

# NARS NEWS



The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

April 2009

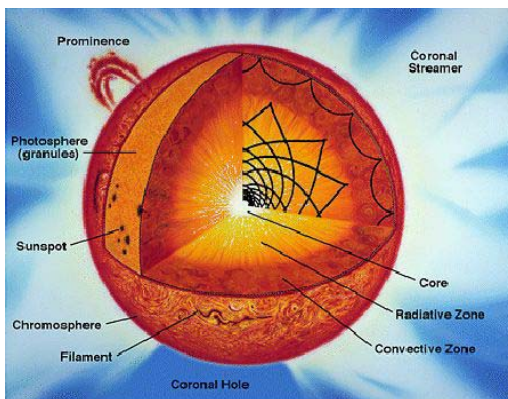


## April Meeting

### Sunspots and Propagation

When I (KD5EIJ) first earned my technician license, sunspot activity was in full swing. I spent about a year terrorizing DX operators on the 10 meter band and enjoyed every moment. It was a great time for new operators and I filled the pages of my log book and collected QSL cards from all over the world. Unfortunately over the next few years the sunspot activity died down as expected and propagation changed.

The average duration of a sunspot cycle is about 11 years, but cycles as short as 9 years and as long as 14 years have been observed. It appears we are still near the bottom of an odd year number cycle and recovery is painfully slow. Sunspot activity is on the upswing and a few flares have been observed, but a full scale recovery is not in the cards at this point in time. Will propagation improve; sure it will but when is anybody's guess. Significant variations in amplitude can also occur. Solar maximum and solar minimums change from cycle to cycle and solar indexes swing from good to bad. That means even though activity is improving we have no guarantees that we'll have the type of propagation we're hoping for.



So why is it taking so long for propagation to improve. Ever wonder what really happens when a radio wave hits the ionosphere? What is the ionosphere? How high is it? What keeps it ionized? HOW DOES it carry the signal to DX-land? How does it depend on the frequency? How does it depend also on the take off angle? What happens to the signals that don't come back? What happens to the ionosphere during high Solar activity, and how does it affect 10 meter signals so much when Sunspots are plentiful? What allows QRP to make it around the world? What happens to 160 meter signals during the daytime? Does the ionosphere "reflect" or "refract" HF? What causes rhythmic QSB? What about VHF/UHF? What are the floating mountains of Big Bend and how do they relate to this? We're going to talk about all of that, and more. You will be amazed by some of the answers. Get ready for some user-friendly but very real science! This program content will be "100% Wikipedia free." See you Friday! (KD5EIJ/K5END)

All good questions. Join us on April 17, 2009.

Also let Jerry KD5VGD know if you plan to join us for the per-meeting dinner gathering.

## Important Dates

### Friday, April 17, 7:30 PM

General Membership meeting,  
Cypress Creek Christian Community Cntr,  
6823 Cypresswood Drive

### Saturday, April 25th, 8:30 AM

VE License Exam Session  
Tomball Community Center  
S. Cherry & Market streets  
(just South of Main)

### Tuesday, April 28th, 7:30 PM

Board of Directors meeting  
Ponderosa Fire Station  
17061 Rolling Creek drive.

### Wednesday Lunch Bunch - North

Jason's Deli Apr 15th  
Baker Street Pub and Grill Apr 22nd  
Sweet Tomatoes Apr 29th  
BJ's Restaurant & Brewery May 6th  
Marco's May 13th  
Spring Creek Barbeque May 20th

### Wednesday Lunch Bunch - West

Jason's Deli Katy Fwy Apr 15th  
Skeeter's Mesquite Grill Apr 22nd  
Fajita Willies W. Little York Apr 29th  
Fajita Willies W. Little York May 6th  
Fajita Willies W. Little York May 13th  
Fajita Willies W. Little York May 20th

### Wednesday Lunch Bunch - Medical Center

Morningside Thai Apr 15  
New Orleans Cajun Kitchen Apr 22  
Prima Pasta Apr 29th  
Jason's Deli May 6th  
Buffalo Grille May 13th  
Old Timey Hamburgers May 20th

### Tail Dragers Lunch Bunch

11:00 am, Aviator's Grill, Hooks Airport

**Notice:** NARS membership dues are \$20 per year, renewable on anniversary.

**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 April - 2009*

I hope you went to the Greater Houston Hamfest like I did because I had a great time. Chuck Sanders, NO5W and I were there to promote the Texas QSO party. We had a lot of interested Hams come by and a few said they really like chasing counties during the QSO party. He put together some nice poster boards with stats and pictures from 2008.

We had a great March meeting program from Walter Holmes, W5WH, who came to talk about Echolink. We even made a contact with two of Walter's friends. One was standing in his front yard on a HT in California and the other was a station from Australia. Learn how to make a DX contact from your laptop. Check out the Echolink web site and down load the program.

The BP MS150 bike ride is just around the corner. I had a lot of fun driving a van for the weekend training rides in February and March. We had 10 new van drivers get some hands on training behind the wheel of the 15 passenger vans we use. If you don't want drive a van ask Mike Hardwick, N5VCX, were he could use some help. You won't regret it.

The board is still looking for a field day site and someone to help plan it. I would like to see some new members step up and try their hand at putting one on. You won't be alone in your effort. It will take a team to plan and execute an event like field day.

I am also looking forward to the NARS Picnic. It will be held at Keith's, NM5G, home. Maybe the NARS Pickers will have a jam session and we can all cheer them on to play a favorite. Please reserve Saturday, May 2.

## *VE Session Notice*

*Eddy Reynolds - K5WQG  
NARS VE Session Manager*

Saturday, Mar 28th VE Test Session Results at Tomball Community Center:

We had 3 candidates - all passed the Element 2 test.

Please welcome 3 new additions to the hobby:

- Kenneth Fabregas - KF5AHA - Technician
- Magdalena Van Wyk - KF5AHB - Technician
- Ralph Diguilio - KF5AHC - Technician

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

- Sarah Connell - W0HXO
- Keith Dutson - NM5G
- Jim Kirk - KJ5X
- Jerry Seay - KE5PUT
- Bob Walworth - N5ET

The next session will be held on Saturday, April 25th 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.

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

## *Pic-a-Nic*

Exit 68, I-45 North  
267 Cypresswood Drive  
Spring, TX 77388

800-471-7373  
281-355-7373  
Fax: 281-355-8007

Houston Amateur Radio Supply, Inc.  
George DiLetto, KD5ORW  
President

[www.houstonamateurradio.com](http://www.houstonamateurradio.com)

**E-Mail:** [houstonamateurradio@prodigy.net](mailto:houstonamateurradio@prodigy.net)

## Around the Circuit

### *Annual Picnic Planned*

Make plans to attend!

**Date:** Saturday, May 2nd

**Time:** 11:00AM until 4:00PM

**Location:** 24415 Deep Meadow Dr, Tomball

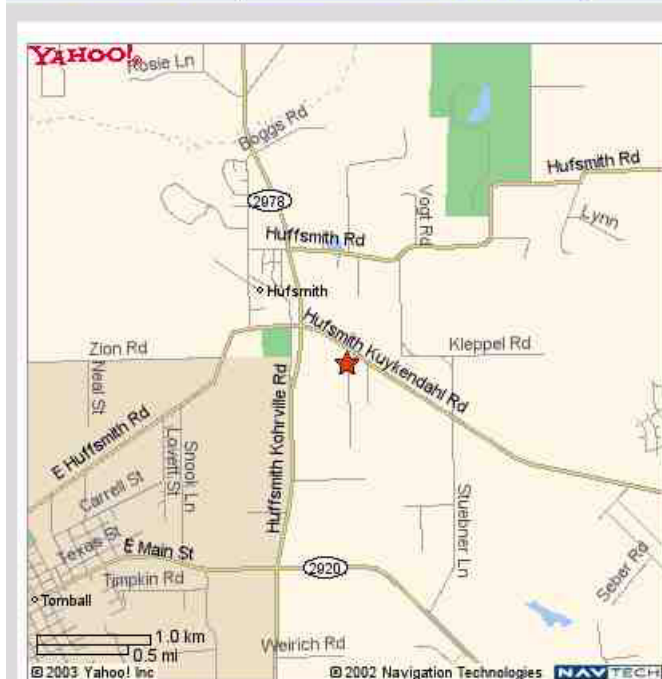
**Food:** BBQ and side dishes from Rib Tickler, home made desserts

**Cost:** \$8.00 per person

Bring your own chairs and cokes (iced tea provided).

Come join the NARS crowd for good eats, games and plenty of eyeball QSOs. Horseback rides will be available for kids and daring adults.

**Address:** ★ 24415 Deep Meadow Dr  
Tomball, TX 77375-5067 [Save Address](#)



### *Sunmart Texas Trails Endurance Run is Now History!*

Daniel Miller, Race Chairman of Petroleum Wholesale announced that Endurance Run had its final race on December 6th, 2008 at the Huntsville State Park. NARS was a participant in this annual event and over the years provided the communication network necessary in maintaining a safe race environment.

This was a task we all looked forward to each year, and it will be very much missed. No reason was given for its discontinuation, but today's economic upheaval certainly is suspect. Sponsoring an event of this size requires a substantial monetary investment, not to mention the hundreds of volunteers necessary to put a program as this in place.

We can only hope that another benefactor will step up to the plate and continue in the support of the Texas Trails Endurance Run's tradition.

**This space could be your  
ham radio article.**

**E-mail [k5cx@arrrl.net](mailto:k5cx@arrrl.net)**

**for rates!**

## Welcome, Congratulations, and Condolences

NARS would like to welcome new members Victor Baney KE5YYK, John Jeffers VE3GYV, Christopher Jeffers (Pending), Godik Gyldenege N5PEI, and Egan Gyldenege KE5YYI.

## NARS Resource List

### General Help:

Bill Stietenroth K5ZTY  
281-893-3901, [k5zty@juno.com](mailto:k5zty@juno.com)  
Allen Majeski WA5REJ  
281-353-8652, [wa5rej.tx@netzero.net](mailto:wa5rej.tx@netzero.net)  
Bill Denton W5SB  
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Madison Jones W5MJ  
281-350-4330, [w5mj@hal-pc.org](mailto:w5mj@hal-pc.org)  
Deral Kent K5WNO  
281-548-7476, [k5wno@juno.com](mailto:k5wno@juno.com)

### Digital Modes:

Marty Fitzgerald W5MF  
281-251-4301, [fitz6@swbell.net](mailto:fitz6@swbell.net)

### VHF/UHF:

Brian Derx N5BA  
281-894-5942

### PC Programming and Operations:

Keith Dutson NM5G 281-351-7683,  
[keith@dutson.net](mailto:keith@dutson.net)

### Building Electronics & Kits:

Mark Tyler K5GQ  
281-587-0256, [k5gq@juno.com](mailto:k5gq@juno.com)

### Interference (Basic Advice):

Terry Myers KQ5U  
281-443-6042,  
[tmyers1031@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tmyers1031@sbcglobal.net)

### Card Checking for Awards:

Bob Walworth N5ET - DXCC  
281-292-2221, [rwalworth@charter.net](mailto:rwalworth@charter.net)

Brian Derx N5BA - WAS, VUCC  
281-894-5942

H O Townsend K5CX - WAZ  
281-376-7416, [k5cx@arrl.net](mailto:k5cx@arrl.net)

### NARS Public Information Officer:

Joe Sokolowski, KD5KR  
281-353-2196, [kd5kr@arrl.net](mailto:kd5kr@arrl.net)

## NARS Information

### PRESIDENT & BOARD CHAIRMAN

Paul Owen N5NXXS  
281-894-7758  
[n5nxs@flash.net](mailto:n5nxs@flash.net)

### VICE PRESIDENT

Tom Atkins KD5EIJ  
281-447-4347  
[tom\\_sts@hotmail.com](mailto:tom_sts@hotmail.com)

### SECRETARY

Larry Kendall  
281-256-1883, [K5END@arrl.net](mailto:K5END@arrl.net)

### TREASURER

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### DIRECTORS

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[n5ba@qsl.net](mailto:n5ba@qsl.net)

Joe Chambers KF5AT

281-825-1634  
[jmchambers@myway.com](mailto:jmchambers@myway.com)

Marty Fitzgerald W5MF

281-251-4301, [fitz6@swbell.net](mailto:fitz6@swbell.net)

Chet Farley KG5YF

281-931-8413, [cfarley@comcast.net](mailto:cfarley@comcast.net)

### ADMINISTRATIVE AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Joe Sokolowski, KD5KR  
281-353-2196, [kd5kr@arrl.net](mailto: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 Wednesday Night: 8:00 PM,  
146.06/66 MHz, Coordinator; Jerry  
KB5VGD

### WEB SITE

URL: <http://www.w5nc.org>  
Web master: Bill Buoy N5BIA  
281-370-3510, [n5bia@arrl.net](mailto:n5bia@arrl.net)

### NARS REFLECTOR

NARS@mailman.qth.net  
Coordinator: Keith Dutson NM5G  
281-351-7683, [keith@dutson.net](mailto:keith@dutson.net)

### TEXAS QSO PARTY

Coordinator: Chuck Sanders NO5W  
936-273-6930, [no5w@consolidated.net](mailto:no5w@consolidated.net)

### VE SESSION (ARRL) Manager:

Eddy Reynolds K5WQG  
[reynolds\\_eddy@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto:k5cx@arrl.net)

Northwest Amateur Radio Society is a  
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American Radio Relay League  
ARRL Club No. 2120