



Mystery Keynote Address Speaker at Banquet

If you have not made plans to attend the annual NARS Banquet you will surely miss out on a great event. There will be wonderful food to eat, great people to associate with, door prizes to win and an unnamed local celebrity to deliver the keynote address.

In addition to all the festivities, the new slate of officers for 1996 will be on hand. They are elected by you and they want to hear any ideas you may have for the operation of NARS this year. For example, you may know of a program that we can have during one of the monthly meetings, or you

may want to start a special interest group (SIG) to stimulate interest in your favorite area of Ham Radio.

So, don't miss this opportunity to have a wonderful time with many others having similar interests while dining on a plate of good Bar-Be-Que with all the trimmings. Be sure to contact Bill Stietenroth K5ZTY at 893-3901 to make your reservation, if you have not already done so. The location is Valley Ranch Bar-Be-Que Restaurant, at the intersection of SH249 and Spring Cypress Road. See you there Friday, January 19, 7:30pm.

Important Dates

Friday, Jan 19, 7:30 pm - NARS Annual Banquet, Valley Ranch BBQ, Spring Cypress & SH249

Saturday, Jan 20, Noon to Midnight - North American QSO Party SSB, Bill's Shack WA5DWX

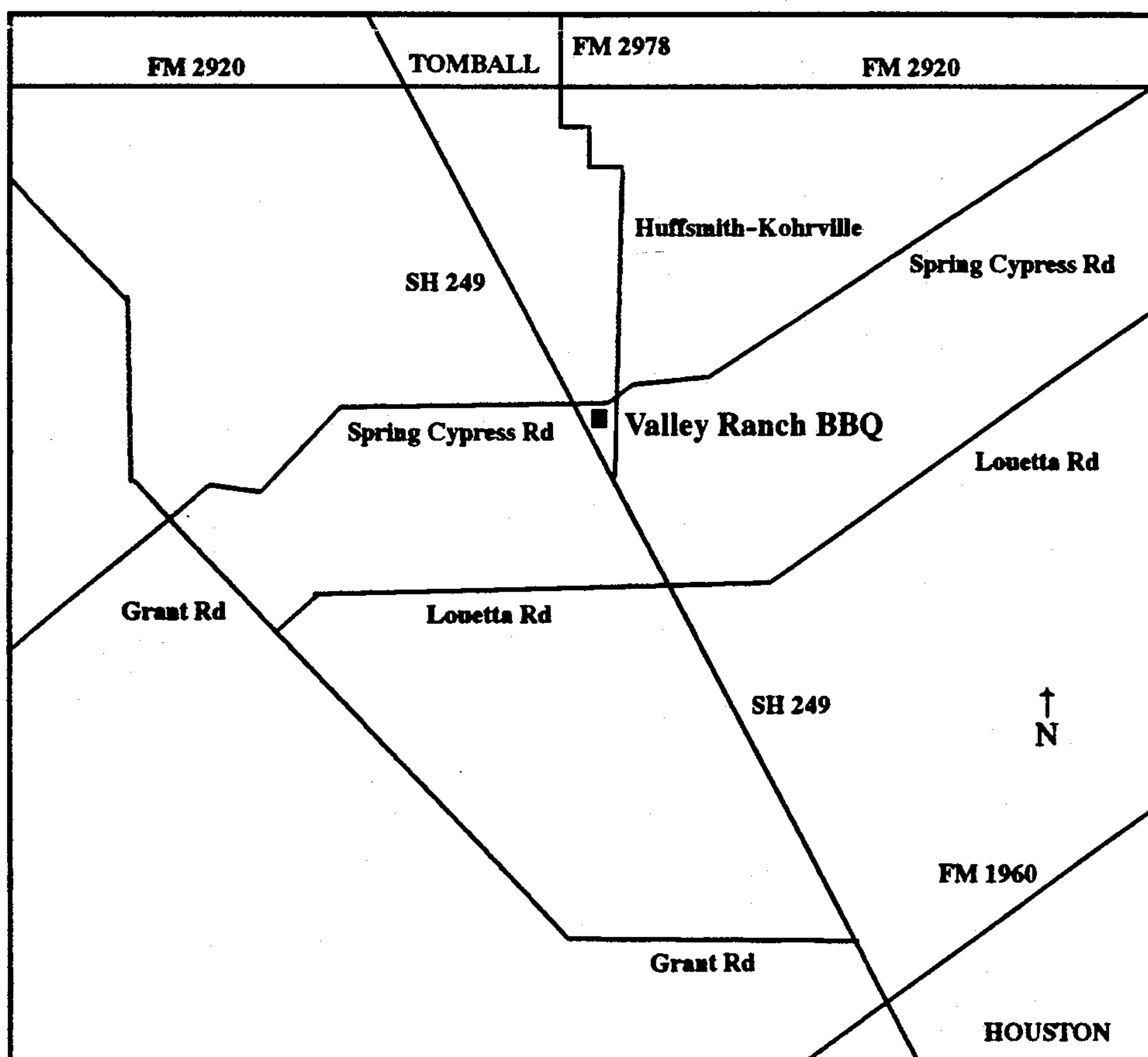
Saturday, Jan 20, 1:00 pm till Sunday, 10:00 pm - ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes

Tuesday, Jan 23, 7:30 pm - NARS Board of Directors Meeting, Valley Ranch BBQ, Spring Cypress & SH249

Saturday, Jan 27, 8:30 am - VE License Exam Session, Tomball, SH249 & Hicks (just north of FM2920)

Notice:

NARS membership dues is \$25 per year, renewable on anniversary of last year's full payment.



BREAKFAST at Bleachers

2318 W FM 1960

Saturdays

8:00 AM

Nars Home-Brew Project

The December meeting, showing home-brew projects was a tremendous success. It got me to thinking of the current state of Ham Radio building projects. In the not too distant past, the entry into Ham Radio was via the Novice license: CW on 80, 40 and 15 meters. Ample building projects exist to get a small station together on HF. Transmitter and receiver projects are in all the publications to get the new ham, or the old ham, that wants to try his hand behind the soldering iron, to succeed in putting something together.

The current entry into Ham Radio is the "NO CODE TECH." To some this is a dirty word, but it is a confirmed fact of life. At least in the Houston area I have heard of no reports of repeaters melting or have seen any grievous harm done to the ether waves. I hear more garbage out of extra class ops on 20 meters! We have a good group of Elmers in town that considerably corrects bad operating practices on the repeaters.

The problem that I perceive is there is really no reasonable no-code tech building project that could be a good entry level starter box. They can't use a 40 meter QRP transmitter, and a direct conversion receiver normally doesn't fill the bill. The new licensee gets his ticket, buys a rice-box and is on the air. I saw a great saying: "Two meter FM isn't really Ham Radio, but it's a great place to talk to other hams."

My vision of a project would be a 2 meter, 10 watt CW transceiver (or

separate transmitter and receiver). The club could start a 2 meter CW slow speed activity. It will give the no-coders a place to go to get some CW skills, as well as the "Tech-Plus" an opportunity to up his speed for the general. It will also expose the club members to the potential of 2 meter "weak signal" stuff. (As I write this on the day after Christmas, stations in this area were working into Arizona and South Carolina!) This is not meant as a project for just the new techs, but for the club as a whole.

Researching the recent literature, Rick Campbell, KK7B, has published some excellent designs for direct conversion receivers capable of receiving up to 500 MHz! The R-2 was described in Jan, 93 QST. A companion Sideband transceiver, the T-2 was described in Apr, 93 QST, and TA-DA! A complete two meter sideband transceiver/exciter was described in May 93 QST.

The starting point is the R-2 receiver, available as board and part for \$110. Add the RF input circuit and VFO for the band you want, and you have a high performance receiver. You can set it up for 2 meters, 222 MHz, or 40 meters. Plug in different RF sections to the R-2 for the bands you choose.

From this starting point, a simple crystal controlled CW transmitter can be lashed up, or mate a T-2 exciter and go transceive. In the Nov, 95 QST, Rick describes a 20 meter CW transceiver using the R-2 and a simple CW transmitter. It may take someone with more technical moxie than I to

get something like that to work, but as a club project it could be great fun.

Unfortunately, I recognize that this is not a simple building project. It would be nice if we could get by with Lockhart's wire-diode-headphones radio. It would not be very difficult. The boards are fairly straightforward. The VFO would require some care, but I think the club has the Elmers to help with that part of the project.

Mull it over. January's meeting is the banquet, so hopefully by February's meeting I may have some more firm ideas. I might also have an idea of the club's interest in this idea. Let me know how you feel about it.

73 Brian N5BA



by Keith Dutson

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I sincerely hope you enjoy reading NARS News as much as I enjoy putting it together. My favorite task is finding fellow Hams who want to write articles about their interests or activities in Amateur Radio.

Does anybody out there dream of learning code or increasing code proficiency? Let me know. I am anxious to get a code net running on 10 meters. It has to be fun, maybe like a game, with a lot of anticipation and participation.

Come on... give me your ideas!

Antenna Designed for Deed Restrictions?

On Wednesday, 1/10/96, Mark Condit KC5OFE and O.J. Quarles WA1YIA kindly offered to get my new 2 meter "Ventenna" up and running.

After the Wednesday "Lunch Bunch" meeting I rode with Mark back to my QTH and O.J. rendezvoused with us. We were joined by observers Don Bedell KA3BKU and George Carlson KC5RCC.

I had all the tools and materials ready for them. We assembled the coax connectors and taped them with weatherproof coax tape (obtained from Radio Shack).

We borrowed an extension ladder and Mark ascended to the roof. I had perviously cemented a 2" diameter adaptor to the bottom of the antenna,

and drilled and tapped 3 holes 120° apart to accept the set screws. Mark slid the antenna (3 feet tall) over the top-most vent pipe and snugged up the set screws. Then he fed the RG-8X coax through an opening on a power vent near the peak of the roof.

At this point we all took a coffee break. Then O.J. and Mark went into the attic and dressed out and fastened the coax to the rafters. O.J. drilled a 1/4" hole in the shack ceiling and we brought the coax down into the shack. Then O.J. stripped and dressed the coax, soldered it to the connector and we were in business. We immediately made good contacts on the air around Harris County and the antenna performed very well.

People with deed restrictions should

be interested in the "Ventenna." The antenna is made of tubular ABS plastic and is 3 feet tall by 2" outer diameter. It has a thick wall and an inner open core which acts as a continuation of your roof vent pipe. It is made by the Forbes Group and marketed by Ham Radio Outlet for \$49.95. There is a dual band version that sells for \$74.95. It can be painted to blend in with the color of your roof or vent pipe and cannot be seen from the street -- a real stealth antenna.

Words alone cannot express my thanks to Mark and O.J. for the high wire act they performed on the roof and in the attic to get my new 2 meter base station working -- but I'll say it anyway -- thanks fellas.

Harry Gage, N5WIZ

Sid's Cosmic Connection

Compact Amateur Radio Club's Web site at <http://www.ssd1.com/hamradio/> has a reprint of a very complete article on "Why radio amateurs are called 'HAMS'." This is the old "names" explanation based on Hyman, Almy and Murry, but it is very complete and very convincing.

It sure stands above all those explanations Wayne Green publishes in "73" magazine. Check it out.

The Web site at <http://www.hal-ipc.org/~sid> now includes a list of various amateur radio test sites around Houston and locations for amateur radio courses.

Sid's planet of the month is Saturn. You can also download the background picture of the Exploding

Star Nebula, if you hurry. Soon, it will be replaced by that Hubble shot of those pillars of clouds showing the stellar nursery of new T-Tauri stars.

Sid's Bookmarks for January include:

1. There is a local amateur radio IRC (Internet Relay Chat) line connection here in Houston out at the U of H. The address is <http://wb5fnd.tech.uh.edu:80/irc/>.

2. Since cancer seems to be such a popular illness among us NARS members (including this writer), here are a couple of cancer Web sites that might be of interest: The Cancer Bulletin out of MD Anderson at <http://utmdacc.mda.uth.tmc.edu:5011/>, a good update of general

research within the field, and <http://info.arc.com/cancernet/cancernet.html>, which is great for researching a particular cancer.

3. A new, different and innovative site on the Web is <http://www.dtd.com/excuse>. Check it out for the next time you need an excuse!

Check it all out.

You can Email Sid your favorite sites or anything else you want at sid@hal-pc.org, and be sure to visit <http://www.hal-pc/~sid>.

Until next time, just remember "Computers are not-intelligent. They just think they are."

Sid, AB5XU

Square Wave

Well, I let it happen to me again. I let someone talk me into doing another volunteer job for big bucks. (They can do that when they print their own.)

I was asked to be the go between for the NARS packet node on 145.71MHz. It seems that there was no one who could answer questions about the node. It was also brought out that there were some members who have trouble hitting the node or staying connected to it. I will collect the questions from the club's members and get the answers.

I have been on packet since 1989 and have seen it grow a whole lot in the last 6 years. Every time I got on packet, there was a new call sign in the buffer. A lot of these call signs were club members. So a few NARS members thought it would be great if the club sponsored a BPQ node. They raised a lot of money but needed the club to actually get the node on the air.

The club bought the radio and TNC (terminal node controller) equipment that the Texas Coastal Amateur Packet Society recommended, and TCAPS did the actual hardware integration. The club selected the site where the club digi was to be located, but not operational at the time. The club trustee of the node is Ken Edinborgh, W5BKK.

Enough history for now. I will detail the equipment list at the node site at a later date.

I talked with Walter Homes, WD5GAZ, about packet parameters that control the TNC timing. I use a PK-232MBX, multimode controller.

Some parameters are different in name but similar in function, so consult your TNC manual if you do not have the exact parameters abbreviation that follow:

Set:

Frack to 7 - frame acknowledgement time TNC will wait for ACK before retrying that frame.

Maxfram to 7- limits the number of unacknowledged frames outstanding.

Paclen to 0 (256) - maximum length of data bytes to be sent in one packet.

Retry to 15 - the number of times a packet will be retried if ACK for packet is not recieved. If number of tries is exceeded, the packet link may be lost.

Resptime to 0 - Minimum time the TNC will wait before sending ACK packets.

Txdelay to 30 - Time delay the TNC will wait before sending packet frame after keying the PTT line. 30 times 10mSec units = 300 mSec.

Paul Owen, N5NXS

NARS Ranks in August SSB North American QSO Party

The results of the North American QSO party held in August were reported in the January/February 1996 issue of the National Contest Journal. In the Multioperator category the top four finishers all came from Texas.

The scores were as follows:

Call	Score	QSO's	Mults	State
WB5VZL (+KA5WSS)	318339	1467	217	TX
W5NN (+KC5AMA, KC5HTX, KG5OW, KK5GJ, AD5Q)	124905	757	165	TX
KZ8E/5 (+NJ1V, WB5N)	116654	799	146	TX
WA5DWX (+KC5PCC, K5WEQ, K5ZTY, KC5NRR, KJ5IP, N5KEW, KC5JLM, WD5DXL, KC5NVY, WA5SAJ, KC5OFE, WA1YIA)	82416	816	101	TX

The article written by Steve Merchant, N4TQO, also stated "There was a lot of multioperator competition this time. WA5DWX had a group of 13 first-time contesters and did very well indeed - this was a very interesting and commendable exercise Billy put on to promote contesting among hams who had never done it before."

Congratulations to Bill and the group for finishing in fourth place with a good effort, but also congratulations to Mike and the crew for a solid second place finish.

73's Rudy - KB5ZXO

January VHF Contest

The ARRL January VHF contest is January 20-21. It starts at 1 PM on Saturday, and ends at 10 PM on Sunday. VHF Bands 50 MHz to Light!

Dust off your multimode rigs, lash together a yagi and get on. Those of you that talk to OSCAR 10 and 13, Earthling's elevation is 0 degrees! Honestly, there is only 3 db loss from circular to horizontal polarization, so give it a go.

The two meter CW and SSB calling frequency is 144.200. There seems to be more life there than on six meters. On six look from 50.125 - 50.150, unless the band gets hot, then look all over! 70 cm activity is on 432.100-432.110. Again, most folks make contact on two meters and move off from there.

FM is allowed, but not on repeaters, nor simplex on repeater frequencies. The use of the two meter FM calling frequency of 146.52 is also forbidden. Those in the contest locally will be monitoring 146.54 simplex for FM QSOs. Simplex on the other bands is ok: ie 223.50, 446.00. Dust off your old 220 rig and give a call.

The exchange is your Grid Square. For most of Houston it is EL29. If you live north of 30 degrees North latitude, your grid square is EM20. For a rough declination, North of a line from Louetta and S.H. 249, to Kuykendahl and 1960 is in EM20. (Milage may vary, subject to dealer prep.)

See you in the contest. Brian - N5BA

Passing the Gavel

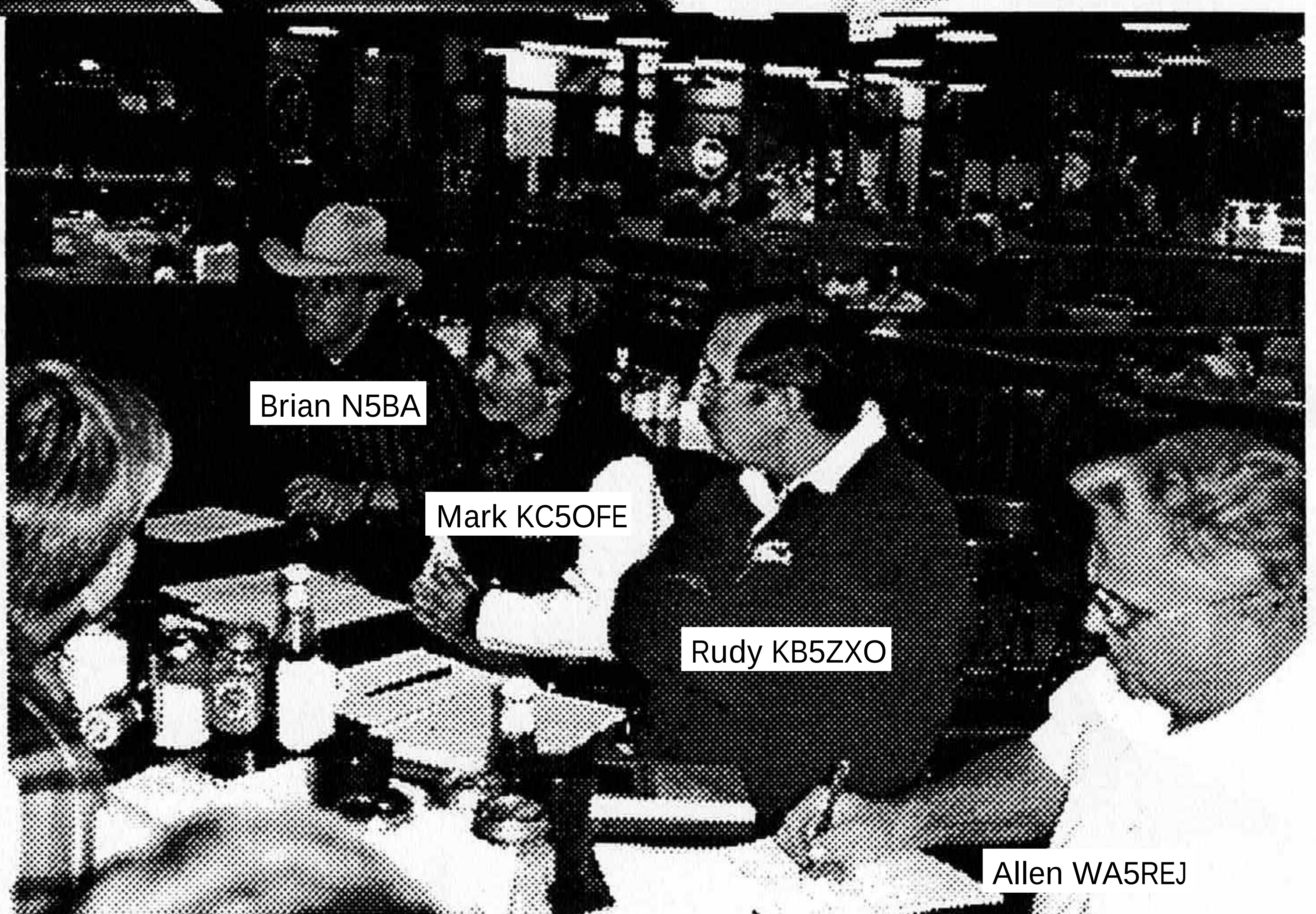


1995 Board of Directors

Working Together

with

1996 Board of Directors



NARS NEWS is published monthly by
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Editor: Keith Dutson, WD5DXL

Send all Articles and Materials for the
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(713) 351-2331 Modem
70570,405 Compuserve User ID

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 PM. Eyeball
QSO's: about 7:00 PM.

NARS BREAKFAST every Saturday
8 AM at Bleachers Grill, located at
2318 W FM 1960 (@ Kuykendahl).
Informal ragchew.

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NARS BOARD MEETS the last Tuesday of
each month at 7:30 PM at Valley Ranch
BBQ. All members are invited to attend.

FOR NARS INFORMATION CALL
KEN EDINBORGH, W5BKK 376-7660 or
send E-Mail to nars@houston.net

NARS NETS

NARS RAGCHEW - MONDAY 8:00 PM
28.444 MHz (Nelson, KK5IJ)

NARS INFO - WEDNESDAY 8:00 PM
146.06 /.66 MHz (Ken, KA5AKG)

EMERGENCY NETS

NORTHWEST HARRIS COUNTY ARES
WEDNESDAY following NARS Info Net

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)

NARS

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