



NARS NEWS

November 2017

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

Important Dates

November 17th. Program:

Monthly club meeting:

Third Friday of each month, 7:30 pm.
(except January) New meeting place
planned due to extensive flooding and
repair of CCCC. See November loca-
tion at bottom of page 1.

*This is a multi-program meeting
Featuring:*

Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, Next meeting, Nov 28, 2017,
7:30 pm at: Ponderosa Fire Station
17061 Rolling Creek Drive, Houston

*Election of Board members for 2018,
TQP 2017 preliminary results,
Awards Banquet 2018,
&
A Q&A session on digital radio
(DMR, D-Star, C4FM)*

VE License Exam:

Next exam, Saturday, Nov 25, 2017
Saturday, at 8:00 AM at Tomball Re-
gional Hospital, 1st floor Green con-
ference room.

Lunch Break—North

Nov 15 Pei Wei
Nov 22 Panera Bread
Nov 29 Jason's Deli
Dec 6 Baker Street Pub
Dec 13 Sweet Tomatoes

.Lunch Break—Medical Center

Nov 15 Antonio's Mexican Grill
Nov 22 Jason's Deli
Nov 29 Buffalo Grille
Dec 6 Southwell's Hamburger Grill
Dec 13 Silver Palace Chinese Buffet

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.



*** Meeting location for November ***

Due to historic flooding around the Cypress Creek Community Center,
location & time change was required.
Spring Creek Barbecue, 6068 FM 2920,
between Kuykendahl & TC Jester on North side of FM 2920,
near Kroger shopping center.
Dinner at 6 p.m., meeting starts at 7 p.m.
(Dinner is not mandatory to attend)

**Breakfast at
Denny's
Saturdays, 7 a.m.
6504 FM 2920, Spring, TX
Just a few blocks west of
Kuykendahl at the intersection of
TC Jester & FM 2920**

President's Corner

Last month the club meeting revisited DMR radio with Marty Fitzgerald W5MF explain what he's learned and Ron Matusek WA6TQH discussing the RFinder DMR Radio/Android phone. I want to thank everyone for their efforts in making these presentations. We also received a request for volunteers to assist at the Marathon.

In the near future I'll be reaching out to the membership for suggestions for future meetings. If there something you've discovered and like to share, please contact me. Some ideas were in last month's newsletter about things you can do to challenge yourself.

We are getting into a busy time of year with the holidays quickly approaching. There are also some ham events to put on your calendar:

November 17, General Meeting at Spring Creek BBQ on FM 2920.
December 2, Bell Ringers at Wal-Mart
December 15, Annual Show & Tell, site TBD
January 13-14, 2018 Houston Marathon – Needs Volunteers
January 19, 2018 Banquet at Backyard Grill 9543 Jones Rd

Elections are coming up this month and we have vacancies on the Board of Directors, and other positions. I want to remind everyone that this your chance to provide input and help. Sometimes you can't make it to every meeting, which is why it's important to have "depth" in these positions. It's also necessary just for purposes of succession planning. It's great we have capable people taking care of the club, but that makes it all the much harder if they are not around.

A fellow club member shared another local club's newsletter with me, and they are facing a similar problem. The same person has been their club President for several years, and he's ready to have someone else take over. I don't want NARS to find itself in the same position. So, I am encouraging you to volunteer to help – your club needs you.

Finally, I am in the beginning of a project to update the "Elmer" list. Both in topic areas and eventually the "Elmers" listed. I hope to get something out on that in the next month. At this point, I'm taking suggestions. Some other changes are in the works, so stay tuned. See you at the meeting!

Richard Nelson, KF5WRD
2017 President, NARS
KF5WRD @ attl.net



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@oafrc.org for further info.

Saturday, October 28, 2017 VE Test Session Results at Tomball Regional Hospital:

We had 8 candidates taking 10 tests.

Element 2 tests given: 6; passed 4
Element 3 tests given: 3; passed 3
Element 4 tests given: 1; passed 0

Congratulations to:

Christopher Blake KG5VFL - upgrade to General
Steven Robbins KT5MMI - upgrade to General
Daniel Mejia - new Technician
Robert West - new Technician
Stephen Stepinoff - new Technician
Peter Dathorne - new General

Thanks to the VE's in attendance:

Martin Rogoff N5GPS
Sam Labarbera K5AOO
Marty Fitzgerald W5MF
Steve Protz KA5AUD
Larry Hill WA5LSV

The next monthly session will be held 0800 Saturday, November 25, at Tomball Regional Hospital. 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 ARRL VE Liaison



NARS now has a new address!

Please update your address list!

Northwest Amateur Radio Society
P.O. Box 11483
Spring, TX 77391

Bell Ringing - A NARS Tradition - Call For Help

Bell ringing for the Salvation Army has been a traditional public service event for many years. The first year I served was in 2009. I was a bit nervous at first, wondering how the public would view my presence as a volunteer. But, after seeing smiles on so many people, and the enthusiasm shown by children asking a parent for money to donate, I automatically reacted by ringing that bell more often, and saying "Merry Christmas" to passers-by. Before you know it, that one-hour slot was over, and I was passing the apron and Santa hat to the next volunteer. I was never prouder to wear my NARS shirt.

So, how did this bell ringing tradition get started? After many years in various locations, NARS changed the annual Field Day site to Burroughs Park. Jerry Whiting KB5VGD has long been associated with obtaining permission to use Burroughs Park from Harris County every year since that time. He is also the coordinator for the Bell Ringing event each year. As I understand, this came about after discussions with the Salvation Army about having the organization bring their food truck to Field Day to serve hot dogs. This helps both organizations. Our service as bell ringers adds to this relationship between NARS and the Salvation Army.

Please consider being a bell ringer this year, and in the future. Many of us serve every year. However, some of the regulars have been unable to repeat lately, causing a shortage. I spoke with Jerry recently and he said this is the first year he has been short of volunteers in November. The event is on Saturday, December 2, starting at 10:00am and running until 5:00pm. There are two ringers each hour, one at each entrance door at Wal-Mart, located at FM249 and Spring-Cypress. Jerry said he will not consider an abbreviated version this year, as this is not what the Salvation Army wants. Instead, he will be forced to cancel the event. This would be a poor showing for NARS. Volunteering is simple. Let Jerry know you can be there to serve one hour. His email is g_whiting@sbcglobal.net

73, Keith Dutson NM5G
NARS Administrative Secretary

American Red Cross Hails "New Partnership" with ARRL Following Puerto Rico Deployment

The American Red Cross (ARC) this week thanked ARRL and its "Force of 50" hurricane recovery volunteers who deployed to Puerto Rico earlier this month, and it suggested a new level of partnership now exists between the two organizations. ARC Senior Vice President, Disaster Cycle Services Harvey Johnson this week wrote ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR, and ARRL CEO Tom Gallagher, NY2RF, to express his organization's gratitude for "all your amazing volunteers for the unwavering commitment demonstrated during the response to this unprecedented disaster in Puerto Rico." Johnson said the team's actions "made a significant difference" in the lives of those affected.

"This mission marked an exciting new path for our two organizations with it being the first time we deployed ARRL volunteers to a Red Cross relief operation," Johnson wrote. "I continue to hear incredible stories about how the ARRL volunteers supported individuals, communities, and partner organizations during their time in Puerto Rico." The ARRL and the American Red Cross have a long-standing memorandum of understanding (**MOU**) to cooperate in emergencies and disasters.

"It was a complex cooperation in an austere environment, and the mission certainly had its challenges," Johnson continued. "While we have much to learn from this new experience and areas to improve upon, we remain committed to working with you, ARRL, and your cadre of talented volunteers."

Johnson singled out for special praise ARRL Emergency Response Manager Mike Corey, KI1U, "for his leadership in planning and managing the mission."

"Mike was fast acting and thoughtful, constantly working to make the mission effective through transparency and collaboration," Johnson said. "We simply could not have achieved the outcomes without him."

Johnson said the ARC looks forward to working together with ARRL to "serve those impacted by disasters."

Election of NARS 2018 Officers!



Hey! Yah, you in the back row sipping on your latte. Get off your duff and place your name in the hat. The election of NARS 2018 officers takes place at the November meeting. The club needs to elect new Directors. Consider taking one of these positions. We'll even give you a title and a set of suspenders, if that's what it takes. Do I have to talk to your Mother about this?

NARS needs new ideas to insure its future. All it takes is to attend board meetings each month and assist in voicing your ideas on how to better the operation of the Northwest Amateur Radio Society. You can help make a difference!

Contact Keith Dutson at kdutson@sbcglobal.net or just come to the general meeting on November 20th. No excuses, now. We'll do the rest.....

New Digital Modes Changing Complex- ion of Bands and Perhaps of Ham Radio

The wave of software-based digital modes over the past several years has altered the atmosphere of the HF bands. Some suggest the popularity of modes that make it possible to contact stations neither operator can even hear has resulted in fewer CW and SSB signals on bands like 6 meters and 160 meters. Traditional modes require far more interaction and effort on the part of the operator; the newer digital modes, not so much. The recent advent of the still-beta "quick" FT8 mode, developed by Steve Franke, K9AN,



Joe Taylor, K1JT.

and Joe Taylor, K1JT -- the "F" and the "T" in the mode's moniker -- has brought this to a head. Some now wonder if FT8 marks the end of an era and the start of a new, more minimalist age.

"We've been as surprised as anyone about the rapid uptake of FT8 for making QSOs on the HF bands," Taylor told ARRL this week. Rather than

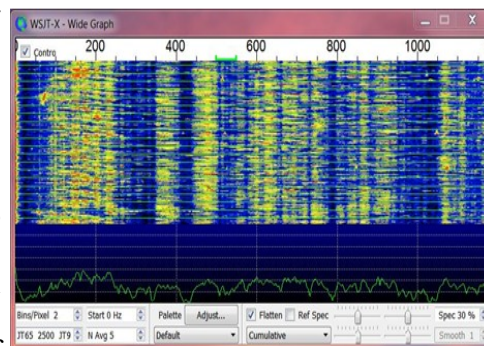
viewing FT8 as a total game-changer, he sees a dividing line between such digital modes and more traditional modes.

"SSB and CW are general-purpose modes," Taylor asserted. "They are good for ragchewing, DXing, contesting, emergency communications, or whatever. FT8 and the other modes in *WSJT-X* are special-purpose modes. They are designed for making reliable, error-free contacts using very weak signals -- in particular, signals that may be too weak for the more traditional modes to be usable, or even too weak to hear."

Taylor notes that the information exchanged in most FT8, JT65, and other digital-mode contacts "is little more than the bare minimum for what's considered to be a valid contact." In addition to call signs and signal reports, stations may exchange grid squares and acknowledgments.

Radio amateurs recently commented in response to a Top Band Reflector post, in which Steve Ireland, VK6VZ, averred that because of FT8, "160-meter DXing has changed, perhaps forever" in recent weeks. Ireland said he downloaded FT8 but just couldn't bring himself to use it on the air. "My heart isn't in it," he wrote. "My computer will be talking to someone else's computer, and there will be no sense of either a particular person's way of sending CW or the tone of their voice. The human in radio has somehow been lost."

In his [blog](#), Steve McDonald, VE7SL, compiled not only Ireland's posts, but some responses to it, although not identified by name or call sign. One commenter suggested that the game-changing aspect of FT8 is that those who typically operate CW or SSB will gravitate to FT8.



"The amount of activity on the FT8 frequency of any band is phenomenal," the commenter observed. A few complained that no skill is involved in making contacts using computer-based digital modes. Another suggested that FT8 is already falling victim to its own success, with too many stations crowding around the designated FT8 frequencies. Others were more philosophical, with remarks along the lines of this one: "It is allowing people who have smaller stations the opportunity to get on and use their radios and a computer to make contacts they never would have been able to make. This is great for ham radio!"

Taylor would agree. As he sees it, FT8 won't replace modes such as CW or SSB. "Nevertheless, it's clear that -- at least in the short term -- many hams enjoy making rapid-fire minimal QSOs with other hams, all over the world, using modest ham equipment," he said. "For this purpose, FT8 shines."

ARRL News



Welcome, Congratulations and Condolences

Concerns for Ron Horton KF5LFL,
who is currently in rehabilitation at the Legend Oak Healthcare & Rehab. of Katy.

NARS Resource list

General help:

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

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

Al Manard N6VQO
281 292-3113 almanard@gmail.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

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

TBA

NARS Information

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Mike Bowen N8ILU
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Texas QSO Party

Co-coordinator: Chuck Sanders NO5W
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Treasurer

Sheree Horton KF5LMJ
713 299-6994
sher5456@gmail.com

Administrative & General Info.

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281 516-1466 keith1@dutson.net

Secretary

Martin Rogoff N5GPS
281 890-4538
N5gps.tx@gmail.com

Send changes in address, phone, or email to:

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P.O. Box 11483
Spring, TX 77391

VE Session (ARRL) Manager

Keith Dutson NM5G
281 516-1466 kdutson@sbcglobal.net

Directors

Lester Mignerey KB0MEF
281 257-6580
kb0mef@arrl.net

Nets

2 meter Wed. 8 pm. 146.660, tone 141.3
Coordinator: Jerry Whiting KB5VGD
g_whiting@sbcglobal.net

Meetings

Monthly General Membership 3rd. Friday
each month (except January) at 7:30 pm.
New location search in progress.

Ron Horton KF5LFL

713 299-7013
Ron.Horton88@gmail.com

Web site

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

Saturday Breakfast

Denny's 6504 FM 2920, Spring
(Just a few blocks west of Kuykendahl)

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, jsokolow@sbcglobal.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.