



Field Day '96

Here it is a full year since last year's field day. I can tell it's almost time because of the weather. We've had scorching heat and high humidity for several weeks. Perfect weather for field day. YUK!!!! Did you ever wonder who decided that the fourth weekend in June was a good time for such an event. It must be those W1's up north. The snow is melted by now and the weather is perfect. One trip to South Texas and they would change their minds. I guess we could have Amateur Radio's biggest event in the fall on our own. It would probably wind up being Amateur Radios smallest.

Ready or not it's time for all us grown men and women to put on our cool clothes and run around in the fields of Fritsche Park and play with our toys and maybe pick a few flowers.

Field Day with NARS has a rich tradition, starting over 10 years ago in parking lots and motor homes. In keeping with the club's traditions we have managed over the years to get a lot of people involved in ham radio and the social side of field day. This is a family event as well as its primary purpose of practicing emergency communications in the field. Many newcomers may not know the importance ham radio plays in the time of emergency needs. Over the years hams have gone into devastated areas and set up emergency communications. When no one else could get through, the hams could. That is what field day is all about.

Another facet of FD is the contest. Who can make the most contacts in a 24 hour period? There are more ham radio operators on the air in the US on FD weekend than during any other period of time. There are literally thousands upon thousands of clubs and groups on the air that weekend. The QRM is incredible. Large, medium, and small size clubs get involved. Many just get together in a

small group at the city park. They all have a ball. While on vacation last year, I heard a group on a 2 meter repeater, in a small Kentucky town planning for field day. Before they decided who was going to bring a radio and an antenna, they made sure that they had plenty of fried chicken, chocolate cake, watermelons and ice cream.

We at NARS try and have the best of all worlds. We will have BBQ on Saturday night at 6:00 pm, for a small nominal fee. Many come out just for the eats and to visit for a while. If we are lucky Hank KK5WK will have a few choice watermelons. Since we send press releases to all the media, this is a public event. Two years ago Channel 11 did part of their 5 O'clock news show live from the FD site. We expect as many as a hundred or so visitors during the weekend.

A big part of our effort is put on the contest. Over the years we have placed in the top ten nationally. Our best effort was last year when we placed 4th. We had about 40 people that operated on one of our seven stations. They included: HF SSB, HF CW, Novice, 6 meters, 2 meters, Packet and Satellite. We will erect 3 towers with three element tri-band beams, a four element 10 meter beam, several wire dipoles for 75 and 40 meters, and a tower and beam for 6 meters along with various antennas for the other stations. We get our power from a large diesel generator that will run non-stop from Friday afternoon until Sunday afternoon when we shut down.

In keeping with the growing world of technology we will be operating with some of the latest and high tech radios. The Phone station will be operating ICOM's new super rig, the IC 775, courtesy Keith WD5DXL.

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Important Dates

Friday, June 21, 11:00 am – Lunch at Valley Ranch BBQ, then field day setup at Fritsche Cemetary Park, Grant Rd West of Telge Rd

Saturday, June 22, 1:00 pm – Field Day at Fritsche Park, lasts 24 hours

Sunday June 23, 1:00 pm – Field Day take-down

Tuesday, June 25, 7:30 pm – NARS Board of Directors Meeting, IHOP, 5790 FM 1960 W, just West of Champions Forest Dr.

Thursday, June 27, 7:00 pm – Reception for Don Bedell, KA3BKU, in celebration of his 80th birthday, Klein United Methodist Church, 5920 FM 2920

Notice:

There are no VE Exam Sessions scheduled for June or July. The next session will be held in August.

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

President's Corner

June 1996

Hope everyone had a great time at the annual NARS Picnic this year at the Pavilion in Meyer County Park. The weather was cooperative, didn't rain (HI HI) and had a good breeze. Jim Kirk KJ5IP brought the trusty antenna launcher and was soon sending CQs to the rest of the world on his Kenwood TS-50. Bill Gary K8CSG set up his Kenwood VHF and was talking the arrivals into a safe landing. We finally got the packet station on line and checked the DX cluster for possible QSOs for Captain Kirk. We enjoyed some delicious Bar-B-Que from the Rib Tickler in Tomball.

Last month's program was a review of Field Day 1993. Video and commentary was provided by Bill Denton WA5DWX. Thanks Bill for a great show. It was sure a treat to see some of the old gang at the NARS Field Day 1996.

Things are shaping up for this Field Day. Fritsche Park is reserved, tents will be erected, the HF stations are warming, the satellite antennas have been checked, the Novice station is in the wings, the 6 meter station is prepared, the solar power station is heating up, and the packet station is chirping. And last but certainly not least, Bar-B-Que from the Rib Tickler has been ordered and will be served June 22 at 5:00 pm local time at the Field Day site to help us make it through the night making all those QSOs. B.Y.O.C. (bring your own chairs).

Now a little bit of information for all. At our April meeting Bob White KF5ZL spoke on the emergency communications facility and severe weather reporting. He asked that we limit reports to the following:

1. Confirmed tornado
2. Tornado pre-cursors - storm structure
3. Measured wind speeds of 50+ m.p.h.
4. Flooding (other than simple short-term street flooding)
5. Measured rainfall in excess of 1 inch
6. Any size hail
7. First reports of damage or injuries
8. Verification of public reports of severe weather

Remember, we all get excited when these situations occur and we should keep our transmissions to a minimum. The weather service will ask for reports from a specific area, so keep your eyes open. Let's be there for the weather service but not in their way.

This month's meeting will be held at 7:30 pm (again B.Y.O.C.) at the site of Field Day 1996, which is Fritsche Park. It is located just west of Telge Road off Grant Road. I am looking forward to seeing y'all there.

By Walter Hock KK5LO

Field Day '96 Continued

We do all our logging by computer and this year we are adding a new wrinkle. We are building a local area network to monitor the progress of all the stations via the network. This will give us more efficient means of deciding which bands the stations need to be operating on as well as the QSO rate. This, I think, will be of great interest to the visitors, being able to see all the stations on-line at the same time from one central computer.

Fritsche Park is about a 200 acre park. It is unimproved with no hook ups. You are allowed to camp but it is considered primitive. Porta-potties will be provided by BFI for your convenience. You can tent camp or bring your motor home or trailer, or stay up all night like some of us fools.

There are really only two major rules. Violating either of them will get us evicted from the park. Since this is a county park there is NO ALCOHOL allowed. This rule is strictly enforced. An officer comes by often and checks. The other rule is, stay out of the Fritsche family cemetery. It is behind a chain link fence and is OFF LIMITS.

One rule that I forgot to mention: bring PLENTY of WATER. It will be very hot and you will need a lot of water. For that matter, bring what you will need to drink and eat except for the Saturday evening BBQ.

We will be meeting at the Valley Ranch BBQ on 249 at Spring Cypress Road for lunch at 11:00 am on Friday before going out to the field day site. If you plan to help out with setup, plan to be at the park by 12:00, or after the crew finishes with lunch shortly thereafter. Join us if you can.

I will be making up the night time and early morning operating list for the phone station Saturday afternoon. Let me know then what hours you can operate. Station managers include: Madison AB5TV, novice; OJ WA1YIA, CW; Paul N5NXS, packet; Herb KF9RX, 6 meters; and Walter KK5LO, satellite. We will need operators for the 2 meter talk-in station also. Contact any of these people on the hours you would like to operate. They will also be making operating lists. Brad WD5GNI and Byron KC5QDX are taking care of the computers and the associated local area network. The contest runs from 1:00 pm Saturday until 1:00 pm Sunday.

If you have any questions regarding field day feel free to call me at 469-8331 or Bill K5ZTY at 893-3901.

Have a great field day!

Bill WA5DWX, bdenton@tenet.edu

May Exam Session Results

NARS VEs had a busy month of May, with three different exam sessions.

On May 19, we examined seventeen individuals via 42 elements. Four new technicians were granted, as were several CSCEs.

On May 23 a special session was held for participants in the NARS radio classes coordinated by Rudy, KB5ZXO. Thirteen participants were examined, with good results. Mark, KC5OFE, passed his Advanced examination. Aron and his father became new technicians, as did two or three others. And several CSCEs were granted.

Finally, on May 25 we held the regular monthly session for ten individuals. Several new technicians emerged and others received CSCEs.

VEs included K8CSG, WA5DWX, WA5SAJ, AB5TV, KJ5IP, KB5ZXO, K5ZTY, WD5GAZ and two others from Compaq. Again demonstrating the efficiency of the current system, examinees on May 23 learned their new callsigns on May 30 with a three-day holiday weekend thrown in.

Submitted by Bill Gary K8CSG



by Keith Dutson

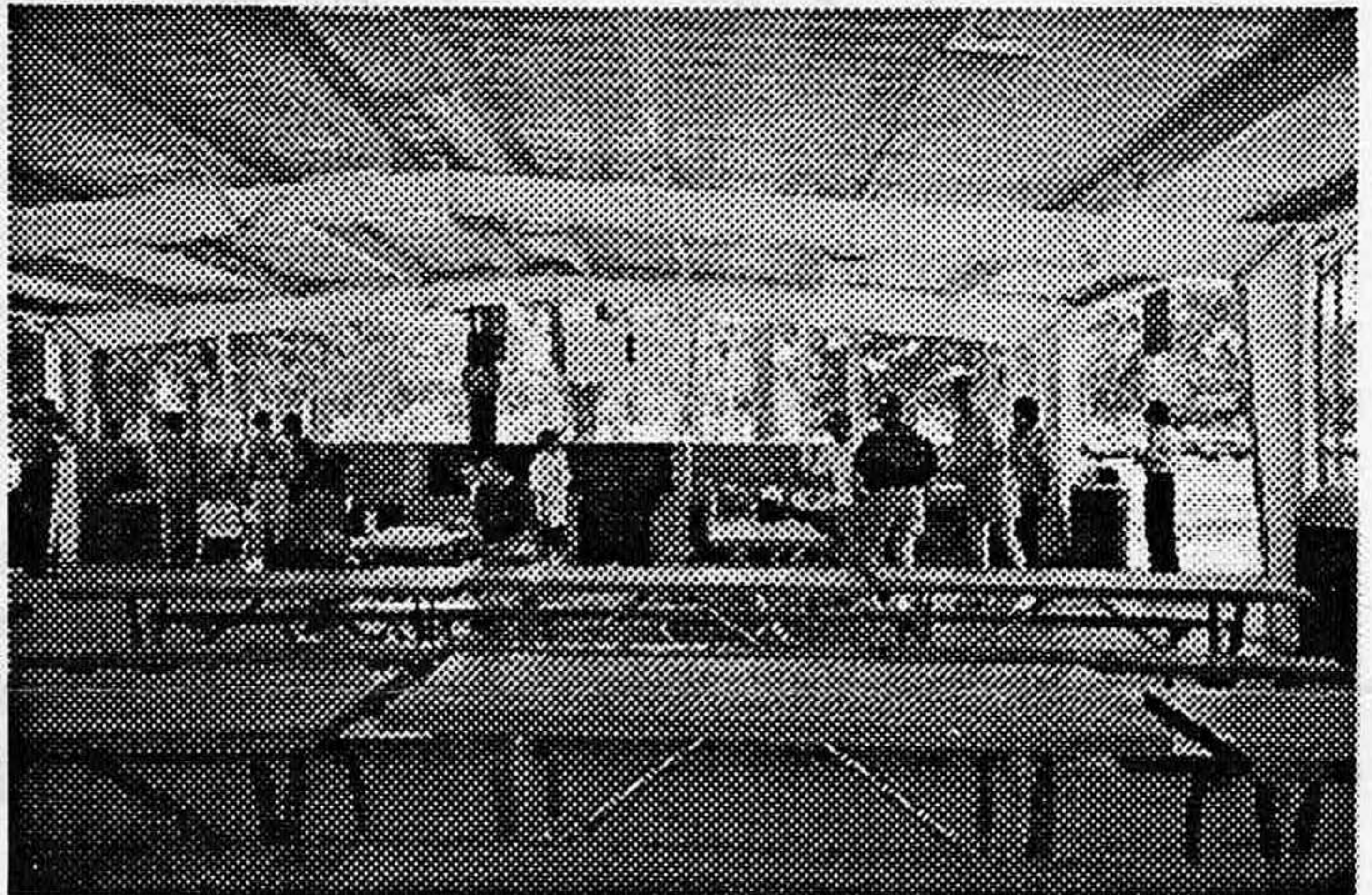
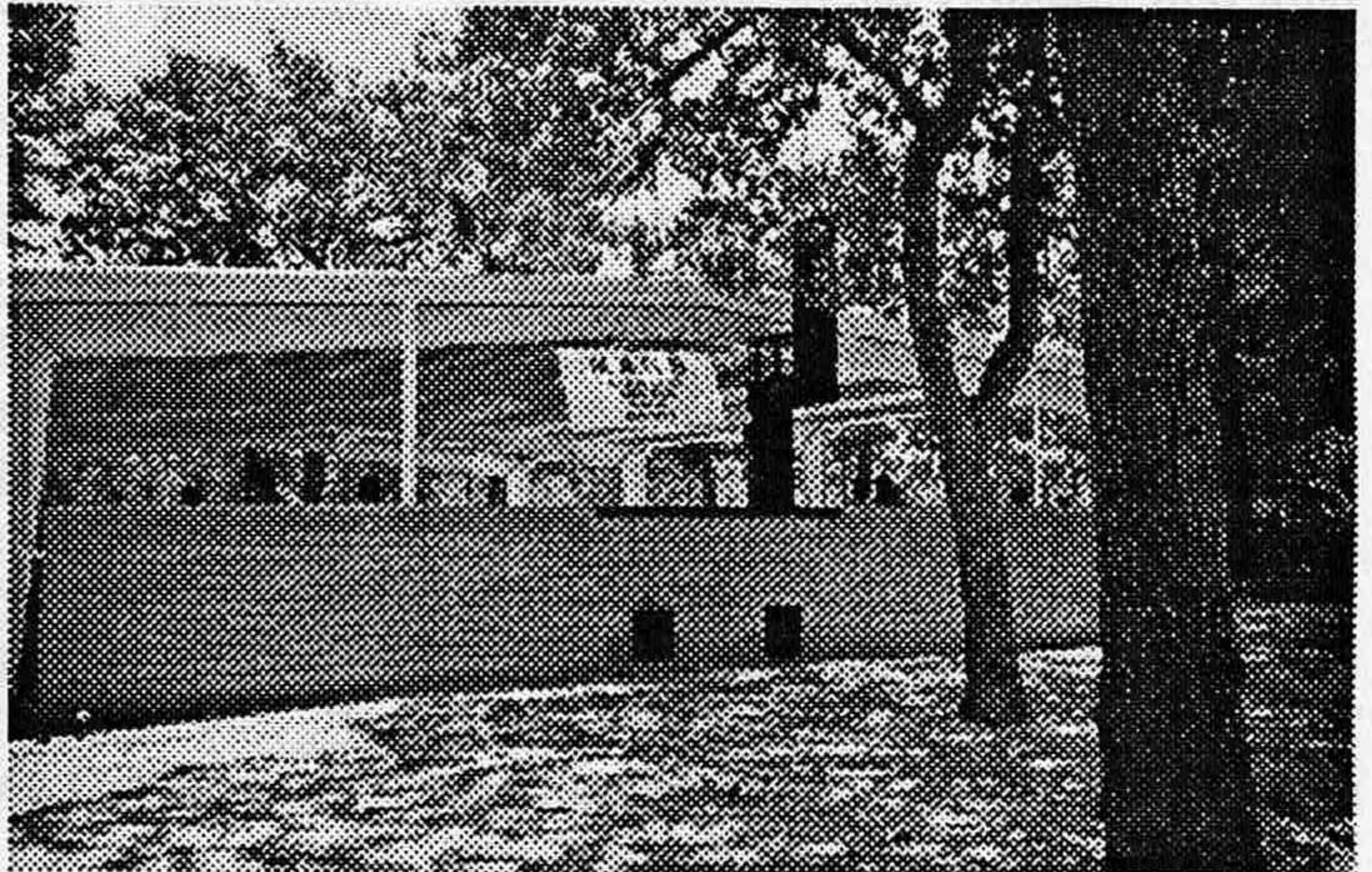
SOAP
BOX

Field Day is finally here this month. If you can possibly be at the site, please come on out and join in the fun and excitement. You'll be glad you did!

Each month I enjoy assembling this newsletter. I am always looking for articles written by NARS club members. I could include many pieces from other sources, but I believe our members are more interested in local news. If you have a story to tell but are too shy to write, just jot down the particulars and I will write the story for you.

1996 Annual NARS Picnic

More than 60 people attended this year's picnic. The Bar-B-Que was delicious, the hamming was fun, and the weather was great!



Wild Rose Country Award

The Wild Rose Country Award is available to all hams and SWL's who work VE6 stations.

Contacts can be made on any band, any mode including satellites and packet.

There is no fee for this award. It is sponsored by the Amateur Radio League of Alberta.

Contacts required are broken down into the following format.

VE6 stations - 30
All other VE's - 20
USA stations - 15
All others - 10

There is no time limit for this award.

Send your log info with a 9 X 12 envelope. Please enclose the following for return postage.

Canadians - 90 cent stamp
USA - 2 IRC's or green stamps
All others - 4 IRC's or green stamps.

Send to:
VE6SRC
Stu Crawford
6354 Bowview Rd NW
Calgary, Alberta
T3B 2H8
Canada

DX News

"DX's the key to wisdom's treasure; DX's the gate to lands of pleasure; DX's the path that upwards leads, DX is friends. Come! Let's all heed . . ."

After languishing in the high 60s through most of April, the solar flux index started May at 67, with the A index at 9. That is the bad news. The good news is that we are seeing the traditional seasonal changes in propagation which provide somewhat better conditions. On May 11, the SFI reached 78 for a short period before beginning to sag back toward 70. The A index was a moderate 5 or 6, with some fairly good DX conditions prevailing. By May 21, the SFI was down to 66, a new low for this cycle, and stuck there for two days. The A index was in double digits. Nonetheless, a nice domestic short-skip opening on ten meters enabled a lot of ragchews to take place on May 22-23, and 2/6 meter activity jumped. Earlier we reported that a West Coast observatory had spotted the first sunspots of the new cycle. This is now in dispute and has lost some significance. We may still be as much as a year away from the start of the new cycle.

Several NARS members are demonstrating their DX capabilities. The DXpedition to Cocos Island attracted W5VHN, who worked TE9RIL via satellite; KC5OFE and KB5YVT who worked TI9X from home; and WA1YIA who worked TI9X on 75 meters from his mobile unit. KC5OFE also worked ZL2VS on 20m at 0308Z on May 3, despite being antenna-deprived, and J73MF on 18m.

It was nice to hear on May 8/9 that KJ5IP, W5VHN, KB5ZXO and KC5OFE had successfully worked ZL8RI (Kermadec). WD5DXL reported a new interest in DX; he worked 9A9A (Croatia). And, WA5DWX worked EA8BYR; N5WIZ worked CT1PZZ; KC5OFE upgraded to Advanced Class and promptly went home and worked RA3QSY on the lower part of 20 meters.

J28JJ, from Djibouti, made a brief appearance on the air from Yemen (across the mouth of the Red Sea). Operating as J28JJ/70 he provided badly wanted QSOs to some of the Deserving

DXers. Unfortunately, he may not have been there legally and the cards (if they materialize) may never count.

Worked during May -- OD5PN (Lebanon), TI9X (17m), ZL2KF, A61AN (Dubai), ER1M (Moldova), ZL8RI (Kermadec-3 bands), XX9KC (Macao), C21DK (Nauru), HZ1AB (S. Arabia), VK9CT (Cocos-Keeling), KH4/NH6D (Midway Isl.). DX heard: TA1FA (Turkey), YI1US (Iraq), BV6AI and BV8BW (China), 5W0AN (W. Samoa), T30BH (W. Kiribati), SU1SK (Egypt), ET3BT (Ethiopia), XX9AS (Macao), A61AM (Dubai), C21NJ.

Jay, WA2FIJ, who made a bit of a name for himself by leading an expedition to Kingman Reef in 1980, is testing the DX world for support of a possible trip to Clipperton Island sometime in 1997. Clipperton is one of the rarely operated DXCC sites, although it can be worked barefoot from Texas when someone is there. While on Kingman, Jay blatantly ran a list operation from the Reef for ALL of the members of his radio club; hence his "name" as a "leading DXer."

The ARRL has finally agreed that recent operations from 5A1A will qualify for DXCC, thus opening another long-shut door in the DX world. The Ukrainian hams found the key to the door last year, but it took a while before they could get documentation supporting their obvious permission to operate from Libya. Since then some local fellows have operated the club station left behind. Apparently all 5A1A operations will be credited for DXCC.

Eager DXers may want to watch for 3C0 on Annobon Island during June. EA6BH plans to be there if possible. This is a rather tough one to work due to low activity.

The ZL8RI operation from Kermadec yielded over 33,000 QSOs, with over 30,000 different DXers on various bands. A surprisingly low duplicate rate for such a rare one. Not bad!

No great surprise, the DXAC voted 9-7 in favor of recommending no change in Mt. Athos, the Monks' restricted peninsula on the northeast of Greece.

The Awards Committee had voted

unanimously for no change. So, Mt. Athos stays on the DXCC Countries List and will remain difficult to work.

VK9WG turned up from Willis Island on May 28. This is another of the relatively rare Australian islands which appear on the DX bands infrequently. A weather crew normally populates the island which may be visited by an expedition periodically.

K8CSG

Special Interest Group (SIG) List

K5ZTY, Bill Stietenroth
893-3901, General Help
WA5DWX, Bill Denton
469-8331, General Help, Antennas
WA1YIA, OJ Quarles
955-1555, HF, General Help
WA5REJ, Allen Majeski
353-8652, General Help
WA5SAJ, Larry McCain
469-6709, General Help
AB5TV, Madison Jones
350-4330, General Help, CW
K8CSG, Bill Gary
537-9240, General Help, DX
KC5EZQ, Bill Rister
537-8596, 694-6074
VHF/UHF, General Help
K5WNO, Deral Kent
548-7476, RS12/13, Sattelite
KC5RCC, George Carlson
376-8307, Electrical Design,
Troubleshooting
KA3BKU, Don Bedell
370-6576, Packet
AB5XU, Sid George
537-0920, License, Upgrade
N5BA, Brian Derx
894-5942, VHF
KC5JZO, Bob Argo
288-7430, Computer Operating,
Win'95
KC5NRR, Doug Hudspeth
367-8927
Computer Tech/Networking
WD5DXL, Keith Dutson
351-7683, Computer Programming
W5NKZ, Jerry Smith
444-4491, HF, Advanced OSCAR,
Antenna
KB5DTB, Joy Smith
444-4491, HF, Advanced OSCAR,
Antenna

Grease Your Vertical? – Maybe

Over a period of time I have talked on the air with hams who have applied Penetrox or Ox-Guard to the joints on their vertical – thereby “greasing” the joints. They had experienced poor conductivity and creeping SWR on their verticals due to build-up of oxide in the joints.

Since I have a Cushcraft R7 vertical, and have recently noted very slight oxidation at the base of the antenna I sent a letter to Cushcraft for their comments. Noted in quotes below are some of their main views:

“If you are in a harsh environment it is suggested (as noted in the assembly manual) that after tuning, the entire

antenna be coated with a clear polyurethane or a good grade of marine spar varnish. Be careful not to let the varnish bleed into the telescopic joints. This should keep the antenna in peak operating condition for many years.”

They also note if a conductive coating like Penetrox or Ox-Guard is used on the joints that they still recommend varnishing your vertical antenna. This is so “the elements over time do not wash out the Penetrox or Ox-Guard.”

“In the case of a beam antenna although the conductive lubricants mentioned may cut down on any corrosion that may appear, as well as keeping the joints from

seizing, the product will also seal in any water that might seep in at perhaps the U-bolt holes and not allow it to drain. This can eventually lead to an electrical short in the driven element of the beam. You may take precautions against this, such as drilling drain holes in the element.”

Cushcraft concludes by saying, “The bottom line is that you must decide yourself and weigh the advantages against the possible disadvantages”. As for myself --- I’m thinking --- I’m thinking --- should I brush or spray or just gamble? hmmm.

73, Harry Gage . N5WIZ

Contest Connection

NARS Leads Texas QSO Party

Thanks to the efforts of more than 25 NARS members, our club will most likely win the top honor to be given by the Texas DX Society for the Texas QSO Party competition held May 4th and 5th. News of our high score was received via e-mail from TXDXS.

Eleven logs were turned in by NARS members representing 3 roving mobile stations and 8 fixed stations. OJ WA1YIA took Mark KM4AO (ex-KC5OFE) and Lockhart KC5MVY all over West Texas in his van. Hank KK5WK drove his RV around with Walter KK5LO, Charles KC5HZZ and Curt KI5AK mainly in Central Texas. Brian N5BA worked mostly Central and Eastern areas from his mobile. The mobile stations together logged contacts with about 75 counties.

The “base” station during the contest was located at Bill WA5DWX’s shack. Eleven operators ran the base station garnering some 839 QSOs and 101 multipliers for a total of approximately 170,000 points. Other fixed stations providing a significant score included Rudy KB5ZXO operating in Montgomery County, Larry WA5SAJ operating in Wood County and Bill K5ZTY operating in Walker County. Four others turned in logs to help in the total club score.

Special thanks go to OJ Quarles and Bill Denton for their planning and coordinating efforts for TQP 96. They are already talking about how to improve our score for next year!

by Keith WD5DXL

NARS NEWS is published monthly by Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Editor: Keith Dutson, WD5DXL

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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.) Eyeball QSO's: about 7:00 PM. Meeting time: 7:30 PM.

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

- NARS BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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OJ Quarles, WA1YIA 955-1555
Mark Condit, KC5OFE 550-5659

NARS BOARD MEETS the last Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM at IHOP on FM 1960. All members are invited to attend.

FOR NARS INFORMATION CALL
Marian Denton, 469-8331, for General Information and Bill Gary, 537-9240, for VE Exam Information or send E-Mail to nars@houston.net

- NARS NETS**

NARS RAGCHEW - MONDAY 8:00 PM
28.444 MHz

NARS INFO - WEDNESDAY 8:00 PM
146.06 /.66 MHz

Net Coordinator OJ, WA1YIA

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 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 690342, Houston, TX 77269-0342

