

NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

March 2002

HDTV and Digital Television Explained in March Meeting

Last month we heard about the cell phone industry. Wayne Rogers made a very informative presentation. In this month's meeting we will hear about something else that affects all. All of us spend many hours a year watching the tube. We have been watching the same type of television with basically few changes since its concept. The biggest change to date is the change over from black and white to color. So we really have had little change since the 60's. When I went to work for Channel 13 in 1963 we had no color equipment. By the late 60's we had converted over to living color. That was a major expense for KTRK TV and a large learning curve for us studio engineers.

In recent years the industry has been trying to keep pace with technology by changing television from its current analog state to a new and improved version. Enter digital and HDTV. The technology is not the real problem; it's been there for quite some time. The biggest problems are how do we convert over the whole television system from the current NTSC system to digital and keep everything compatible during the process. One of the major considerations to the TV station owners is the cost. It requires several million dollars to convert over. The stations have to run their old analog system along with the digital system for several years until the change over is made. That means two complete systems running at the same time: two antennas, two transmitters and all studio equipment converted over to digital signal processing.

The down side of all this is the controversy and cost for the consumer. TV sets cost around \$1500.00 although a HDTV set has 2 million more pixels than analog TV. In the year 2000 only 1 million digital TV's were sold as compared to 30 million analogs.

To explain all of this and to tell us where we stand on the Digital and HDTV issues is Marty Kirkland WA5TMN. Marty is a long time friend and colleague of mine. He is currently Chief Engineer of Channel 8, KHOU TV. Many of you know Channel 8 was the first PBS channel and the oldest. He will tell us about their new studios and how they are involved in the change over from analog to digital broadcasting.

Here are a couple of interesting websites:

<http://www.chron.com/cs/CDA/story.hts/tech/weekly/1250595>

<http://www.chron.com/content/chronicle/atchron/97/11/23/compute.html>

See you at the meeting.

Bill Denton W5SB

Ham and "Sheez" Meeting see page 3



Important Dates

Friday, March 15, 7:30 PM – General Membership meeting, Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church – Eyeball QSOs, 7:00 PM.

Saturday, March 23, 8:30 AM – VE License Exam Session, Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just South of Main).

Tuesday, March 26, 7:30 PM – Board of Directors meeting, Terra Nova Clubhouse, 5200 Woodville.

Contests

Mar 10 North American RTTY Sprint

Mar 10–11 Wisconsin QSO Party

Mar 16–17 Alaska QSO Party, Russian DX

Mar 16–18 Virginia QSO Party, BARTG Spring RTTY

Mar 22–24 Oklahoma QSO Party

Mar 30–31 CQ WW WPX SSB

Apr 6–7 MARAC County Hunters SSB, SP DX, EA RTTY

Apr 20 Holyland DX

Wednesday Lunch Bunch

Mar 6: Charlie's Hamburgers

Mar 13: Casa Imperial Mexican

Mar 20: Woodlands House

Mar 27: Brown Sugar's BBQ

Apr 3: Red Lobster

Apr 10: Strack Farms

Swapfest

Mar 30 8am–noon, Brenham, Washington County Fairgrounds, Talk-in 147.260 (+600), Brian KA5BKG, bkgaskamp@comwerx.net

Notice

NARS membership dues are \$20 per year, renewable on anniversary of last year's full payment.

Deadline for articles to appear in the April issue is Sunday, March 31.

BREAKFAST

at Victors

4710 W FM 1960

Saturdays

7:30 AM

President's Corner

March 2002

Well it is March, 2002 folks and as I write this it is all of 32 degrees on the Fahrenheit Scale out of doors. One of those "Arctic Blasts" has arrived to hopefully deliver the "coupe de grace" to all of those pesky varmints that we are bothered by here in South Texas. I can't help but think of the guys down in Mexico, doing battle with the massive pile-ups in the ARRL DX Contest. I think that the heat from the amplifiers, good old 98.6, and maybe a jalapeno or two may be it as far as warmth goes.

Anyway, Spring is supposed to be on the way and that means that we Narsians, and the radio community in general will be coming out of the shack after a brief South Texas hibernation to assist in the many public service events that require communications expertise. The March of Dimes Walk-America, Walkathon and the Buffalo Bayou Regatta are two that immediately come to mind as NARS sponsors these events. The MS-150 bike ride from Houston to Austin also comes in the spring, and requires the services of many, many radio ops as well as a lot of other volunteer power. I can attest first hand that these events are fun and event filled. So join in, and put your skills and your equipment to good use volunteering for one of these events. You will not regret one second of the time spent.

Lastly, I would like to thank Wayne Rogers for the fine presentation on cell phone technology at January's general meeting. I think I can speak for most of us in saying that we take our cell phones for granted for the most part. Wayne brought the "how it all works" part to us in a very understandable manner.

Thanks Wayne!!

See you all!

George, KD5AYF

Public Service Events *Your Radio Skills Are Needed*

March of Dimes WalkAmerica

QST QST QST QST

Calling for volunteers for the March of Dimes WalkAmerica fundraiser walk, Sunday, April 28, 2002

New location: First Colony Mall, Sugar Land (has been moved from George Bush Park)

This is a six-mile walk, which will raise money to combat birth defects. We will need an operator at each water stop, a net control... probably a half-dozen operators in all. Communications to take place on two-meter FM simplex.

Please contact me at kf5nd@arrl.net

73, Pete

TOMBALL VFW MEMORIAL CENTURY BIKE RIDE

The Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 2427, of Tomball, TX is sponsoring this event to be held on Saturday, April 13, 2002 and will start and finish at the VFW Post home, located at 14408 Alice Road.

Mike Lavender KB5WQJ, is requesting the assistance of any ham operator with a hand held transceiver to help in the health and welfare of this race. This race begins at 8 a.m. and should end about 1 or 2 p.m. Participants will be given a tee shirt honoring the event, and will be guests of the Post at a Barbecue dinner.

Volunteers can contact Mike at 281-356-1635 for more detailed information and signup. Proceeds of this event are to benefit the Post camp for the underprivileged kids of Tomball and surrounding area. Your help in this event would be very much appreciated.

Joe - KD5KR

VE Session Results

At the NARS VE Test Session February 23, 2002 we had 14 candidates. The results were 3 new Technician hams, one upgrade to Technician Plus, two new Generals, three upgrades to General, and one upgrade to Extra.

We administered 20 elements with 16 elements passed.

The VE's were Jim Kirk KJ5X, Bob Walworth N5ET, Norm Covey K5OS, HO Townsend WA5MLT, Keith Dutson WD5DXL, Gregg Erlenbusch W5IDX, Paul Frantz W5PF, and Walter Holmes K5WH.

Thanks to all for their help.

The next NARS VE Test session will be held on March 23, 2002. See ya there.

Walter Hock KK5LO
NARS VE Session Manager

Ham and “Sheez” News

The first meeting of the NARS ladies group was a tremendous success! Eight ladies attended the meeting, and all are included in the group picture [Left row from the back: Nancy Edwards, Anita Townsend, Schalee Lodge. Right row from the back: Margaret Quarles, Mary Tyler, Laurie Meier, Georgina Frantz, Linda Walworth.]. Several other ladies have voiced interest but were unable to attend the meeting due to schedule conflicts.

As you can tell from the title of this article, we have chosen a name for our group. It is Ham and “Sheez”! Catchy, don’t you think? We also decided to have our meetings on the last Monday of each month at 7:00 at a location in the Northwest Houston/Tomball area. The location is being finalized and will be communicated shortly via a note to the NARS reflector. An update will also be provided at the upcoming NARS meeting on Friday, March 15.

The first Ham and “Sheez” outing will be on Saturday, March 23, when we go to the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston to see the Texas Flags exhibit. We will be car pooling from Victor’s on FM 1960 after the traditional Saturday NARS breakfast. So, ladies – join your husbands/significant others for breakfast at Victor’s and then join the ladies for the trip to the Museum of Fine Arts! Mark your calendars and join in the fun!

Potential areas for volunteer and community work were also discussed at the meeting. The organization that truly captured our interest is Handihams, focusing on providing tools for people with disabilities to

learn Amateur Radio and technology skills, and to earn their Amateur Radio licenses. We have made direct contact with the organization to determine how best we might be able to support their work. Stay tuned for details on the work we will be doing and how you might be able to directly support our efforts.

As is evident by the information in this article, our first meeting was full of great conversation, wonderful ideas, and just a lot of fun! We look forward to welcoming many more ladies to the group...

· Our next meeting will be held on Monday, March 25, at 7:00 p.m. Location to be communicated shortly. Please join us! If you are unable to attend the meetings, please feel free to join in our other activities!

· To expand upon the tradition started by Margaret Quarles, the ladies will be providing desserts at the upcoming Field Day activities.

· Future trips around the Houston area may include the Bluebonnet Festival, antiquing, Rice Village shopping, and the downtown jewelry show – just to name a few!

Each month, a “ham” recipe will be the final portion of the Ham and “Sheez” News article. Our first “ham” recipe comes from the kitchen of Marian Denton, KB5SGV –

Hopping John: (Serves 4)

In a Dutch oven, over medium heat, sauté (stirring constantly) until tender:

- 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
 - 1 cup sliced celery
 - 2/3 cup chopped onion
 - 1 clove garlic, minced
- Stir in, bring to a boil, and cook 30

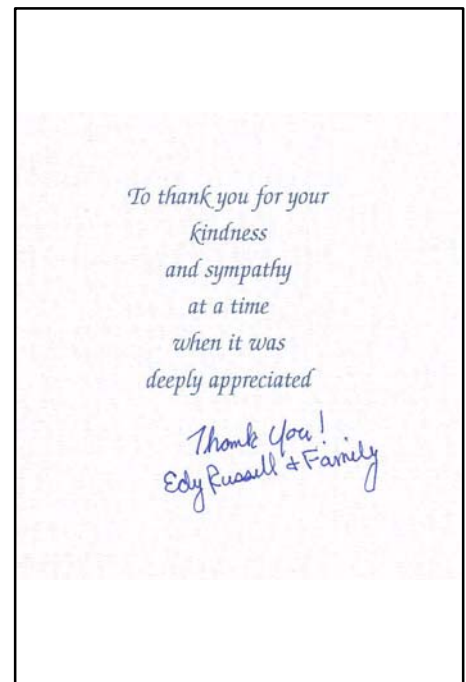
minutes:

- 1 (16 oz) package frozen black-eyed peas
 - 3/4 pound cubed cooked ham
 - 2 1/2 cups chicken broth
 - 1/4 to 1/2 cup Rotel tomatoes with green chilies (or 1/4 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper) or for a milder flavor, plain canned or fresh diced tomatoes
 - 1 bay leaf
 - 1 cup uncooked long-grain rice
- Stir in, cover, and cook for 20 to 25 minutes until liquid is absorbed and rice is tender.

Before serving, discard bay leaf, and sprinkle with freshly ground pepper. Optional garnish is chopped green onions.

Enjoy!

*Best regards,
Laurie Meier, NIYXU
nIyxu@arrl.net
936-271-1096*



DX News

“For All the NARS DX News Fit to Print”

A second month of great DX has passed! PW0T and TI9M, wow two great DXpeditions in one month with excellent signals here in 5Land. We are blessed! Read on through the column and look at the March DX madness. More good DX. Gooooooo get'm boys!

The February numbers were good and by-in-large the bands were also in good shape.

* The high SFI occurred February 24th with a reading of 245 down a bit.

* The low SFI occurred on February 24th with a reading of 188, down 1.

* The low A index occurred on February 16th with a reading of 3.

* The high A index occurred on February 3rd with a reading of 18.

* The low K index occurred on February 15th with a reading of 0.

* The high K index occurred on February 2nd with a reading of 5.

The SFI was over 200 for 14 days of the month down from 27 days in January. Hummm???

Local Events:

Steve – N5EN reports in with two very nice catches: 9Q1A Zaire and TI9M Cocos Island. Steve says these are new ones. How much better can it get. Good going Steve.

Mike – K5NZ says his operating time was short in February; however, Mike logged the PW0T –Trindade and Martin Vas Island on 20 meter SSB and 40 meter CW. But Mike says the most fun was operating 3 hours in ARRL DX CW QRP and working 38/36/34 countries on 20/15/10 respectively.

Gerald – W5BA sends along a review of his activity for February and reports a couple of new ones worked. Gerald says he missed the VP8 bunch on South Sandwich Island, but that he did

manage to get the boys on while they were on South Georgia –VP8GEO both on 20 meter SSB and CW! He caught the Niger group on both modes on 20 meters and worked 5U1A on 80 CW. He worked S9LA on 40 SSB for a new band/mode country. And, he worked HK0OEP on San Andres for a new band/mode on 75 SSB. "Nice to see some activity from Montserrat... it's been hard to catch since the eruption caught most folks (including Bob N5RP's) QTH in the lava flow." Gerald managed VP2MDY on 17 and 20 meter SSB and 80 and 160 meter CW. Additional, new band/mode countries with KL7Y, FG/YL2KL, KG4EC and TI9M on 40, 80, and 160 meter CW and 15 meter SSB and WH0V on 40 CW. Now need less than 20 on 80 meters to finish 5BDXCC and AF to finish WAC on 160.

Cal – WF5W reporting another 4S7 on the 21st of February. This time it was 4S7CF! Second contact in two years with a 4S7. NO CARD! Cal's crystal ball says this guy is a poor QSLer. Further, Cal says he will take the 1st bright idea that comes along. 9U, that's the next project... Good luck Cal! (See Matt, Honduras is just a character builder.) Good luck to both of you dragging those cards in.

John – W5PDW says "Ahhh, the sweet smell of #300 in my log book!!!! I did it with TI9M – Cocos Island on 10 and 15 meters. Got him with "One Call"... the one on the third day of ump-teen trys." John says after this he called in sick. It took a lot out of him. John did work other DX. Here's his list: H40T, PW0T, VP2MDY, A71, 3A2, 7Z1, ZD9, 8R, DK, V51, JW, F6, CX, CP, CO, ZP, Z22, and EL. John made his Olympic connection working K7O, Salt Lake City!

Tim – KD5ITM says he had a great month for DX!! "I'm still somewhat new to this, so I'm still not 100% sure

of what is a good DX QSO, but I'm getting closer to figuring out what is a good DX and what is your every day DX contact, I worked 12 DX stations, 9 of them were new countries this month! I'm using an IC-761, IC-706MKII, and a G5RV up at 40 feet and 100w, all 10m USB." Here is a portion of Tim's log: 2/4, VP5/K9KK Turks & Cacaos Is.; 2/5, SP3KFH Poland; 2/6, 9A9A Croatia; 2/7, 9A2VR Croatia; 2/7, T32IR Christmas Is.; 2/8, ON4GG Belgium; 2/8, S50C Slovenia; 2/10, HA7TM Hungary; 2/10, 9A2NY Croatia; 2/12, 5U4R Niger; 2/17, HK3SGP Colombia; and 2/17, VP2MDY Montserrat!

"Since most of these contacts are a first for me, its kind of hard to decide which are my top 3. If I had to pick, I probably would pick: 5U4R, T32IR, and VP2MDY." Tim says he is working on his General Class upgrade, and hopefully by this time next month, I'll be able to get off of 10m DX and try some 20m DXing!!! (Tim your judgment is right on the money. Any DX in your log, is good DX. Congratulations!)

George K5VUU reports that the third weekend of February will always be special when he looks at his log. In one weekend, George logged "4 new countries...count 'elm...FOUR!" Here goes: TI9M Cocos Island 10 and 15 meters SSB and 15 meter RTTY; FP5AC St. Pierre & Miguel on 20 meter SSB; PW0T Trindade & Martin Vaz on 10 meter CW; and J28VI Djibouti on 10 meter SSB. This brings George up to 293 worked and 286 confirmed. "My goal is 300 confirmed by the end of the year. Put it in the tabloid!"

Jim KJ5X reports that some DX is still coming in to the KJ5X shack even with colds and flu in the mix.

Continued on page 5

DX News – Continued from page 4

Jim reports working another new one, PW0T to top off two new ones in January for a total now of 318. “Worked PW0T on 15 and 12 meter SSB and 10 and 17 meter CW.” Jim says that he thought he had him on 40 meter CW also, but doesn’t see that on their web site. Jim spent some time rounding up 40 meter contacts working: JT, YU, V4, LY, LT, 9A, and GW. Jim says he’s got well over 100 40-meter contacts, but cards seem hard to get. “On a roll here. Looking for Orkneys and Ducie soon.”

W5PF – Paul says that February was slow a month, no new ones like we had in January. Paul did work the TI9M Cocos Island and PW0T Trindade and Martin Vas Island a couple of times. At newsletter time, Paul was still trying for them on the lower bands now that he has rebuilt his 160-meter dipole. “I tune it for all bands below 20 meters.” Paul also logged the 5U9C and several semi-rare ones in the ARRL CW contest. “I received several IOTA QSLs and the D68C QSL for 9 QSOs.”

Paul, along with several others of us, is looking for YA and P5 pile-ups any time they are on, and will be looking for VP6 Ducie Island of course. “March could be a good month. I will do my best not to anger the DX gods.” –Paul

Jim K5JDB had 35 DX contacts during February. Some of the more exotic ones were EX2T Kyrgestan (sp); VP8GEO South Georgia; H44LB Solomon Is.; DS0NO South Korea; 5U4R Niger; 9Q1A Rep. of Congo; TI9M Cocos Is.; 3XY8A Guinea; and PW0T Trindade and Martin Vas Island. He only got one QSL card and it was T32CY East Kiribati Christmas Is. from a contact back in October 2001. Jim says “Good DX & 73”

Larry KN5Z reports in with “No DX for this month. Larry says that he did finally receive his D68C card.

Bruce N1LN says February started out well, went out of town for 2 weeks, and

ended well. He worked the PW0T Trindade and Martin Vas Island group and TI9M Cocos Island about 30 minutes after returning home!

In Bruce’s log for the month under New Band/Mode country he logged VP8GEO South Georgia on 75 meter SSB, PW0T Trindade and Martin Vas Island on 40, 20 and 10 meter CW and 12 meter SSB. Under New Country – he worked YA5T Afghanistan on 15 CW, TI9M Cocos Island on 160 CW, 75 SSB, 20 CW, 15 SSB, 15 CW, 17 CW, and 10 SSB.

Terry – KQ5U reports that the forces of Reliant Energy struck hard for much of the month. They have been out several times and found numerous problems and made some improvements. Still the line noise is very high, and they can hear it as well. However, it has not been found as of the end of the month. They have promised to keep after it until it is gone. Terry also says that SSB has been non-existent at his station for the month. CW (QRP of course) catches include: 5U1A (Niger) on 40, 30, 20 and 15 meters; 4JOTX (Azerbaijan) on 20 meters; TI9M (Cocos Is.) on 20, 15 and 10 meters. “Played a little QRP in the ARRL WW DX CW on 10 meters in a very casual effort (149Qs) and in the process netted some countries that have not been confirmed yet. They were the common variety OM1CW, RA2FBC (UA2), V31JP & V73UG.” In his effort, Terry became acquainted with “cabrillo” file format and finally managed to get his log electronically accepted by the ARRL.

From this Station:

February, yep! As good as January. One new country in the log, PW0T Trindade and Martin Vas Island.

A week on the road to Seattle for a business conference took a little time out of hamming, but we got to see the oldest son and tour the San Juans with an overnight stay at “Friday Harbor.”

Sure great to see all of the DX activity this month by our members. Great going to all.

Scheduled DX Operations

Here are some of the scheduled DX operations for March. Format: From, To, DX Country, Call sign, QSL via. Good hunting!

- * 3/01–3/07 Turks & Caicos VP5
- * 3/01–3/10 Belau T88RM
- * 3/02–3/09 Sint Maarten PJ7
- * 3/04–3/06 South Georgia VP8SGK
- * 3/04–3/15 Vanuatu YJ0
- * 3/04–3/16 Madagascar 5R
- * 3/05–3/06 St Martin FS
- * 3/05–3/06 Sint Maarten PJ7
- * 3/07–3/14 Sint Maarten PJ6
- * 3/08–3/11 USA W4D
- * 3/08–3/24 Balearic Islands EA6
- * 3/08–3/15 Chagos VQ9GB
- * 3/12–3/30 Ducie Island VP6
- * 3/12–3/30 San Felix Island XR0X
- * 3/13–3/19 Jersey MJ
- * 3/14–3/16 Vietnam 3W
- * 3/15–3/21 Dominican Republic HI9
- * 3/15–3/30 Netherlands Antilles PJ2
- * 3/16–3/26 Ascension ZD8CSA
- * 3/17–3/22 Canary Islands EA8
- * 3/21–3/23 Vietnam 3W
- * 3/21–3/30 Guantanamo Bay KG4
- * 3/21–4/02 St Lucia J68GS
- * 3/22–3/28 St Martin FJ
- * 3/26–3/31 Mexico XF4IH
- * 3/28–4/03 Western Samoa 5W0IR
- * 3/28–4/12 Temotu H40

Thanks to Steve N5EN, Mike K5NZ, Gerald W5BA, Cal WF5W, John W5PDW, Tim KD5ITM, George K5VUU, Jim KJ5X, Paul W5PF, Jim K5JDB, Larry KN5Z, Bruce N1LN, and Terry KQ5U for continuing to support this month’s column. Your support for the column is appreciated by all.

If you have DX info for the column, please e-mail wa5mlt@arrl.net.

*73 es gd DX to all ...
de — H. O. WA5MLT*

Welcome, Congratulations and Condolences

Welcome new members Ana Allison, John Allison KD5OQP, Glyn Boren KD5QOM, Patrick Boren KD5QON, Lynnon Brimmer and Sue Mennell KB5GOE

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Houston, TX 77090-0387

*For general information call one of the
Club Officers or Board Members.*

NETS

10 M Ragchew: Mon 8:00 PM, 28.444 'sb
Coordinator: Jim Kirk KJ5X
281-376-0718, kj5x@swbell.net
2M Information: Wed. 8:00 PM,
146.66MHz
Coordinator open

WEB SITE

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Webmaster: H.O. Townsend WA5MLT
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NARS REFLECTOR

NARS@mailman.qth.net
Coordinator: O.J. Quarles, K1OJ
281-955-1555, k1oj@ditdit.com

REPEATERS

2M: 146.060 / 146.660 (KA5AKG)
70 cm: 449.375 / 444.375 (KA5AKG)

MEETINGS

Monthly General Membership

Third Friday each month at 7:30 PM
Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church, 6000
Spring Cypress Road

Saturday Breakfast

Victor's Restaurant 7:30 AM

Wednesday Lunch 11:30 AM

Various locations (Info on 146.660 and
listed on front page in Important Dates
column)

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