

NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

December 1990

WHAT'S NEW AND EXCITING IN HAM RADIO FEATURED AT DECEMBER 21ST MEETING

You might want to hold off on your letter to Santa until after the NARS December meeting. Just in time for Christmas we will have Don "Spunky" Busick, K5AAD, an owner of Madison Electronics Supply. He's coming to the meeting to titillate us with what's new on the market or "Boy are they loaded with the latest features that you just can't live without."

He will also have information on what new models are expected out for next year, several wonderful door prizes, and some new rigs for us to look at and to turn the knobs and to push the buttons.

A few teasers he has will be info on the Kenwood TS-950S that will replace the TS-940S, and a new ICOM rig that will replace the IC-781 featuring digital signal processing on receive and transmit. Now that should get your mouth watering a little bit.

For you DX hounds, Don is on the DXCC Honor Roll and is listed in November QST with 323/351. That means he has ALL of the current countries on the ARRL DXCC list! Congratulations, Don—that's quite an accomplishment. He's always ready to answer queries about DXing and practical antenna systems, so come prepared.

For all the lowdown plus some more tidbits, be sure to make this month's meeting. Don also has stated that you don't have to limit questions to amateur radio. He will be ready to field all personal, family history, and even off-the-wall questions. . . That's worth the meeting right there. The show starts at 8 p.m. at the Cypress Creek EMS building. Come on out early for some eyeball QSOing.

ELECTION HELD AT NOVEMBER MEETING FOR 1991 NARS OFFICERS

NARS held election of officers for 1991 at the November meeting. The following candidates were voted in by acclamation!

President - Paul Frantz, KF5SB

V. P. - Bob Chmielewski, N5PJI

Secretary - Barbara Peat, KB5GEZ

Treasurer - BT Burk, N5QVS

Director - Brad Nelson, WD5GNI

Officers are elected for a period of one year, and the Director for two years. They will all be officially installed at the NARS Annual Banquet in January. Congratulations to all!

NARS RAFFLE HUGE SUCCESS

NARS held a raffle culminating with a drawing on November 11th at the Houston Com-Vention '90; the prize was a Kenwood TS-440S. The raffle was organized by Dan Cassiani, N5KPI, who has the heartfelt thanks of all NARS members for a job well done! Dan passes along his sincere thanks to all who helped in this endeavor. This includes all those who sold tickets both before and during the convention with particular thanks to Don Busick of Madison Electronics, who supplied the rig and drew the winning ticket out of the drum. Winner of the raffle was Joe Ross, AA5BD.

NOVEMBER MEETING RECAP

Meeting topic was all about caving. Mike Furrey, WA5POK, showed us the ropes and some terrific slides. . . Door prizes were won by Brad Killebrew, N5LJV, a home brew 2-meter quad antenna, built by Mike Furrey, and by Mike Furrey, WA5POK, a 1991 ARRL Handbook, donated by Madison Electronic Supply. Tel: 729-7300.

* * * P R O P A G A T I O N * * *
by ROY HRADILEK, AD5Q

MUFs are significantly lower this season. With solar fluxes in the 200 range much of the time, the bands (all of them) are acting as though fluxes were lower than they are. I don't have an explanation, only an adjusted forecast.

LOW BANDS: Conditions on 80 are better than the last two seasons, with activity every night - especially on fone. In the early evening, pileups on European stations are dominated by east coast packeteers (lids). This is not the EU propagation peak anyway, since sunrise doesn't sweep across the continent until after 0600Z. On both 40 and 80, the DX can then be worked with much less competition because so many are asleep. The best nighttime band will be 40 CW. Exotic African stations tend to show during the evening, and the east coast does not seem to have such an advantage in this direction.

20 Meters: MUFs are not high enough to keep 20 open at night. The evening path to the sunrise areas to the northeast is closed, and this is the path with the most DX activity. The southern hemisphere is not affected by this problem, so the band will usually remain open to points south and east after it closes to Europe. Trans-antarctic long path openings will occur at their regular times. During much of the day there are marginal openings to Europe - but we all know there are better daytime bands.

DAYTIME BANDS: The lower MUFs have affected 10 meters, which shuts down shortly after dark (also in Europe). Last year the Europeans kept coming through into the afternoon. These openings are now shorter, especially into Russia where the band closes shortly after our sunrise. A greater portion of Asia will be inaccessible this winter on 10. There will be plenty of activity anyway, since 10 is a very popular band. 15 will actually be in better condition, with longer openings to more of the world.

* * * F A R O U T * * *
by JACK DOUGLAS, KA5DNP

STS-35, COLUMBIA(OV-102), was launched at 0649 UTC, December 2, 1990. As the first in a series of Astronomy missions, this flight was entitled ASTRO-1. But, clearly listed under MIDDECK PAYLOADS was the following: "SAREX-II (Shuttle Amateur Radio Experiment): A two-meter handheld transceiver will be used to communicate with amateur radio operators in one of two transmission modes, voice or data."

While I have no "official" tabulations, the ROBOT packet equipment confirmed well over 1300 CONNECTS, among them one with our own W5BKK. Many others among us tried hard and often and we may make the lists of "heard but not worked" either on phone (about two passes over here involved phone on the published frequency) or packet when the tapes are replayed and studied.

Hearing, copying, or connecting with SAREX-II was not easy. The flat window mounted antenna proved to have a more narrow pattern than anticipated, thus signal strength varied more than expected with spacecraft attitude. Of course spacecraft attitude was dictated by requirements of the primary mission - - telescopic observations. Also, in the Houston area we suffered from the fact that most of the very best passes were devoted to necessary "in-house" scheduled communications between WA4SIR (Ron Parise, the Amateur on board STS-35) and SAREX controllers and other special contacts on unpublished frequencies.

A major part of SAREX-II was communication from WA4SIR to school kids in selected classes. Since the shuttle was never over the USA during school hours, these QSOs involved links from Amateurs in other countries. Examples were contacts with Junior De Castro, PY2BJO, in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Junior was linked by twisted pair to Greenbelt, MD and thence by two-meter repeater to a classroom where kids asked questions of Parise on STS-35. It was this educational activity that qualified SAREX-II to be a part of the official activities of STS-35.

NARS NOTES

- PLEASE WELCOME new NARS members:

Clark Haynie, N5NVB
Keith White, KB5OBM
Rick Seidenberg

- CONGRATULATIONS to Jim Sutherland who passed his Novice and Technician tests and awaits a call sign.

- THE NARS ANNUAL PICNIC in October drew an appreciative crowd. Co-Chairmen BT Burk, N5QVS, and Melvyn Adams, KB5GES, are to be congratulated for a well planned and organized event! Word has it that Mel's BBQ beef was the hit of the picnic. (What's your recipe Melvyn? Ed.)

- HEARD FROM THE NORTH POLE was Bob, KE5IC(Y), acting Santa at home, in QSO on the NARS 2-meter repeater with Jim, N5FIX, located at a Cub Scout Pack meeting (over 100 in attendance) in West Houston. Jim told the Scouts all about Ham Radio. The Cubmaster is Don, W5VXF.

- NARS ANNUAL BANQUET plans are under way for late January 1991. Chairman for this event is Rich Richardson, KA5YFU, who asks that you volunteer your assistance by calling him at 448-1624. Or please call Rich with your suggestions regarding location and activities, etc. Details will be announced in the January issue of the NARS News.

- NARS MEMBERS WERE ACTIVE during the Houston Com-Vention '90 held November 9-11. Mike Furrey, WA5POK, presented a paper on indoor antennas, and Henry Freedenberg, N5HF, gave a paper on direction finding. It has been reported that both presentations were very well received.

- BEST 73 AND GOOD LUCK to Dr. Jerry Reynolds, WB3GYA, who's been called into active service and is currently stationed in northwest USA.

- FOR NARS INFO, see Dec. QST p.134.

NARS 1991 DUES ARE DUE

Yes, it's time for all of us to send in our dues for 1991. Dues remain at \$15 for the year. Please complete the renewal blank in this newsletter and return it in the enclosed s.a.e. to Bob Welch, KE5IC, 7811 Theisswood Road, Spring TX 77379.

NARS NOVICE CLASS PLANS PENDING

The NARS novice class for 1991 is scheduled for early next year. The location and exact starting date will be announced later. Watch for details to be announced in the newsletter and on the air! Volunteers are needed to help out with the program. Contact Joe Sokolowski, KD5KR, at 353-2196 or Bob Welch, KE5IC, at 376-4814.

ARRL BULLETIN 54 DECEMBER 13, 1990

FCC announced on December 123 that new Technician Class license applicants will not have to demonstrate morse code proficiency in order to have all privileges above 30 MHz. Implementation is expected by February 1991. Techs who obtain their licenses prior to that date will be grandfathered, meaning they will continue to have their present HF privileges.

The codeless Technician written exam will have 55 questions. New Technicians wanting HF privileges will be required to hold a CSCE for Element 1A. That is 5 WPM, which must be administered by three accredited VE'S. There will be no call sign designator to indicate whether or not a Technician has passed a code test, but FCC will have records of who has passed.

More details will be forthcoming in February QST.

FOR SALE

TH6DXX (SS HDWE); 70 FT. ROHN 25 (SS HDWE); 8 FT. HEAVY WALL MAST; HAM II & BOX; FOLDOVER; PALOMAR 1:1 BALUN. PLEASE CALL JOHN DAVIS: 443-6127.

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.

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Send news to Jim Clarke, N5FIX
Editor, 14800 Memorial Drive #200
Houston 77079 Tel: 493-5908

BOB WELCH, KE5IC
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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, K5HUT)

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)