Lakshadweep, was a new-one for him.

6. **Bob (“Bubba”) WB5IUU** has kept the post office in business sending a lot of QSL requests out for band-needed QSL’s. A recent self-audit shows he needs about 30 countries on each band for 5BDXCC. The recent 5A7A, Libya, operation, was a new one for him and still awaiting the QSL card.

If the rain and cold would ever stop, Bob has a CushCraft XM240, 2 element 40m Yagi, all ready to park on top of his 85 foot tower. His 40 and 80 meters activity to date has been with a "Carolina Windom 80" wire antenna up about 60 feet.

7. Mike, K5UO: New band-counters: 80m CW: Managed a pile-up exchange on 80 meters w/ 'hiz honor' Madison Jones from VU7RG; great! JD1BME, Minami Torishimo; XT2C, Burkino Faso. 80m status: 253/259.
160m: VP8/LZ1UQ. If South Shetlands- a new one on 160m. If The Falklands- have already on 160. 160m status: 143/150. It's been tough this year on 160m. Lots of new houses around with new noises.

Needed QSL's received in January:

1. KH0PR, Mariana: 160m CW
2. PZ5WP, Suriname: 17m CW
3. TR9CA, Gabon: 12m CW
4. V5/DJ4SO, Nambia: 30m CW
5. E51PEN, S. Cooks: 17m CW

My three element 40m KLM Yagi is all refurbished and ready to go up whenever the weather decides to cooperate. DX Engineering makes some fine looking OEM element/boom brackets that are not Lexan and supposed to be 5 x stronger than the original KLM type. DX E also uses the "Gorilla Grips" which are one-tough and strong 'hose-clamp' for clamping the bracket to the boom.

Going to first-run the 3-cable tram system I built, in taking this monster sky-ward. That's one cable for lifting and pulling and two in parallel for stabilizing. Will need some ground help on this antenna project. Anyone interested? Anyone know where I can find an affordable used capstan-type electric winch? New, they are about \$1200.00 plus. Not the monster marine type.

That's it folks for January! Lots of us made contact with VU7RG; the DXpedition of the month for an overall new one or band-counter. It was a well designed and carried out project.

73, de Mike, K5UO

VE Test Session Results; 01/27/2007

There were seven elements given and one paper upgrade; 1 - Code; 2 - Technician; 3 - General; 1 - Extra; and 1 - Paper Upgrade. There were four new licenses earned; 2 - Technician, 1 - General, 1 - Extra.

Please welcome to the hobby; Paul Thomas Rawlings - KE5MHZ - Technician - Cypress and Jonathan Earl Bickford - KE5MIA - Technician - Magnolia. We have one new General Class licensee - Andrew M. Burger - WA4MDV - General - Houston and congratulations to Steven George Weidman - N0VJC - Extra - Houston.

The VEs in attendance were; Eddy Reynolds-K5WQG, Keith Dutson-NM5G, Jim Kirk-KJ5X, Martin Rogoff-N5GPS, Tom Rum-W5RUM and Gregg Erlenbusch-W5IDX; my special thanks to these volunteers, we can't do it without them.

The next Tomball session will be on 02/24/2007...we'll see you there.

73,

**Norm Covey
K5OS**

QUA* Paul Flagg WA5EE?

A good portion of my morning was spent discussing some unusual topics...and it was wonderful fun! WA5EE (ex WD9HCB), Paul Flagg's life started out in a small, quiet town, but very quickly moved onto a wider horizon.

Paul was born in Sanford, Maine. His mother studied nursing and his father moved to Main to be an apprentice undertaker. They met because she worked in a hospital and her father made necessary visits during his occupation. (meeting Jonan was much more exciting!)

He joined the Navy at 17 to play the clarinet. He had decided that he would never be quite good enough to play in a symphony orchestra, so he took the next best opportunity and auditioned for the Navy. He studied at the Navy School of Music in New York. The only boring part was a two year, two month and two day stay in Newfoundland. The most exciting part was playing at base clubs and late in the evening running out the back door to avoid brawls.

When he arrived back in the states a friend suggested they attend Indiana University together. He liked the idea and received his bachelor's degree in Science then his Masters. He then taught middle school Science and Biology for 15 years. His path changed to A/V Coordinator in the school system.

Paul married Margie his Senior year of college and they had three boys. She died after a five year battle with cancer. He managed the boys through school then in 1986, received his PhD in Sociology. His thesis involved his photography hobby. He studied the impact of a single photograph on society at a particular time or event.

His love of music prompted him to take on managing the Racine, Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra. They were gradually dying and he took some drastic measures by firing their pompous director and replacing him with several visiting directors. He would also stage unusual performances with background narrative and singing. The Concertmaster wouldn't play one piece so he brought in several members of the Milwaukee Orchestra to "fill-in". He is very proud of the fact that the orchestra is still in existence.

He had been involved with the Civil Air Patrol while in high school and college and maintained his love for flying. He became a licensed pilot and used this to his advantage when the position to be liaison between the Civil Air Patrol and the Air Force became available. He became the new Director of Aerospace Education for the Air Force to the Mid-Atlantic coast region. He moved to a home just outside Andrews Air Force Base and was able to fly the Congressional Squadron planes, which were seldom used.

He had three 45 minute presentation he could present with little preparation. Once he was asked to speak to all the Jr. High School students in Racine at the SC Johnson "flying saucer". The building was originally designed as a World's Fair pavilion then moved to Racine.

He had two identical sets of Legos. One was assembled in a specific pattern. He picked two students out of the crowd, handed one the loose Legos and the other the assembled set. He then had the person with the assembled set describe, with words only, how to assemble the loose set. This was to demonstrate NASA giving directions from Houston to astronauts fixing a problem in space!

He had an entire presentation on "Waste Management in Space". He would ask the class "What is the first thing you should do when "relieving" at zero gravity?". The answer..."Put on your seatbelt." ...think about it...jet propulsion.

Sarge and I answer at least one “relieving question in every speaking engagement we have also. The answer...baggies.

Paul then transferred to their “Health and Welfare Education organization for approximately one year and then to their “Logistics” area. This group provided training for the Presidential fleet maintenance. A colleague mentioned that with four years in military service and six years as a civilian employed by the Air Force he would qualify for a military pension. He calculated that he would make more money if he retired. He re-calculated and gave his notice for the end of the month, October 1998.

He would often work seven days a week for several months to take off an entire month to travel. He was now able to concentrate on traveling. He was at a presentation when a speaker said his company was planning a four month millennium cruise, which was two years in the future. Immediate bookings would mean a discount of \$1000. Paul signed up! The ship sailed out of Athens, Greece and he added a few extra days on the beginning of the trip to explore the city. Paul always traveled with his “mistress”...his Nikon.

At a group meeting one of the other passengers suggested he join her to see the full moon. He declined, but later was sitting on his balcony and heard “Romeo, Romeo... He didn’t respond and heard it again. He answered and Jonan stepped into his life. They had a great time on the cruise and she visited him in Maryland, he visited her in Texas. He joked that if he could find a house just like her cousins he would move to Texas. A short time later, when her cousins were moving to Austin he kept his promise.

WD9HCB was licensed in the 60’s, but was not living in environments conducive to antennas. When he moved to Texas he saw George’s store and now has ICOM’s equipment,(the Ic756proIIand the Icv8000. The first time he used his rig he interrupted his neighbor’s football on television and the neighbor threatened his life, so he concentrates on listening.

He does enjoy increasing his code speed and is now at about 13 WPM. His favorite contact was sending and receiving code with Cal White and John Ellis on straight-key night.

He sums up his life that it is not about a box of chocolates. It is much more and has been a great ride and he looks forward to waking up every morning to see what the day will bring...Paul, We hope it will keep bringing you across our paths often.

* QUA - Q signal meaning “Do you have news of....?”

***Schalee Lodge KD5WLL
Ham and Sheez Reporter***

Welcome, Congratulations and Condolences

Welcome new member Dean Miller KD7AXC

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
Madison Jones W5MJ
281-350-4330 w5mj@hal-pc.org
Deral Kent K5WNO - Antennas
281-548-7476 k5wno@juno.com

NARS Resource List

Digital Modes:

Don Bedell KA3BKU Packet
281-257-6425
donka3bku@houston.rr.com
Gregg Erlenbusch, W5IDX PSK/RTTY
281-970-6860, W5IDX@ARRL.net

VHF/UHF:

Brian Derx N5BA
281-894-5942

PC Programming and Web Design:

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

Interference (Basic Advice):

Mark Tyler K5GQ
281-587-0256 k5gq@juno.com
Terry Myers KQ5U
281-443-6042, tmyers1031@sbcglobal.net

Card Checking for Awards:

Bob Walworth N5ET – DXCC
281-292-2221 rwalworth@charter.net
Brian Derx N5BA - WAS, VUCC
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no5w@consolidated.net

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Manager: Norm Covey K5OS

281-252-8285 k5os@arrl.net

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.

ARRL Club 2120