

# NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

February 1993

## The Positive and Negative of Batteries to be Reviewed at February 19 Meeting

I hate to say this, but, yes you will get a charge out of this month's meeting topic. Hams have a love/hate relationship with batteries. They give us great mobility but they are always going south on us just when we are trying to make a good point on the repeater.

This month we have two experts on batteries that are sure to entertain as well as inform us. From LSM International, located in southwest Houston, is Bill Devine, Vice President Sales/Marketing and Troy Spann, Technical Sales Representative. LSM supplies and repairs batteries of all types in all areas of industry.

Bill and Troy will describe the care and feeding of all sorts of the new and exotic as well as address new products on the market. The latest advance in battery technology is Nickel Metal Hydride. Experts claim NMH is better than Nickel Cadmium because it has double the capacity and it has no "memory". Yes, no memory. Sound like someone you know?

Bill and Troy will tell us about NMH and many other positively and negatively charged topics. So don't miss the meeting this month. Come early and enjoy some eyebal QSOing before the meeting. We've had good attendance with many new faces. See you there!

## January Meeting Recap

New local ham TV group presented their plans for the Houston area.. an ATV repeater with an organization and funding to make it go. President Bill WA5DWX announced Jim N5SBP, VP, will head up public events and Van KJ5FN, Director, will foster Elmering for our new Hams...Starting February a tailgate party may be held after the VEC exams in Tomball on the third Saturday of each month. Check into the nets to keep up on these and other developments.

## NARS Novice/Tech Class Begins February 18th

NARS annual course preparing candidates to pass the FCC license exams will begin Thur. evening at 7:00 at Prince of Peace Catholic Community, 19222 Tomball Pkwy (FM 249) and continue for 12 weeks. The \$10 registration fee may be paid at the door and the text, "Now You're Talking," will be available at the class. For more information contact Ken Harlan, KA5AKG, at 370-2950.

## NARS Calendar

--- plan now !

Feb. 18 - NARS Noice/Tech class begins at Prince of Peace Catholic Community - 7:00 PM.

Feb. 19 - Regular monthly NARS membership meeting at the Cypress Creek Emergency Center - 7:30 PM.

Feb. 20 - V. E. License Exam session at Tomball Community Center - 8:30 AM.

Feb. 25 - NARS Noice/Tech class Session 2 at Prince of Peace Catholic Community - 7:00 PM

Mar. 4 - NARS Noice/Tech class Session 3 at Prince of Peace Catholic Community - 7:00 PM

Mar. 11 -NARS Noice/Tech class Session 4 at Prince of Peace Catholic Community - 7:00 PM

Mar. 12- NARS Directors meeting - Lakewood Forest Fund Office - 7:30 PM.

## 1993 Dues Are Due

Have you renewed yet? Now is the time. Please remit to:

Paul Frantz, KF5SB  
22911 Wren Lane  
Tomball, TX 77375

Member - \$15 Students - \$10  
Additional family members - \$5



## NARS Awards Banquet Celebrates 1992 Activities

A record crowd gathered for the Annual Awards Banquet this year at Strack Farms. Ed, KB5QLX, did a top notch job of putting this one together. Outgoing president, Dick Rousseau N5JZY, made a few fairwell remarks but not before reading Joe Green's timely poem "A Man In The Mirror." He also recognized the other outgoing officers VP B.T. Burk, N5QVS, treasurer Jay Rubens, KI5MD, Secretary Keith White, N5RV, director Bob Chmielewski, N5PJI, and program director Bill Denton, WA5DWX. All received certificates of appreciation.

Dick then handed the mike over to incoming president Bill Denton, WA5DWX. Bill introduced the other officers for the new year. The program continued, after everyone had their fill of great food, with a slide show depicting the club's many activities and many characters. He and Brad Nelson, WD5GNI, club photographer, put a professional show together using multiple projectors, a dissolver and a sound track.

After everyone had laughed at each other and commented on those caught in the act, the awards part to the program took over. As always there are never enough awards to go around to all those who have contributed to the club so some hard choices had to be made.

The Outstanding Member Award was renamed this year to recognize Bob Welch, KE5IC, who became a silent key in 1992. Bob put himself into every club activity and in so doing set a great example for all of us. His silence has become a wake up call for others to step forward and lead the way. This year BT Burk, N5QVS, was selected the member most deserving this recognition for his untiring effort, enthusiasm, and commitment to the club. BT has been the man of the hour whenever there was a need by the club or another Ham. Along with the plaque recognizing this achievement goes \$150 to BT.

Out of our 1992 Novice course came a new Ham who wasted no time in moving all the way through Extra in a few months. He jumped right into the thick of things getting on the air and assisting others too. For his great strides Willard (Van) VanDevender, AB5KK, was recognized as our Most Progressive New Amateur Operator of the year.

In recognition of his service to Emergency Communications a special plaque was presented to Scott Byrd, N5KEU. Scott is very active in coordinating EC for the club and representing us to the city and county EC agencies.

Also recognized for his behind the scenes involvement in the club and in amateur radio was Alan Cross, WA5UZZ, ARRL South Texas Section Manager. Mark Tyler, K5GQ, was also honored for his successful efforts in developing our VE license examination program this year.

Shirley Kajawa, KB5WOO, won the door prize of dinner for two at Strack Farms. Another successful event was enjoyed by all.

## Notes From the President Bill Denton, WA5DWX

I've just runned across my favorite band, 17 meters. It seems to have gone to sleep. By the time I get home in the evening and turn the rig on, 17 has gone to bed. This time last year the band was in great shape and I was having meny good rag chew QSO's. Many over an hour. I recently made my firsty ever contact on 160 meters and even looked in on my old home, 75 meters. I heard my old friend K5SWK. Otis is still hacking a hole in the QRM with an old AM rig he built back in 1964. If you want to hear what a really good home brew AM rig sounds like, tune in on 3.883, he's there almost every night of the year.

I'm sure that everyone enjoyed this years banquet, I know I did. The awards committee did themselves proud by their selections to receive awards. It's always nice to see members and their spouses in attendance.

The Novice/Tech School is just around the corner. I was just looking at an April 1992 edition of the NARS NEWS and was delighted to see how many of the students received their tickets and made it on the air. Including my better half. In fact, some of those grads have already upgraded their license more than once. I hope that this year's class will be just as successful. As I wrote this article I received a call from a new member, Desie Livingston. She informed me that she and her husband, Nelson, have just received their license in the mail. She got KB5YGG and he KB5WYY. The really good part of this story is their son, Buddy, has chosen to go to the Novice class over playing soccer. He is already working on his code. Buddy is 8 years old.

One of my pet projects for this year is to provide "Elmering" to the students or whomever may need help getting their license or getting on the air. Van, AB5KK, will be seeing to those needs. At the last board meeting we voted to make a contribution to the Cypress Creek EMS for the use fo their meeting room where our club meetings are held. Brad Nelson, WD5GNI, and I met with their board and presented them with a check for \$200. Needless to say they were quite pleased. They even invited us to stay for pizza. It was tempting but we declined.

Well, I just tuned across 20, and heard YS1XS calling CQ. After calling several times with no response, I quickly retuned the finals and gave him a call. Bill, is an American from North Carolina now living in El Salvador. After talking sports for several minutes he asked me to check the sports page to see how his favorite NBA team, the Charlotte Hornets, were doing. After several minutes of ragchew on sports, 20 meters went to bed and that's what I'm also going to do. 73. See you at the meeting.



**\* \* \* \* PROPAGATION \* \* \* \***  
**by Roy Hradilek, AD5Q**

Throughout the sunspot peak, February has been the month when all-night openings return to 20 meters. With the lower fluxes this year, we may not see the return of these conditions until March. Night path on 20 is important to certain contesters who lack beams on 40 and typically make 90% of all contacts with a tribander (me). I rely on this path to Europe and Russia to run up my QSO totals, while the east coast runs the same path on 40 with their beams. In contests when this path is not open, I lose about 500 contacts and spend the night on low bands pouncing for multipliers.

My benchmark for comparison is the ARRL CW DX contest, which occurs in late February. Through the sunspot peak, 20 has been open through the night each year (except in 1990, when solar conditions were bad). During the CQWW CW test (late November) MUFs are lower. 1989 was the only year that 20 stayed open through the night. We will be lucky if we get all-night 20 meter openings for the ARRL CW this year. Low band capabilities will increase in importance.

DX conditions on 40 are currently excellent, and we can look forward to an extended season on 80 this spring. Conditions on 10 meters are sharply off this year. 10 is an important rate band during the ARRL, but this year the openings will probably be much shorter. The east coast will have openings to parts of Europe and Russia that will not be accessible by the time the band opens for us. Most of the everyday DX activity has already moved to 15, and code free Novice/Techs will soon be faced with a difficult decision if they wish to continue making DX contacts practice CW or learn Spanish.

20 meter long path conditions have also deteriorated. The westerly long path to Africa is still good, and remains open until about 11 am local time (though you'll have to fight the sixes in the pileups). Through the sunspot peak, winter has been the best season for the Antarctic paths to Europe, Russia, the Middle East and India/4S7. With the lower MUFs, a daytime path to Europe may be open instead or both paths at once. Signals can be difficult to copy when propagating over short and long paths simultaneously. When this occurs, it is important to recognize that when the signal coming off the back of your beam is strong enough to cause QRM, you are pointing the wrong way. Turning the beam 180 degrees (at the stronger signal) will usually eliminate this multipath QRM.

**Amateur License Exam Results**  
**by Mark Tyler, K5GQ**

Saturday, January 16, twelve applicants took nineteen exams or elements. Extra Class upgrades include George Taylor and Charles Lafkoff. New Technician licensees include Debbie Simons, Richard Schmidt, William Simons and Robert Weedn. Chris Overby received 1A, 5wpm credit.

NARS, sponsors ARRL Amateur Radio license exams monthly. This session's examiners and assistants include Calvin White, WF5W, Tim Wettach, N2TW, Gary Eades and Paul Franz, KF5SB. Each examiner holds an Amateur Extra Class License. For information on amateur radio testing contact Paul Franz at 351-8930 or Mark Tyler 587-0256.

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**NARS Notes .....**

During 1992 the NARS treasury had receipts of \$4804 and expenses of \$3870, ending the year with a balance of \$3776. During January 1993, receipts have been \$1545 and expenses \$1083 producing a balance of \$4238. A year end audit concluded the to be in good condition.

Consideration is being given to holding a CW practice net following the 10 meter net on Monday evenings. If you are interested or would like more information contact Van, AB5KK, at 370-0953.

Would you like to have some of those radio reference books you see advertized available at a local library? The Harris County Library is supporting the idea. Let Brad, WD5GNI, know if you have any suggestions. The Board is compiling a list.

Congratulations to Van Vandevender on finally receiving the new call, AB5KK. Cheers also to the Livingstons, Desie, KB5YGG, and Nelson, KB5WYY, on their new calls.

Lots of opportunity exists to have a hand in developing NARS activities. We need leaders for the Spring picnic, Field Day, meeting Program Director, and various workshops. Would you like to help with these operations or maybe you have an idea of your own for something new. Contact Bill, WA5DWX, or one of the officers and see what you can do.. You'll be the real winner.

Please submit articles for publication in the NARS News to Ken Harlan, KA5AKG, by the 1st Friday of the month.



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Northwest Amateur Radio Society is  
a Special Service Club affiliated with  
the American Radio Relay League.  
ARRL Club No. 2120

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: 8:00 P.M.  
Eyeball QSO's : about 7:30 P.M.

NARS BREAKFAST every Saturday 8 AM  
at Strack Farms Restaunt, located at  
5707 Louetta Rd. - Informal ragchew

## NARS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT & BOARD CHAIRMAN  
Bill Denton, WA5DWX 469-8331

VICE PRESIDENT  
Jim Sutherland, N5BP 353-6696

SECRETARY  
Brad Nelson, WD5GNI 370-0934

TREASURER  
Jay Rubens, KI5MD 393-3023

DIRECTORS  
Paul Frantz, KF5SB 351-8930  
Dick Rousseau, N5JZY 370-5714  
W. VanDevender, KJ5FN 370-0953

NARS BOARD MEETS the second Friday  
of each month at 7:30 P.M. at the Prince of  
Peace Catholic Community at 19222  
Tomball Parkway, Houston. All members  
are invited to attend.

## NARS NETS

NARS RAGCHEW - MONDAY 8:00 P.M.  
28.444 MHz (BT, N5QVS)

NARS INFO - WEDNESDAY 8:00 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  
ALTERNATE SATURDAYS 7:00 p.m.  
146.34 / .94 MHz (Inactive)

## NARS REPEATERS

2 M - 146.060 / 146.660 MHz  
70 cm - 449.375 / 444.375 MHz  
Digipeter - 145.07 MHz  
Call (W5BKK) Alias (NARS)

FOR NARS INFORMATION CALL  
KEN EDINBORGH W5BKK 376-7660

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12034 Laneview Dr.  
Houston, TX 77070



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