

# NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

October 2005

## October Meeting – APRS

Walter Holmes K5WH will take us for a walk through the world of the Automatic Position Reporting System (APRS): what it is, how it's used for fun, how it's used for practical applications, and a look into the many different types of hardware in use today for this mode. He will show us ways that you can track anything from a car driving down the road, to balloons in the sky, or spacecraft traveling through the solar system.

## Twenty Year Anniversary

Many of you know that a few weeks ago my wife Marian, KB5SGV, had total knee replacement surgery. I am happy to say that she is doing well and hopefully spend more time walking and less time on her electric scooter. Having spent many hours in waiting rooms watching the clock, reports of Hurricane Katrina and later Rita on the TV and generally being bored, I had hoped to write the August article on the twenty anniversary, during that time but just couldn't get my mind to concentrate on the writing. Fortunately Paul W5PF came to my rescue and wrote of some of the early activities that led to the formation of NARS.

I was able to do some reflecting back on the 14 years that I have been with NARS about all the interesting people that I have come to know along the way and some that I just heard about. I would just bet that few radio organizations could boast of such an array of talent and folks in just about every walk of life.

A trip to the Saturday morning breakfast proves this theory. It seems like someone knows something on just about any subject that anyone would want to know about. They either know it or they are really good imposters.

The fact is that NARS does have a wide array of talent. We are recognized for our radio related skills but I am continuously amazed what a wealth of knowledge that these guys and gals have in their various walks of life.

When I was in the US Army back in the 60's, I was in a little known small branch of the service that was called US Army Security Agency (ASA). This was a top-secret operation that was highly active during the cold war with Russia. We were stationed in some very little known remote parts of the world. From the time I was discharged from the service in 1961, I had not met another ASA member until I joined NARS in 1991. Then it appeared that just about every other person I met was an ASA ex. It was my involvement with the communication activities that got me interested in getting my Ham Radio License in W4 land in 1961. I would guess the same would apply for the others.

Along the way we have had many interesting people come through the ranks of NARS. I guess the most common are the ones interested in electronics and communication. We have electronic design engineers, engineers involved in the computer industry and just about any phase of the electronic industry that a lot of us are familiar with. We have many people involved in the petroleum industry including all phases of engineering and geology. I'll bet that no other radio club can boast of having the two lady Ham's that are PhD's and departmental chairmen of two local universities. One of our original male members is a PhD and was departmental chair of one of our local universities. We have airline pilots, private pilots and corporate pilots. One of our members is a world-class aerobatic pilot. Some of the guys fly radio control planes, and some, flying lawn furniture. We have doctors, lawyers, ministers, missionaries, accountants, professional musicians, amateur musicians, photographers both amateur and professional, business owners, high ranking executives in major companies, school teachers, plumbers, people that work for various city and counties departments. We even have a mayor of a striving Texas city in our midst.

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## Important Dates

**Friday, Oct 21, 7:30 PM** – General Membership meeting, Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church – Eyeball QSOs, 6:30 PM.

**Saturday, Oct 22, 8:30 AM** – VE License Exam Session, Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just South of Main).

**Tuesday, Oct 25, 7:30 PM** – Board of Directors meeting, Ponderosa Fire Station, 17061 Rolling Creek drive. This is one signal light west of Ella on 1960, go north about 200 yards and park on the south side of the fire hall, NOT in front of the big doors.

### Contests

Oct 29–30 CQ WW DX SSB

Nov 5–6 ARRL Sweepstakes CW

Nov 12–13 WAE DX RTTY, SARL Field Day

Nov 19–20 ARRL Sweepstakes SSB

Nov 26–27 CQ WW DX CW

### Wednesday Lunch Bunch

Oct 19 Farm To Market Grill

Oct 26 Casa Imperial Mexican

Nov 2 Strack Farms

Nov 9 Peppercino

Nov 16 Luby's Cafeteria

### Wednesday Lunch Bunch – West

Oct 19 Jason's Deli

Oct 26 Luther's BBQ

Nov 2 Skeeter's

Nov 9 Charlie's Hamburgers

Nov 16 Cafe Express

### Monday "Tail Draggers" Lunch Bunch

11:00 AM 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 Denny's**  
7720 Louetta  
**Saturdays**  
**7:30 AM**

## President's Corner

October 2005

Greetings Fellow NARSians

Our thanks to Paul Owen (N5NXS) for his very informative program on fire prevention/protection at last month's meeting. Two people won a fire extinguisher (I believe they were ABC type extinguishers). There were good things presented for each of us to know and review for the protection of ourselves and our families. The October meeting will be given by Walter Holmes (K5WH) on APRS – Automatic Position Reporting System, a new technology that is quickly becoming widely used. See you there on the 21st.

Speaking of NARS meetings, I have some news that you all will be interested in. Ever since Bill Denton (W5SB) informed us that this is the 20th anniversary of the formation of NARS, the board has been considering how best to celebrate. If you have been reading the newsletter, you know that SB has been researching and publishing articles and information about NARS as retrieved from his and other OTs (Old Timers – Shhhhh!, we don't want to say it out loud) memories and the past newsletters. Frankly, I have more confidence in the newsletters! And Bill and the board have decided to make the January banquet the venue for our celebration. Since there will be a lot of reminiscing and entertainment from the NARS past, the board feels that the time for other things such as door prizes and awards will be very limited. Now don't get worried food connoisseurs, we will have a dinner. In fact the dinner that is being planned by Mark Tyler (K5GQ) our VP, is going to be a couple of levels improved from years past – not that they have been bad, but this IS a special celebration. And every effort is being made to keep the cost close to what it has been in the past. The food and the cost are a focus of your board. The other focus is the entertainment and the review of the NARS past. In order to provide the proper amount of time for this second element, the board has decided to move most of the awards ceremony to the November meeting which is also the election of officers meeting – seems to go hand-in-hand doesn't it? And yes, a program is also being planned in addition for that meeting. So make your plans to attend all the meetings and the banquet on 20 January 2006.

Last month, I was talking about the events following Hurricane Katrina and now we are dealing with the aftermath of another monster storm; Rita. And once again, the amateur fraternity has come through to help those in distress. Great hobby and terrific people. Thanks to all who participated.

And the new .06/.66 repeater has been improved with the addition of the director element from Force12. Coverage seems to be excellent and the squawks are gone. Great job guys!

73, Lee K5AVY

## Public Service Events

*Your Radio Skills Are Needed*

Events officially sponsored by NARS include Buffalo Bayou Regatta (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 2005.

## *NARS Members Perform Out-of-State Public Service*

Chuck Mountfort N5GCQ and Jeff Walter KE5FGA worked the Cox MS150 in Atlanta over the weekend of September 10–11.

We are both on the steering committee for the 2006 version of the Houston–Austin MS150. We would like to invite anyone to volunteer as a SAG van driver for that weekend. Of course any SAG volunteer with radio communication would be a bonus. We worked the 2005 ride also but that was before NARS membership. The MS150 web site is [www.ms150.org/ms150/](http://www.ms150.org/ms150/).

We both did the 2005 Dallas MS150 and will both do the 2006 Dallas MS150 as well.

*Jeff Walter KE5FGA*

## VE Session Results

The September session was cancelled. The next session will be held October 22.

73

*Norm Covey/K5OS*  
*NARS VE Session Manager*

## *Twenty Year Anniversary from page 1*

I think one of the most unique occupations among our membership was, one of our long time members was a Porter on a passenger train that ran from Houston to New Orleans. Obviously that was a few years ago. Two other members that I know of worked with some of our best known entertainers. One of them traveled the world with Michel Jackson and Madonna as a sound technician. Another member worked with Houston's own ZZ TOP. As for me, I spent most of my adult life working in Television. I was hired at Channel 13 in 1964 because had a Ham Radio License and the chief engineer was a ham. I worked as a broadcast engineer until I retired in 2001.

Not only have our members worked in all those various occupations. Much of this travel was work related but a surprising amount of it was Ham Radio activities and have literally traveled to just every part of the world chasing DX, IOTAS, contesting and various other activities. Over the years we have operated our radios in places like, Falklands Islands, Scotland, Many of the Caribbean Islands, the Provinces of Canada, and Korea. Many of the African countries, Macau, Norway, England, Mexico and a small island in the middle of Lake Conroe. I'm sure that there are many more that I don't remember or know about.

So you can see why our Saturday morning breakfast round tables are so eventful. With all this vast array of talent, knowledge and travel, it's no wonder that someone knows something on just about every subject. At least they want you to think that they do.

Saturday morning breakfast is a long-standing NARS tradition. As far as I can tell this activity started almost from the very beginning of NARS. I'm not sure how many important issues have been resolved over the years, least they have been vigorously debated.

Our normal crowd is about 12–15 but have had as many as 40. If you have not been to one lately, I heartily recommend it but bring your BS filters.

*Bill Denton W5SB*

# *Ham and “Sheez” News*

## Relief is on the Way

The weatherman is promising an awful lot, but the last I heard, we have a COLD front on the way. It is predicted to be here by Thursday, October 6th, and hang around for at least a week. I am hoping that this will help to change our dangerous Hurricane season and send all the future storms harmlessly into the Atlantic. Just as we were recovering from Katrina, the Houston area was introduced to Rita. Rita was not nearly as bad as the “preparations” for Rita. The last meaningful Hurricane to hit Houston was Alicia. The population of Houston and the surrounding bedroom communities has easily doubled since that time. Evacuation of that many people in a short time was a dangerous journey in and of itself. I am happy to say that the Amateur Radio community stepped up to the plate and provided lots of emergency communication for the exodus as well as the repatriation of Houston. This is my heartfelt “THANK YOU” to everyone who worked to keep us all safe.

Luckily, we were able to squeeze the Ham and Sheez Wine Tasting Party in between Katrina and Rita. I was unable to attend, but I have had lots of feedback from some of those who were able to be there. There were 15 who were able to attend. The wines for tasting ranged from the Texas Hill Country to Greece. Schalee and Michael Lodge won the “prize” for “Best Wine in Show.” I don’t have the name or Winery, but it was a sparkling Chiraz. Sounds like a winner to me. The Stampin Up ladies met the day after the wine tasting, but there were no leftovers –

wine that is. Many thanks go to Tina and Eddie Sinclair for hosting this annual event.

The real reason for the Wine Tasting and other events that the Ham and Sheez are involved with is the opportunity for us to get together with each other on more than one occasion each year. When 15 or more Ham and Sheez get together, you know there is going to be a “hot topic.” This year’s hot topic keeps coming up and I would like to propose that we put some muscle into it and see if we can do it. Ladies – we are going to publish a Ham and Sheez Cookbook. I have been working on a template for the recipe submissions. If any of you are the least bit creative and could lend a hand, this will be one of the major topics of discussion at the October meeting of the Ham and Sheez. See upcoming activities for further details.

Hurricane Rita forced many of our husbands and me out of the Texas QSO Party. Yes I was very disappointed, but everyone’s safety is much more important than a club sponsored contest. Also because of Hurricane Rita, the regular monthly meeting of the Ham and Sheez was cancelled for September.

## Upcoming Activities

**Sunday, October 16th** – This will be the last scheduled Stampin Up ladies monthly meeting. Schalee Lodge has the honor of being the last hostess for this event. We are talking about doing this again next year, but so far, I have not heard if we have enough to make a go of it. Schalee will send out an email with

directions to her house, if you need them. I don’t know about anyone else, but I am looking forward to ordering some stampin supplies for Christmas cards. If you missed last month, Tere brought several samples of some absolutely beautiful Christmas Cards.

**Monday, October 24th** – This will be the regular monthly meeting of the Ham and Sheez. The meeting will be held at the Church on Spring Cypress. We are NOT meeting on the 31st, because it is Halloween. Some of us have some “small people” who might have things planned for that evening. My grandchildren might be very disappointed if I was not at home on Halloween, so – in order to launch the Ham and Sheez Cookbook planning, we will meet on the 24th instead.

I will be calling as many of you as I can in the next two weeks to enlist your help and support with the cookbook project. I won’t give you the entire list that I have already started, but there are many things that we need to decide, so please bring a calendar, pen, and paper to the meeting that night so we can determine the best way to accomplish this.

I hope everyone enjoys the cooler weather – whenever it gets here. I will be the one on the south side of Tomball who is holding the door open and pushing it on through to the rest of you. See you on the 24th at the church – 7:00 to 7:30. Please try to be there.

*Best Wishes*  
*Anita – N5AOK*

# QUA\* O J Quarles K1OJ?

My latest interviewee is “comfortable” – with himself, his circumstances and even on a tower with an antenna! K1OJ, otherwise known as Owen Junior, the nick-name came before the call sign, has stepped away from the hobby for a short time, but is anxiously waiting to “drive” back in. And, maybe he’ll let me do some steering! Keep reading; you’ll get it.

OJ was born in the Appalachian Mountains in a small town, Buchanan, Virginia. He attended a one room school through the fifth grade. Then his family moved to Pennsylvania, where he graduated from Marionville High School.

He went directly into the Air Force out of high school and was trained in technical electronics at Lackland AFB in Colorado. From there, he was based at Pease in Portsmouth, NH, where he worked on F-122 bombers. He served a short time in Viet Nam and was also stationed in Thailand.

The Asian countries were a culture shock for someone raised in the Appalachian Mountains, but one of his favorite experiences was the “bot bugs”. At night the rice beetles would fly out of the fields and sometimes run into equipment and buildings. They were as large as your hand. When one would hit the ground a small child would run up from no-where grab it and run off. They would then wrap them in banana leaves, steam them and sell them the next day. They cost a small coin called a bot. When they were broken apart they would be full of whole grain rice, fully-cooked! Thus the name “bot bug.” OJ enjoyed these and the spicy food.

He was then transferred back to New Hampshire, where he took on a variety of civilian jobs. He met a man who owned a TV repair shop. OJ offered to work for the training. His employer was a HAM which sparked his interest in radios.

When he was in the service, he was required to report any contacts with communist countries to the base security. They monitored his logs for a while and then said they trusted him. Later, an agent attempted to recruit him for the Office of Special Investigations. They wanted him to remain in the service for four more years with no rank, no uniform and monitor equipment and communications. He decided to leave the service instead of becoming a counter-intelligence agent. How exciting to even be asked!

He left the Air Force in 1984 and began to think about where he wanted to live. He thought about California, Massachusetts or Texas. One rule was no snow and he decided against California. He and a

friend from the Air Force bought ten acres in Magnolia, Texas.

OJ went to work for a Johnson & Johnson company doing medical equipment repair, such as nuclear, ultra-sound and C.T. machines.

He then began working with Toshiba’s cardio catheterization equipment in labs. This is where he met Margaret. He paused for a second and said “she is a natural care-giver and this fascinated me”. They married about seven years later.

His newest interest at work is direct digital imaging. Patient records can be stored with their data and referenced instantly, instead of requiring film. Converting existing equipment to this process requires several steps. First the image must be stored on a charged plate and then laser scanned to be stored digitally. This will allow doctors to have instantaneous access to a complete medical record with a few keystrokes.

OJ and Margaret are raising two sons; Travis, almost 18, and Kevin, who is now 20. These two boys are the reason OJ has pulled away from the hobby for a while. They have little interest in radio and he wanted to find some common ground during their teen-age years – cars. He found a Corvette Stingray in St. Louis, MO and went to pick it up. On the way home the voice-mail to Margaret were things like, “well, the good news is the fire is out.” The Corvette will be completely restored next summer.

OJ and Margaret have a new puppy; a Great Dane named Jedediah. They also have Roxy, a mutt, who is 13 years old.

I explained to Sarge that even at 18 months Jedediah could have him as a light snack! Although I’ve heard a rumor that he is a sweet-heart.

OJ was licensed in 1976 as WN1YIA. He remained a General for twenty years then upgraded to Extra with his current call sign, K1OJ.

While in the service as a novice, using surplus equipment, OJ was listening. He heard an SOS from a sinking ship. He responded in “slow” CW (about 12 wpm) and let them know he would send help. He called the Coast Guard and gave them the frequency. He was astounded at the response. They blasted through. He was sure anyone listening could have heard their communication with the ship. He monitored while they located them and rescued the crew. This event brought a new respect for CW and it has become a second language. He has been clocked at

just under 60 wpm.

OJ has a minor preference in equipment. “Ten-Tec is the only rig for CW”. When he decided to leave the hobby for a while he sold most of his equipment except his Yaesu FT-100 mobile.

His favorite contacts are Owens Garrett on the Space Shuttle, King Hussein, Barry Goldwater and recently driving back from Dallas on 20 meters CW he contacted The USS Missouri memorial in Hawaii. He spent the next 2 hours talking to an old-timer with great stories.

One of the things OJ especially enjoyed was being the “radio Santa Clause”. People would let him know what their children’s interests were, things they had done (or not done) and what they wanted for Christmas. He would then “contact” them on the NARS repeater.

He had an interesting Texas QSO Party story that involved a west Texas town, junk for radios, Mark Condit KM5AO, Larry Lockhart K5LBL, a cafe, a sheriff and about 15 cops. I’ll let him finish the story.

He called a QRP experience on a newly recognized IOTA island in the middle of Lake Conroe a riot. The “island” is ten feet long and five feet across. Rudy Novotny brought his party boat and they set up a tent on the island.

There is a published article he wrote about a 10-10 contest. The link is <http://www.ncjweb.com/novdec01ncj.php?page=1>. I enjoyed reading about new HAMS getting excited about our hobby.

His other hobbies include his guitar, playing blue grass and blues and listening to “old rock” like Alice in Chains and 9 Inch Nails!

He also enjoys reading Greek mythology and fantasy and has recently developed an interest in politics. He has a conservative view and has begun to see the effect “not interested” has on our society.

His sports interests run toward cars – any surprise? He enjoys NASCAR and even entered a 1989 firebird in a car show and had good results.

OJ summed up his fun with “I work hard, play hard and say what I think.” Well, OJ, we are waiting for you to get that Stingray finished so you can get back into “playing hard” with NARS.

*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”*

**“DX IS”:** I have shared this statement with the membership in the past issues of the DX Report. It comes from the grand-daddy of DX reporters – and story-tellers, who recently became a silent key. “DX is” (“DX is what you make of It.”) was his trademark and I will continue to use it as a tribute to his top notch DX reports. “The West Coast DX Bulletin” was “the” DX newsletter in the hardcopy days:

**“SILENT KEY”** – The DX community mourns the passing of Hugh A. Cassidy, WA6AUD, who left us on 9 September at 88 years of age. Quoting Jarmo Jaakola, OH2BN, The Daily DX remembers Cass as “a truly towering figure in DX, a source of great inspiration, a literary genius who had the unique talent to express in words some of our innermost feelings, who was capable of touching the human soul with his pen, with a message that transcended geographic boundaries, language barriers”. Give a look to a few issues of The West Coast DX Bulletin, of which Cass was the editor for eleven years, and read a few of his delightful DX Stories on K2CD’s web site at <http://www.geocities.com/k2cddx/index.html>.

Band activity and DX reports were a little thin this past month. Need more input ladies and gentlemen. There are more than 3–4 DXers aren’t there in the club? Don’t be so bashful and share your reports with the Multitude of the Membership! Remember that “DX is what you make of it”.

Haven’t heard of too much “Rita” damage to member’s antennas and/or towers. Bruce, N1LN had an element broken off by Rita but really caused by some squatter mud-daubers who had

homesteaded in an element (and maybe more?). It was filled up with their mud and the Rita-winds broke it away from the boom.

I heard that Keith, NM5G with his two new monster multi-banders had a boom section and elements rotate to a vertical position. Does he know something we don’t about polarity? Keith felt that the bolts that held the boom sections together had not been tightened adequately. How about some good reports from the new antennas Keith?

Jim, KJ5X reports that his 40M loop and 80M dipole got twisted around a bit; probably to be expected in the gusty, strong winds of Rita. Will take some more work to get that straightened away.

I had the 3 el KLM 40 meter and TennaDyne T12 mast pipe rotate in the rotor about 90 degrees. I have had to compensate for any antenna directions by 90 degrees until I get up there and correct it. Come-on 60 degree WX! That is the first time that has happened in 15 years. But, then I don’t think we have had 75+ MPH wind gusts until Ms. Rita visited.

I needed only a 17M QSO with Kure Island, K7C and had to point NNE with the controller to point the antennas NNW (or is it NWN? Anyway: 293 degrees.).

I had that happen one time in Montana and thought the antennas were off by 15–20 degrees. Climbed up there and the direction was off by, maybe 1200 degrees. The coaxes had may-poled around the mast pipe about 4 times. It was a flat-top tower and I could not see the tightly wound up coax from the ground. After that I pinned my mast

to the rotor box otherwise I would have this problem every week. Quit doing that when we moved to Texas. “They don’t get any wind in South Texas,” huh! Anyway, it is probably best not to pin the mast pipe and let that area serve as a ‘shear pin’ to save on tearing up rotors.

Jim, KJ5X reports low activity this month, but has snagged one 15M RTTY QSO with the ongoing Kure Island (KH7K) DXpedition, K7C. He also reports some SKN activity. Since this was written, I am sure Jim has filled his logbook up with K7C QSOs!

Jim was able to confirm his contact almost instantly on the Kure DXpedition’s “DXA” website. [www.cordell.org/htdocs/KURE\\_pages/KURE\\_DXA.html](http://www.cordell.org/htdocs/KURE_pages/KURE_DXA.html). Pretty neat stuff this fancy DXpedition had on the Web, even though they did have some problems with their internet provider (What’s new?):

**“PLEASE REST ASSURED** that if your contact was confirmed by a K7C operator over the air, and it currently doesn’t show up on DXA, it is in the log and it will appear on DXA in the near future after we have resolved these issues. Thanks” (<http://www.cordell.org/DXA>)

John, W5PDW had a good month chasing down the “Route 66 On The Air” 17 special event stations. The special event stations all had 1x1 calls, W6A–W6Q. Did you work Martin Milner, John? For some of the younger people, Route 66 was the old road to Southern California from the mid-west; long since replaced by Interstate 40. There was also a TV series, too; which Martin Milner starred in.

*Continued on page 6*

# “The Net”

Well by now the news is starting to get out, “The Net” is back. The net I’m speaking of is the 2 meter Wednesday night net. This was a long standing tradition with NARS and it was sorely missed due to equipment issues that were affecting not only the range but also inducing the (and I’m not sure who coined the phrase but it fit) chicken squawk noise we all came to know and hate, The net was just not working.

Thanks to Ken–KA5AKG and Bill–K5ZTY it’s finally safe to use

our repeater without earplugs. And we can’t forget Bruce–N1LN who may have developed a temporary case of cauliflower ear from being on the phone so much with FORCE–12 trying to get the antenna upgrade that was put in. We now have a new repeater in place and with the revamped antenna system Ken and Bill put together it looks like our 2 meter coverage is phenomenal (well ok how about great). I have heard mobiles working into the repeater from Alvin, Brookshire, Prairie View and Sheldon. If that doesn’t impress

everybody then getting the nod of approval from Cal–WF5W in Tomball and Mark–W5MMX in Kingwood should!

So all this leads up to the return of the NARS Wednesday night 2 meter net and hopefully it will grow back to the “gee I wish Wednesday would hurry up and get here” status it once held.

Thanks and hope to hear you there!

*Rick KZ5E*

## *DX News from page 5*

John also made a nice 10M QSO with A35RK with 100 Watts and his Yagi at 21 feet height. Thirty minutes later: zilch, nothing! That is more than I have heard on 10M, John! I have seen some good cluster spots on 10M but hear nothing when I tune across the band.

“Cap’n Cal”, WF5W reports that all is ship–shape on the Sea Pumpkin after Rita had passed the Kemah, TX harbor berth. He further reports that the “K5VUU Marine Special” antenna is a real fire–breather aboard the Pumpkin.

And Steve, N5EN, snagged his first DX for the year! K7C, Kure on 20M and was able to confirm the QSO on the DXpedition’s DXA web site just moments after the QSO. What will technology do next for DXpeditions!

Bruce, N1LN has been a bit slow w/ the DX this month (Haven’t we all?) with travel, etc. He was able to snag K7C, Kure on 40M / 80M / 20m / 17M for an over–all new one; all in one day.

Here at K5UO, I did receive some nice band–counter QSLs:

1. V51GB 15M CW
2. TT8AMO 15M CW
3. ET3TK 17M CW
4. 5R8GZ 17M CW

Little thin on the new–worked band counters, this month:

1. 7P8/KH4RHF 40M CW
2. KH9/W0CN 12/17M CW/SSB
3. 9M6NA 17M CW
4. K7C 17M CW

Due to loosing power and other Rita–related priorities, a lot of us were unable to operate in the Texas QSO Party this month. And I wanted to exercise the new “club call” K5TQP!

Come on Fall and Winter! Starting to see some North American DXers reporting activity on 80 and 160; mostly the Kure Island DXpedition. That’s a start!

Better/ Good DX plans from the bulletins:

1. – The same Clipperton DX Club

team (F2VX, F9DK, G0LMX and F5LMJ) that operated as A52FH in 2000 and A52CDX in 2004 will return to Bhutan from 18 November to 3 December 2005. They will be at the Ham Centre in Thimphu on 18–29 November, and will also try to be active from Bumtang and the valley of Paro. It will not be a DXpedition but a project to promote the growth of amateur radio in Bhutan, and one or two radio equipments will be donated in order to help establish of new club stations in the eastern part of the country. QSL via F9DK, direct or bureau. [TNX F5NQL]

2. – 5B, CYPRUS. Zoli, HA5PP, will be active as 5B/HA5PP during the CQ World–Wide DX SSB Contest (October 29–30th) as a Single–Op/Single–Band (TBD) entry. QSL via HA5PP.

Remember that DX contests are a super way to pick up new countries or band–counters for you DXCC or CQ Awards.

*Tnx es 73, de Mike, K5UO*

# *BPL Update*

Ed Hare's visit, September 15, 2005, with comments from W5TXV.

Coordinated with Greg Angst of Centerpoint Energy (CnP).

The gathering was scheduled for 10:30 AM at a Burger Doodle on Richmond Avenue on the south edge of the Houston BPL test area. The Houston contingent was Mike Davidson (N5MT), Lee Gaspard (WA5QXE), and Kent Marshall (W5TXV). Also there for the opening festivities were Greg Angst and the designated consultant for CnP, Ed Lyda of EastWestCommunications. The manufacturers and IdaComm were not present.

We discussed basic understanding of each person's association with the situation. Mr. Angst (who had a meeting to attend at 11:00 AM) managed to leave about 11:20 with Mr. Lyda. The remaining five then visually inspected the BPL injection site immediately behind the Burger Doodle, and then moved to an inspection of the BPL-2 site. Measurements were taken (with a couple of raised eyebrows and at least one surprised look). This killed the time until lunch. I was unable to stay, but the others continued. The group reconvened at the chosen barbecue establishment (where you get your barbecue on butcher paper).

Everyone agreed that the barbecue was good; the Luling Cafe has that reputation. Since it was Texas barbecue, that was no surprise. We were gratified that Ed and Jerry had the good breeding to be able to decide that fact on their own. Our assessment of their basic intelligence rose considerably. However, no one observed either

Jerry or Ed eating jalapenos.

After lunch, BPL-34 on Lana Street west of the tracks was visited. This injection point is classic Amperion. Measurements were taken, but the results are unclear, since the system was probably in idle mode with no active customers.

The next site was BPL-4, on the north side of Richmond, west side of the tracks. Readings were taken, and the group moved to the injection point behind the Burger Doodle at Drexel and Richmond (which is Mitsubishi). Rain set in, and the group went to the new CnP BPL demonstration center in South Houston. Greg Angst met the other four there, and ran through the complete dog-and-pony show, which is impressive. This center is pointed toward demonstrations of the actions which can be monitored and/or controlled by BPL, including substation monitoring and control, service and pole top switch applications, home control, meter reading, and remote IR viewing, as well as residential internet service.

Observations after the fact:

1. We think our visitors were impressed with the honesty and integrity of the individuals involved, as well as with the methodology of the trial and the monitoring which has taken place, and will continue.

2. It appeared that Jerry and Ed were pleased with the level of cooperation with hams, and vice versa.

3. Everyone saw the (CnP) business side of the endeavor (which we point out was clearly delineated in the very first report at the rollout

meeting in May). The business side is the only real justification in the view of the utility; internet service is a byproduct.

4. We perceive that all understood better the nature of the trial in the sense that the trial area is minuscule compared to overall service area ---the present effort truly is only a technical trial.

5. CnP truly does NOT know the "right answer" to the question of BPL.

6. We are NOT opposed to the utility, and we are NOT opposed to BPL. They can put up all the BPL they want, so long as it doesn't affect our legally recognized and protected amateur radio privileges and operation. If it doesn't affect us, then we don't care.

As a final comment, we still need volunteers to visit the ham station at the test site, operate, and file interference complaints after hearing the noise. One person has already taken notes and is preparing a complaint. We need more (the interference is obvious, and there will be NO misrepresentation involved). If you want to help, and do your part, let me know.

We were very happy to have Ed and Jerry as guests, and appreciated the time they took to meet with us. As well, we appreciated the hospitality and understanding from the CnP representatives. We missed meeting up with Arthur Johnson, who is the lead in CnP's ongoing interference complaint section. Give me a call, Arthur, and we'll both go get the meal we missed; I'll buy.

*Kent W5TXV*

# Welcome, Congratulations and Condolences

Condolences to Lois Graf, XYL of Frank Graf WA5KXP who became a silent key August 11, 2005

## NARS Resource List

### General Help:

Bill Stietenroth K5ZTY  
281-893-3901, k5zty@juno.com  
Allen Majeski WA5REJ  
281-353-8652, wa5rej.tx@netzero.net  
Bill Denton W5SB - Antennas  
281-469-8331, w5sb@arrl.net  
Madison Jones W5MJ  
281-350-4330, w5mj@hal-pc.org  
Larry McCain KN5Z  
281-469-6709, kn5z@arrl.net  
Deral Kent K5WNO - Antennas  
281-548-7476, k5wno@juno.com

### Satellite:

Dick Rooney W5VHN  
281-288-8424, dickrooney@usa.net

### Digital Modes:

Don Bedell KA3BKU Packet  
281-257-6425 donka3bku@ev1.com  
Gregg Erlenbusch, W5IDX PSK/RTTY  
281-970-6860, W5IDX@ARRL.net

### VHF/UHF:

Brian Derx N5BA 281-894-5942

### PC Programming and Operations:

Keith Dutson NM5G  
281-351-7683, keith@dutson.net

### Interference (Basic Advice):

Mark Tyler K5GQ  
281-587-0256, k5gq@juno.com  
Terry Myers KQ5U  
281-443-6042, tmyers1031@sbcglobal.net

### Card Checking Awards Managers:

Bob Walworth N5ET - DXCC  
281-363-0209, rwalworth@charter.net  
Brian Derx N5BA - WAS, VUCC  
281-894-5942  
H O Townsend K5CX - WAZ  
281-376-7416, k5cx@arrl.net

### NARS Public Information Officer:

Laurie Meier N1YXU  
936-271-1096, n1yxu@arrl.net

## NARS Information

### PRESIDENT & BOARD CHAIRMAN

Lee Kinard K5AVY  
281-586-0785 l-kinard@sbcglobal.net

### VICE PRESIDENT

Mark Tyler K5GQ  
281-587-0256 k5gq@juno.com

### SECRETARY

Charles Sanders NO5W  
936-321-0053, no5w@txucom.net

### TREASURER

Joe Sokolowski KD5KR  
281-353-2196 kd5kr@arrl.net

### DIRECTORS

Jerry Whiting KB5VGD  
281-583-5588, g\_whiting@sbcglobal.net  
Paul Frantz W5PF  
281-351-8930 w5pf@houston.rr.com  
Cal White WF5W  
281-351-6323 CWhite314@direcway.com  
Mike Lodge K7LEX  
281-255-2202 lodgem@swbell.net

### ACTIVITIES CHAIRMAN

TBA

### ADMINISTRATIVE AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Joe Sokolowski, KD5KR  
281-353-2196, kd5kr@arrl.net

### Send address, phone, email and other changes to:

NARS  
PO Box 90387  
Houston, TX 77090-0387

### NET

10M Ragchew: Mon 8:00 PM, 28,444 ssb  
Coordinator: Jim Kirk KJ5X  
281-376-0718, kj5x@swbell.net

### WEB SITE

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

### NARS REFLECTOR

NARS@mailman.qth.net  
Coordinator: Peter Wang KF5ND  
281-550-3864, kf5nd@yahoo.com

### TEXAS QSO PARTY

Coordinator: H.O. Townsend K5CX  
281-376-7416, k5cx@arrl.net

### VE SESSION (ARRL)

Manager:  
Norm Covey K5OS  
281-252-8285 k5os@arrl.net

### REPEATERS

2M: 146.660 / 146.060 (KA5AKG)  
Tone: 141.3  
70 cm: 444.375 / 449.375 (KA5AKG)  
Tone: 103.5

### MEETINGS

#### Monthly General Membership

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

#### Saturday Breakfast

Denny's, 7720 Louetta, at 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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281-351-7683, keith@dutson.net

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