

NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

December 1989

THE CAYMANS BECKON YOU WITH ISLAND HAMMING AT THE DEC 15 MEETING

How would you like a balmy sea breeze with palm trees and colorful tropical waters as a backdrop while operating 20, 15, and 10 meters with nonstop QSLing. Sounds like a tropical paradise for a Ham operator doesn't it? Well, it is!

Joe Staples, W5ASP when he is in the states, and ZF2NE when he is in the Cayman Islands, will tell us at this month's meeting what it's like to operate island style.

Joe has been going to the Caymans for the last 10 or 12 years. Last May, Joe and a friend, Rob Peterson, W5VAH traveled down to the Caymans to relax and operate a contest sponsored by CQ Magazine. Joe rented the Ham shack of Ron Sefton, ZF8AA, which comes complete with a beam at 50 feet and just 30 yards from the salt water of the Caribbean.

Joe has slides of hamming, the islands, scuba diving - you name it. This is a great topic for December. Come to the islands, like the travel brochures entice, at the club meeting this month. Come early, too, and visit with other Hams before the island adventure begins.

FLASH - The Johnson Space Center Amateur Radio Club has prepared a proposal to AMSAT that it act as host to the Annual AMSAT Space Symposium in late October of 1990. Competing cities are Denver, Los Angeles, and Ogden, Utah. This is an event of international interest; let's hope their "bid" is successful!

de Jack Douglas, KA5DNP

NEW CLUB OFFICERS ELECTED FOR 1989

Election of officers for next year was held during the November meeting. The new officers were voted in by acclamation and are:

President - Ed Hinds, KB5AEL
Vice President - Dan Cassiani, N5KPI
Secretary - Curt Furtado, KB5BCL
Treasurer - Bob Patterson, N5MJB
Director-at-Large - Bob Welch, KE5IC

Congratulations to all! The new slate of officers will be installed at the NARS Banquet in January.

CLUB VOTES TO INCREASE DUES

Not only did club members vote on officers, but they also approved an increase in annual dues to \$15 as recommended by the Board. Dues for members will now be \$15 per year, high school students \$10, and family member dues will remain at \$5.

1990 dues are now due. Please complete the application blank in this newsletter and return it in the enclosed pre-addressed envelope. TU!

NOVEMBER MEETING RECAP

At the November meeting Bob Black, Exxon, briefed us on communications required for the oil spill clean up from the Valdez incident. Along with Bob were Bill Geary, Aramco telecommunications, and John Lavender, national account exec for Motorola. Bob said they ended up using 15 simultaneous voice channels on satellite just to coordinate all the various groups. . . Door prize winner was Ken Edinborgh, W5BKK, who received a copy of the 1990 ARRL Handbook donated by Madison Electronics, 3621 Fannin, Houston. Phone: 713-520-7300.

*** * * PROPAGATION * * ***
by ROY HRADILEK, AD5Q

Winter approaches. A large area over the pole is in darkness, making certain Asian paths difficult on higher bands, especially 10 meters. 10 & 15 will otherwise be excellent. The morning grey line extends NE to Europe and enhances propagation along the path with the heaviest DX activity. This path opens on 40 around sunrise for a brief opening to Scandinavia and Russia. The morning grey line also extends SSW around Antarctica and back up the Indian Ocean to the Middle East, Russia and Europe. This is the most popular 20 meter long path circuit, and it peaks in the winter.

20 Meters: Winter conditions, especially during January, seasonally bring the lowest MUF's of the year. This will usually shut the high bands down at night. At the peak of the last sunspot cycle, even 20 would close in the early evening. Though fluxes in this cycle are higher than last, at some point in the night 20 will usually close. If this occurs earlier in the night, the nighttime path will not be open to the sunrise area that sweeps across Europe. Without fail, this path will open on 40, but 20 would experience better daytime propagation. Look for peak conditions on 20 in late afternoon to Europe, with excellent easterly paths to Africa and long path to VK and the Pacific. Long path shifts to the SSE around sunset for a grey line path to SE Asia and Indonesia. This will also be a good path to Antarctic regions for those BIG expeditions (e.g. 3Y). Vibrant equatorial ring will identify the South American stations, which will be loud.

LOW BANDS: 40 CW is very good right now, and should be tuned frequently for rare DX. Check 80 at sunrise on weekends. Pileups on the lowbands build to unmanageable levels very quickly nowadays, even though few are actually tuning the bands. Once the DX announcements hit the packet networks, frequencies are swamped with lids. This is true on all bands during contests.

*** * * FAR OUT * * ***
by JACK DOUGLAS, KA5DNP

The much long awaited launch of the "MICROSATS" is now scheduled for January 9, 1990. Our August column presented the CHALLENGE of preparing to operate through the "PACSATS", the store and forward mail boxes being sponsored by AMSAT-North America and AMSAT-Argentina (When in orbit they will be known as OSCAR-14 and OSCAR-17 respectively.)

BRAMSAT (AMSAT-Brazil) is sponsoring a very different satellite that will become OSCAR-15 and is known by the acronym DOVE (Digital Orbiting Voice Encoder). Anyone with 2m FM receive capability (scanners, inexpensive receivers with Public Service FM bands, handhelds, etc.) should be able to enjoy this "talking" bird.

Those who picked up the SKITREK announcements from OSCAR-11 (many on rubber ducks!) might not know that the power output of the Digitalker was only about 350 milliwatts. DOVE will have 4 watts, 10 times the power of OSCAR-11! (GAD! I should say 10 Db above OSCAR-11). The frequency will be 145.825 MHz and while we will have to give you more exact info after launch it should be heard around 10:30 AM and 10:30 PM every day.

DOVE can be commanded to generate specific general interest messages in five languages and to transmit, in digitally generated voice, data on its own health and welfare (temperature, power, etc.).

Additionally, messages can be digitally recorded by ground control stations and sent to DOVE where they will be reconstituted to original form and transmitted. So, we might hear the voice of a school girl in Africa telling us of her desires for world peace and understanding and it might be in FRENCH if that is her first language!

Remember, there is no equipment to buy, just listen at the right times on 145.825 MHz.

NARS NOTES

- UPGRADES AND NEW CALLS - CONGRATULATIONS to Miguel Chiusano, who is now N5PER ex KB5JPY; to Bill Moon, N5POZ, who passed his Technician exam and got his call sign; to Curt Furtado who upgraded to Advanced Class; to Cippy Rodriguez, N5NPS, who upgraded to General Class; and to Phil Graves, KB5BXO, who upgraded to General Class.

- NARS NOVICE COURSE for 1990 is now in the planning stage. It is expected that next year's class will start in late January or early February. More information will be out in the next NARS News as well as on the club nets.

As in the past, volunteer instructors will be needed. Please offer your help with this interesting project by calling "The Professor" Joe Sokolowski, KD5KR, at 353-2196 or Bob Welch, KE5IC, at 376-4814.

- NARS ANNUAL BANQUET time is upon us again. Rich Richardson, KA5YFU, is the event chairman this time around and he reports that plans are well under way. Mark January 27, 1990 as the date and The County Line as the restaurant. Rich promises full details regarding starting time and food prices will be announced in the next edition of the NARS News.
- REPORTING IN FROM THE TUNDRA is Jim Minor with a word or two about his newly acquired call sign, N1GXQ. Jim says "I have sprained my wrist trying to practice sending my new call in Morse. I have also sprained my tongue trying to say it on phone. I still haven't had time to try to get anything in the air so that I can check-in on the nets down there. Maybe when the snow is up to my *** I will find time to freeze my (censored) off while putting up an antenna." Jim's address is in the new roster; drop him a warm note.
- FOR NARS INFO see Dec. QST, p.122

HOUSTON COM-VENTION '89

The annual Houston Com-Venture was held on November 3, 4 and 5 and was a rousing success. NARS members outdid themselves in convention participation with five events this year.

Mike Furry, WA5POK, and Bob White, KF5ZL, conducted seminars. Mike demonstrated and discussed homebrew projects, including antennas and tuners to about 100 attendees. Mike is looking forward to doing it again next year. Bob's subject was ARES and RACES and his meeting was also well attended. Bob concentrated on RACES; his guest, Tom Tanner, K5DG, Section Emergency Coordinator, South Texas, discussed the functions of ARES.

Henry Freedenberg, N5HF led the traditional Transmitter Hunt with assistants Allen Majeski, WA5REJ; Curt Furtado, KB5BCL; Mike Furrey, WA5POK; Brad Killebrew, N5LJV; and Brad Nelson, WD5GNI. The event took the scheduled one and one-half hours and the winner got a 2M mobile antenna.

Tom Roraback, KF500, and Bob McBride, WA5RLU, handled the parking detail. Parking spaces were exhausted very early forcing later arrivals to find space at adjacent lots and streets.

Through the work of Bob White, KF5ZL; Ken Harlan, KA5AKG; Ed Hinds, KB5AEL; and Ken Edinborgh, W5BKK, a Special Event Station in the motor home of KB5AEL was in operation during most of Saturday and Sunday, as scheduled on page 82 of November QST. Operators included Steve Farlow, N5PBD; Vincel Hayes, KC0LM; Bob Patterson, N5MJB; Ken Harlan, KA5AKG; Ed Hinds, KB5AEL; Brad Nelson, WD5GNI; Scott Byrd, N5KEU; Dick Rooney, W5VHN; Derek Elkins, KB5EYR; Curt Furtado, KB5BCL; and Ken Edinborgh, W5BKK. QSO's totaled 200, all SSB. So far we have had 64 requests for special event cards and they have been printed and mailed.

NARS is to be commended; many thanks are extended to all participants.

de Ken Edinborgh, W5BKK

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society
is an ARRL Special Service Club
** ARRL Club No. 2120 **

NARS BULLETIN BOARD

NARS MEETS the third Friday of each month at the Cypress Creek EMS Bldg. 16650 Sugar Pine Lane (beneath the water tower) which is one block east of Kuykendahl and two blocks south of FM 1960. Meeting time: 8 p.m. Eyeball QSO's: about 7:30 p.m.

NARS BREAKFAST every Saturday 8 a.m. Strack Farms Restaurant, located at 5707 Louetta Rd. - Informal ragchew.

NARS NEWS is published monthly by Northwest Amateur Radio Society
Send news to Jim Clarke, N5FIX
Editor, 1842 Knoll, Houston 77080
Tel: 984-9028

BOB WELCH, KE5IC
7811 Theisswood Rd.
Spring TX 77379

NARS NETS

NARS RAGCHEW - MONDAY 8 p.m.
28.444 MHz (Ed, KB5AEL)

NARS INFO - WEDNESDAY 8 p.m.
146.06/66 MHz (Ken, KA5AKG)

EMERGENCY NETS

Northwest Harris County ARES

WEDNESDAY 8:30 p.m.
146.06/66 MHz (Scott, N5KEU)

Harris County OEM RACES

SUNDAY 7 p.m.
146.34/94 MHz (Bob, KF5ZL)

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT NARS, PLEASE
CALL KEN EDINBORGH, W5BKK, 376-7660

NARS REPEATER FREQUENCIES

146.06/66 MHz 449.375/444.375 MHz

NARS DIGIPEATER

Freq. (145.07 MHz) Alias (NARS)
Call (W5BKK-1)