

NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

January 1995

Annual Banquet Planned for January 20th Club Meeting

The subject of the Club meeting January 20th will be our favorite topic, good food. Our Annual Banquet, beginning at 7:30 PM, will be catered at our regular meeting place, Spring Cypress Presbyterian, 6000 Spring Cypress Road. A great buffet of Chinese cuisine is planned for a bargain price of \$10 each. To enable us to plan the amount of food required, please sign up in advance by contacting Bill Stientenroth, K5ZTY, at 893-3901 or sending your check marked "Banquet" to Brad Nelson at 17606 elegraph Creek Dr., Spring, TX 77379. Spouses and friends are always welcome so bring them along for the evening.

We sill spend a few minutes rcognizing the good times of 1994 and wondering how we did it all. The plug will be pulled on any long-winded exhaltations. Tommy Jackson's slight-of-hand performance will prove that what we think we see may not always be right. Watch your money closely. Rumor has it that he's still perfecting the conversion of dollar bills to tens. Most of all though, there will be a chance of enjoy good fellowship and some good laughs.

NARS Class Will Again Bring Novices and Techs into the World of Ham Radio

NARS' licence class for Novices and Technicians is scheduled this year beginning February 16th and continuing for 13 weeks. The final session will be examinations for the licenses. The course will be conducted at the Cypress Creek EMS Center at 16650 Sugar Pine Lane (beneath the water tower) beginning at 7:00 PM. Morse code instruction will be included and is also available to anyone wanting to upgrade to Technician plus.

Cost of the course will be \$10 with registration at the door on a first come first serve basis. The ARRL examination fee of just over \$5.00 will be additional for those taking the Technician exam. Space will limit us to about 25 students. The text for the course will again be "Now You're Talking" published by the ARRL and we expect to have copies available at the class. A code practice program will be available on disk, for \$1, for those with computers.

Support beyond the instruction is essential for these future hams. We are also seeking Amateurs to assist in the presentation and to coach students. Anyone wishing more information should contact Jim Kirk, KJ5IP, at 376-0718, Ken Harlan, KA5AKG, at 370-2950 or Rudy Novotny, KB5ZXO, at 251-4546.

NARS Calendar

--- plan now !

Jan 20 - NARS Annual Banquet and General Memberrship meeting @ Cypress Creek Presbyterian Church - Eyeball QSO's @ 7:00.

Jan 21 - North American SSB QSO Party - noon til midnight.

Jan 21 - Swapfest @ Houston Amateur Radio Supply, 181 Cypresswood Dr. 8:00 AM

Jan 28 - Feb 5 -Novice Roundup - all modes

Jan 28 - Amateur radio license exams by NARS at Tomball Community Center, 8:30 AM.

Feb 3 - NARS Directors meeting @ 7:30 PM, Lakewood Forest Fund Office, 12415 Louetta Rd.

Feb 4 - 10-10 International SSB QSO party - 6 PM Sat - PM Sun

Feb 16 - NARS Novice - Tech License Class begins @ Cypress Creek Emergency Center - 7:30 PM & continues for 13 weeks.

**Breakfast
at Bleachers
2318 W. FM 1960
Saturdays
8:00 AM**

Pouring Concrete for Fun and Profit by Madison Jones, AB5TV

Despite what you may have heard, there is really nothing to the making of a concrete tower base in your backyard. All it takes is hundreds of hours of preparation, agonizing over location, selling the idea to spouse and neighbors, finding the parts to put together something which will be more permanent than a tattoo, generating enthusiasm among your friends, and then putting it all together exactly as it must be before the stuff sets and permanently memorializes your efforts, for better or worse. Failure to exactly carry out any step, however insignificant, will result in your being laughed out of ham-dom, the jerking of your license, being locked out of your house, being sued by the subdivision homeowners' association, and spending the rest of your life living under the Congress Avenue bridge in downtown Houston. Or so it seems.

My particular project began by a visit to the home of Roy, AD5Q, to listen up to a brand new Yaesu FT-1000 which Mike, KB5YVT, had commandeered somewhere. With those two acting as tutors, I heard all those foreign CW call signs that I had previously ignored as incomprehensible leaping out as real voices, not just gibberish of strength 1 or 2. These folks from the Ukraine and Indonesia were actually S3 on the meter, and they were calling CQ! Wow, after the first 10 seconds, I was hooked. Of course, not only did my elderly KW TS-440 not have much in the way of either RF gain or filters, my flimsy wire antennas had so much white noise and static crashes on them that it was hard to tell that there were real bodies out there in radio land. Roy's 125 foot tower with a 40 meter beam on top, which can be actually rotated toward Europe or Asia, and the filters in the FT-1000 had skirts as sharp as a razor. I was getting a better signal from Vladmir in RA land that I could bring in from Kansas on my rig.

With that in mind, I immediately took 15 seconds to read my deed restrictions, and fired off a letter to ARRL for the Antenna handbook. That was the easy part. After that, I consulted everyone within earshot about what tower and antenna to get. They all assured me that not only was putting in a tower a snap, each of them would personally oversee acquiring all the merchandise, give me hands-on help in preparing the hole, and be there with bells on when it came to pouring the concrete. I actually believed everything they said. You should, too, because the whole adventure was too good to miss, even if I misunderstood some of what was said in my rapture.

Because I had worked construction as a

teenager, I had some knowledge of concrete work. Heck, our streets are full of it, right? I did learn that the concrete serves only to give some stability to the tower, and provides a platform for the weight of the tower, antenna and pressure from the guy wires to push against. For my 40 footer, about a yard of concrete will be sufficient in a 3'X3'X3' hole. The first problem is location: not only is every back yard in Southeast Texas the size of a postage stamp and have 27 big pine trees in it, each yard also has a right of way which you have granted to HL&P and the rest of the utilities right where your tower should go. I understand the gas company get surly when you rupture its line. They also insist you keep your tower off the right of way so they can get their truck in your back yard 20 years from now. Unfortunately, guy wires are a must for anything over 40 feet unless you want to shell out megabucks for a crankup or foldover unit. If you have that kind of cash, you probably have a 2 acre yard to put guy wires in anyway. If you believe the literature that Rohn puts out, any tower over 10 feet ought to be guyed on each leg.

Surprisingly to me, there are as many types of towers as there are people that put them up. Choosing between fixed base, tilt-overs, push-ups, crank ups, guyed, unguyed, true freestanding, tall, and short are just some of the choices. Usually the selection comes from some other fortuitous circumstance, however, other than the exercise of one's free will based upon informed consent. In my case, I was aware that a friend, Arthur N5KTN, had one lying in his back yard which he had purchased from Max Busick but which he had not set up due to power line conflicts (take note of that). We had discussed several time the possibility that I might someday like to put one up to show the world I was a real ham, not just a 2 meter junkie, but had never progressed beyond the talking stage. One day when, over lunch, he told me that he was going to drop it off at another friend's house in Lafayette because he was headed that way to go fishing, I foolishly became alarmed, thinking this was my last hope to obtain a tower. We struck a deal that sometime within the next year we would make the deal, and I would become the owner at some future date. That would give me approximately 12 months to convince my XYL and the neighbors that a massive beam behind our house would enhance property values, and would not blank out TV sets for the subdivision. By 2:30 that very afternoon, the tower was lying in my driveway. I surmised that my life had taken an unexpected turn, not unlike the feeling when my wife announced that our first child was on the way.

[Stay tuned for Part 2 of this wonderful adventure in next month's NARS News, where the mechanics of concrete pouring are actually discussed!]

NARS Node Status by Rudy Novotny, KB5ZXO

During the last few weeks there has been much activity and controversy involved with the start-up of the NARS Packet node. This will hopefully be resolved soon. The 1200 baud link is up and running on 441.100 and seems to be working well.

The 1200 baud link is up and running on 144.05 but there was a problem with a few other operators who have been suing that frequency for unproto operations. After several heated discussions with these individuals and within NARS, the following seems to be resolved:

The NARS 2m 1200 baud node will be moved to 145.71 as soon as crystals can be secured for the radio, expected about mid January. This means the frequency change is expected during the latter part of January.

The frequency (145.71) is designated as a 9600 baud frequency, however, it is not in use now and there are no immediate plans to place a node on this frequency. There are four other available frequencies designated for 9600 baud not in use. It should therefor be some time before other considerations need to be made about use of this frequency. If and when 9600 baud 2m packet becomes common place, NARS options will be to (1) move the node to another frequency designated for 1200 baud operation, or (2) convert the NARS node to 9600 baud operation. I understand this would only require reprogramming the data engine and a few physical modifications. No major investment to NARS. However all us poor packet operators who only have 1200 baud capability would have to upgrade or use another frequency.

While the establishment of the NARS node has not been with controversy, it appears everything is working out, with some positive factors for the future. If you have any questions or comments, please direct them to me and I will do my best to provide the information.

JAN 6, 1995 BOARD MEETING

PRESENT: KB5ZXO, KB5WQJ, WD5GNI, WA5DWX, KB5ZTY, KA5AKG, K5GQ, AND WD5BZY. Treasurer's Report indicated \$3243.55 at club's disposal. Secretary-elect Shirley Kujuwa, KB5WOO, has job commitments which will prevent her attention to club duties for 45-60 days. Deposed secretary Allen Majeski will assume these duties for this period. The apparent withdrawal of Van AB5KK from the club prompted the board to remove him as director, and appoint Dave Cole, WD5BZY, as Director.

Monthly Tailgate Session and Swap Meet Scheduled

Beginning January 21, 1995 there will be a tailgate session and swapmeet each 3rd Saturday of each month at 8:00 A.M. in the parking lot at Houston Amateur Radio Supply. The address is 181 Cypresswood Drive, Spring TX.

The participation at the swapmeet in October at George's first anniversary celebration was terrific and suggests that a regularly scheduled session may be of benefit to the Houston ham community. Mark your calendar and bring your saleable and tradeable gear, or your allowance, and help make this an on-going, fun event.

NARS DUES ARE DUE FOR 1995

Now is the time to renew your support of the Club for another year.

Individual Membership	\$ 15.00
Family Membership	5.00 each addl.
Student Membership	10.00

Send to:

Brad Nelson, WD6GNI
17606 Telegraph Creek Dr.
Spring, TX 77379

NARS Notes

On the air, Mike Furrey, WA5POK, has been burning the freq. in his spare time. He is recognized 7 times in the Century Club Awards (pg. 99, Jan. 95 QST) in phone and CW. Who said the bands are dead? Congratulations Mike - lead on.

Our condolences to Don Busick, K5AAD, on the recent death of his mother, Mary.

Board discussed duties of Activities Director. President Rudy will talk to prospects for this position and appoint one to that post. Discussed programs for general club meetings, any suggestions will be welcomed. Went over Banquet preparations. The death of Mary Busick prompted the club to make a donation in her memory. Reviewed node operation. Discussed details for Novice Classes. Went over By-laws of club and discussed needed changes, will make more revisions before presenting them to membership. Discussed need for various insurance for club. Board voted to try to reserve Fritche Park for Field Day, second choice is Spring Creek Park. Bill Denton to head Field Day committee. Mark Tyler needs more VE's and warm bodies to help administer Amateur Exams.

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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 Spring Cypress
Presbyterian Church, 6000 Spring
Cypress Rd. (1.7 mile east of
Stubner-Airline on Spring Cypress Rd.)
Meeting time: 7:30 P.M. Eyeball QSO's :
about 7:00 P.M.

NARS BREAKFAST every Saturday 8 AM
at Bleacher Grill, located at 2318 W
FM1960. (@ Kuykendahl) , Informal
ragchew.

NARS
KEN HARLAN, KA5AKG
12034 Laneview Dr.
Houston, TX 77070

NARS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT & BOARD CHAIRMAN
Rudy Novotny, KB5ZXO 251-4546

VICE PRESIDENT
Bill Stientenroth, K5ZTY 376-0718

SECRETARY
Shirley Kujawa, KB5WOO 820-2649

TREASURER
Brad Nelson, WD5GNI 440-3374

DIRECTORS
Madison Jones, KB5ZMH 350-4330
Van Vandevender, AB5KK 370-0953
Bill Denton, WA5DWX 469-8331
Mike Lavander, KB5WQJ 357-0614

NARS BOARD MEETS the first Friday of
each month at 7:30 P.M. at a location to be
announced. All members are invited to
attend.

FOR NARS INFORMATION CALL
KEN EDINBORGH, W5BKK 376-7660

NARS NETS

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

NARS CW PRACTICE FOLLOWS
RAGCHEW NET - 28.185 MHz (AB5KK)

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)

CITY OF HOUSTON -
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NET
SATURDAY 9:00 AM 146.84(-) MHz
SATURDAY 9:30 AM 3.905 MHz

NARS REPEATERS

2 M - 146.060 / 146.660 MHz
70 cm - 449.375 / 444.375 MHz
Digipeter - 145.71 MHz
Call (W5BKK) Alias (NARS)