

NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

January 1997

January Meeting is Banquet

If you can imagine the sweet taste of delicious Bar-B-Que with exciting and possibly an entertaining evening; that is in store for those at the annual NARS Banquet.

The 1997 NARS Banquet will be at the Valley Ranch Bar-B-Que Restaurant on Friday January 17,

at 7:30pm. The restaurant is located on the southeast corner of SH 249 and Spring Cypress.

If one gets there late it might be like Saturday morning breakfast; one does not get to sit at the main table. Try to buy tickets early.

Mark K5GQ

Important Dates

Friday, January 17, 7:30 pm – NARS Annual Banquet (monthly General Membership meeting), Valley Ranch Bar-Be-Que Restaurant

Saturday, January 25, 8:30 am – Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just South of Main)

Tuesday, January 28, 7:30 pm – NARS Board of Directors meeting, IHOP, 5790 FM 1960 W, just West of Champions Forest Dr.

Contests:

January 18-19 – North American SSB QSO Party

January 18-20 – ARRL VHF Sweepstakes

January 24-26 – CQ WW 160 meter CW

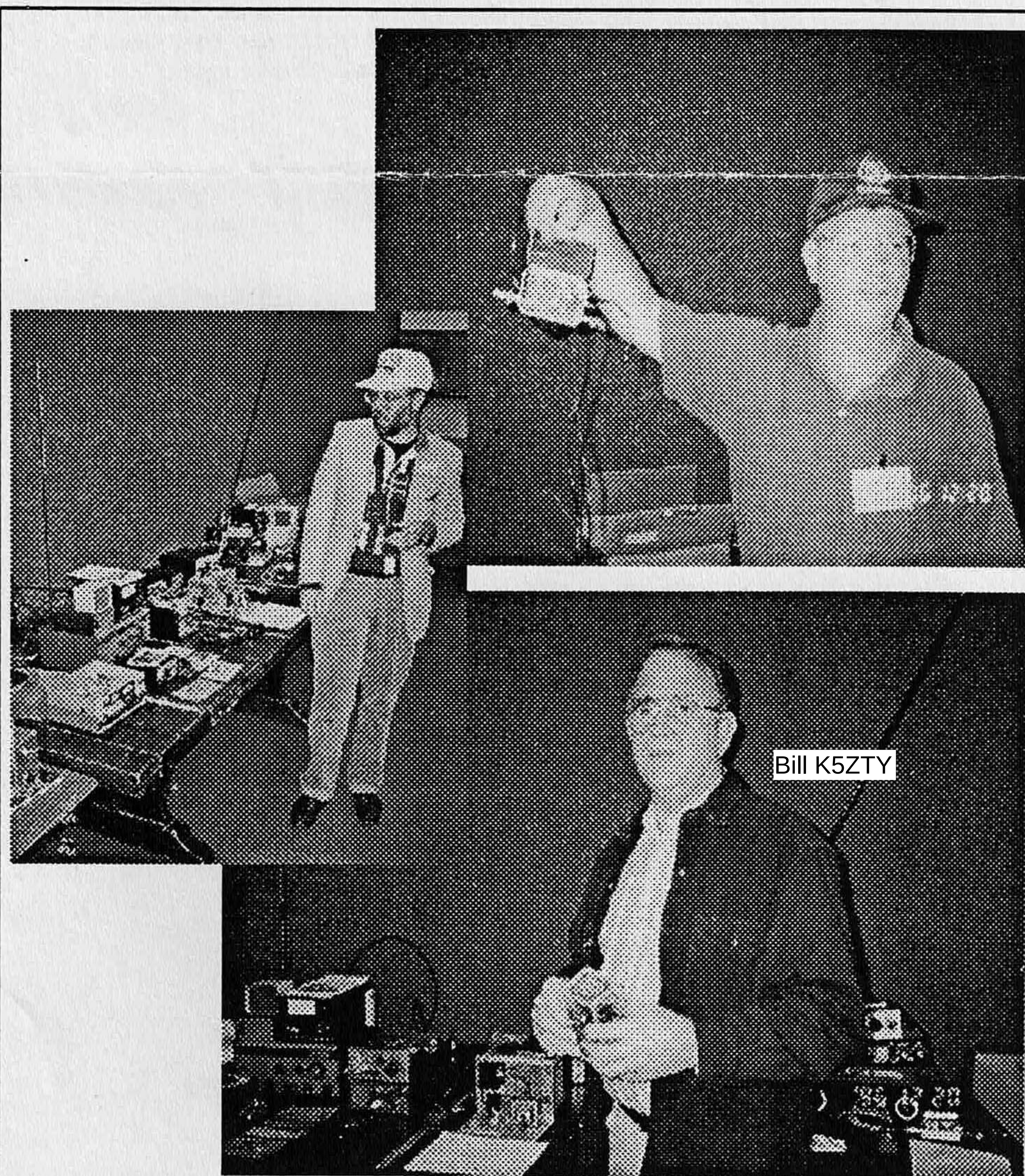
February 15-16 – ARRL W DX

Notice:

NARS membership dues is \$20 per year, renewable on anniversary of last year's full payment.

NARS News deadline for articles to appear in February issue is Friday, January 31

Homebrew Snap Shots



BREAKFAST

at Victors

4710 W FM 1960

Saturdays

8:00 AM

President's Corner

January 1997

The December meeting was a GRAND one. Not because it was my last as president, but, it was good to see all the home brew projects that y'all brought. The thing that has impressed me most about this club are the members like you. We have one common hobby but we are all diverse within it. There were projects from QRP stations to antennas. Jack WA8GHZ won best project for his very impressive mobile QRP rig complete with wheels. John W5PDW won the best story for his underground antenna and portable ground.

This will be my last president's corner and I would like to say that I have had great pleasure serving as president this past year. Our club members are the best people. Someone came up to me after the meeting and told me he liked the club because everyone openly offered help to problems and were not critical of different ideas. I am also proud of the way that we all pull together for all of the events like Field Day, Texas QSO Party, March of Dimes Walk, etc. The list goes on and on.

Well, Christmas has passed and I hope everyone had a great one. I am always glad that we have our health and get to see our families during this time of the year.

Now it is a brand new year and we are off to a good start. The annual banquet is this month's meeting. It will be at the Valley Ranch Barbecue restaurant at Spring Cypress and Highway 249, so don't go to the regular meeting place. By the way, don't forget to send in your reservation with your money before January 12, 1997. The price is \$12 for each member and significant other, and \$15 for non-members. We want to make sure we have enough food for everyone. This promises to be a great time for one and all, to do one of the best things this club does, get together to eat and talk. So, come on out and take a stroll down memory lane to remember the events of last year. See ya there.

Walter Hock KK5LO

SUNMART TEXAS TRAIL ENDURANCE RUNS



TO: All FWI/Sunmart Employees & Volunteers

FROM: Terry Matlock

DATE: December 17, 1996

SUBJECT: 7th Annual Sunmart Texas Trail Endurance Runs

I wish to take this opportunity to thank each and everyone of you and your families for all the assistance, hard work and time you spent to make this year's race the largest and the best ever. We have received many thanks, phone calls, and hugs for the effort you put forth. Most of you know that Mother Nature blessed us with great weather Saturday which helped 90% of the runners finish the race, and made our work easier. The race could not have been a success without your unselfish contribution. Thanks again!

S. Northwest Amateur Radio Society

*Your hard work and long hours helped
make this year's race a huge success!*

We really appreciate your valuable assistance.

Terry

P.O. Box 4456 • Houston, Texas 77210 • (713) 444-2266

SUNMART Texas Trail Endurance Run

It was way before daylight Saturday morning and Jim KJ5X said, "This better not be some sort of joke, Walter." Bob KC5JZO, Don KA3BKU, Bill K8CSG, Larry KC5NVY, Jim KJ5X, Gerald W5BA, Paul N5NXS, Tim KC5VHI, Jack WA8GHZ, and myself met at the prescribed place. We all said our hellos, jumped in our trusty four wheeled steeds and headed north to Huntsville State Park. We all volunteered to provide communications for the SUNMART Texas Trail 50 Mile Endurance Run. We arrived there at 6:15 a.m. and after getting our aid station assignments headed off into the woods at various spots along a 12.5 mile course.

The first runners started at 7:00 a.m. and we had already manned the first 4 check points. By the time the second run started at 9:00 a.m. the other 2 radio

operators had been transported to their remote check points.

The first incident came when a runner's knee locked up. This happened at Bill's and Gerald's check point #3 (the farthest away). We were able to arrange transportation back to the aid station in the shortest time.

Later on there were two runners that collapsed in the woods by Larry's and

Paul's check point #6. This time an ambulance was called and came from Huntsville. They were checked out and continued the race. There were other runners who suffered dehydration and were treated and released. All incidents were resolved with no major injuries.

Keith WD5DXL arrived after noon to assist and take pictures. My biggest surprise came about 3:00 p.m. when

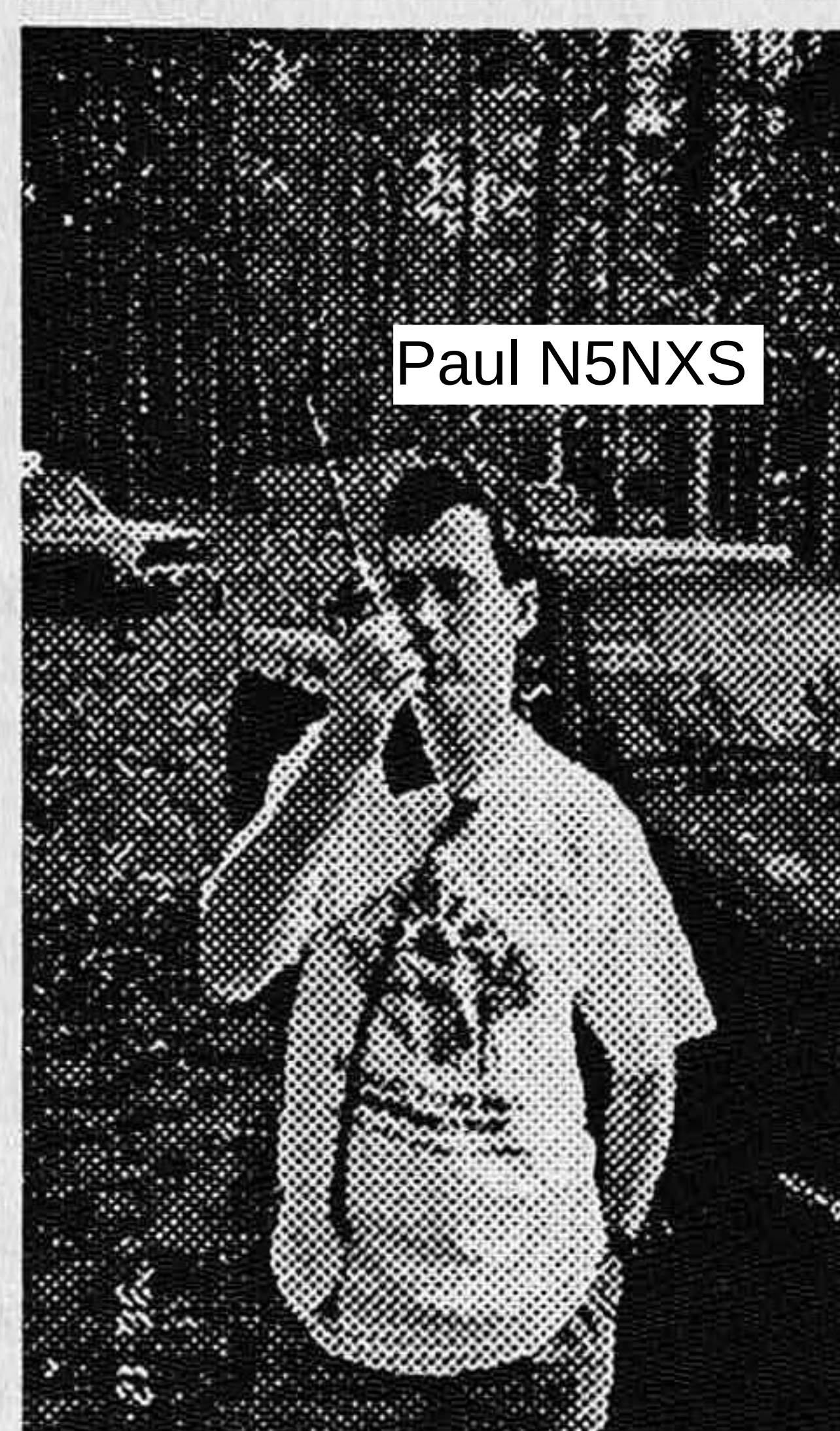
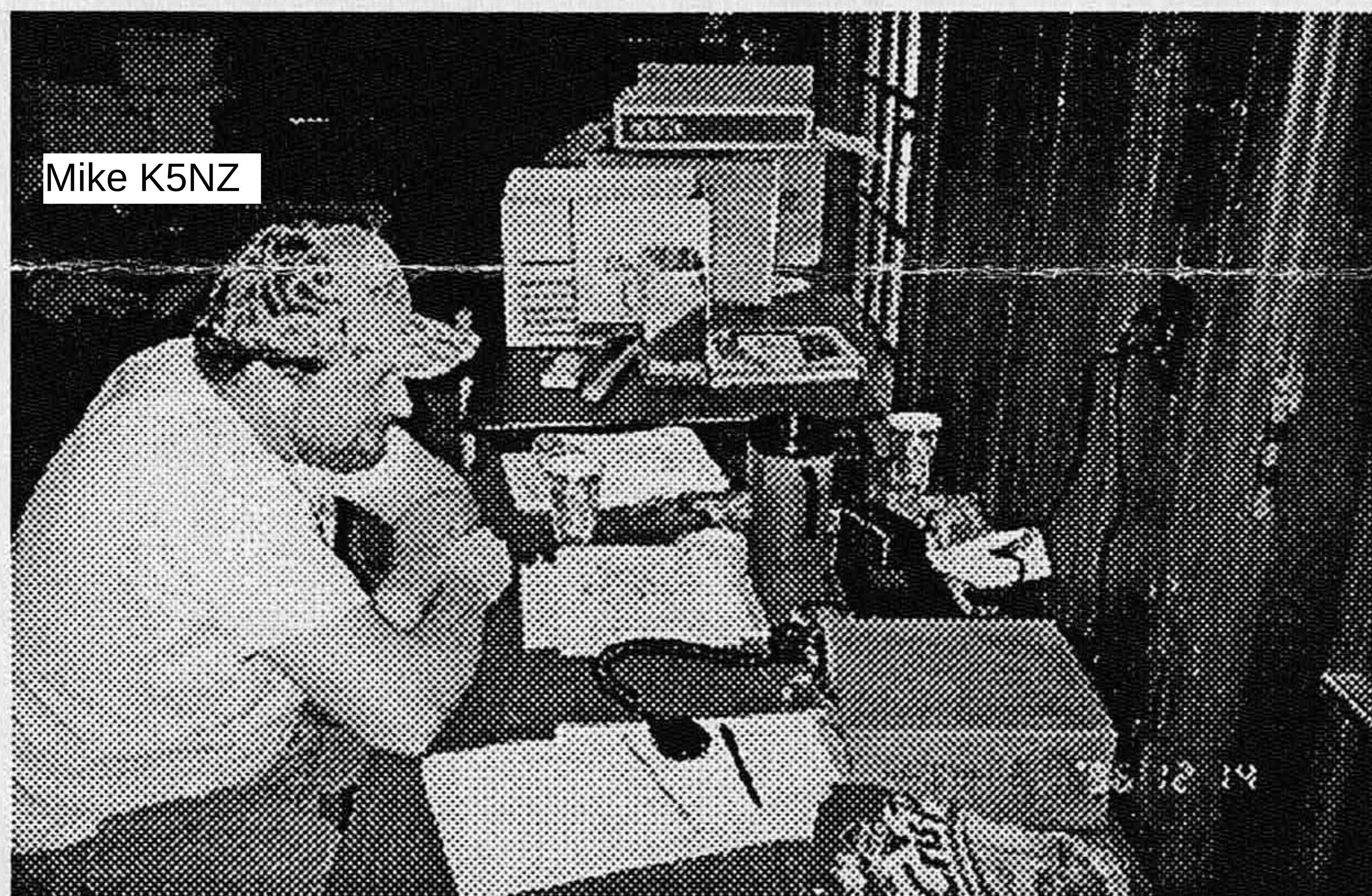
Mike K5NZ, from Bedias, (yes, I said K5NZ) showed up to relieve me at net control. Which was just about the right time because that was when the two runners collapsed.

The first runner finished the 50 mile run in 5 hours and 40 minutes. Boy, are these guys serious or what? We closed up the last check point and were headed out of the park at 6:15 p.m.

Norman Klein, the race director, was extremely pleased and he thanked me for our help. He mentioned, they never had reliable communication like ours before. He asked that we return again and help in December 1997.

I want to thank all of you for your help in making this another successful public service event.

Walter KK5LO



DX News

I heard his call -- And went right back to him. "Three hundred worked at last," I cried! Alas! 'Twas Burma Slim...

We think that the early signs of the new sunspot cycle have become visible. The sudden rise of the solar flux index at the end of November came as a surprise. When it hit 104 late in the month it was the highest it had been in nearly three years. But, it not only rose; it stayed up for nearly a full week before beginning to slide back down a bit. This DXer did not find band conditions which reflected such a seemingly positive sign. But there must be meaning in there somewhere. Perhaps the Palos Verdes Sundancers have been at it again. We shall see...

DX Worked: ZS6AMX (South Africa); EI6S (Ireland); JA1SEP (Japan); OE6MBG (Austria); A625ND (United Arab Emirates); ZS2JL (South Africa); TI9JJP (Cocos Island); HL3VQ (Korea); VQ9KH (Diego Garcia); VK2FLA (Australia-long path); YJ8AA (Vanuatu); V51BP (Namibia); 9G1BJ (Ghana); A22RV (Botswana).

DX Heard: TZ6LL (Mali); C21NJ (Nauru); 4U1ITU (ITU Hqtrs., Geneva, Switz.); 4Z5AD (Israel); YI1US (Iraq); HZ1AB (Saudi Arabia); 3A2HB (Monaco); YI1BW (Iraq); 7O1A (Yemen); VU2WAP (India); 5Z4RL (Kenya); 3D2DI (Fiji Is.); ZL2RHE (New Zealand); VK4AAR (Australia long path); ZD7MY (St. Helena).

Gary, KK5WL, worked XF1/K6ASH in Baja California on 20m early in December for his first DX contact. Good start, Gary! Cal White, WF5W, worked 3B*CF (Mauritius Isl.)

Back in mid-1995 some fellows from Ukraine visited Libya. They were endeavoring to start a Youth Club, with amateur radio as a key facet. This was when Libya was essentially off the air and much in demand. It was one of the very few that we had not worked. During their stay they obtained permission to operate using the call sign 5A1A. After several days of fruitless efforts, it became obvious that solid contacts on 20 meters were not going to happen for those of us in Texas. However, they were generally readable on 40 meter CW at various times. Lacking a 40 meter antenna, we decided to put one up and try it. After working frantically for a couple of days, we finally got it up on their last day in Libya, but could not hear them.

Good fortune smiled, however, when transportation problems caused them to stay there for one extra day and we finally made a solid contact after having had a couple of broken QSOs on 20 and 15. In typical fashion, after the Ukrainians had left one of the local Libyan chaps turned up on 20 SSB and we worked him, too.

On November 5, 1996 (sixteen months after the QSOs) we received in the mail a QSL from Ukraine -- a QSL from 5A1A with

three CW QSOs confirmed, one on 15 meters (broken), one on 20 meters (broken), and one on 40 meters (solid). As most true DXers realize, patience is a virtue in this game! ++++++

It was encouraging to find the KE5IV DX cluster back in service on Dec. 8. Just sort of stumbled onto it by accident. Easy to get a good, long-lasting connection via our NARS node. Unfortunately, KE5IV disappeared before the next day. What's going on?

Mt. Athos has been, and is, a bit difficult to work. Monk Apollo, SV2ASP/A, is about the only likely opportunity for this one until things change. He promises to become more active during this winter, with even some activity on 160-meters promised. Get 'im when you can!

KK5UH worked FI5HR but could not find out where to send the QSL. The operator said he was okay in the Callbook, but nothing there. One suspects the FI5 was a pirate, but in these days of interesting prefixes, who knows? I suggested he send the card to Les Bannon, WF5E, and see if he knows where to send it. Les runs a nice outbound DX QSL service for sixteen cents a card.

Harry, N5WIZ, reports he worked Neville, VK6VU, on 20-meter long path recently. Nice going!

HEARD ISLAND should be on the air about the time you receive this. Listen for their beacons (VK0IR/B) on 14.100, 18.110, 21.150, 24.930 and 28.200 KHz. If you don't hear the beacons, just look for the biggest pileup on the band! The operation should begin on January 15 if all goes as planned, and should wind down at the end of the month. This is one to watch for, and to work if you can. Who knows when the next visit may come -- the last was in 1982!

QSL Routes: T31BB via DF6FK; CX8DX via CX3CE; J3K via WB8GEX; 9J2VK via ZS6MG; 5V7A via GM4AGL; TI9JJP via TI2JJP; 5Z4RL via N2AU; T94B via N9JR; P5 (No. Korea) -- Per QRZ DX, there was a tiny glimmer of hope regarding P5 recently. Two Japanese operators recently visited there at the invitation of the DPRK-Japan Friendship Association. Patience is, of course, in order. But there may be hope...

An X5 prefix has turned up on some of the bands, causing some consternation among the unwashed multitudes. I had several calls on X5 callsigns worked, mostly from people wanting to know what country X5 represents. X5 is an unofficial callsign adopted by the Serbian interests within Bosnia-Herzegovina. Although not assigned by the ITU, the "government" of the Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina accepted the recommendation of the prefix by a consultant serving them. X5EOL was worked by several hams in our area. This is the former YU4EOL, Slobodan, a refugee

from the Muslim side of Bosnia. What will eventually come of this business with the X5 prefix and the 90+ hams using it remains to be seen. The usual advice -- Work first, worry later -- remains practical for this incident.

Some late-in-the-year news of interest to many. The NTIA (the counterpoint to the FCC within the government) has forecast some things that may eventually lead to additional HF spectrum for amateurs. In a report it released on its study of HF spectrum needs and resources, NTIA calls ham radio "the oldest radio service" and one that "predates regulation", and casts us in a very positive light. Possible added spectrum may involve the 17, 20 and 30 meter bands, as well as possibly the 12 meter band. A new band between 4900 and 5000 kHz is mentioned as another possibility. Another 300 kHz atop the present ten meter band is seen as viable by NTIA. There is nothing to say that any of these things will come into being, but it all sounds very good.

FLASH: Heard on 20-meters on Dec. 31, per Martti Laine, OH2BH -- look for a possible operation from P5-North Korea in May, 1997! Many people will have fingers and other bodily components crossed on this one.

That's enough for this month. A belated Happy New Year to all of you, and may much of your DX be new countries for you during 1997, the year the sunspots return.

Bill Gary 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
281-537-8596, VHF/UHF, General Help
K5WNO, Deral Kent
548-7476, RS12/13, Satellite
KC5RCC, George Carlson
376-8307, Electrical Design, Troubleshooting
KA3BKU, Don Bedell
370-6576, Packet
N5BA, Brian Derx
894-5942, VHF
KC5JZO, Bob Argo
288-7430, Computer Operating, Win'95
WD5DXL, Keith Dutson
281-351-7683, Computer Programming
W5NKZ, Jerry Smith or KB5DTB, Joy Smith
444-4491, HF, Advanced OSCAR, Antenna
N5WIZ, Harry Gage
370-7488, Basic Advice - RFI
W5VHN, Dick Rooney
288-8424, Satellite
K5GQ, Mark Tyler
587-0256, Interference

Contest Connection - W5NC Rich in Tradition

About a year or so ago the club started thinking about replacing its current call sign of KC5OGI with a new, more appropriate one. With the new vanity call system in place clubs were allowed first shot at the any of the available unissued calls in the FCC data base. Several members submitted suggestions. We were allowed 25 choices. Calls like K5TX, K5HTX and others were included.

Someone suggested W5NC (Nars Club), and, it was put on the list. By luck of the draw W5NC came up the winner. In doing some research on the previous owner of W5NC, I found that it originally had been issued to a local ham. And to bring it closer to home, he was a resident of Spring. His name was Harold A (Hal) Sears. He became a silent key in 1989. I had thought that I had remembered him from back in the 60's. I called my friend of many years, Fred Look K5MJA, to see if he could refresh my memory of Mr Sears. He not only refreshed my memory but sent me an article from the June 1, 1989 Houston Chronicle about the passing of W5NC. I thought it ironic that we would just by chance receive a call of someone that lived in our NARS Club area.

The following is a reprint of the Chronicle article telling of his accomplishments. Thanks again to Fred for passing that information on to us.

Bill Denton W5SB

Houston Chronicle (Thursday, June 1, 1989)

HAROLD A. (HAL) SEARS, 85, of Spring, Texas, died May 30, 1989.

He was born September 14, 1903 at Fall River, Kansas. He attended public schools at Eureka, Kansas, and college at Southwestern College in Winfield, Kansas. His interest in electronics and instrumentation began early, and in 1920, Hal became a licensed radio operator. During the ensuing years, he worked in various capacities as a radio operator and technician aboard ship and on shore.

In 1930, Hal joined Western Air Express, Alambra, California. This company, the forerunner of Trans World Airlines, was engaged in the establishment of a transcontinental radio communications system for its aircraft, under the direction of Herbert Hoover, Jr. After completion of the development stage of the project, Hal was transferred to Tulsa, Oklahoma.

In 1934, Hal resigned from TWA and began his 49 year geophysical career when he started to work for Seismograph Service Corporation in Tulsa. In 1935, Hal left SSC's Tulsa lab and went to work for Barnsdall Oil Company. It was at Barnsdall that Hal made his first geophone, a product for which he was later to become famous.

Hal built his first geophones while working on a Barnsdall field crew in Louisiana. He later helped Barnsdall set up their geophysical laboratory in Houston and moved his work from the field to his lab.

When Barnsdall closed the lab in 1940, Hal purchased the shop equipment and continued his development of geophones. It was this endeavor that led to Hal's forming Electro-Technical Labs (ETL).

In the late nineteen forties and early nineteen fifties, major geophone users began expressing a strong interest in the use of multiple geophones. Hal was impressed by discussions with friends such as C. H. (Chili) Carlisle and Dr. Tom Poulter. Hal worked with W. P. (Pete) Johnson to develop ETL's Model EVS geophone.

In 1957, Hal formed Hall-Sears, Inc. with Ernie Hall and continued his pioneering in geophone development until the late 1960's. He next started Professional Instrument Company, which developed and produced medical electronics. In recent years he was a consultant to Life Tech, Inc. of Houston.



by Keith Dutson

S
O
A
P

B
O
X

Please take special note of the featured article this month. It is the 1996 Sunmart Texas Trail Endurance Run. This is fast becoming a nationally recognized event for long distance runners. The traditional marathon distance events that are known around the world (Houston-Tenneco, Boston, Olympic, etc) are mere babies compared to this event. There are two distances: long (50K, or 32 miles), and longer (50 miles). This was our first year to provide communications, and they have already asked us back for next year. I'm sure this will turn out to be a successful annual event for many years to come.

Newsletter positions are still available: see me about the At-large editor or Public Service editor, or send email to kdutson@wt.net.

Part 2 – Buckyballs and Buckytubes: Are they in Ham Radio's Future?

That was 30 or more years ago; this is now. We've come a long way! While reminiscing I did get a few more Christmas cards written, but the recent news stories about buckyballs and buckytubes intruded. What does this new discovery about carbon molecules hold for ham radio's future? Well, on the electric side they say cables for electric power lines could weigh about 1/5 to 1/6 less than conventional copper and could be 100 times stronger than steel and so far appear to have no resistance. So for one thing we might have coaxial cable with a buckytube center conductor in the future.

Recently I had a phone conversation with Mr. Carlos Byars, Houston Chronicle Science Writer. He did one of the news stories on buckyballs and buckytubes. I asked for some of his views on this discovery by Dr. Smalley and Dr. Curl of Rice University and their colleague Harold W. Kroto of Sussex University in England. Since Mr. Byars is also a ham – K5BNA (Extra class, a ham since 1954) I was particularly interested (as I knew

you would be) in what he thought of any possible effects on ham radio in the future might be.

Random comments from the conversation are paraphrased below.

Buckytubes may hold great promise in the future as wave guides for UHF.

Buckytubes may hold promise also as cables to transmit electric power and other wiring uses. Applications labs around the world are working on the problem now of how to twist-strand the nanometer thick strands into something seeable and usable. Right now the strands are parallel; how do you twist them? So far they can only be seen with the aid of an electron microscope!

Buckytubes may make smaller, more tightly packed solid state chips possible. This in turn may make more miniaturization of ham gear possible. He makes the point here that in his opinion how small do we want to go and still have practical radio gear? He notes that like all things in science there are

trade-offs and compromises to be made. Too much miniaturization could lead to heat dissipation problems given the average wattage used in ham gear operation.

After they found buckyballs and buckytubes they discovered other ways than zapping with lasers, like zapping with helium arcs to produce the sooty residue in which buckyballs and buckytubes are found.

Buckyballs are spherical-like soccer balls and for now their greatest promise may be in the medical field.

In summing up he felt the discovery of buckyballs and buckytubes was without a doubt a great step forward in science, but he sees it mainly as an adjunct when narrowed to the field of ham radio gear, sort of like when the pentium chip was introduced in the computer field. Time may well prove differently but for the present that is the way it looks.

73 Harry Gage N5WIZ

NARS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT & BOARD CHAIRMAN
Walter Hock, KK5LO 350-6633

VICE PRESIDENT
Paul Owen, N5NXS 894-7758

SECRETARY
Bill Gary, K8CSG 537-9240

TREASURER
Keith Dutson, WD5DXL 351-7683

DIRECTORS
Rudy Novotny, KB5ZXO 251-4546
Mike Lavender, KB5WQJ 259-7257
OJ Quarles, K1OJ 955-1555
Mark Condit, KM5AO 550-5659

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Please send address, phone, email and other changes to Marion Denton at NARS, P.O. Box 690342, Houston, TX 77269-0342.

FOR NARS INFORMATION CALL

Marion Denton, 469-8331, for General Information and Bill Gary, 537-9240, for VE Exam Information or send E-Mail to novotny@tenet.edu

NARS BREAKFAST every Saturday
8 AM at Victors, located at 4710 W FM 1960. Informal ragchew.

NARS LUNCH BUNCH every
Wednesday – location decided Tuesdays
on the informal morning 2 meter net.

NARS NETS

NARS RAGCHEW – MONDAY 8:00 PM
28.444 MHz
Net Coordinator – Open –

NARS INFO – WEDNESDAY 8:00 PM
146.06 / .66 MHz
Net Coordinator Bill, K8CSG

NARS REPEATERS

2 M – 146.060 / 146.660 MHz
Digipeter – 145.71 MHz
Call (W5NC) Alias (NARS)

NARS Web Page

<http://www.flash.net/~nars/>

NARS NEWS is published monthly by Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Editor: Keith Dutson, WD5DXL

Send all Articles and Materials for the Newsletter to: 24415 Deep Meadow, Tomball, TX 77375, (713) 351-7683, EMail kdutson@wt.net

Northwest Amateur Radio Society is a Special Service Club affiliated with the American Radio Relay League.

ARRL Club No. 2120

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