

April 2020

Northwest Amateur Radio Society

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**VE License Exam Info — Page 6**

### Lunch Break - North

Apr 22 Panera Bread  
 Apr 29 Jason's Deli  
 May 13 Woodlands Sweet Tomatoes  
 May 20 Gianna's Restaurant  
 May 27 Spring Creek BBQ  
 Jun 03 Panera Bread

### **Saturday Breakfast:**

Saturdays at 7 am  
 Denny's 6504 FM 2920 @ TC Jester  
 (west of Kuykendahl)

### Lunch Break - Medical Center

Apr 22 Silver Palace Chinese Buffet  
 Apr 29 Pappas Barbecue  
 May 13 Jason's Deli  
 May 20 Buffalo Grille  
 May 27 Vieng Thai Restaurant  
 Jun 03 Southwell's Hamburger Grill

### **Monday Lunch (was Taildraggers lunch):**

Mondays at 11 am; Goodson's in Tomball

**The following items have been changed for April:**

- 1. The April 17<sup>th</sup> general meeting will take place via ZOOM.**
- 2. The April 25<sup>th</sup> VE session has been cancelled.**
- 3. Lunch Break North and Medical Center have been suspended until further notice.**

*Next Gathering: Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>*

“Getting the signal out”

“Lightbulb Antenna” What???

“Latest project builds from the Amsat Group.

- April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 7:00PM
- ZOOM.
- [https://zoom.us/j/2815436502?](https://zoom.us/j/2815436502?pwd=dGZ2VkFGei9LUHBRT1p0V2szaG1O)  
 pwd=dGZ2VkFGei9LUHBRT1p0V2szaG1O

**NARS News** is published monthly by the Northwest Amateur Radio Society (NARS). Northwest Amateur Radio Society is a Special Services Club affiliated with the American Radio Relay League, ARRL Club No. 2120. Please send all submissions to the newsletter editor before the end of the month prior to publication.

## Meeting Location—When social gatherings are allowed.

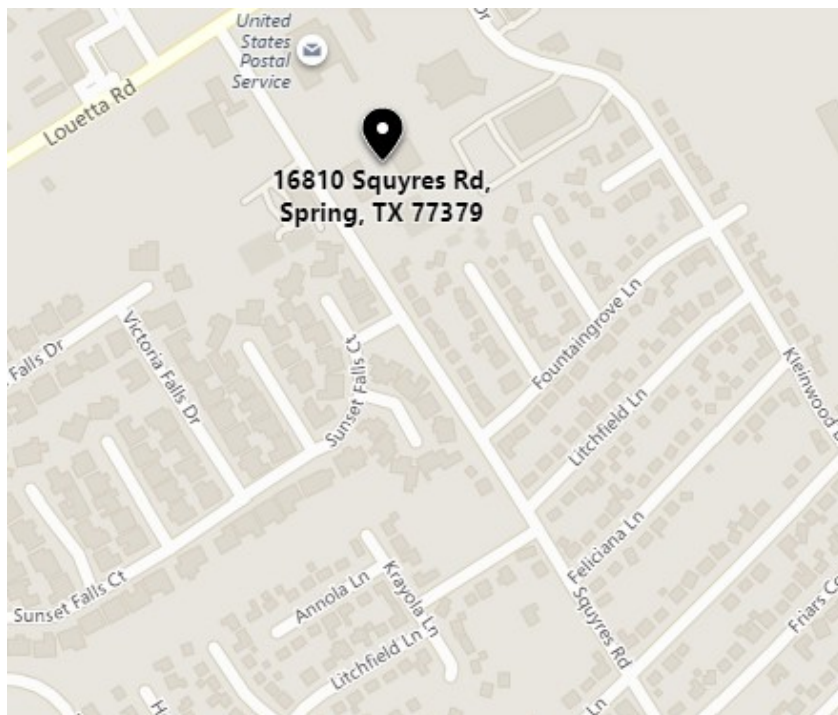
We will meet at Klein Fire Department Administration, 16810 Squyres Rd., Klein, TX 77379. It is located behind Klein Fire Station 4.



Picture from <http://kleinfiredept.com/services/stations/headquarters>

The Board wishes to thank the Klein Fire Department for the generous offer allowing NARS use of their facility.

### **LOCATION MAP — 16810 Squyres Rd.**



## **April 2020 message from NARS President**

I continue checking with officials at the Tomball Regional Hospital where we conduct our monthly VE test sessions and I am told the restrictions to the facility are projected to be in place through June. As for our general meeting place Klein FD Administration building, I'll get an update around mid to late April. I am hopeful that restrictions on the facility may be relaxed in April. Watching this closely as it may also impact our plans for Field Day. We are looking at alternatives and suggestion has been made to a mobile field day this year and that information if we go forward will be posted later in our Newsletter.

I have tried to keep busy with various Ham projects but am finding that a lot of the parts I need come from China so my projects are spread out over months making it frustrating at best to keep focused on any one project. It's no wonder why Hams have a stockpile of components at home, however, can never find them when needed!

To avoid getting home fever from lock down I do get into my truck which is outfitted with All HF band capability and UHF/VHF just go for a ride and make mobile contacts with friends throughout the U.S. and occasionally Europe. At least I get some fresh air!

Difficult times require modifications to how we socialize.

Members of the Northwest Amateur Radio Club (W5NC) have overcome the social separation issue imposed during the coronavirus, by meeting several times each week using their radios. They gather using repeaters located locally i.e. (Klein or Cypress DMR repeaters); (VHF & UHF Repeaters Klein or Galleria) or using Hotspots networked using talk groups. All the information is available on our web site at [www.w5nc.net](http://www.w5nc.net).

The "weekly net" meetings vary in size but usually include some 10 to 20 participants who "check in" through a central network control operator and then take turns sharing information. Topics can be anything from "what I'm doing today" to recipes, posing technical questions, and more. Weekly Net times are posted in this Newsletter so check in and let us know how and what you're doing!

Many hams are using their FCC allocated Two Meter band to come together, noting that two meters is approximately six feet, which is the minimum distance we are supposed to stay away from one another.

But in the near term, amateur radio provides a means to escape the barriers of sheltering in place, linking with others, sharing experiences and being social without the need to gather in person.

**Continued on Page 4**

**Topic's for up-coming NARS General meeting**

We have some volunteers who present the following at our Friday ZOOM general meeting Friday April 17<sup>th</sup> at 7PM

Richard "Getting the signal out"

Kirc "Lightbulb Antenna" What???

Walter "Latest project builds from the Amsat Group.

**Fun Facts:**

The original ham radio was distributed in the 1920's. The first wireless set that came out in the early 1940's boomed in sales as people could use it to communicate with each other in the way you would with a telephone or walkie talkie but with a longer range. Since then they have come a long way and people use them for many different reasons.

Join our next ZOOM General meeting Friday evening 7PM April 17th!

Stay Safe and stay in communication with the team!

Ron Matussek WA6TQH

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## Opportunities to Serve

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## APRIL GATHERING

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Our April gathering will be held on ZOOM this Friday April 17th at 7PM.

<https://zoom.us/j/2815436502?pwd=dGZ2VkFGei9LUHBRT1p0V2szaG1OUT09>

Topics:

1. Lightbulb Antenna - Kirc Breden - N5XJB
2. Coax Routing—Richard Nelson - KF5WRD
3. Balloon Activity—Walter Holmes - K5WH

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## MARCH MEETING RECAP

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The February gathering was presented by David Holman—(AC7DS) “D-Star and DMR”.

### DMR Training

If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the Video of each Session please bring a USB stick (estimate 3GB per session) and we can make a copy available to you to download on your USB stick with a NARS donation of \$6.00 per session. You can sign up at the meeting. Many have requested this as a helpful tool to refer back to when programming radio's and other general information related to DMR. This video is NOT planned for wide public publication so take advantage of this opportunity.

VE Session Congratulations

NARS WEBSITE: W5NC.NET  
E-Mail Reflector: mailman.qth.net.

**NARS now has a new address!**

**Please update your address list!**  
Northwest Amateur Radio Society  
P.O. Box 11483 Spring, TX 77391

Special points of interest:

- Next VE Session: Undetermined due to the social distancing requirements.



**Houston Transtar Building**  
**Conference Center West Entrance**  
**6922 Katy Road**  
**Houston, TX 77024**

*V.E. Exams every 4th Saturday of the month at 9:30 a.m.*

*Contact: Mark Landress, WB5ANN@arrl.net for further info.*

# Welcome, Congratulations, and Condolences

## NARS Info

### NARS name tag

Any member can request a badge and should contact Cindy, KM4YGG, & Art, KM4YGH.

### Board Meetings

The board meetings will be at 6:00 on the same date and at the same location as the general membership meeting, except for January due to the NARS award banquet.

### General Membership Meetings

3rd. Friday each month at 7:30 pm. — EXCEPT January Banquet  
Located at Klein Fire Station Administration, 16810 Squyres Rd., Klein, TX 77379. Located behind Klein Fire Station 4.

### Weekly 2m Net

Wednesdays at 8 pm.  
Monitor Reflector for Current Repeater.  
Coordinator: Neal Naumann N5EN.

### Weekly DMR Net

Tuesdays at 7 pm.  
Monitor Reflector for Current Repeater.  
Coordinator: Sam Labarbera, N6HB  
slabarb@outlook.com

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# NARS Resource List

## Digital Modes (Including DMR)

Walter Holmes – K5WH

Marty Fitzgerald – W5MF

Ron Matusek – WA6TQH

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## NARS Officers & Other Contacts

### President & Board Chairman

Ron Matusek WA6TQH  
713-825-9606  
officers@w5nc.net

### Vice President

Marty Fitzgerald W5MF  
281 251-4301  
officers@w5nc.net

### Treasurer

Tom Hoherd KK5YU  
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treasurer@w5nc.net

### Secretary

Martin Rogoff N5GPS  
281 890-4538  
officers@w5nc.net

### Newsletter Editor

Martin Rogoff N5GPS  
832-603-0036  
officers@w5nc.net

### Directors (term expires 12/31/2021)

Cindy Grant KM4YGG  
352-318-7430  
officers@w5nc.net

Sam Labarbera N6HB

832-781-3145  
officers@w5nc.net

### Directors (term expires 12/31/2020)

Richard Nelson KF5WRD  
281 257-1279  
officers@w5nc.net

Mike Pate K5MAP

281-376-1316  
officers@w5nc.net

### Texas QSO Party

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

### Administrative & General Info.

Marty Fitzgerald W5MF  
281 251-4301  
officers@w5nc.net

### Web site

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

### NARS E-Mail Reflector

NARS@mailman.qth.net  
Coordinator: Keith Dutson NM5G  
keith1@dutson.net

### VE Session (ARRL) Manager

Ronald Matusek – WA6TQH  
vec@w5nc.net

### Texas QSO Party

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



## NARS has a social media presence

NARS has a social media presence! Thanks to Sam Labarbera, N6HB, we have a Facebook page for those who would like to follow us there. Visit the [W5NC Facebook](#) page and join! It is open to ham radio operators, so there is a short quiz to qualify new members.

We also have a Twitter feed. Follow us on [https://twitter.com/nars\\_w5nc](https://twitter.com/nars_w5nc).

## Origin of the name “Ham” for Amateur Operators

Right after I received my Ham Operators license, I have been asked by several friends where did the term “HAM” come from with Amateur Radio Operators. It seems that there are several theories. Here is what I found about this etymology: Enjoy the read!

### Theory 1: Who Lacks Ability:

According to [Wikipedia](#), by 1901, the terms "ham" and "plug" were used by landline telegraphers to describe an operator "who lacks ability" or who had poor or "ham fisted" skills. In the 1890s it was alleged that railroads were employing telegraph operators who were negligent or incompetent. These unskilled operators were described as either drinking alcohol while working, irresponsible teenage boys, or merely having very little ability. Their miscommunication was blamed for causing severe train wrecks railroad executives during this era were also accused of hiring unskilled operators to save money and were said to be accepting bribes from telegraph schools to hire unqualified students. These disreputable telegraph schools were referred to as "ham factories".

Early radio initially known as wireless telegraphy included many former wire telegraph operators, and within the new service "ham" was employed as a pejorative term by professional radiotelegraph operators to suggest that amateur enthusiasts were unskilled. In "[Floods and Wireless](#)" by Hanby Carver, from the August 1915 [Technical World Magazine](#), the author noted; *Then someone thought of the "hams"*. This is the name that the commercial wireless service has given to amateur operators.

This pejorative usage continued into at least 1940, as evidenced in the January 1940 issue of [The APCO Bulletin](#), where it was written *"Rumors of citations by the FCC for violation of the superfluous traffic regulation on the part of certain of our radiotelegraph stations have resulted in a sudden decrease in 'hamming' on the police frequencies..."*.

Even among amateur radio operators, the term was used pejoratively at first by serious experimenters. For example, in December 1916 [QST Magazine](#), an amateur operator working on long distance message passing describes one way to avoid interference was to send messages "...on Thursday nights, when the children and spark coil "hams" are tucked up in bed" (a spark coil was an unsophisticated radio transmitter, made from an automobile ignition coil, that produced noisy interference).

However, only a few months later, in an indication of the changing use of the term among amateurs, a [QST Magazine](#) writer uses it in a clearly complimentary manner, saying that a particular 16-year-old amateur operator "...is the equal of a ham gaining five years of experience by hard luck.

Use of "ham" as a slur by professionals continued, however. A letter from a [Western Union Telegraph Company](#) employee, printed in the December 1919 edition of [QST Magazine](#), showed familiarity with the word's negative connotations, expressing concern that "Many unknowing land wire telegraphers, hearing the word "amateur" applied to men connected with wireless, regard him as a "ham" or "lid".

However, many other amateurs increasingly adopted the word "ham" to describe their hobby and themselves during this period, embracing the word that was originally an insult, similar to the way Yankee Doodle evolved, as seen, for example, in Thomas F. Hunter's exuberant "[I am the wandering Ham](#)" from the January 1920 issue of [QST Magazine](#).

## Theory 2: Albert S. Hyman, Bob Almy and Poogie Murry:

From *Florida Skip Magazine*, 1959 the word "HAM" as applied to 1908 was the station CALL of the first amateur wireless stations operated by some amateurs of the Harvard Radio Club. They were Albert S. Hyman, Bob Almy and Poogie Murry.

At first, they called their station "HYMAN-ALMY-MURRAY". Tapping out such a long name in code soon became tiresome and called for a revision. They changed it to "HY-AL-MU," using the first two letters of each of their names. Early in 1901 some confusion resulted between signals from amateur wireless station "HYALMU" and a Mexican ship named "HYALMO." They then decided to use only the first letter of each name, and the station CALL became "HAM."

In the early pioneer days of unregulated radio amateur operators picked their own frequency and call-letters. Then, as now, some amateurs had better signals than commercial stations. The resulting interference came to the attention of congressional committees in Washington and Congress gave much time to proposed legislation designed to critically limit amateur radio activity. In 1911 Albert Hyman chose the controversial WIRELESS REGULATION BILL as the topic for his Thesis at Harvard. His instructor insisted that a copy be sent to Senator David I. Walsh, a member of one of the committees hearing the Bill. The Senator was so impressed with the thesis is that he asked Hyman to appear before the committee. Albert Hyman took the stand and described how the little station was built and almost cried when he told the crowded committee room that if the BILL went through that they would have to close down the station because they could not afford the license fees and all the other requirements which the BILL imposed on amateur stations.

Congressional debate began on the WIRELESS REGULATION BILL and little station "HAM" became the symbol for all the little amateur stations in the country crying to be saved from the menace and greed of the big commercial stations who didn't want them around. The BILL finally got to the floor of Congress and every speaker talked about the "...poor little station HAM." That's how it all started. You will find the whole story in the *Congressional Record*.

Nation-wide publicity associated station "HAM" with amateur radio operators. From that day to this, and probably until the end of time in radio an amateur is a "HAM."

## Theory 3: HAM meant poor operator:

One common story says that initially amateurs were not welcomed by the military and commercial stations who they shared the airwaves with and were referred to by the derogatory term "ham", which meant someone who was a poor-quality operator. This would be similar to saying that someone was "ham-fisted" which meant that they could not send CW very well.

Railroad telegraphers used it as a serious insulting term for a poor operator. The term "lid" was also used.

This theory is well substantiated. A search in old articles in *QST Magazine* found the following in the July 1945 issue, page 78, a letter from Roy Wheadon, W6KTY. He was the son of a railroad telegraph operator and said he knew this from personal experience.

Most of the students were young farm boys, who served their apprenticeship as unpaid helpers for the over-worked station agents, who in return taught them telegraphy. As I understood it in my younger days, the word *ham* had a bucolic reference to the farm origin of most of the student railroad telegraphers. I know it was a disgrace to be called a *ham*.

The letter was in response to the editorial in the May 1945 *QST Magazine* (pp 9-10) by Kenneth B. Warner, W1EH. He alludes to the term ham as defined in a book called *Dictionary of American Tramp and Underworld Slang*. According to that, it says *ham* meant:

A telegraph operator or radio amateur. Abbreviation for hammer because the key operates with an up and

down motion similar to a hammer. Applied in a derogatory sense as an amateur does not have a light and gentle touch, however, hammers the key.

The same editorial also related the story of how the word *ham* came from the Cockney English pronunciation of the word amateur, *h'amateur*.

#### **Theory 4: English attempt to pronounce the word “amateur”:**

An article was first published in a newspaper article: *The Daily Journal, Wheaton*, Illinois DuPage County, February 18, 1948 titled: *Emphasis is mine*.

It reads, sixteen radio amateurs, all holding government licenses to transmit on the amateur bands, met recently to discuss the possibilities of an organization for Wheaton. The meeting was held at the DuPage county courthouse and the evening was spent in getting acquainted and in talking of plans for a future amateur radio club.

Known as hams, not from the connotation as used on the stage to denote strictly underrate performances, but from the *English attempt to pronounce the word amateur*, these sixteen represented a range from freshmen in high school to old-timers whose early days included spark transmissions. Most of the group have known each other over the air for some time, however, the meeting offered the first chance for them all to become personally acquainted.

When the club perfects its organization, it will include some notable amateurs who are well known around the world. Frank Golder, K9AAM of Warrenville, has been in radio for many years, however, only recently joined the amateur ranks. He has run up a total of 74 countries, contacted through his work on 20 meters, one of the allotted amateur frequencies.

Bill Newcomb, W9QES and his wife Alice, W9QMS, have friends all over the world through their work on 20-meter phone. Emerson Squires, W9BRX, has a call which dates back to his high school days at Wheaton Community High School. Emerson is presently most active on the amateur radio 20-meter phone band.

#### **Wrap up:**

No matter which theory you believe, the fact remains the word “HAM” or “HAMS” is used as a shortcut for radio operators all over the world as Amateur Radio Operators.

**Authors Note:** *I found that the call signs in this article are not currently correlated to the names or listed in QRZ.COM.*

73'

Steve Stepinoff, KG5VUG