

# NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

October 1989

## OCTOBER 20 MEETING BARES IT ALL WITH THE BEST LITTLE HAM STATION IN TEXAS

That's right, the best (equipped) little (in Texas what does little mean?) Ham station exists right at our back door. Quoting the caretaker of the station "We have more equipment, towers, and cable on the ground than anybody else has in the air."

The station we are going to visit in slides and words at this month's NARS meeting doesn't have just one tower, but a forest of towers with phased bobtail dipoles hanging everywhere plus a few verticals to break up the monotony of all those towers.

Kenny Grabenstein, KE5IV, President of the Texas DX Society, will talk about DXing at the NR5M contest station. It is located northwest of Houston on a ranch, and is sponsored by George DeMontrond, III, NR5M.

Naturally, since members of the TXDX Society are geared up for DXing, the station is well equipped from antennas to operator positions. They compete for the number one slot at every contest so nothing is spared. Everything will be described in detail but just to whet your whistle a little there is a 24 element (total) rotatable antenna for 10-15-20 meters on a 200-foot tower, an 8 element (4 over 4) rotatable beam for 40 meters (full wave of course), a 160 meter vertical, and phased dipoles for every direction on 80 meters. Andrews hardline is used on all antennas. There's more, but that should be enough to entice you to the meeting.

Kenny has been a Ham since 1974 and has been very active in setting up large stations. He has climbed more towers than most of us have seen. He has many stories to tell -- even a recent one about deer "hunting" while

## FROM THE PRESIDENT by RICH MACDOUGAL, KG5LZ

As we get near the end of 1989 it is again time to seek out interested candidates for officer positions in NARS for 1990. A proposed slate of candidates will be developed by the directors for consideration by the members and we will request direct input on nominations from the membership during the October meeting for the general election in November. If you have a desire to be a club officer please let Ken Harlan, KA5AKG, Tom Roraback, KF500, Bruce Cline, N5FD, or myself know of your interest. As a general rule, outside of the extra directors meeting, all officer positions require less than one hour per week to fulfill the duties. The directors encourage new and inactive members to be officers as a way to regenerate and revitalize NARS, and make sure that no small groups or individuals dominate the club's affairs.

## SEPTEMBER MEETING RECAP

Last month we heard Alex Stalinsky, WA5UHT, discuss the Bug Catcher mobile antenna to a packed house. First door prize, a Bug Catcher coil given by City Electronic Supply, at 7015 Atwell, was won by Bob Welch, KE5IC; second door prize, a 1989 N. American Call Book donated by Madison Electronics, at 3621 Fannin, was won by Carlos Gonzales, KD5ZK.

-----  
tending to the antenna farm. He lives on the ranch and commutes in to the DeMontrond Buick dealership in Houston where he works. How would you like to go home to all that DX every day? He'll tell you about it. You really don't want to miss this meeting. Come early and enjoy some eyeball QSOing with your fellow Hams.



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

**10 Meters:** 300+ solar fluxes would improve things on 6 meters, but 10 doesn't need them. A number of 200 hundred is plenty good with a low K-index. 10 is very sensitive to seasonal variations. The peak season is right now: October/November. November is the peak month for the high traffic paths to Europe and Japan, but October is best for the polar stuff. These stations are easy to pick out on a crowded band: polar sigs on any band have the same hollow echo.

**15 Meters:** The excellent evening/nighttime activity we have enjoyed through spring and summer is no longer a factor. In the early evening we have an excellent daylight path to Asia with some polar stuff - but no Europe. 15 is now a daytime band - a very good one. 15 and 10 will open to the same part of the world throughout the day, with signal strengths peaking on 15 a couple hours later. As good as 15 will be, it will have to compete with 10 meters for your attention. Much of the rare DX tends to show up on 10. Tune both bands carefully during the day.

**20 Meters:** Macho DX'ers always prefer 20. This will be the best nighttime band until winter, when it will compete with 40. Antarctic long path will be at its best for the next several months. Though African/Indian Ocean LP peaks in the summer, high fluxes will keep these paths open at least through the fall. The exotic NW morning path across Asia to FT5/ZS8 etc. is dropping out. Short path openings will be fine. Use a sunrise chart or program to predict peaks to anywhere east of north. Peaks occur 1 to 2 hours after sunrise. This writer's software is now on HAL-PC BBS#1.

**40 Meters:** Activity is increasing, with Europe and Africa workable in the evening. Signals peak an hour either side of sunrise.

**80 Meters:** DX-peditions make an effort to operate all bands, and will provide the majority of opportunities to work new countries for 5B-DXCC. Conditions will be poor.

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

SAREX (acronym for Shuttle Amateur Radio EXperiment) will fly again on STS-35 now scheduled for launch in April of 1990. Dr. Ronald Parise (WA4SIR), Payload Specialist, will be on board to operate the ASTRO equipment which includes an infrared telescope. Ron will be the amateur operator for what is planned as standard 2 meter Packet and Voice operation from this flight.

Amateurs located within 50 degrees north or south of the equator (of course that includes us!) should have direct access on many orbits. So if you can work 2 meter packet you shouldn't need any special equipment to get involved!

Some efforts are underway to have Gateway stations link 20 meters to 2 meters thereby providing access to the shuttle for stations not lying in the "Footprint". Thus, Canadians, for example, could work the shuttle packet via 20 meter links although never being in line-of-sight of the satellite.

It's easy to say "operate standard packet and voice on 2 meters" but there is a staggering amount of planning, procurement, and work between the saying and the doing. Our friends at the Johnson Space Center Amateur Radio Club are major players in this effort. You might begin to appreciate the scope of the task by thinking what you would have to procure, test, and package to mount a field day operation for packet and voice subject to restrictions and controls of a third party. And there is no going back home to pick up the missing COAX jumper! Our hats are off to those dedicated individuals that are making this happen! Operating frequencies will be forthcoming in later columns.

**UPDATE:** The latest word is that the launch of Ariane V-35 will be delayed at least four weeks. So the MICROSATS won't be up until after the middle of December.



## NARS NOTES

- CONGRATULATIONS to Bill Rimmer, N5LYG, for his upgrade to General Class; and to Bob Chmielewski who passed his Novice and Technician tests and is awaiting a call sign.
- PLEASE WELCOME newest NARS member Chuck Furman, KG6PH.
- VOLUNTEERS NEEDED to participate in the '89 Boy Scout Jamboree-On-The-Air (JOTA), October 21-22. Invite scouts into your shack to introduce them to Ham radio and let them talk on the air. Contact Jim Clarke, N5FIX, for details.

## COM-VENTION '89 SET FOR NOVEMBER 3-5

Don't forget the Ham convention coming up the first weekend in November. NARS will be very active this year!

Ken Edinborgh, W5BKK, our convention coordinator, can still use volunteers for the special events station. The station will be set up in the "Swat Wagon" belonging to Ed Hinds, KB5AEL, and will use Rich MacDougal's call, KG5LZ. Please sign up with Ken for your desired operating time; he will have a sign-up list at the October meeting and also at the convention.

Tom Roraback, KF500, needs volunteers to help with the convention parking detail. Henry Freedenberg, N5HF, can use some help with the transmitter hunt. Get in touch with them to volunteer your assistance.

Look for two NARS members in the seminar programs this year. They are Ken Harlan, KA5AKG, on home brew, and Bob White, KF5ZL, on emergency communication operations.

The convention will be held November 3 through 5. Location is the same as last year: Sheraton Crown Hotel and Convention Center, 15700 John F. Kennedy Blvd., adjacent to the Houston Intercontinental Airport. Let's all get out and support this convention!!

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

## 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)