

NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

March 2004

March Meeting - Yap DXpedition

Cal White, WF5W and Paul Frantz, W5PF, will tell the story of their mini DXpedition to the far Pacific. They will cover the good, the bad and some of the ugly of the adventure. They have lots of pictures from the trip. If all goes well and you worked them on Yap, a QSL card may be presented in person.

Annual Picnic 2004

Date: Saturday, April 24

Time: 11:00AM until 4:00PM

Location: 24415 Deep Meadow, Tomball - see map below

Food: BBQ and side dishes from Rib Tickler, home made rolls and desserts

Cost: \$6.00 per person

Bring your own chairs and drinks.

Come join the NARS crowd for good eats, games and plenty of eyeball QSO's. Horseback rides will be available for kids and daring adults. There may even be a bit of music entertainment from the NARS Pickers.

Tables will be rented. We need a volunteer to pick them up in their truck. Do you have a truck?

Another volunteer is needed to pick up the BBQ from Rib Tickler. We also need horseshoes, washers and badminton. Do you have one of these? If so, please call 281-351-7683. Thanks.

A dessert or two will be made in the WD5DXL kitchen. Do you have a favorite dessert (hint - chocolate chip cookies

- yum) to show off? If so, bring it along. I am sure it will be appreciated and you will receive plenty of comments and critique.

Mark your calendar now for this fun, informal get-together.

Keith Dutson WD5DXL
keith@dutson.net
281-351-7683

Important Dates

Friday, March 19, 7:30 PM - General Membership meeting, Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church - Eyeball QSOs, 7:00 PM.

Saturday, March 27, 8:30 AM - VE License Exam Session, Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just South of Main).

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

Contests

Mar 20-21 Russian DX

Mar 20-22 BARTG HF RTTY, VA QSO Party

Mar 27-28 CQ WW SSB WPX, OK QSO Party

Apr 3-4 SP DX, EA RTTY, MO QSO Party

May 29-30 CQ WW CW WPX

Wednesday Lunch Bunch

Mar 17 Strack Farms

Mar 24 Pepperchino

Mar 31 Luby's Cafeteria

Apr 7 Jason's Deli

Apr 14 Neal's Restaurant

Wednesday Lunch Bunch - West

Mar 17 Fuddrucker's

Mar 24 Escalante Mexican

Apr 7 Jason's Deli

Apr 14 Luther's BBQ

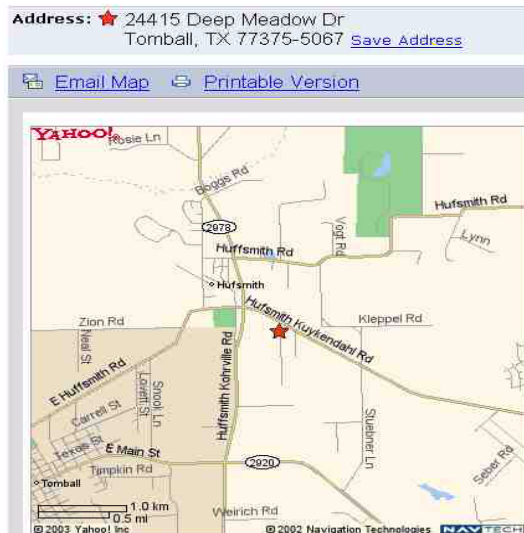
Apr 21 Skeeter's

Monday "Tail Draggers" Lunch Bunch

12:00 Noon Aviator's Grill, Hooks Airport

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

Deadline for articles to appear in the next issue is the last day of this month.



BREAKFAST
at Victors
4710 W FM 1960
Saturdays
7:30 AM

President's Corner

March 2004

Special Service Club Affiliation

I am sure that most of you know that NARS is an ARRL Affiliated Club, but you may not be aware that NARS is also recognized as an ARRL Special Service Club. This additional classification is available to clubs that demonstrate significant levels of community involvement in areas of new ham development, public relations, emergency communications assistance, school club support, and involvement in operating activities.

This classification is good for a two-year period. The renewal process requires the completion of a detailed form listing and describing club participation in specific activities in all of the above areas. As this is a renewal, the submission can not be accomplished by simply resubmitting old information. The NARS renewal documentation was easy for me to complete this year because of the help that I had from many of you. This help was not in writing the words, but came in the way of your participation in many new and creative activities as well as continued participation in many of the recurring ones.

At the last club meeting we heard about a few of these activities that NARS is involved in. I would like to thank Bill - K5ZTY and Mike - N5VCX for putting together a very informative program giving us a greater level of information about the MS 150, Sunmart Endurance Run, SIRE, Buffalo Bayou Regatta and Wings Over Houston. I would also like to thank those NARS members that have volunteered to continue in the role of communications coordinators for these events and those that just stepped forward.

Specifically:

Keith Dutson - SIRE
Paul Owen - Sunmart Endurance (first year coordinator)
Rob Nixon - Buffalo Bayou Regatta (first year co-coordinator)
Paul Franz - Buffalo Bayou Regatta (first year co-coordinator)
George Levandoski - Wings Over Houston (second year coordinator)

HAM & Sheez played a key role in this renewal with the excellent work they did with Fort Sam Houston and the Easter Basket project. Stay tuned to hear more details about their latest activity that they have just been approved to participate in - Adopt a Platoon.

Moving on to the Operating Activities - well, this list of NARS members is very long. For Special Event Stations (Colin / KU5B, Adam / KD5NDZ, Pat / KD5IZK, Bill / K5ZTY, George / W5GFP, Terry / KQ5U, Laurie / N1YXU, Bruce / N1LN, and I am sure more. I won't even begin to list the names and calls of the members that participated in the many contests and other on-the-air activities as it would be well over 100 people. You know who you are and your club thanks you.

One of the big events of the year for NARS is our participation in the annual ARRL Field Day. If you look back in your old December issues of QST in the 2A or 3A entry class you will always find that W5NC not only placed very well in the entry category but also has one of the highest counts of club member participation ranging from 74 to 110.

In closing, I would once again like to thank everyone that helped contribute to the renewal of the NARS Special Service Club certification. A special thanks goes to those of you that have volunteered to take leadership roles. And, a "more special" thanks to those of you that have not yet volunteered to take leadership roles but will in the future. Stand up - say yes - help your club. For our club to continue enjoying these successes we need your support.

Bruce Meier
N1LN

Public Service Events

Your Radio Skills Are Needed

Events officially sponsored by NARS include Buffalo Bayou Regatta (May), SIRE Ride-A-Thon (October) and Sunmart Texas Trails Run (December). Events supported by NARS members include Houston Marathon, MS 150 and Wings Over Houston.

Plan to help with one or more of these events in 2004.

VE Session Results

At the NARS VE Test Session held February 28, 2004 there were ten candidates. The results were two new Technicians, and one upgrade to General. Four candidates passed the element 1 code test. Elements administered totaled fourteen with nine passed.

The VE's were Jim Kirk KJ5X, Kirby Van Horn W7SV, Laurie Meier N1YXU, Keith Dutson WD5DXL, Walter Hock KK5LO, and Steve Niles N5EN

Thanks to all of the VE's for their help.

The next NARS VE Test session will be held on March 27, 2004. I'll see you there.

Norm Covey K5OS
NARS VE Session Manager

Highlights from the NARS Board Meeting

The regular monthly NARS board meeting was held on February 24 at the Terranova Clubhouse. The following board members were in attendance: Bruce Meier, Jerry Whiting, Paul Frantz, Chuck Sanders, Tom Hoherd along with the following guests: H.O. Townsend, and Keith Dutson. Following are highlights of the meeting:

- **Programs** - The schedule of upcoming programs was reviewed and it was determined that March would feature the Yap DXpedition.
- **Voice Repeater** - Paul Frantz reported that final work on the voice repeater was still pending but hopefully will be completed prior to the next meeting.
- **Texas QSO Party** - H.O. reported on the expenses for 2003 and that he had drafted a letter requesting sponsorship of plaques and tee shirts for 2004 that will be sent out as soon as the categories for 2004 are finalized. He also announced plans to have a formal trophy passing ceremony at HamCom to pass the club aggregate trophy from the San Antonio DX Amigos to the Austin CTDXC club.
- **Field Day** - Discussion of Field Day focused mainly on finding a coordinator or co-coordinators.
- **ARRL Certification** - Bruce reported that all of the paperwork had been submitted to the ARRL for certification and that the ARRL currently had the application under consideration.
- **Publicity** - Bruce reported that Laurie had recently designed and printed some new business cards for her use as the club's Public Information Officer. An interesting idea for a fund raiser was discussed -- more to follow on this topic.
- **Ham & Sheez** - Bruce reported that planning for another wine tour was underway. Could this give rise to a new version of the TQP -- the Wine Tour TQP?

On the last Tuesday of each month the board meets at 7:30 pm at the Terranova Club House to discuss club business and to set direction for the club. All members are invited to attend the board meetings and if interested should contact any board member if directions are needed or if they desire a specific item to be on the agenda.

C. W. Sanders, N05W
NARS Secretary

Ham and "Sheez" News

What a great way to start February! **Schalee and Mike Lodge hosted a Superbowl party** at their house for somewhere in the neighborhood of forty people. While everyone agrees that the game was one of the best in Superbowl history, the party was even better. To show no bias toward either team, the living room and kitchen were decorated with colors for both teams. Even a wonderful cake from Carrie's Kitchen had the Superbowl logo! And, there were terrific prizes for correctly answering Superbowl trivia. [Those of us who came from New England a few years ago were also very pleased with the outcome!!] Schalee and Mike -- Sincere thanks for a terrific party! The next time Houston hosts the Superbowl you can be sure about forty of us will be coming over to your house for the party!

As was mentioned in last month's update, the ladies conspired to ensure that **Valentine's Day** was celebrated appropriately. On Valentine's Day, nineteen of us ventured to Buca di Beppo's Italian restaurant for a wonderful dinner. We filled two long tables with delicious food, a few (?) glasses of wine, delightful conversation, and unbelievable deserts. If you have not been to Buca di Beppo's and you enjoy Italian food, take it from the nineteen of us -- you don't know what you're missing. Just one word of caution -- be sure to go with a very big appetite, several other people, or knowing that you'll go home with a doggy bag full of food. We'll let you know when we plan to go again so you can join in the fun!

We had a record number of ladies at our **February meeting** when Cheryl Tompkins was gracious enough to teach us how to use Shrinky Dinks. [Cheryl - Thank you so much for your patience and talent!] What a fun, versatile, and easy craft! Several of us had the opportunity to make magnets with our names written in Hebrew. It was a great evening with well-needed relaxation, laughter, and some new friends. Welcome to Darlene and Shannon!

In addition to having a great time at the February meeting, we also took some time to **plan events** for the next few months. If you think we've been busy so far this year, you haven't seen anything

yet. Ladies -- Get your calendars and pens and mark down the following dates:

- On **Saturday, March 13**, several of us will be spending the day on the Azalea Trail sponsored by the River Oaks Garden Club. There are seven different spots on the trail. You can read more about the even at <http://www.riveroaks.gardenclub.org/AzaleaTrail.cfm>. If you are interested in going, please send me a note. We can coordinate car pooling and lunch or dinner somewhere along the way!

- On **Monday, March 29**, Georgina Frantz will be discussing advanced medical directives at our March meeting. The meeting will be held at the Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church and will begin around 7:30. Please be sure to join us for a very informative evening.

- **Saturday, April 3**, marks the day for the annual herb luncheon at the Arbor Gate Nursery in Tomball. Unfortunately, the luncheon is completely booked; however, there is a wait list that has been started. If you're interested in possibly attending, be sure to call Arbor Gate and have your name added to the wait list. A few of us are already signed up on the wait list and are crossing our fingers. The website for Arbor Gate can be found at <http://www.arbortgate.com/classes.html>.

- A **wildflower trip** toward Brenham and a visit to Martha's Bloomers garden shop in Navasota is planned for April. The only issue is -- we don't quite know exactly when the bluebonnets will be blooming. Not to worry since we have a plan -- we'll keep checking the following website for the most up-to-date information on the best places for bluebonnet viewing and decide when to go -- <http://www.brenhamtexas.com>. [Ed note: plan for earlier than usual because of the mild, wet winter.]

- Schalee has appropriately named our next event a Wine and "Sheez" outing! On **Saturday, April 17**, we will be heading to the Messina Hof winery in Bryan for their Wine and Roses Festival. You can read all about the full day of events planned on their website -- http://www.messinahof.com/festival_wineandroses2.htm. We even have at

least one team of four who are ready to participate in the grapestomping championship of the western world! If you think I'm kidding, come out and watch as we stomp our way to victory! Some of us will also be staying for dinner. If you're interested in having dinner at the winery, let me know no later than April 3. I'll do my best to get the group reservations. You really don't want to miss this fun event!

- Our **April meeting** will be held on **Monday, April 26**, at the Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church. Carol and Shannon will share their flair for decorating and will show us how to make beautiful greeting cards for any occasion -- birthdays, anniversaries, Mother's Day, Father's Day, and other holidays. Bring any fancy-edged scissors, scraps of material, miscellaneous buttons, ribbon, and other notions to add your personal touches to the cards. The meeting will start around 7:30. We hope to see you then!

As you can see, we have quite a lot planned. If you haven't been involved in any Ham and "Sheez" events or meetings before, please pick one or two that interest you the most, and join us. You'll have a great time -- trust me!

Monthly recipe:

Cheesy Potatoes and Ham (Fix-It and Forget-It Recipes for Entertaining)

6 cups sliced, peeled potatoes
2 1/2 cups cooked ham, cubed
1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
10 3/4 ounce can cream of mushroom soup
1/2 cup milk

In slow cooker, layer one-third of potatoes, of ham, and of cheese. Repeat two more times. Combine soup and milk. Pour over ingredients in slow cooker. Cover. Cook on high for one hour. Reduce to low for 6 to 8 hours or just until potatoes are soft.

Enjoy!

Best regards,
Laurie Meier - NIYXU
936-271-1096
nlyxu@arrl.org

QUA* Dan Clark KK5LD?

My conversation with the latest QUA prospect revealed someone who refers to radio as his “relaxing” hobby. His vocabulary includes words such as; loop, stall, snap roll and spin. He uses these to describe what he enjoys in the cockpit of his Pitt bi-plane. Dan Clark KK5LD spends most of his free time in the clouds. Since flying is one of my first loves we spent lots of time comparing “war stories”. Here are the results.

Dan was born in San Antonio in 1956, which is close, but I won't say how close, to when I was born, except to say that he is o-l-d-e-r than me. He started working on vehicles at a young age in the form of Tonka trucks. He took them apart and kept taking everything he put his hands on down to the smallest component. This served him well when competing for a job as a sophomore, up against several others, to tear down plane engines. He held this job through college but soon realized he wanted to do more than tear down and wash parts.

He was attending Tarrant County Junior College concentrating on Aviation when he decided to pursue a degree in Engineering at UT Arlington. At graduation he was offered a job at General Dynamics. Just as he was getting settled the '80's recession hit, but he had a friend who had chosen Gearhardt-Owens and he recommended Dan for a position. Dan designed electronic packaging and equipment racks. He stayed with the company for 25 years through their name-change to Halliburton. Computers became throw-away items and unfortunately so did Dan's job.

He is now using his design skills at Aggreco special equipment

production ASEP to retro-fit semi-tractor-trailer trucks (big Tonka's!) for oil field wench assemblies.

He began his “other” hobby soon after graduating from UTA and getting a job. He found a Pit that had been wrecked on the first flight by a Navy pilot who didn't know how to fly with his feet. The engine was in great shape, but he had to rebuild the wing, replace the prop and while he had it apart, beef it up a little. He might have carried this tendency from his drag-racing days, but you can ask him about that. He used words like tickets, 167 mph, Hemi, etc?!?! I guess he figured there were fewer patrol planes than patrol cars.

He wanted to learn how to use this plane so he read a book, then took the plane high enough to allow for error and tried the maneuvers. He must have gotten the idea because he is ranked as one of the top 10 aerobatic pilots in the nation. He performs in air shows as well as competitions.

He competes in the Unlimited Class which consists of Qualification, Standard Maneuvers, Free-style (a routine to show the plane at its best) and Unknown, maneuvers given 24 hours before competition without chance to practice.

He has met some interesting people in this hobby: Tom Cruise, Gene Hackman and a friend is Willie Spence who flew in the movie Top Gun.

He and a friend own an air strip where their respective garages hold not only their car, but also their planes. He has a second house on a strip near Ft. Worth.

His Houston partner flew for the TXU commercial and Dan designed the mounting for the camera that sat on the top of the engine compartment and filmed the pilot and tail of the plane. One difficult problem was that when he would take off and roll the camera would stop filming. It took three different cameras to get it right.

Dan is engaged to Kathy who lives in the Dallas area. They enjoy hiking in the hill country. She likes to go when the wild flowers are blooming in the spring. Hey, girls that sounds like fun!

KK5LD builds most of his radio equipment, but the store bought stuff is an ICOM IC745 that he rarely uses and a K2 kit, which he considers to be “store bought”. He has built a 160-10 meter transceiver for CW and SSB from scratch; also a linear amp 5 to 500 watts.

He has a Mosley TA53M at 60 feet next to his hangers with an inverted-V with apex 55 feet on the tower over the hanger; can't ask for better ground!

He likes the challenge of QRP and enjoys the Tuesday fox hunts.

Dan is happy with his life and he sums it up with “If I wanted to do something, I did. I didn't want to say one day “I wish I had” - I just did it!” We should all approach (yes, I know another flight term) life with this much gusto!

*Schalee Lodge, KD5WLL
Ham & Sheez Reporter*

* QUA: “Q” signal meaning “Have you news of . . . ?”

DX News

“For All the NARS DX News Fit to Print”

Well group, hello from your new DX editor. I got a pretty good response from all, but am still looking for input from the newer hams that have HF privileges. Doesn't have to be DX worked, just what is the rig and antennae you are using and how do you feel about DXing. We all know that it's near or pretty close to the bottom of Cycle 23, so contacts with anywhere will be interesting for the newsletter. Enough said about that.

Cal writes a nice article as follows:

WF5W writes - un-official review of the new Kenwood TS480HX. This will be the transceiver that WD5DXL, W5PF and maybe W5MJ and I are taking to VP8 in November. Wanted to get it on the air and do a shake down so got this little rig and put it on the air 29 January. It has a separate head that is not a composite of the main body, slightly larger than a 706 or FT 100 and a pound or two heavier; 200 watts out of the box.

It takes a hefty power supply, 41 amp single or two 20.5 amp supplies in parallel. Slick looking front panel, dials and knobs are positioned with the operator in mind. Easy to get up and running and the manual is in ENGLISH!! Lots of menus, easy to get to and easy to change functions. You can assign a key to use for tuning, then it tunes at 10 watts automatically. DSP works well, however front end overload is a problem. REQUIRES filters to help out, the DSP does its job, but can't do it all in this rig. Have filters on back order as of this note. Doesn't look like it would be the easiest to mount mobile, but with some planning, could work, not a dash mount, but something in a console.

How does it do on the air? To date (barefoot) worked 310 contacts in 78 countries: 42 on 20, 1 on 24 (the only SSB contact VK9LB), 42 on 40

(including DU5AOK, JW5HE, and JY9QJ), 27 on 80 (including U2BG and 3B8CF), 16 on 160 (including 8R1RPN and HC8L). So must conclude it hears pretty well even with the above noted weakness on the front end.

If you thinking about getting a high end (at least price wise) mobile rig or one that looks spiffy in the shack, this may be the one for you.

John W5PDW always has some interesting contacts as follows:

Here, is what has been going on in my shack for Feb. I like to chase some of the special event stations. Most have really nice and unusual QSL cards; only got a couple this month: W5B Buddy Holly Lubbock, Tex; and W4S Commonwealth Governor's School. DX worked: OC3I, KP3B, PJ7LT, VE9GU, TI2VW, FS/K3LP and LU5YDK both 5-9 plus on 10 meters, XF1/F6AOI, XF1/F5TYY/ XF3, VE6MRT, VP2E, AH6RF, VE7HBS and K9EIB, Bob Heil Hummer Mobile. All contacts were 10-15-20 meters SSB, barefoot (200 watts).

Walgreens has some nice photo albums, several colors to choose from, vinyl, 2- 4x6" pockets per page, holds about 200 QSL cards; perfect for the coffee table. Great way to show and store your cards. Price is right too, think they were \$5.99.

Bruce, N1LN always has a good report:

Not lots of new stuff worked this month but did manage to pull in a few QSL cards.

New Confirmations: CY9A - St Paul Isl - 160CW, 9A7P - Rep. of Croatia - 160CW, A61AJ - UAE - 160CW, 6Y5/W7CB - Jamaica - 160CW

New Band Countries: VP9/K9CC - Bermuda - 160 CW, J6/WA1T - St. Lucia - 160CW, AY1ZA - South Orkney Isl - 17SSB, 20SSB, ZK3SB - Tokelau Isl - 80CW, 40CW, 30CW, 20CW, 5W1SA - Samoa - 40CW

This brings 160 totals to: 93 worked / 44 confirmed.

Jim Kirk looks like he had a good month on 80M, wish I could help with the 9N or S2.

Not much DX activity at the KJ5X shack in February. But, with only a couple hours effort, worked seven new countries on 80 meters in the ARRL CW contest. My 80M DX capabilities are slim as are my list of confirmed countries there. So new ones are really welcome. I'm still looking for 9N and S2. They seem to have disappeared into some late winter sunset. Give me a shout if you hear them. Reward. KJ5X

I guess it's time to report my meager contribution to this column. Worked only one all time new one in February, D2GG Angola on 20M phone. Cards received: P29TL, Papua New Guinea, ZWOS St. Peter and St. Paul rocks, and last ZA1B Albania.

That's all till next month.

Al Fritsche W5ADF

MOTORCYCLE HAMS NEEDED

If you are an Amateur Radio Operator, with or without a motorcycle, interested in volunteering for the BP MS-150 on April 17-18, 2004, please contact:

Jerry Irwin, WAØGLD

Home: 936-856-5178 Cell: 936-537-7524

email: F16Jock@earthlink.net

or visit <http://www.ms150.org>

Welcome, Congratulations and Condolences

Welcome new members Joe Monk W5JDM and Kenneth Williams KQ4CX.

NARS Resource List

General Help:

Bill Stietenroth K5ZTY
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TEXAS QSO PARTY

Coordinator: H.O. Townsend K5CX
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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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Send all articles and materials for the
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Northwest Amateur Radio Society is a
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ARRL Club No. 2120