



NARS NEWS

March 2014

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society
an ARRL Special Services Club #2120

Important Dates

Monthly club meeting:
Third Friday of each month, 7:30 pm.
Cypress Creek Christian Community Ctr.
6823 Cypresswood Drive

Saturday, March 22, 2014 8:30 am.
VE License Exam Session
Tomball Community Center
S. Cherry & Market Streets
(just south of Main)

Tuesday, March 25, 7:30 pm.
Board of Directors Meeting
Ponderosa Fire Station
17061 Rolling Creek Drive

Lunch Break—North
Panera Bread, March 19
Jason Deli, March 26
Baker Street, April 2
Sweet Tomatoes, April 9
B.J.'s Restaurant & Brewery, April 16

Lunch Break—Medical Center
.Southwell's Hamburger Grill, March 19
Marco's Mexican Bar & Grille, March 26
Silver Palace Chinese Buffet, April 2
Pappas Barbecue, April 9
Morningside Thai, April 16

Tail Dragger's Lunch Bunch -
Mondays, 11 am.
Aviator's Grill, Hooks Airdrome

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

Deadline for articles to appear in the following newsletter are the last day of each month .

George Carlson Presents Antenna Design for Dummies!

Back by popular demand, George Carlson KC5RCC, will present his popular demonstration on the physics of antenna design using a variety of miniature antennas atop an aluminum platform and applying a signal to simulate an actual transmission. It's like getting a "Smith Chart to go!"

George has spruced up his previous presentation a little to show the effects that an antenna design can have on its radiation pattern. You don't have to have a PhD to get something out of this lecture. He will help you understand why your vertical can make contacts on the east coast, but can't be heard in, say, Cut-n-Shoot, Texas.? (Yeah, there is a Ham in Cut-n-Shoot.)

But wait, there's more! Show up for this event and we'll double the entertainment value at no additional charge. Tom King WK5DX will attempt to convince you to participate in the coming Field Day event. And, you know what fun that can be....

April meeting to be changed to the 25th.

So, you happened to have missed last month's announcement about the date change for the April meeting... I knew it! How could you? It was right on page one of the February issue. But then, it may be a male thing.

Many of us Narsians are creatures of habit and need to be reminded a few times of anything that alters their mental schedule. A frustrated Ron Horton once remarked to his wife, "Sheree, when I say I'll do it, you don't have to remind me every six months!" Hmmm....

Okay, once again, the April meeting has been rescheduled for Friday, April 25th. Due to a conflict with the Easter week activities at the Cypress Creek Christian Community Center. Therefore, for **April only**, our general meeting will be held on the fourth Friday.

**Breakfast
at Denny's
7720 Louetta Road
Saturdays 7 am.**

Field Day, June 28 & 29!

It's official!

NARS Field Day 2014 will be held at Burroughs Park. Tom King, wk5dx@arrl.net has agreed to be the coordinator. We would like to have both a competitive operation and a few demonstration type activities for the general public and those new to the hobby.

Classification will depend upon how many transmitters, antennas and operators we can count on. We need help in all the areas listed below, so if you can help or have any suggestions please contact Tom King or any board member ASAP so we can plan accordingly. Thanks in advance and see you at Field Day!

Equipment Loans: Generators Transceivers Antennas (HF, Satellite) Laptops, Keys/Paddles Headphones SignalLink, WinKey, Pop-Up Shelters Tables Chairs etc.

Sign Up: Operating Time-CW, Operating Time-Phone.

Other Activities: Stand Alone Demonstrations (Posters, Flyers, etc.)

Workshops: Soldering Basics, Emergency Communications, SkyWarn. Any other suggestions?

Mark the dates on your calendar and tell our Field Day Coordinator, "Sign me up, Tom. I'm ready to help make Field Day a success!" All your hard work can turn into fun too and the satisfaction that you were part of an important exercise that can prepare you for the next emergency.

Thanks,

Oh yeah, I forgot to say that, "Operators are standing by to take your calls!"

Ron Horton KF5LFL

President's corner

As spring approaches activity picks up. Daylight Savings Time rolls around again and there are many public service opportunities available and many contests scheduled. The Buffalo Bayou Regatta looks like a go this year. I would encourage my fellow hams to check out some of the trivia and history of the Regatta, Buffalo Bayou and Houston. Just type in any of the key words into your favorite search engine and you'll find a wealth of information, or start from <http://users.hal-pc.org/~lfa/BBIntro.html> and go from there.

The Texas State Parks on the Air contest is coming up in early April as well. This is a unique contest where hams dust off their portable rigs, spend some time at a Texas State Park or Historical Site and make as many contacts as they can in 12 hours. Great fun and an opportunity to see some of the natural beauty Texas has to offer. From the website (<http://tspota.com/>) you can register a username and password, find the rules, see which parks have been activated for this year's contest and activate a park. If you're not the outdoor type you can join the contest from your home station as well.

And of course don't forget to begin making plans for the ARRL Field Day. You can volunteer to help in many ways by contacting this year's coordinator, Tom King, WK5DX. We still need equipment (radios, tables, chairs, pop-up shelters, etc.), and volunteers to operate both Voice and CW stations. For more information check out the calendar of events and other articles in the newsletter. See you down the log.

Ron Horton KF5LFL

Antenna launcher workshop in planning stage.

Last months program on antenna launchers had those attending wanting to get more information on building their own. Terry Myers KQ5U. has agreed to hold a workshop to build an antenna launcher. Participants will need to purchase their own fishing reel (Zebco 808 was recommended and Wal-Mart has a combo rod & reel package for about the same price as the reel by itself). Terry will purchase the rest of the materials and supplies if we will prepay (\$65). We will begin looking at a time, date and place for the workshop so we need anyone wishing to attend the workshop to contact Terry via email at tmyers1031@sbcglobal.net or Ron Horton at ronhorton88@gmail.com to get on the list. On the chance that there may be some design changes prior scheduling the workshop, hold off any purchases you make until scheduling is announced and you actually enroll.

Exit 68, I-45 North 800-471-7373
267 Cypresswood Drive 281-355-7373
Spring, TX 77388 Fax: 281-355-8007

**Houston Amateur Radio Supply,
Inc.**

David McCombs NA5CW, President

www.houstonamateurradiosupply.com

West Gulf Division Awards to be presented at HamCom in June

It is time to start considering your submissions for the WG 2014 Divisional Awards, which will be presented at the ARRL Regional Centennial Convention at HamCom in June. Nominations for 2014 Award Winners will be accepted until April 15, 2014. Nomination forms for each nominee (by category) must be supported by at least three ARRL members on the award nomination form, a minimum 150-word statement and any available supporting documentation. Other rules do apply and can be found on the nomination forms.

The Division Awards judging panel consists of four (4) ARRL members, selected by each of the Section Managers in North Texas, Oklahoma, South Texas and West Texas Sections. The Section Manager may opt to appoint his/herself to the committee. The fifth judge is selected by the Division Director and may reside anywhere within the West Gulf Division. Neither the Division Director nor the Vice Director will participate in the vote.

Nomination forms can be found at:

<http://arrlwg.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/WGD-Awards-Full-Nominating-Package.pdf>

David Woolweaver, K5RAV
Director West Gulf Division



"I SUGGEST GETTING OFF YOUR HAM RADIO LONG ENOUGH TO GET YOUR DOG GROOMED."

Sunday, March 2 VE Special Test Session Results at Tomball Fire Department, Station 1

This was for the technician class held March 1 and 2.

We had 20 candidates taking 28 tests.

Element 2 tests given: 20; passed 15

Element 3 tests given: 8; passed 1

Element 4 tests given: 0; passed 0

Congratulations to:

Eugene Monaco - new Technician

Michael Stall - new Technician

Kenneth Lindow, Jr - new Technician

Brian Royce - new Technician

Gary Freeman - new Technician

Gerald Allcorn - new Technician

Larry Smith - new Technician

Neal Sitler - new Technician

David Barron - new Technician

Matthew Barron, Jr - new Technician

Brett Dearman KF5YKL - upgrade to General

Jonna Johnson - new Technician

Mark Clarke - new Technician

Saturday, February 22 VE Test Session Results at Tomball Community Center

We had 5 candidates taking 7 tests.

Element 2 tests given: 2; passed 1

Element 3 tests given: 3; passed 3

Element 4 tests given: 2; passed 0

Congratulations to:

John Lockwood - upgrade to General

Gary Craze - new Technician

John Cook - upgrade to General

Larry Newhard - upgrade to General

Thanks to the VE's in attendance:

Sheree Horton KF5LMJ (acting session mgr)

Skip Ferguson K5LLR

Ron Horton KF5LFL

Martin Rogoff N5GPS

Sarah Connell W2AOV

Mike Bragassa K5UO

The next session will be held Saturday, March 22 at 8:30AM at the Tomball Community Center, located at the corner of Market and South Cherry Streets. Official address is 221 Market Street. Let me know if you would like to serve at this session. Parking is in the rear of the building. Use the entrance on the east side bordered by Cherry Street.

NOTE* There will be a special session held Sunday, March 2, at 3:30PM, at Tomball Fire Station 1. This is for the technician class being held March 1 and 2.

Anyone who wants to observe and/or participate in a session is always welcome. Just let me know if you want to learn more about becoming a volunteer examiner.

73, Keith Dutson NM5G
NARS VE Session Manager

Contesting Corner

I've been asked, "Do I need a computerized logging program?" To make a serious attempt at an international contest, yes. Most of the smaller stations that enter a contest spend much of their time answering other stations that are calling CQ. This is known as "search and pounce" - you search for a station you need, and then pounce on it by replying to its call. However since you can only work a station once on each band and mode, before you reply to the CQ, you need to know whether you have worked the station before, and unless you have a photographic memory a computer logging program is by far the best way to do this. Contesters are a very friendly bunch, but calling the same station five or six times on the same band during a major international contest will test the patience of even the most saintly participant.

Of course if you are fortunate enough to be even moderately rare DX (ZS for example), then you can get by with calling CQ yourself and waiting for a reply, log this on paper and later remove the duplicates ("de-dup" the log) by hand. This is what I did in my first major contest, but after manually de-duping 475 QSOs, which took me a whole day, I went out and bought a logging program. Note that for many of the smaller state or national contests, you can get by without a logging program as there are few enough entrants that you can remember who you have worked or look it up on your paper logs. These contests can be great fun and are excellent practice for the "big ones".

There are many different, some commercial ones, which you have to pay for, and some which are free. Popular commercial programs include WriteLog for Windows, TRLog and SD. Writelog has a Windows graphical user interface. Although originally written for DOS, TRLog will also run under most versions of Windows. SD is available in two versions, one which runs character-mode under Windows, and one for DOS. Free contest logging software includes CT, also originally designed for DOS, and the open-source N1MM logger and Win-Test for Windows. You can read user reviews of these and other programs at www.eham.net.

First, be aware that logging programs come in two different flavours - general logging programs designed to maintain a normal station log, and specialized contest logging programs. The difference is that contest logging programs have contest scoring rules "built in" for major contests, so they will automatically keep track of your score, tell you whether you can work a particular station for the contest, and other contest-specific time saving features. Needless to say, you want a program designed for contest logging. Then make sure it supports the contests you want to enter, since having the contest programmed into the software for you is a real time saver. If you don't know exactly which contests you want to enter, then at least see how many contests it supports. Also consider the ease of adding new contests yourself if you have to.

Also consider the ease of adding new contests yourself if you have to. Some programs, like WriteLog for Windows, require programming skills to do this while with others, like TRLog, you can add new contests by editing a configuration file. Also look for a program that can interface with the rig(s) you use or are likely to use. Having the logging program automatically pick up the band and mode your rig is set to is a great time saver and eliminates a common source of costly errors. Many logging programs can also turn your beam automatically for you to point at the station you are working, so if you want to use this feature then make sure the program is compatible with the rotator(s) you are using. Finally, make absolutely sure that the logging program can export the log file in the standard "Cabrillo" format, which is used to submit logs for most contests. All decent logging programs can interface to your rig's key jack to send CW automatically. This is a great feature as it allows you to send exchanges while capturing information into the logging program.

- Tom King WK5DX

Coming Contest Schedule:

MARCH

Virginia QSO Party 1400Z, Mar 15 to 0200Z, Mar 16 and 1200Z-2400Z, Mar 16.

Oklahoma QSO Party 1300Z, Mar 22 to 0100Z, Mar 23 and 1300Z-1900Z, Mar 23.

Louisiana QSO Party 1500Z, Mar 22 to 0300Z, Mar 23

CQ WW WPX Contest, SSB 0000Z, Mar 29 to 2400Z, Mar 30.

APRIL

Texas State Parks On The Air 1400Z, Apr 5 to 0200Z, Apr 6

Mississippi QSO Party 1400Z, Apr 5 to 0200Z, Apr 6.

New Mexico QSO Party 1400Z, Apr 12 to 0200Z, Apr 13.

Georgia QSO Party 1800Z, Apr 12 to 2359Z, Apr 13.

Michigan QSO Party 1600Z, Apr 19 to 0400Z, Apr 20.

Ontario QSO Party 1800Z, Apr 19 to 1800Z, Apr 20.

Florida QSO Party 1600Z, Apr 26 to 2159Z, Apr 27.

Welcome, Congratulations and Condolences

New member, Gary Craze.
Best wishes for full recovery of Paul Owen N5NXS and Cal White WF5W
after major surgical procedures.

NARS Resource list

General help:

Allen Majeski WA5REJ
281 353-8652 wa5rej.tx@netzero.net

Deral Kent K5WNO
281 548-7476 k5wno@juno.com

Digital modes:

Marty Fitzgerald W5MF
281 251-4301 fitz6@swball.net

VHF/UHF:

Brian Derx N5BA
281 251-4301

PC Programming & Ops:

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

Building Electronics & kits:

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

Interface (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

Bob Walworth N5ET—WAZ
281 292-2221 rwalworth@charter.net

NARS Public Info. Officer

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

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Send changes in address, phone, or email to:
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Houston, TX 77290-0387

Nets

2 meter Wed. 8 pm. 146.06/66 Tone 141.3
Coordinator: Jerry Whiting KB5VGD
g_whiting@sbcglobal.net

Web site

URL: <http://www.w5nc.net>
Web Master: Bill Buoy N5BA
281 370-3510 n5bia@arrl.net

NARS Reflector

NARS@mailman.qth.net
Coordinator: Keith Dutson NM5G
281 516-1466 keith1@dutson.net

Texas QSO Party

Co-coordinator: Chuck Sanders NO5W
832 657-4832
no5w.chuck@gmail.com

Co-coordinator: Keith Dutson NM5G
281 516-1466 keith1@dutson.net

VE Session (ARRL) Manager

Keith Dutson NM5G
281 516-1466 keith1@dutson.net

Meetings

Monthly General Membership 3rd. Friday
each month (except January) at 7:30 pm.
Cypress Creek Christian Community Ctr.
6823 Cypresswood Drive

Saturday Breakfast

Denny's 7720 Louetta Rd. 7 am.

Wednesday Lunch—11:30 am.

Various places. Info on front page.

NARS News is published monthly by the Northwest Amateur Radio Society. Send all articles and materials for the newsletter to:
Editor, Joe Sokolowski KD5KR, 281 353-2196 kd5kr@arrl.net Deadline for articles to appear in the next newsletter is the last day of
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Northwest Amateur Radio Society is a Special Services Club affiliated with the American Radio Relay League, ARRL Club No. 2120.