

NARS NEWS



The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

November 2008



November

Public Service

A big part of our ham radio activity is volunteering for public service events. Many opportunities are available for the new as well as the experienced ham if you just know where to look. Our guest speaker this month will be Mike Hardwick of the MS150 fame. Mike will be happy to discuss several projects he's involved in along with the MS150. We'll discuss basic procedures as well as the types of equipment you'll need to communicate efficiently. If you're really interested in learning how to handle information nets on the fly this is a great opportunity.



Paul Owen W5NXS will be discussing opportunities available during the winter months when the Sun Mart 50 mile 50K Cross country endurance run.



Join us on the third Friday of each month for our club meetings and social hour.

Important Dates

Friday, November 21, 7:30 PM - General Membership meeting, Cypress Creek Christian Community Center - Eyeball QSOs, 7:00 PM.

Saturday, January 24th, 2009
- 8:30 AM - VE License Exam Session, Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just South of Main).

Tuesday, October 28, 7:30 PM - Board of Directors meeting, Ponderosa Fire Station, 17061 Rolling Creek drive.

Wednesday Lunch Bunch - North
BJ's Restaurant & Brewery Nov 19th
Marco's 26th
Spring Creek Barbeque Dec 3rd
Pepperchino Dec 10th
Luby's Cafeteria Dec 17th
Jason's Deli Dec 24th

Wednesday Lunch Bunch - West
Fajita Willies W. Little York Nov 19th
Fajita Willies W. Little York Nov 26th
Jason's Deli - Katy Fwy Dec 3rd
Skeeters Dec 10th
Fajita Willies W. Little York Dec 17th
Fajita Willies W. Little York Dec 24th

Wednesday Lunch Bunch - Medical Center
Marco's Mexican Bar & Grille Nov 19th
Silver Palace Chinese Buffet Nov 26th
Pappas Barbecue Dec 3rd
Morningside Thai Dec 10th
New Orleans Cajun Kitchen Dec 17th
Prima Pasta Dec 24th

"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 newsletter is the last day of this month.

BREAKFAST

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

President's Corner

November - 2008

2008 Field Day results have been posted. You can see the details at the ARRL web site. In category 2A with 1248 QSO's, we placed 4th in STX section behind W5C (Williamson Co. ARC) 1953 QSO's, K5WA (Tilson Contest Group) 1717 QSO's and K5DX (TDXS) with 1869 QSO's.

In overall 2A, NARS placed 54th in a field of 442 entries. That is not too shabby.

You can sure see where our 'downtime' hurt our QSO count.

We learned a lesson in that we must check all of our equipment early in the year to make sure it is all working good and have time to repair before Field Day begins; not during the event. This calls for an early volunteering FD coordinator.

Additionally, we need to locate a site that meets what we had this year but allows more antenna spacing. The GOTA station just got wiped out too many times. Early on next year, please pass on to the club your suggestions based upon:

- Central location to NARS membership
- Good all-weather site, preferably with cover.
- Good antenna separation between three stations.
- Adequate parking.

Speak up or forever hold your self!

Tip of the month: Improve your station to take advantage of this sunspot cycle low. Yes; during the low of the cycle, in the winter, usually, is the best time for our low bands. In the night time the Maximum Usable Frequency (MUF) will be low, allowing good opportunities on our lower amateur bands, particularly 80 and 160 meters.

Best times can be the greyline paths, where either or both stations are at their sunrise and the other at their sunset. There will be a definite rise in received signals. For example at our sunrise, I have seen situations where signals were below ESP, only to come out of the noise and be S7-9 at our sunrise. Sometimes there is only ten minutes or so of readable signal.

VE Session Results

Eddy Reynolds - K5WQG
NARS VE Session Manager

Congratulations to the latest additions to the hobby:

- Robert L. Kendall - KE5WUP - Passed Element 2 for Technician Robert, is Larry's (K5END) dad!
- George R. Hood - KE5WUQ - Passed both Elements 2 & 3 for General

Congratulations to the upgrades:

- Ricky D. Powell - KE5PWR - General
- Michael T. Stone - KE5TQA - General

Special thanks to the VEs in attendance for their time and hard work:

- Tom Rum - W5RUM
- Keith Dutson - NM5G
- Bob Walworth - N5ET
- Martin Rogoff - N5GPS

Note Since normal test session dates conflict with Thanksgiving and Christmas, the next session will not be until next year. It will be on Saturday, Jan 24th 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.

Also, the fee for 2009 will increase from \$14 to \$15.

The rules concerning multiple elements and repeating failed elements will remain the same - you will be able to take multiple elements for the same amount, and repeat exams for the same element at the same test session will require paying the \$15 fee again.

Mike Bragassa - K5UO
President's Column (cont)

Other times I have seen DX signals S7-9 thirty minutes past my sunrise. Strange happenings indeed.

You don't get DXCC in a weekend on 80 meters and definitely not on 160 meters. More patience and diligence is needed...and more real estate helps, too. They require bigger and more proficient transmit and receive antennas. And, yes, there are ham's proficient on 80 and 160 with city lots.

The sunspot followers and predictors say: "A large number of spotless days means that the following cycle is going to be late, and the later a cycle is, the weaker it will be. The upcoming Cycle 24 will be weak" Please see this link for details: <http://www.warwickhughes.com/blog/?p=181#comment-20552>

Bell Ringers: Elsewhere in your newsletter this month is information on NARS participation in the Salvation Army Bell Ringer event. Please contact Jerry, KB5VGD, pronto, to volunteer one hour to this event. Everyone I know that did this last year had a lot of fun doing this.

Elections: (No, not that other one!) This month's meeting involves election of club officers for 2009. We have a full slate of some fine people wanting to get more involved in your club. If no additional candidate's surface, please give your support to our new officers going forward in 2009. Start by attending this monthly meeting on November 14, 2008.

Salvation Army Bell Ringers Event Scheduled for November 29th

Joe Sokolowsky - KD5KR

NARS will be participating in our second annual Bell Ringer event in order to help out with the Salvation Army's yearly fund raiser program during the coming holiday season. The event will be held on Saturday, November 29th at the Wall-Mart located at Spring Cypress & Hwy. 249. NARS

members will be "ringing for donations" at both entrances from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Assignments will be only one hour in duration. Last year's event turned out to be the largest collection that the Army has ever had in the area, and our goal is to beat that record for 2008.

Jerry Whiting is coordinating this event and still needs a few more volunteers.

Please contact him at 281 583-5588 or email: g_whiting@sbcglobal.net This is a fun event that can give NARS not only public recognition, but also pride in contributing to a worthy cause. This is a no-pressure gig. You ring the bell and folks drop \$\$ into the bucket. How much simpler can it be? Sign up now and be part of the action!

Have You Renewed Your Membership Lately?

Joe Sokolowsky - KD5KR

I bet some of you didn't realize that you had forgotten to renew your membership in Houston's largest and most vibrant fraternal organization, the Northwest Amateur Radio Society. If you're like most of us, renewal notices tend to get set aside, the idea being that "I'll get to that later." Magazine subscriptions usually give you plenty of advance notice, sometimes too much. They want to lock you in for another year before you realize that maybe you don't really need another periodical claiming to make you a better golfer in seventy-three easy lessons. We at NARS typically send you a notice that your membership is about to expire, and a month later you might get another reminder. If you haven't responded by

then, we figure that you're either not interested, or you've reached room temperature and have gone SK.

Going SK we can understand, but how can you not be interested in one of the free world's most exciting hobby? Part of the excitement is sharing your interests with others. Clubs like NARS offer much in helping you be a better ham. Have a problem with an antenna? Someone nearby is bound to have a fix. Need help getting your tower up? There are always a few that will offer to give you a hand. You say you can't get your son to get a haircut? Forget it, pal! You're on your own with that one. But really, where else can you find a source for technical information and problem solving that's so readily available when you need it? NARS, of course.

Annual dues are still twenty bucks, American, and haven't increased in many years, but administrative costs continue to soar. We need your renewals to keep NARS vibrant. It costs us about 75 cents to send a renewal notice. If we could do away with that "second notice," it would help keep the overhead down. Get back into it! The coffee is still strong (when I'm there,) meetings end on time, and the tall tales never fail to entertain. Not sure when you are due? Check the NARS website and click on Membership. There you'll find your renewal date. Send your check in to P.O. Box 90387, Houston TX 77290-0387, or bring it to the next general meeting. Where else can you get an evening's entertainment for a buck sixty-six a month?

***Make Plans
to Attend
the
NARS 2009 Banquet
Details Soon!***

Boy Scout Troop Hosts NARS Speaker

Joe Sokolowsky - KD5KR

Bill Skipper KB5BS entertained scouts from Troop 1318 in Magnolia on the evening of 11/10 with a discussion on Amateur Radio and the part communication plays during natural disasters. The boys' interest peaked

when told that there were no age limits preventing one from getting his FCC license. Bill gave a short demo on the use of multi-band handheld transceivers and fielded questions from the group. Bill's support group consisted of Jerry Whiting KB5VGD and Joe Sokolowski KD5KR.

Scoutmaster Tom Brewster thanked NARS for taking the time to show the boys that there's more to communications besides cell phones and text messaging. The meeting began with a solemn "Pledge of Allegiance," and we left later feeling there was hope for the next generation after all.



Welcome, Congratulations, and Condolences

Welcome to our newest member:
James Greenlee. No license yet but working on it!

NARS Resource List

General Help:

Bill Stietenroth K5ZTY
281-893-3901, k5zty@juno.com
Allen Majeski WA5REJ
281-353-8652, wa5rej.tx@netzero.net
Bill Denton W5SB
281-469-8331, w5sb@arrl.net
Madison Jones W5MJ
281-350-4330, w5mj@hal-pc.org
Deral Kent K5WNO
281-548-7476, k5wno@juno.com

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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Tom Adkins KD5EIJ

281-447-4347, tom_sts@hotmail.com

ADMINISTRATIVE AND GENERAL INFORMATION

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

Send address, phone, email and other
changes to:

NARS
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)

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281-376-7416 - k5cx@arrl.net

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