



# NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

March 2018

## Important Dates

### 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.

### Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, Next meeting, March 27,  
2018, 7:30 pm at: Ponderosa Fire  
Station 17061 Rolling Creek Drive,  
Houston

### VE License Exam:

Next exam, Saturday, March 24, 2018  
at 8:00 AM at Tomball Regional Hos-  
pital, 1st floor Green conference room.

### Lunch Break—North

March 7 Pei Wei  
March 14 Panera Bread  
March 21 Jason's Deli  
March 28 Russo's NY Pizzeria  
April 4 Sweet Tomatoes  
April 11 B.J.'s Brewery

### .Lunch Break—Medical Center

March 7 Antonio's Mexican Grill  
March 14 Jason's Deli  
March 21 Buffalo Grille  
March 28 Southwell's Hamburger Grill  
April 4 Pappa's BBQ  
April 11 Morningside Thai

### Tail Dragger's Lunch Bunch -

Mondays, 11 am.  
Aviator's Grill, Hooks Aerodrome

Notice: NARS membership dues are  
\$20 per year, renewable on the 1st of  
January

**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**

**March 16th.**  
**A video showing of the  
2014 FT5ZM DXpedition  
to  
Amsterdam Island.**  
**This video begins with preparations  
for the trip & ends with....  
well, we don't want to give away the  
surprise ending of this  
thrilling event!**



**A Bob Allphin K4UEE production**

**The meeting this month has been scheduled at  
Spring Creek BBQ!**

## ***Saturday, February 24 VE Test Session Results at Tomball Regional Hospital***

We had 4 candidates taking 6 tests.  
Element 2 tests given: 3; passed 3  
Element 3 tests given: 2; passed 1  
Element 4 tests given: 1; passed 0

Congratulations to:

Nathan Minich - new Technician  
Joshua Staley - new Technician  
Daniel Doty - new Technician  
William O'Neal KG5HEF - upgrade to General

Thanks to the VE's in attendance:

Sheree Horton KF5LMJ - Session Manager  
Martin Rogoff N5GPS  
Sam Labarbera K5A00  
Ron Matussek WA6TQH  
Brian Derr N5BA  
Ted Blackburn N9GVR  
Stephen Protz KA5AUD  
Ron Horton KF5LFL  
Richard Nelson KF5WRD

The next monthly session will be held 0800 Saturday, March 24, 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

### ***Did you turn your clocks back one hour Saturday night?***

**Wrong!** Everyone knows that it's "Spring forward, Fall back!" Okay, now go back and do it correctly this time before your Mother finds out! Of course, if you never changed the clocks last Fall, you may have gotten lucky.

Officially DST is March 11, (hint, hint...)



**4721 Watonga Blvd.  
Houston, TX 77092**  
[www.ofarc.org](http://www.ofarc.org)

*V.E. Exams every 4th Saturday of the month at 9:30 a.m.*  
Contact: John Westerlage  
[N5DWI@ofarc.org](mailto:N5DWI@ofarc.org) for further info.

## ***President's Corner***

Paraphrasing Robert Burns, the best laid plans of mice and men sometimes go awry. And true to form, this has happened with NARS this past month.

We had hopes of getting to meet at a local church; however, in the end this facility decided to not allow us to meet there. The Board is currently pursuing a few other options and I want to thank the Board for all of their support. So we are back at Spring-Creek barbecue on Friday March 16 for next meeting [Reminder, 6068 FM 2920, Spring, TX 77379].

We had initially planned to have a presentation on F8 (a Joe Taylor derived digital mode), but things went awry there as well. We are having an alternative, a video on a DX Expedition.

We have a planned presentation on remote operations in April. The F8 presentation will be rescheduled. I will pass on suggestions for meeting topics, so feel free to contact me.

A question had been raised about the directory on the website. One reason that the contact information is linked to QRZ is we are trying to reduce spammers from "scraping" information from the website. Any changes in the directory, or request for information should be directed to the Club V. President & Admin. Secretary, Keith Dutson NM5G

Finally, it's time to start planning Field Day, which is three months away. We are still looking for volunteers for Field Day Coordinator and other key positions. You also may be contacted for various aid and assistance. Remember, nothing gets done without member involvement, so I urge everyone to get involved. Hope to see you at the meeting.

I want to remind members they can attend the Board of Director's Meeting, the next being held at 7:30pm on Tuesday, March 27 at the PONDEROSA Fire Station, 17061 Rolling Creek Dr, Houston, TX .

Until we meet again, 73.

Richard Nelson, KF5WRD  
NARS President

### ***NARS now has a new address!***

Please update your address list!

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

## ***Reminder: Daylight Saving Time Begins in Most of the US on March 11***

In most of the US, Daylight Saving Time (DST) begins on Sunday, March 11, at 2 AM local time. Set clocks ahead by 1 hour. The start of DST does *not* affect Universal Coordinated Time (UTC), also known as Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) or simply Zulu (Z), although some transceiver clocks generate UTC based on a specified difference from the local time setting. UTC is the generally recognized "standard time" for Amateur Radio log keeping.

In any case, in those areas observing DST, the difference between UTC and local time will be 1 hour shorter.

Daylight Saving Time this year ends on Sunday, November 4, at 2 AM local time — which is in the middle of ARRL November Sweepstakes CW weekend.

The changeover to or from DST is an ideal occasion to check the serviceability of any smoke, gas, and carbon monoxide detectors and replace batteries with fresh ones, if necessary. It could save your life!

## ***ARLB007 ARRL Requests Expanded HF Privileges for Technician Licensees***

ARRL has asked the FCC to expand HF privileges for Technician licensees to include limited phone privileges on 75, 40, and 15 meters, plus RTTY and digital mode privileges on 80, 40, 15, and 10 meters. The FCC has not yet invited public comment on the proposals, which stem from recommendations put forth by the ARRL Board of Directors' Entry-Level License Committee, which explored various initiatives and gauged member opinions in 2016 and 2017.

"This action will enhance the available license operating privileges in what has become the principal entry-level license class in the Amateur Service," ARRL said in its Petition. "It will attract more newcomers to Amateur Radio, it will result in increased retention of licensees who hold Technician Class licenses, and it will provide an improved incentive for entry-level licensees to increase technical self-training and pursue higher license class achievement and development of communications skills."

Specifically, ARRL proposes to provide Technician licensees, present and future, with phone privileges at 3.900 to 4.000 MHz, 7.225 to 7.300 MHz, and 21.350 to 21.450 MHz, plus RTTY and digital privileges in current Technician allocations on 80, 40, 15, and 10 meters. The ARRL petition points out the explosion in popularity of various digital modes over the past 2 decades. Under the ARRL plan, the maximum HF power level for Technician operators would remain at 200 W PEP. The few remaining Novice licensees would gain no new privileges under the League's proposal.

L's petition points to the need for compelling incentives not only to become a radio amateur in the first place, but then to upgrade and further develop skills. Demographic and technological changes call for a "periodic rebalancing" between those two objectives, the League maintains.

"There has not been such a rebalancing in many years," ARRL said in its petition. "It is time to do that now." The FCC has not assessed entry-level operating privileges since 2005.

The Entry-Level License Committee offered very specific data and survey-supported findings about growth in Amateur Radio and its place in the advanced technological demographic that includes individuals younger than 30. It received significant input from ARRL members via more than 8,000 survey responses.

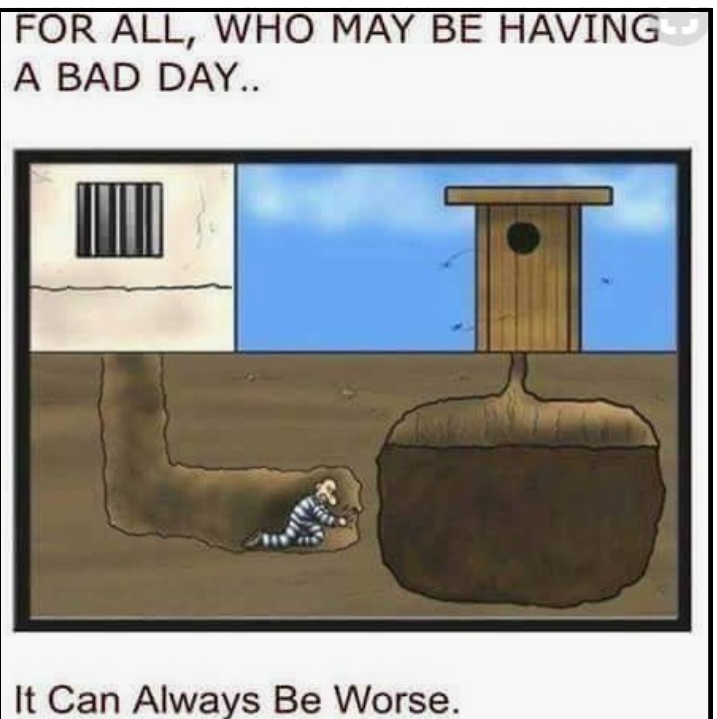
"The Committee's analysis noted that today, Amateur Radio exists among many more modes of communication than it did half a century ago, or even 20 years ago," ARRL said in its petition.

Now numbering some 378,000, Technician licensees comprise more than half of the US Amateur Radio population. ARRL said that after 17 years of experience with the current Technician license as the gateway to Amateur Radio, it's urgent to make it more attractive to newcomers, in part to improve upon science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education "that inescapably accompanies a healthy, growing Amateur Radio Service," ARRL asserted.

ARRL said its proposal is critical to developing improved operating skills, increasing emergency communication participation, improving technical self-training, and boosting overall growth in the Amateur Service, which has remained nearly inert at about 1% per year.

The Entry-Level License Committee determined that the current Technician class question pool already covers far more material than necessary for an entry-level exam to validate expanded privileges. ARRL told the FCC that it would continue to refine examination preparation and training materials aimed at STEM topics, increase outreach and recruitment, work with Amateur Radio clubs, and encourage educational institutions to utilize Amateur Radio in STEM and other experiential learning programs.

"ARRL requests that the Commission become a partner in this effort to promote Amateur Radio as a public benefit by making the very nominal changes proposed herein in the Technician class license operating privileges," the petition concluded.



## ***Here's your chance to get back into Morse Code!***

NARS has a continuous Morse Code class where students can “jump in” at any time. It covers persons learning from scratch to those of us who learned the code many years ago, but need to refresh their code memory and get back on the air. This class is open to everyone.

There are three important parts to learning to operate using code:

Learn the code

Learn to send using your favorite key

Learn to recognize call signs & the typical QSO format.

Each class will include code practice, call sign, & sending practice. Each student will practice sending via their chosen key. Bring a keyer if you have one. There are a few that may be loaned during the class.

The learning curve of each student will depend on private practice at home. If you practice only during class, it may take a year or so to achieve the 20 WPM goal. However, if you practice 30 minutes per day, it's likely you will “graduate” within 4 to 8 weeks.

We use CW Teacher, written by Scott Davis N3FJP. Use the following link to download the free program to your laptop. Bring your laptop, key and keyer to each class.

<http://www.mn3fjp.com/cwteacher.html>

There are two classes each week:

Saturday, at 0830 - 1000

Tuesday, at 1800 - 1900

Location of classes is Charles R. Hooks Education Center, 7111 Five Forks, Spring, TX 77379, and it's all free!

Need more info? Contact [keith@dutson.net](mailto:keith@dutson.net) or 281 516-1466, Cell, 713 553-1847.

## ***Once gain, NARS covers the annual Buffalo Bayou Regatta***

NARS had the honor of once again providing communications for the 2018 Buffalo Bayou Regatta event, held on March 10th. Volunteers stationed at ten key points kept track of participants as they passed each checkpoint making sure no problems requiring medical attention or “rescue ops.” were needed.

The first race group started at 9:00 am with other groups starting at ten minute intervals. The course covered about 15 miles, with the finish line being under the Main Street Bridge. Mark Janzer K5MGJ and his crew in



sweep boats followed insuring no boat was left behind. Lunch was provided for all volunteers at the end of the race.

## ***ARRL Repurposes AM Broadcast Transmitter for Ham Radio Use***

Thanks to a joint effort by ARRL and the Vintage Radio and Communications Museum of Connecticut (VRCMCT), a classic Gates BC-1T AM broadcast transmitter will enjoy a second life on the Amateur Radio bands for occasional use under WIAW or under the ARRL Headquarters Operators Club call sign, W1INF. Spearheaded by broadcast engineer Dan Thomas, NC1J, VRCMCT volunteers restored the 1-kW transmitter to operating condition, after obtaining it from the National Capital Radio and Television Museum in Bowie, Maryland. The VRCMCT will retain ownership of the transmitter, while the League houses, and maintains it on loan. The transmitter will be located in the ARRL Lab, and Assistant Lab Manager Bob Allison, WB1GCM, said the transmitter could be on the air as WIAW during such operating events as the AM Rally and the Heavy Metal Rally.

ARRL turned to AM guru and veteran broadcast engineer Tim “Timtron” Smith, WA1HLR, of Skowhegan, Maine, to handle shifting the BC-1T from 1340 kHz to the ham bands. Timtron not only has been an AM mainstay on 75 and 40 meters over the years, he’s engineered all manner of AM, FM, and HF broadcast transmitters in his extensive career. This combination of familiarity and experience made him a logical choice to handle the conversion to amateur use of the Gates BC-1T, which once transmitted country music from KPGE in Page, Arizona.

While a shift from the higher end of the Standard Broadcast Band to 160 meters alone might seem rudimentary, various stipulations added a level of complexity. First, the transmitter had to be modified as little as possible, retaining original components. That ruled out completely redesigning the circuitry. The 833 final amplifier tubes, better suited for broadcast-band use, would be retained as would the inductance-heavy tuning circuits. Another requirement — this one set by Smith — ambitiously called for the transmitter to function on 75 as well as on 160 meters.

The plan was to accomplish the conversion in two phases, with the first to be completed in a few days and include basic crystal-controlled functionality on 160 and 75. The second phase will include adding remote control, relay band switching, and external RF drive for frequency agility, to be completed later.

Each RF stage was converted, starting with the Colpitts oscillator — which offered two octal tube sockets to hold broadcast crystals, and a selector switch. As most veteran radio amateurs may recall from their Novice license days, an octal socket will accommodate FT-243-case crystals; in this case, only minor rewiring was needed. More complicated was changing out feedback and loading capacitors in the oscillator stage, along with the buffer tank circuit. The driver tank circuit was next. Removing one-half of the windings on the multiple tank, changing some connections, shortening long leads on RF bypass capacitors, and modifying the neutralization circuit were necessary.

The output tuning circuit proved to be the easiest to convert; parallel capacitors that enabled broadcast-band operation were rewired in series to resonate on the amateur bands. A spare inductor, not required for higher frequencies, was repurposed in place as a dc safety shunt. The modulator just needed only minor changes. All was documented.

Initial tests conducted at 250 W on February 22 demonstrated the success of the modifications and marked completion of the first step toward a new lease on life for the BC-1T as ARRL’s flagship AM amateur band transmitter. “It took many volunteers and their resources to make this project come together,” Allison said. Eventually, visitors to ARRL Headquarters will be able to see the transmitter on the air and possibly use it, by advance request. Allison calls the BC-1T “The Ambassador.”

“It’s an ambassador for the AM mode, reaching out a friendly hand to radio amateurs old and new,” he said. — *Thanks to Clark Burgard, N1BCG, and Bob Allison, WB1GCM*

# Welcome, Congratulations and Condolences

Welcome new members: Mike Dietrich KB5FLX, Gene Linder KG5YCJ, Nathan Minich KG5YPR  
Condolences to the family of Bob Arnold K5KZS/ SK

## 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

### President & Board Chairman

Richard Nelson KF5WRD  
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Ron Matusek WA6TQH  
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### NARS Reflector

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

### Vice President

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

Mike Bowen N8ILU  
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### Texas QSO Party

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

### Treasurer

Sheree Horton KF5LMJ  
713 299-6994  
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### Administrative & General Info.

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

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

### Secretary

Martin Rogoff N5GPS  
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N5gps.tx@gmail.com

Send changes in address, phone, or email to:  
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Spring, TX 77391

### VE Session (ARRL) Manager

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

### Directors

Marty Fitzgerald W5MF  
281 251-4301  
fitz6@swbell.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

### NARS News Editor

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jfsokosm2@gmail.com  
Remote Abilene, TX office, now serving the  
Northwest Houston Metropolitan Area

**NARS News** is published monthly by the Northwest Amateur Radio Society. Send all articles and materials for the newsletter to:  
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Northwest Amateur Radio Society is a Special Services Club affiliated with the American Radio Relay League, ARRL Club No. 2120.

*Friday, April 20,  
Featuring  
Jimmy Vance W5ZTX  
A discourse on  
the subject of  
“Remote Radio Operation.”*

*There’s more to it than you think!*

*“Shocking but oh, so true” Rolling Pebble Magazine  
“Awesome and revealing” Editor of Resistance is Futile Monthly  
“Every child should know about this!” Quarter pounder, TX Console  
of International Faith, LLC  
“Ya gotta be kidding!” Say What? Review*