

NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

March 2008



March Meeting

5J0E Antennas

The TDXS/NARS members are back from their travels to far off places. Cal White, WF5W and crew will present an antenna project that they used on their recent visit to San Andres (HK0) using a special call 5J0E.

Radio Merit Badge

On March 1st, a few Narsians got together at the Champion Forest Baptist Church and assisted a group of Boy Scouts in getting their Radio Merit Badges. Seventeen scouts from various troops in the Polaris District attended this session, and all were mighty glad to be able to add another merit badge to their sash. Many scouts do not have the opportunity to achieve this badge due to the limited offering of a structured course, so those that are awarded this coveted merit badge are "one-up" on the competition.

This session lasted about six hours and consisted of lectures by Ray Clutts N5VRT and practice QSO's assisted by well known Narsians, Tom Atkins KD5EIJ, Jerry Whiting KB5VGD, Bill Skipper KB5BS, Paul Owen N5NXS, and Joe Sokolowski KD5KR. There were others, too many to mention, that contributed their time and effort.

One of our younger NARS members, Chris Brown KE5IOR, also a member of Redd School, was one of those that completed the session. He managed to peak their interest in amateur radio by being the only licensed operator in the class. More than a few showed interest in the hobby and wanted to learn more. Of course, Narsians, being "true defenders of the faith," were more than happy to shower them with information!



Important Dates

Friday, Mar 14, 7:30 PM - General Membership meeting, Cypress Creek Christian Community Center - Eyeball QSOs, 7:00 PM.

Saturday, Mar 22, 2008 - 8:30 AM - VE License Exam Session, Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just South of Main).

Tuesday, Mar 25, 7:30 PM - Board of Directors meeting, Ponderosa Fire Station, 17061 Rolling Creek drive.

Wednesday Lunch Bunch - North

Luby's Cafeteria Mar 12th
Jason's Deli Mar 19rd
Baker Street Pub and Grill Mar 26th
Sweet Tomatoes Apr 2nd
BJ's Restaurant & Brewery Apr 9th
Los Cusco Restaurant Apr 16th

Wednesday Lunch Bunch - West

Fajita Willies W. Little York Mar 12th
Fajita Willies W. Little York Mar 19th
Jason's Deli - Katy Fwy Mar 26th
Skeeters Apr 2nd
Fajita Willies W. Little York Apr 9th
Fajita Willies W. Little York Apr 16th

Wednesday Lunch Bunch - Medical Center

Jason's Deli Mar 12
Buffalo Grille Mar 19
DJ's Old Timey Hamburgers Mar 26
Marco's Mexican Bar & Grille Apr 2
Silver Palace Chinese Buffet Apr 9
Pappas Barbecue Apr 16

"Tail Draggers" Lunch Bunch

11:00 am, 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 Denny's

7720 Louetta Road

Saturdays

7:30 AM

*President's
Corner
March - 2008*

Band conditions, for this time of the sunspot cycle has been fairly favorable. Of course, this is prime-time for the low bands. So far, on 160m, I think I have picked up 10 new countries. The higher bands, of course have been the disappointment; but considering where we are in the cycle, they aren't 'that terrible', with the possible exception of 10 and 12 meter long-haul. These two bands rate maybe an "ugh!" This time of the cycle you can fairly well pick your band-time: 160/80/40: Sunrise up to 2 hours past SR. 40/30/20: mid-morning into evening and 30(+/-) / 20(+/-) / 17 / 15: noontime until just past SS. These are very general times and change gradually as we move towards summer.

The recent ARRL SSB DX contest was still a great opportunity, as all DX contest can be, to gather new DXCC counters. It's a great opportunity to test equipment, particularly antennas. Take advantage of these opportunities. Remember, the contest participants need our QSO's!

From my letter of last month. This was directed, predominately (but not exclusively...) at our newer members: To get it started, anyone willing to volunteer for an upcoming project (We have so few, really) please email me and let me know your interest. I'll get you an advisor!

No email requests received; no contact received... at all! What happened to your generosity; your sense of volunteer to help? You get out of something what you put into it. This is really true. For example, someone might say the club lacks in this or that. Look into the mirror: "What can I do to better that?"

Paul Owen, vice-president and program coordinator still needs a couple of members to help him with programs. So you did it before! Great! We are looking for experienced members, too. What is really wrong in doing it again? Enlighten me...please.

Here are some members that stepped up and volunteered for a project and need to be recognized. See separate article in this issue. Thanks to KB5BS, KB5VGD, KD5EIF, KD5KR, N5NXS and N5VRT for their time, effort and sense of volunteerism in helping the Boy Scouts achieve their radio merit badge. I can remember from my scouting times, that the only merit badge training available were the ones of local interest. No interest; no badge..

And speaking of the clubs upcoming programs: Paul and the board are wanting to provide quality programs. We need your input on this issue. What programs, particularly ham radio oriented, do you want? What program could you, as a member, present?

Please, at the least, let us know.

As I write this, I have the receiver on 30 Meters listening to 'the multitudes' trying to work 5JOE on San Andreas Island in the South Caribbean Sea. Though sponsored by TDXS, it is an almost all NARS group of guys: W5PF, WF5W, K5WAF, and NM5G. The additions, from TDXS exclusively, are N4AL and W5PR. The ARRL DX Phone contest was this past weekend and they were on San Andreas to run that contest as a multi-single and then spend a few days running mostly CW and RTTY. An email from K5WAF reports 3800 QSO during the 48 hours contest period. Not too shabby for some Montgomery County guys, Hi! (Well, several of them..) This should make a good meeting program.

Tks es 73, Mike Bragassa, K5UO

VE Session Results

*Eddy Reynolds - K5WQG
NARS VE Session Manager*

Here are the VE Test Session Results for Saturday, Feb 23rd.

We had a total of 6 candidates. Please welcome the latest addition to the hobby:

- Henry Tarver - KE5TCE - Technician

Congratulations to the upgrades:

- Mitchell Leben - KA5YIX - General
- Ashwin Ashok - KE5SPV - General

The following individuals passed both elements 2 and 3 for their General Class license:

- Harry Mallery - KE5TCF
- Lawrence Kendall - KE5TCG

Special thanks to the VEs in attendance for their time and hard work: Jim Kirk - KJ5X, Bob Walworth - N5ET, Tom Rum - W5RUM, Keith Dutton - NM5G, Martin Rogoff - N5GPS, and Bruce Wright - WC5CW.

The next session will be held on Saturday, Mar. 22th at 8:30 a.m. at the Tomball Community Center, located at the corner of Market St. & S. Cherry St.

Parking is in the rear (south side) of the building.

The entrance is on the S. Cherry St. (west) side of the building.

March Meeting

The NARS March meeting will be held on Friday, the 14th. due to a conflict with Good Friday (the 21st.) services at the Cypress Creek Community Center.

Friday March 14th!

DX NEWS

"For All the NARS DX News Fit to Print"

Mike Bragassa - K5UO
NARS DX Editor.

DX...IS !

DX IS what you make of it!

Many thanks for the responses to my forever-request for DX, etc. information.

Members Activity

1. Colin, KU5B, reports a bunch of new band-countries: 1. 3D2AG (Rotuma) 20m CW, 2. E51WWA, (South Cook) 15m CW / 20m SSB 3. ZK2CC (Niue) 20m SSB 4. HB0/DJ4MZ (Liechtenstein) 80 SSB 5. 5R8GZ (Madagascar) 40 CW 6. ZS6CCY (RSA) 80 SSB 7. V85TT (Brunei) 40 CW 8. JD1BLY (Ogasawara) 160/80 CW!! 9. RW0CN (Asiatic Russia) 10. KP2/K3TEJ (Virgin Isl) 80 CW 11. 8R1PW (Guyana) 40 CW 12. C21DL (Nauru) 20 SSB 13. VP6DX (Ducie Island) 15 of 22 possible band-mode combinations. All bands: CW / SSB. 14. "Plus a nice 6m opening on 2/26 to the east and west coasts!"

Those are some good one's to get, Colin. Who said band conditions are bad??

Colin also gives us an update on his DXCC band standings of worked stations: 10m: 79, 15m: 134, 20m: 214, 40m: 170, 80m: 56, 160m: 16. His DXCC effort stands at 248 worked of a possible 338 DXCC entities. Some of you older hams better get to going!

Many thanks for the fine report.

2. John, W5PDW, another one to report a good month for DXing: VP6DX, Ducie Island, 10 through 80 meters. John sums up a common feeling of operators about the Ducie Island effort: "Best bunch of op's I've heard". John has the 'mystery' chicken wire antenna all rigged-n-ready for the locals at HK0, San Andreas on 80 and 160m.

3. Jim, KJ5X, reports working a fair amount of DX from his antenna-impaired location. VP6DX,

Ducie, on 15m CW and 17m SSB. J79PN, Dominica, 20m CW. Received QSL's for Montenegro, 4O, and St Barthelemy, FJ5. This brings Jim's DXCC count up to 330 entities. Great!

4. Earl, N8SS, (ex-kz8e, n5tu) reports working VP6DX, Ducie on CW/SSB all bands except 160SSB. "Claims" to have a hardship situation compared to other NARS members, being "another 2000 miles away" from VP6. We will think about that, Earl, when a rare-one shows up from Europe and eastward! "Oh, Vladimir, your only 5 over S9 tonight here on 160 meters." Thanks Earl for the report!

5. Tom, W5RUM, while awaiting delivery of his monster 'fire-breathing' SteppIR monster Yagi whiles his piloting time working VP6DX as aeronautical mobile at 40,000 feet.

6. Madison, W5MJ, enjoyed working VP6DX this past month on less than 100 Watts and cracking the CW pileups being a few KHz up from the 'dog pile'. It's all in the wrist, he reports.

7. Mike, K5UO, also joined the melee for a contact with VP6DX. Needed it On 160m and 80m and that was no problem at all. Worked them on 18 band-mode combinations. For 160m, this was my DXCC country number 169. Ten new ones on 160 so far this season with maybe six weeks remaining.

VP6DX www site had a log-search feature plus a tally of the top 100 amateurs who worked them on the most bands/modes. Top was 22 combinations including 6m; but don't think they worked any 6m.

VP6DX: Again speaking of this multi-national DXpedition to Dulcie Island: This was a fantastic effort that resulted in them making more QSO contacts than any previous DXpedition. This was their goal. They were better organized and better engineered than any previous Dxpeditons; and there

have been some really great DXpeditions recently.

Examples: The south Pacific is not 'easy-pickins' on 160 meters or even 80 meters, for that matter. They made it sound like they were across the street. This was a result of operating at the right times with phased full-sized verticals and multi-directional Beverage antenna's for receive.

This will make a good story.

Fastest international QSL-turn-around time: (Sorry, Canada doesn't count) Sent and received a QSL from OX3XR, Greenland, via OZ3PZ in Denmark in 12 days. Almost can't do that in Houston-to-Houston mail.

New QSLing twist that has merit: 5H3EE, a German national working in Tanzania: Send \$3.00 to his PayPal account and have your QSL in 12 days or so. It was even mailed from Tanzania. Sure way to get around the mail pilfering countries.

Additionally, that is one good advantage to Log of The World. Except LoTW credits don't help you with CQ Magazine awards. VP6DX also has something like this available. See their www site.

DX Happenings:

FO/C, Clipperton Island: By the time you read this, using the call sign "TX5C", Clipperton Island will be active. Clipperton, 10.18N, 109.17W, in the North Pacific Ocean, off the coast of Mexico and Costa Rico. Much more difficult for EU and Asia; emphasis will predominately be for those areas. It is expected they will be on the island for 12-14 days, of course, weather dependent. QSL via N7CQQ A.R.C. and there is supposed to be a log-search site. LoTW after "log has been certified" (?) (DXCC approved?) More information at www.clipperton2008.org.

"Work 'em first; worry later"

Ham & Sheez News

A Job Well Done - The 3rd Infantry Division of the U. S. Army will be coming home soon. They would like to thank all of the **Ham and Sheez** for the hand-made cards they have sent to them for the last year - the duration of their deployment. The ladies have touched the lives of more than just the soldiers. The friends and families that have received the cards will never forget what they have done.



REPLY TO:
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
3rd BDE 3D INFANTRY DIV SIGC (MECHANIZED)
OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM V
FORWARD OPERATING BASE, HAMMER
APO AE 09397

February 21 2008

Office of the 3rd Brigade Chaplain

SUBJECT: Thank you Letter

Anita Townsend
16880 E. Maglito Circle
Tomball, TX 77377

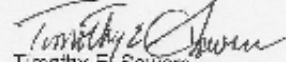
Dear Anita:

We are coming to the end of our deployment and I wanted to write to express our thanks for all the support you have given to our soldiers during this year. All the Christmas ornaments, cards and cookies were a wonderful blessing for our soldiers during the holiday season. Thank you so much!

I have included a certificate of appreciation and a video. The video can only be played on your computer with "Windows Media Player". I hope you enjoy it and pray that it is a blessing to you. We have appreciated all your support and prayers.

The picture is of (left to right) CH Swartz, CH Reed and myself. From all our Chaplains, we truly appreciate your act of kindness. My thoughts and prayers are with you. The Lord's richest blessings be with you and your family. Thank You!!

Sincerely,


Timothy E. Sowers
Chaplain (LTC), U.S. Army
3rd Brigade Chaplain



Welcome, Congratulations, and Condolences

Welcome new members Ashok Ashwin KE5SPV and Ron Matusek WA6TQH!

NARS Resource List

General Help:

Bill Stietenroth K5ZTY
281-893-3901, k5zty@juno.com
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281-353-8652, wa5rej.tx@netzero.net
Bill Denton W5SB
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Deral Kent K5WNO
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Digital Modes:

Marty Fitzgerald W5MF
281-251-4301, fitz6@swbell.net

VHF/UHF:

Brian Derx N5BA
281-894-5942

PC Programming and Operations:

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

Building Electronics & Kits:

Mark Tyler K5GQ
281-587-0256, k5gq@juno.com

Interference (Basic Advice):

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
281-894-5942

H O Townsend K5CX - WAZ
281-376-7416, k5cx@arrl.net

NARS Public Information Officer:

Joe Sokolowski, KD5KR
281-353-2196, kd5kr@arrl.net

NARS Information

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281-353-2196, kd5kr@arrl.net

Send address, phone, email and other
changes to:

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P. O. Box 90387
Houston, TX 77090-0387

NETS

10-Meter Ragchew: Mon 8:00 PM,
28.444 MHz Coordinator: Open

2-Meter Wedneaday Night: 8:00 PM,
146.06/66 MHz, Coordinator; Jerry
KB5VGD

WEB SITE

URL: <http://www.w5nc.org>
Webmaster: Bill Buoy N5BIA
281-370-3510, n5bia@arrl.net

NARS REFLECTOR

NARS@mailman.qth.net
Coordinator: Keith Dutson NM5G
281-351-7683, keith@dutson.net

TEXAS QSO PARTY

Coordinator: Chuck Sanders NO5W
936-273-6930, no5w@consolidated.net

VE SESSION (ARRL) Manager:

Eddy Reynolds K5WQG
reynolds_eddy@yahoo.com

REPEATERS (KA5AKG)

2-m: 146.06/146.66 MHz Tone: 141.3
70 cm: 444.375/449.375 MHz Tone:103.5

MEETINGS

Monthly General Membership

Third Friday each month at 7:30 PM
Cypress Creek Christian Community
Center, 6823 Cypresswood Drive

Saturday Breakfast

Denny's, 7720 Louetta, 7:30 AM

Wednesday Lunch 11:30 AM

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:

Editor: H. O. Townsend - K5CX
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Northwest Amateur Radio Society is a
Special Service Club affiliated with the
American Radio Relay League
ARRL Club No. 2120