



April 2015

Important Dates

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

Tuesday, April 28, 7:30 pm.
Board of Directors Meeting
Ponderosa Fire Station
17061 Rolling Creek Drive

VE License Exam:
Saturday, April 25, 10 a.m.
Lone Star College Tomball Library,
located at the south entrance to the
College. Official address is: 30555 St.
Hwy 249

Lunch Break—North

Apr 15, Panera Bread
Apr 22, Jason's Deli
Apr 29, Baker Street Pub
May 6, Sweet Tomatoes
May 13, BJ's Brewery

Lunch Break—Medical Center

Apr 15, Buffalo Grille
Apr 22, Southwell's Hamburger Grill
Apr 29, Marco's Mexican Bar & Grill
May 6, Silver Palace Chinese Buffet
May 13, Pappa's BBQ

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

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

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

NARS NEWS

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

Limited Space Antennas

**A George Edwards K5VUU
Presentation
April 17th.
Seating limited, so come early!**



146.660 Repeater News

NARS will be testing the replacement for the 146.660 repeater in the next few weeks. Anyone wishing to help defray the cost of replacing the repeater, antenna, connectors, etc. can make a donation to the Repeater Fund by making checks payable to NARS and designate "Repeater Fund" in the Memo field.

NARS, P.O. Box 90387, Houston, TX 77290-0387

The cost of this equipment is considerable and will be done in stages as we go along. Some equipment, material, and technical assistance has already been donated, but we have a long way to go towards completion of this massive project. Your monetary donations can help in bringing 146.660 up and running sooner. More details will follow in future announcements.

President's Corner

There are times when all of us, no matter what training and background we have, run into situations that appear difficult. Fortunately there are people involved in our hobby that have already experienced these same situations and have frequently found solutions for them. In Ham Radio we have come to call these people "Elmers" or Mentors.

Whether it is mastering Morse code or tuning your new amplifier, assistance is always appreciated. Your "Elmer" may have pushed you to get your license, or loaned you a rig to get started on the air after you got your license. The term "Elmer" – meaning someone who provides personal guidance and assistance to would-be hams – first appeared in QST in a March 1971 "How's DX" column by Rod Newkirk, W9BRD (Now also VA3ZBB). Newkirk called them "the unsung fathers of Amateur Radio." I know that I have appreciated all of the assistance I have received from a number of hams during my time as a Ham Radio Operator.

If you have had assistance from an "Elmer", there is a page on the ARRL web site that tells about Mentoring and "Elmers". The web site includes a form that you can fill out to send an "Elmer Award" to someone who has helped you along the way. Check the article for yourself and send your "Elmer" or "Elmers" an "Elmer Award". You can have the award sent directly to them or to you for presentation to your "Elmer" in person.

Brad Nelson WD5GNI



4721 Watonga Blvd.
Houston, TX 77092
www.ofarc.org

V.E. Exams every 4th Saturday of
the month at 9:30 a.m.
Contact: John Westerlage'
N5DWI@ofarc.org for further
info.

HOUSTON AMATEUR RADIO SUPPLY, INC.

HAM | CB | COMMERCIAL | DIGITAL SCANNERS | ELECTRONICS
RETAIL | REPAIR | CONSIGNMENT | INSTALLATION

houstonamateurradiosupply.com

Dave McCombs, NA5CW
Owner

281-355-7373
contact@harsradio.com

2558 E. FM 1960 Rd.
Houston, TX 77073

Saturday, March 28 VE Test Session Results at Lone Star College Tomball Library

We had 11 candidates taking 25 tests.
Element 2 tests given: 6; passed 5
Element 3 tests given: 6; passed 3
Element 4 tests given: 3; passed 2

Congratulations to:

Peter Cameron - new Technician
Charles McBride KB5ESS - upgrade to General
James Lowry KE5UVI - upgrade to Extra
Alexander Seton - new Technician
James Glenn KG5CJQ - upgrade to General
George Devoucalla - new Technician
Bennie Cervenka - new General
Stephen Hickman KC5USN - upgrade to Extra
Matthew Johnson - new Technician

The next monthly session will be held Saturday, April 25 at 10:15AM at Lone Star College Tomball Library, located at the southern entrance to the College. Official address is 30555 State Highway 249. Let me know if you would like to serve at this session. Parking is in the lot to the right of the entrance.

There will also be a special session held Saturday, April 18 at 3:00PM at Christ United Church, at the corner of Telge and Huffmeister. This session is for the first ham radio class of 2915, sponsored by NARS.

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

VIRGIL STAMPS
Radio Amateur K5OOR
vstamps@comcast.net

HF PROJECTS
hfprojects.com
281-467-9424

Home of the HF PackerAmp
5802 Miller Valley Drive
Houston, TX 77066
USA

NARS 2 meter net

Held every Wednesday night at 8 pm. We will be temporarily using the Texas DX Society's repeater until ours is back in operation. Please configure your equipment for 147.36/96, Tone: 100.
All are welcome, members or not!

WORLD AMATEUR RADIO DAY 2015

Mark down April 18th as the day that radio amateurs worldwide take to the airwaves in celebration of World Amateur Radio Day. It was on that day in 1925 that the International Amateur Radio Union or IARU was formed in Paris, France .

Since its founding, the IARU has worked tirelessly to defend and expand the frequency allocations for Amateur Radio. Thanks to the support of enlightened administrations in every part of the globe, radio amateurs are now able to experiment and communicate in frequency bands strategically located throughout the radio spectrum.

Today, Amateur Radio is more popular than ever, with over 3,000,000 licensed operators scattered around the globe. World Amateur Radio Day is the day when IARU Member-Societies can show our capabilities to the public and enjoy global friendship with other Amateurs worldwide.

And in helping to keep with the spirit of the event, the IARU is providing a downloadable poster for World Amateur Radio Day 2015. Any group may download it and have it printed locally. Its in Adobe PDF- format at tinyurl.com/ward-poster-2015.

Amateur Radio Newline (tm)



"Yes, I have to admit the parting of the Red Sea was pretty darn spectacular. But if, just once, we could travel someplace without getting lost, now that would truly be a miracle.

"Ah yes, If only Moses had GPS and a smart phone, history could have been sooo different...."

Anon

Recap of the March program...

Virgil Stamps K500R presented a program on kit building with emphasis on his development of the HF Packet AMP V4R7. He has been designing and supporting in his spare time, HF projects over the past 15 years. The program covered much on the application and development of his kits but managed to interest many of the attending members based on the fielded questions.

For those whose interest continued after the program ended, we've included his business card on page 2 in the event you need to contact him for further information on his kits.



Virgil Stamps, K500R

NARS in rewind....

June 1990

NARS Helps Madison Electronics shut down!

Armed with pickup trucks, a Suburban and a big diesel truck, NARS members showed up early Sunday morning, June 3rd to help move mucho "stuff" out of Madison Electronics to its storage facility. Participating on a hot day were NARS members Allen Majeski WA5REJ, Dick Rooney W5VHN, Ken Edinborgh W5BKK, Bob Judd WN5G, Rich Richardson KA5YFU, Ken Harlan KS5AKG, Henry Freedenberg N5HF, Curt Furtado KI5AK, Special Advisor "Mean Joe" Green WA4FGH, Spunky Busick K5AAD, Bob Welch KE5IC, and harmonic Kirk Welch who brought the diesel truck. Kirk summed it up quite well when he says, "This is a great bunch of guys, and they really work!"

The Busick family expressed their sincere appreciation for our assistance. Thanks everyone!

Surge Protectors 101

Surge protectors aren't like diamonds. They have a definite lifespan. At some point, your surge protector will stop protecting your gear from power surges and become a dumb power strip. It's difficult to tell exactly when a surge protector loses those protective powers and just functions as a power strip. But, if you're still using an old surge protector you purchased ten years ago, it's probably long past time to replace it. These devices sit between the electrical socket and your gadgets, protecting them from any power surges and ensuring they receive a consistent voltage of electricity. It's possible for a voltage spike caused by an issue in the power grid to damage your expensive electrical equipment, and that's what surge protectors are designed to stop.

Typical surge protectors also function as a power strip, providing additional electrical outlets for you. If you're connecting your computing equipment or home theater system, there's a good chance you'll want some electrical outlets anyway — so just pick up a power strip that's also a surge protector, not a simple power strip that only provides additional outlets without providing any protection. Surge protectors are inexpensive, so they're a no-brainer when it comes to your expensive computing equipment and other electronic gadgets.

Surge protectors aren't forever

Surge protectors aren't magic. When they receive a power surge from the electrical outlet they're plugged into, they have to do something with that extra voltage to get rid of it and shield the connected devices from it. A typical surge protector uses a component called a metal oxide varistor (MOV). When the voltage spikes, the surge protector effectively diverts that extra voltage to the MOV component. This component degrades when it's exposed to either a small number of large surges or a larger number of smaller surges. The additional energy doesn't damage your devices — it stays in the surge protector, where it degrades the MOV. In other words, your surge protector can only absorb so many surges before it stops functioning as a surge protector and starts functioning as a dumb power strip that'll let everything through to your devices.

Their Life spans Are Measured in Joules

Surge protectors are rated in joules, and this tells you how much protection they're designed to provide. For example, you might get a 1000 joule surge protector. This is a measure of a total amount of energy a surge protector can absorb before the protection wears out and it stops absorbing any extra voltage. Every power surge your surge protector absorbs decreases the amount of future joules it absorbs. If that 1000 joule surge protector takes an 1000 joule hit, it's done for. But it's also done for if it takes ten 100 joule hits — or if it takes a thousand one joule hits. It's all cumulative. Surge protector life spans aren't measured in years — they're measured in joules. It's all about how many joules your surge protector has absorbed. But, the older your surge protector is, the more it's likely degraded.

How Can You Tell?

It's practically impossible to tell exactly when a surge pro-

teCTOR stops functioning as intended. Some surge protectors have built-in lights that are designed to alert you to this problem and inform you when the protector needs to be replaced. However, you can't necessarily rely on these lights. It's not a foolproof system. If your surge protector is warning you that it's no longer protecting you or asking you to replace it, you should probably get a new surge protector. But don't assume your decade-old surge protector is still working properly because the warning light hasn't come on yet. So when is it time to replace that surge protector? Well, the longer it's been, the more at risk you are. If you know your surge protector has absorbed a serious power surge, you should probably replace it immediately. There's no exact lifespan we can give you, and it varies from area to area — it depends how many surges occur in your area as well as how many joules your protector can absorb. Many people recommend replacing a surge protector every two years or so, but any recommendation like this one can only be a rule of thumb.

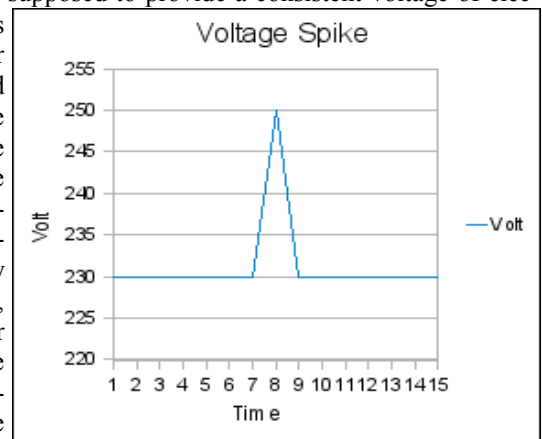
Why You Need a Surge Protector?

Do you have your amateur radio, PC, television, or other expensive electronics plugged directly into a power outlet? You shouldn't. You should plug your gadgets into a surge protector, which isn't necessarily the same thing as a power strip. Sure, we all might forget about surge protection because everything seems to be going fine, but it only takes one power surge or spike and your expensive electronics could become useless.

Power Surges and Spikes

Electrical sockets are supposed to provide a consistent voltage of elec-

tricity, and devices you plug into your power outlets depend on this. In some cases, a power spike can occur when the voltage suddenly increases. This can often be caused by lightning strikes, power outages, or malfunctions in the grid the power company is responsible for. A spike is a short



increase in voltage, while a surge is one that lasts more than a few seconds. Surges are usually caused by problems with the electrical grid. Whatever the cause, a sudden increase in current can damage electronics that are drawing power from the surging or spiking outlet. It could even render them completely inoperable, the increase in current having damaged them beyond repair. Surge protectors use a variety of different methods to do this, but they generally boil down to a system that diverts energy over the safe threshold to a protective component in the surge protector itself. The surge protector ensures that only the normal, safe amount of electricity passes through to your devices. Power Strips Aren't Necessarily Surge Protectors. Some people are confused about this and call every power bar a "surge protector," but this isn't true. The cheapest power strips are often not surge protectors and only provide additional power outlets for you. When using a power strip for your expensive electronics, be sure its specifications say it has a surge protector.

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Chris Hoffman — "How to Geek."

Welcome, Congratulations and Condolences

Welcome new members,
Fred Orsack,
We note with regret the passing of NARS member & past President, Tom King WK5DX/SK

NARS Resource list

General help:

Allen Majeski WA5REJ
281 528-0673 wa5rej@yahoo.com

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
281 516-1466 keith1@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

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

NARS Public Info. Officer

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

NARS Information

President & Board Chairman

Brad Nelson WD5GNI
281 370-0934
wd5gni@swbell.net

Vice President

To be announced

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Sheree Horton KF5LMJ
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sher5456@gmail.com

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Deral Kent K5WNO

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Mike Bowen N8ILU
mike5664g@yahoo.com

Administrative & General Info.

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

Send changes in address, phone, or email to:

NARS
P.O. Box 90387
Houston, TX 77290-0387

Nets

2 meter Wed. 8 pm. 147.36/96, tone 100
(Courtesy of Texas DX Society)
Coordinator: Jerry Whiting KB5VGD
g_whiting@sbcglobal.net

Web site

URL: <http://www.w5nc.net>
Web Master: Bill Buoy N5BIA
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 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
each month.

Northwest Amateur Radio Society is a Special Services Club affiliated with the American Radio Relay League, ARRL Club No. 2120.