

NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

October 1997

September Meeting About ARRL

Come to the meeting Friday, October 17, and hear Alan Cross WA5UZZ speak of his experiences in the ARRL. Alan has just retired from his position as Manager, ARRL West Gulf Division, West Texas Section. This is an opportunity for all NARS hams to get a glimpse of

what has been going on recently in the organization that has been so influential to amateur radio over the many decades since it became regulated by our government. So, bring your interest and questions to the meeting.

Keith WD5DXL

Important Dates

Friday, October 17, 7:30 pm – NARS monthly General Membership meeting, Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church – Eyeball QSO's, 7:00 pm

Saturday, October 18, 6 am – S.I.R.E. workers meet, Whataburger, Tomball (just south of FM2920 on SH249)

Saturday, October 25, 8:30 am – VE License Exam Session, Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just South of Main)

Tuesday, October 28, 7:30 pm – NARS Board of Directors meeting, Terra Nova Clubhouse, 5200 Woodville

Contests:

October 17-19 – Jamboree-on-the-Air

October 18-19 – Hamcom in Humble

October 25-26 – CQ WW DX, Phone

November 1-3 – ARRL November Sweepstakes, CW

November 11-12 – VK/ZL/Oceania, CW

November 15-17 – ARRL November Sweepstakes, Phone

November 29-30 – CQ WW DX, CW

Notice:

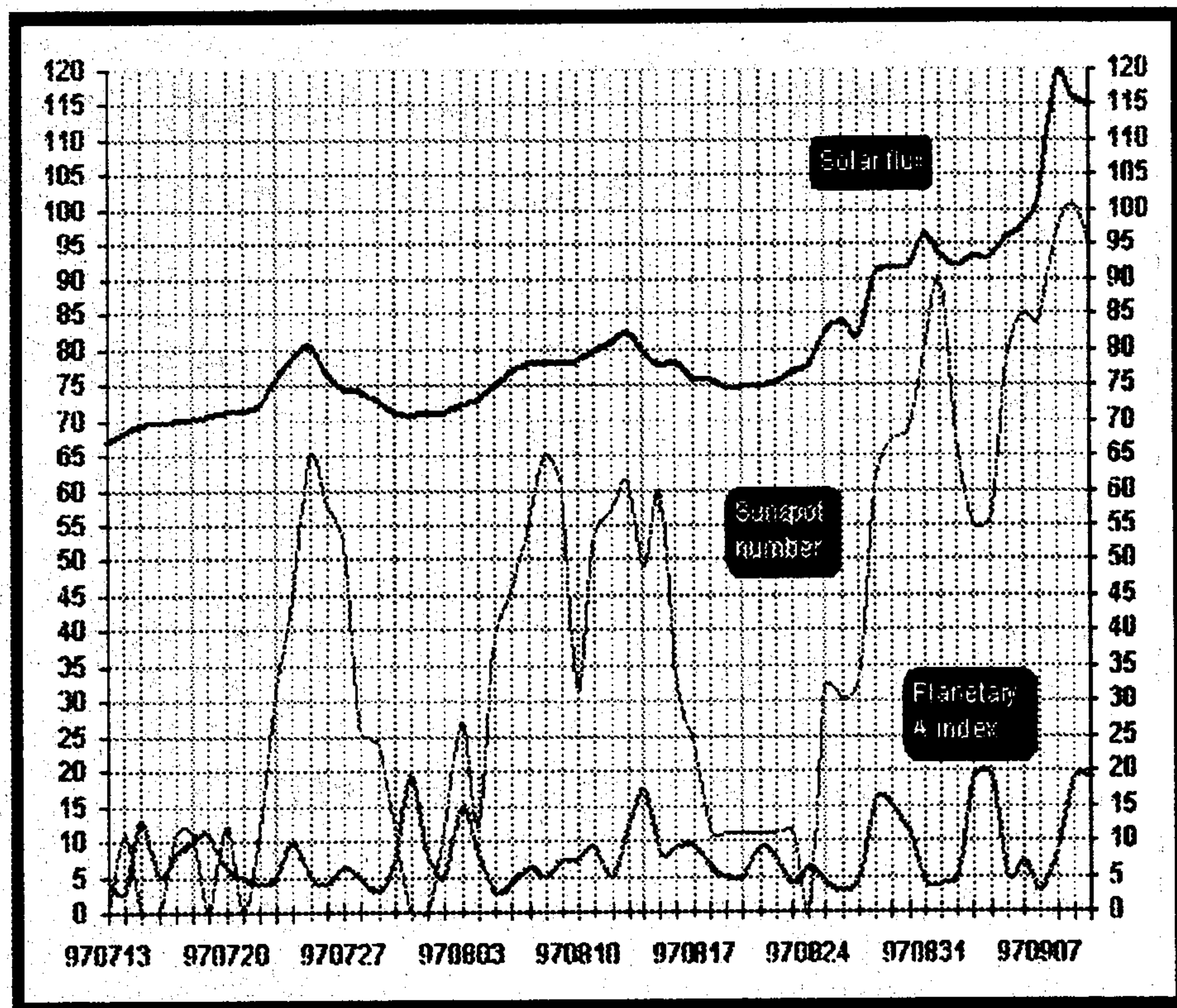
NARS membership dues are \$20 per year, renewable on anniversary of last year's full payment.

NARS News deadline for articles to appear in November issue is Friday, October 31.

Glossary Of Solar-Terrestrial Terms

What with all the highfalutin' Solar indexes/indexes, K numbers, A numbers, etc. I feel like the dumbest guy on the planet. You see, I was inactive and out of the game during every solar peak since first licensed in '62. I always thought that Texas to Ohio was a pretty good distance for a poor radio wave to travel all by itself. And I considered Canada to be DX, even when I lived in Cleveland! Now I understand the game is about to change thanks to Mr. Sol. See the chart for proof that it's really here.

Continued on page 5



BREAKFAST

at Victors

4710 W FM 1960

Saturdays

8:00 AM

President's Corner

October 1997

The September meeting had a good talk by Earl N5TU and Rick KC5RNV on Foxhunting. They and others in the Compaq radio club have foxhunts fairly often. They invited NARS members to participate in these. Observers are welcome. Fox hunting is a splendid way to have some radio fun and also expand your radio know-how. I intend to take part as soon as I can get some equipment ready. More info is at a website that can be found by a search for <K5WH>. Or, you can email Earl at KZ8E@wt.net or Rick at KC5RNV@wt.net for times and places.

Don't forget the Hamcom in Humble on 18-19 October. NARS will have some tables set up there. Take your once-upon-a-time valuable radio, computer or other electronic stuff and see what you can get for it. Or, see what new treasures you can find there. NARS will let you sell your stuff to your heart's content for 5 percent of the sales price or \$5, whichever is less. What a deal!

As I type this I hear the XYL mumbling to herself as she tries to get all her stuff into one suitcase for an extended trip. My answer to the question she keeps asking: no, mine is full! Don't use up all the DX while I'm gone.

Jim Kirk KJ5X

NARS Outstanding Service Award, 2nd Notice

One last time. If you have someone in mind that you think has done an outstanding job for NARS and you would like to have them recognized at the banquet in January, please give your thoughts to the committee. The committee consists of Paul Owen N5NXS, Bill Denton W5SB and Bill Stietenroth K5ZTY. We need for this to be in writing giving your reasons for the nomination. All nominations will be kept confidential and the selection will be done by the committee. Please get it to us by the November meeting date so that we have time to put the presentation together. U.S. Mail to Paul at 9310 Walnut Glen, Houston TX 77064, email to bdenton@tenet.edu or k5zty@juno.com, or hand it to any one of us at any breakfast, lunch or meeting.

Help us find that most deserving NARS member to bestow this prestigious award upon.

73, Bill Stietenroth K5ZTY, for the committee

NARS Raffle, Third Notice

NARS is holding a raffle to raise funds for new Field Day antennas and maintenance of our repeaters. The prize is an IC-2710H, ICOM's top-of-the-line dual band 2 meter / 70 cm portable transceiver with detachable front panel and remote control microphone. Tickets are \$1 each, or a book of 12 for \$10 available from Walter Hock KK5LO (281-350-6633) or Keith Dutson WD5DXL (281-351-7683). The drawing will be held at the Houston Hamfest at 2:00 PM on Sunday, October 19, 1997. The winner does not need to be present at the drawing.

NARS Board of Directors Meeting 9/30/97

Treasurer's Report – The checkbook balance on August 31, 1997 was \$3760.79.

Programs – November: WA8GHZ Jack Dx-ing from Africa; December: Homebrew Night.

New Node – Searching for a good used 2M cavity.

Special Event – Texas Trails Endurance Run Dec 13th; need a lot of volunteers! See KK5LO.

January Banquet – Will be at Valley Ranch BBQ.

Radio Raffle – Ticket sales are good; tickets still available.

Bob Argo KC5JZO Secretary

DX News

DX Notes -- Through the night of doubt and sorrow, Onward goes the DX band, Singing songs of expectation, Calling to the promised land. . .

Sometimes people encounter problems with their antennas. My problem began over a year ago when I noticed that I was occasionally hanging the end of my reflector in a limb of the oak tree in my back yard. After twenty years, the tree has obviously grown a good bit. Finally, this year I noticed two things: 1) The end cap on the reflector had disappeared, obviously pulled off by repeated entanglement with the tree limb; and, 2) Leaves on the branch were showing evidence of overexposure to RF. Apparently the driven element was also catching the limb and some burning was occurring during my transmissions. Obviously something needed to be done, and soon. Belatedly, since the limb was well beyond the reach of my tree pruning equipment and abilities, I called a tree service crew in and had a chunk of the treetop removed. Nice to be able to turn the antenna fully again without having to back it up and try again to rock it through the obstructing limb.

The solar flux index reached a surprisingly high 96 at the first of September, although band conditions appeared to be completely out of sync. Probably due to the higher numbers on the A and K indices. On September 3, the SFI had fallen to 92 and the A & K indices were each 2. This provided a lovely morning opening into Western Australia and LP into South Africa. On September 8, the SFI reached a surprising 119, with the A at 10 and the K at 3. The result was a flurry of 10m. and 15m. spots appearing on the DX cluster. Almost like the old days. By the latter part of the month, the SFI was back down to the mid-eighties, with relatively low A and K indices. On Sept. 26 and the weekend, this yielded nice afternoon openings into Europe.

KJ5X was heard working ZS5PT via long path. KK5LO worked T32BI in E. Kiribati and ZD7MY on St. Helena Isl. Gary KK5WL worked VK4KTS with 15-20 watts. Loyd KD5AIG has worked a good bit of DX recently: LU2CFC, PU2MRY, PY2EJN, HH2NH, PY2KC and PY5IP. Late in the month he worked Jamaica (6Y5) and Aruba P43). All of those were ten meters, of course, and in this hemisphere. But, any DX country you have not worked is good DX. Something about a journey of a thousand miles beginning with a single step (old Chinese proverb).

DX Worked -- RA9JR (Russia); ZS5PT (morning LP in South Africa); VK6CF, VK6LC, VK6DJP, VK6APM & VK6NZ (W. Australia); VK1GT (Australia); YB2BRW (Indonesia); T32BI (E. Kiribati); 9X/RW3AH (Rwanda); R3/WA2NZA (Moscow, Russia); VK6ACY (W. Australia); VK6ISL (Lacepede Island, W. Australia); ZS5NL (South Africa); 5X1Z (Uganda); 9X0A (Rwanda); VK2ARJ (Australia at 2200 UTC on 15 meters); VR6TC (Pitcairn Island); 3V8BB (Tunisia); VK9WM (Willis Island); V63KU (Micronesia); ZK1CC (So. Cook Is.); Z22JD (Zimbabwe); a whole string of JA stations during All Asia contest; another string of Siberian Russian stations in the same contest; D44BC (Angola); 9Q5HX (Zaire); ZS2H and ZS1AU (South Africa); Z22JE (Zimbabwe); VK6APM (W. Australia); ZK1XXP (Tongareva Isl., No. Cook Is. - 10, 15 & 20m SSB

+ 10m CW); ZS1LI (South Africa); HS0ZBJ (Thailand); ZS6AON (South Africa); ET3BT (Ethiopia); P29DW (Papua New Guinea); T32O (E. Kiribati); TT8JFC (Chad); lots of Europeans on 20-meters; VK2ARJ (Australia); UX5UO (Ukraine); K7K (Kure Island).

DX Heard -- 5N7YZC (Nigeria); ZS4CV (So. Africa); T32O (Christmas Island, Kiribati); 5H3HG (Tanzania); C21NJ (Nauru); XX9AU (Macao); 4X1MO (Israel); 3B8CF (Mauritius Isl.).

QSL Routes -- 5X1Z via SM7PKK; 9X0A via RW3AH; YB2BRW via N2UE; VR6TC via WD6GUD; 3V8BB via DF4UU; VK9WM via VK4FW; V63KU via JA6NL; ZK1XXP via WA4YBV; HS0ZBJ via W8GIO; T32O via P O Box 1583, Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744; TT8JFC via WA4ZJB; VR6CT via KA6CT; K7K via KE7LZ.

DXpedition activity: There were several good DXpedition operations on the air during September. 3V8BB turned up in Tunisia on Sept. 11 and was worked while operating split on 20-meters. That same day the expedition to Willis Island came on the air and was worked a half hour after 3V8BB, before they attracted the usual array of lid troublemakers. CY9DX was on but attracted modest levels of interest. In Libya, 5A28 was heard celebrating the 28th anniversary of their new government. Their operation was not all bad, but did not fulfill their objectives. The DXpedition to the North Cook Islands turned up on fifteen meters on Sept. 22 with a good signal. After working them fairly quickly, I noted KJ5X & KK5LO also worked them. KM5AO got them later in the week on 75 meters.

Jim Kirk worked VK9WM (Willis Island) on Sept. 15, as did yours truly (again). Walter Hock worked VK9WM on 10 meters on Sept. 16 and tipped me to where he was, whereupon I VFOed up to the frequency and worked Willis Island for the third time. Walter also worked a 6W1 in Senegal recently. K5NZ reported on the 10-meter net that he, too, had run up to the Willis Island frequency, followed by John W5PDW, where both fellows grabbed a new country. KZ5E followed with a QSO shortly thereafter. The Willis operation had been getting good results. One fellow was heard asking where their log server could be located so he could verify he is in the log. Seemed very disappointed and disturbed that they did not have such yet. Some people become easily spoiled. Willis has been easy enough to work that there should be no doubt if one has worked them. If so, a second contact on the same band will often yield confirmation by the DXpedition team: i.e., "that's a dupe!"

John WA5KOI reports working Pitcairn Island (VR6CT). George KD5CBC has retuned his Drake equipment and worked a little DX. He reports 15-meter contacts with Guiana (8R1), Mexico (XE) and Panama (HP1). KC5JZO also worked Mexico (XE). Terry KQ5U reports success in working some of the Asiatic stations in the evenings: i.e., UA0FH among others. W5PDW reports he worked Antarctica recently. Jack WA8GHZ reports two contacts in a row with Mauritius Island. He worked 3B8's CF and FG on 10 MHz recently.

Congrats to WA5POK on his recent endorsement of 320 countries credited for DXCC. Pokie worked Willis Island for #323 recently.

The DXpedition to Annobon/Pagalu Island has been canceled. After being postponed earlier due to visa problems, it is now canceled for the same reason. Often, getting there is the most difficult part!

The Midway-Kure DX Foundation got a neat call sign for their operation from Kure. Scheduled for a week beginning on September 26, the call sign was K7K; very nice. They appeared more or less on schedule, working primarily CW on 40m. and 17m. 25 years ago there was a Coast Guard MARS station at the Loran site there. KH6EDY was for some years the best (only?) way to work Kure. With the Loran station no longer there, it is becoming considerably more difficult to work and confirm Kure. They turned up on 15m Monday with a true 5/9 signal, operating split. After working them, I made a few phone calls. Heard W5PDW make a good contact; KK5LO, KQ5U, KZ5E and KM5AO followed afterward. K1OJ reports he had a QSO on 12m CW.

Walter KK5LO advises that the Pyramid 12 VDC power supply running his station blew up on him recently. This followed a similar fate of KD5AIJ's Pyramid unit, and the failure of another Pyramid supply at the NARS digipeater. Wonder what is wrong with these Pyramid units? [Wonder what model they are ... I have a model PS-26K and no problems since '94, Ed]

The DXpedition to Tongareva (No. Cook Islands) arrived on schedule on Sept. 22. I ran across them on 15 meters while casually tuning the bands late one evening. After working them (naturally), I called Jim Kirk who worked them shortly afterwards. Then I called Walter KK5LO who also worked them. An hour later I heard them come up on 20-meters with a mediocre signal, calling CQ. I worked them there, too, and learned they were using a vertical on 20. Four days later I ran across them on 15 meters again and learned they had a CW station going on 10 meters right then. A quick check revealed them to be highly readable, so I worked them there, too. Like other DXpeditions of recent times, this one has been easy to find and easy to work.

I stumbled onto a TT8 (Chad) station on 20 meters on Sunday evening while looking for the Kure DXpedition. His signal was about 5/5 and he had a horrible pileup bellowing at him endlessly. I know that Chad is not the easiest place to work, but there must be a lot of brand new DXers with older-sounding call signs. It might have helped quite a bit if he had operated split. Unfortunately, he seemed unfamiliar with the technique. This was a classical example of the unwashed multitude bellowing interminably, while no one could hear anything. It reminded me of the chaos that reigned a few years ago while the Norwegian chaps were operating on Bouvet Island. His signal built up a bit and after a few telephone calls, KK5LO, W5PDW and KQ5U also worked him.

Bill Gary K8CSG

Contest Connection

Members Score In Bubba Contest

This past Winter, our own O J K1OJ won the national FYBO (Freeze Your Butt Off) Contest where a scoring multiplier accounted for low temperature at the operating location. Although the winter FYBO contest favored our Northern friends, the tables were turned this August. That's when the BUBBA contest was held with scoring multiplier for Heat Index, a combo of temperature and humidity: the more the better!

K1OJ combined prime August Gulf Coast weather with good contest skills to place 2nd in this national QRP CW contest. K5ZTY and W5SB also placed in the top ten, while WA8GHZ and K5GQ placed "somewheres down there." Another nice showing, Bubba O J; congrats.

From 1930 Handbook, A Few Obscure Historical Q Sigs:

Q-Sig	Explanation
QRB	Approximate distance from your station to mine
QSC	Signal disappears entirely at intervals
QSD	Is my keying bad; keying is bad
OSE	Signals distinct? Signals run together
OSJ	Charge to be collected per word
QSP	Relay free of charge

73, Jack WA8GHZ/5 "I know the guy who built my radio."

1998 Election of Officers

The following are the candidates for NARS club officers for 1998. Each has accepted the challenge and agreed to serve if elected.

President – Joe Sokolowski KD5KR
Vice President – Dianna Hudspeth KC5VSF
Secretary – Bob Argo KC5JZO
Treasurer – Keith Dutson WD5DXL

Director at Large (2 year term) – Allen Majeski WA5REJ

In addition to these officers the 1998 Board will also consist of :

Bill Gary K8CSG – Director at Large (2nd of 2 year term)
Jim Kirk KJ5X – Immediate Past President
Walter Hock KK5LO – Past President

It looks to be an outstanding year.

Rudy KB5ZXO



by Keith Dutson

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Okay all you testers, this is the time to be preparing for some real neat on-the-air fun. Phone or CW, take your pick, because there are plenty of opportunities to operate in grand style over the next two months. Just check the contest dates on page 1. One of my favorite contests is the ARRL Sweepstakes. I already have one "Clean Sweep" coffee mug, thanks to Bill W5SB and all the ops who worked his station during the 1995 November Sweepstakes. Now my goal is to do it myself in my own shack. Wish me luck.

Sign up today as a NARS News reporter; see me for details. You do not have to be a writer or photographer, but it will help if you can do either. Call me at 281-351-7683, or send email to kdutson@swbell.net.

Glossary Of Solar–Terrestrial Terms – continued from page 1

Thanks to the Space Environment Center, here are some definitions of some of the relevant buzzwords:

a INDEX. A 3–hourly “equivalent amplitude” index of local geomagnetic activity; “a” is related to the 3–hourly K INDEX according to the following scale:

K	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	0	3	7	15	27	48	80	140	240	

A INDEX. A daily index of geomagnetic activity derived as the average of the eight 3–hourly a indices.

GEOMAGNETIC STORM. A worldwide disturbance of the earth’s magnetic field, distinct from regular diurnal variations.

Minor Geomagnetic Storm: A storm for which the Ap index was greater than 29 and less than 50.

Major Geomagnetic Storm: A storm for which the Ap index was greater than 49 and less than 100.

Severe Geomagnetic Storm: A storm for which the Ap index was 100 or more.

K INDEX. A 3–hourly quasi–logarithmic local index of geomagnetic activity relative to an assumed quiet–day curve for the recording site. Range is from 0 to 9. The K index measures the deviation of the most disturbed horizontal component.

Kp INDEX. A 3–hourly planetary geomagnetic index of activity generated in Gottingen, Germany, based on the K INDEX from 12 or 13 stations distributed around the world, or number of solar active events.

SOLAR MAXIMUM The month(s) during the SOLAR CYCLE when the 12–month mean of monthly average SUNSPOT NUMBERS reaches a maximum. The most recent solar maximum occurred in July 1989.

SOLAR MINIMUM. The month(s) during the SOLAR CYCLE when the 12–month mean of monthly average SUNSPOT NUMBERS reaches a minimum. The most recent minimum occurred in September 1986 (until maybe this August 1997???).

SUDDEN IONOSPHERIC DISTURBANCE (SID). HF propagation anomalies due to ionospheric changes resulting from solar FLAREs, PROTON EVENTS and GEOMAGNETIC STORMs.

SUNSPOT. An area seen as a dark spot on the PHOTOSPHERE of the sun. Sunspots are concentrations of magnetic flux, typically occurring in bipolar clusters or groups. They appear dark because they are cooler than the surrounding photosphere.

SUNSPOT NUMBER. A daily index of SUNSPOT activity (R), defined as $R = k (10 g + s)$ where S = number of individual spots, g = number of sunspot groups, and k is an observatory factor.

VE Session Results

NARS and Compaq VEs conducted an exam session in Tomball on September 27. The pass–rate of 100 percent was perhaps due to the small number of candidates and elements. Two candidates were examined on three elements, all of which were passed successfully, resulting in new Technician and Tech–Plus licensees. The participating VEs were out of the site by shortly after nine AM, one of the shortest sessions in memory. NARS was represented by Bill W5SB, Dick W5VHN, Jack WA8GHZ and Bill K8CSG, while Compaq was ably represented by Walter K5WH.

Public Service Events

Your radio skills are needed.

SIRE 5th Annual Ride-A-Thon, Saturday, October 18

Contact: Keith Dutson, 281-351-7683

Here's a chance to take part in an event that NARS members have supported with radio communications since Saddle Up For SIRE started five years ago. With reasonable weather, it is always fun and requires only a 2 meter HT, fresh batteries and a few hours

time. Volunteers are stationed along a ten mile trail near Montgomery where participants ride horses to raise money for SIRE, Self-Improvement Through Riding Education, the charity dedicated to the rehabilitation of children and adults with disabilities. For more information, call Keith Dutson.

Sunmart Texas Trail Endurance Run, Saturday, December 13

Contact: Walter Hock, 281-350-6633

This will be the second year NARS members have handled communications at this prestigious event with more than 600 participants. It is held in Sam Houston State Park, where the runners circumnavigate the entire park for a whopping 50 mile run. Bring STRONG batteries.

NARS Resource List

General Help:

Bill Stietenroth K5ZTY, 713-893-3901
Allen Majeski WA5REJ, 281-353-8652
Bill Denton W5SB, 281-469-8331,

Antennas

O J Quarles K1OJ, 281-955-1555, HF
Larry McCain WA5SAJ, 281-469-6709
Madison Jones W5MJ, 281-350-4330,
CW
Bill Gary K8CSG, 281-537-9240, DX
Bill Rister KC5EZQ, 281-537-8596, ATV

Satellite:

Deral Kent K5WNO, 281-548-7476,
RS12/13
Dick Rooney W5VHN, 281-288-8424

Electrical Design, Troubleshooting:

George Carlson KC5RCC, 281-376-8307

Packet:

Don Bedell KA3BKU, 281-370-6576

VHF:

Brian Derx N5BA, 713-894-5942

Computer Operating, Win'95:

Bob Argo KC5JZO, 281-288-7430

Computer Programming:

Keith Dutson WD5DXL, 281-351-7683

Interference:

Harry Gage N5WIZ, 281-370-7488, Basic
Advice

Mark Tyler K5GQ, 281-587-0256

Card Checking Awards Managers:

DXCC - Bob Walworth N5ET,
Linda Walworth KE5TF, 281-363-0209
WAS, VUCC - Brian Derx N5BA;
713-894-5942

NARS Public Information Officer:

Open

NARS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT & BOARD CHAIRMAN
Jim Kirk KJ5X *376-0718

VICE PRESIDENT
Open

SECRETARY
Bob Argo KC5JZO 288-7430

TREASURER
Keith Dutson WD5DXL 351-7683

DIRECTORS
Walter Hock KK5LO 350-6633
Rudy Novotny KB5ZXO 251-4546
Mark Condit KM5AO 550-5659
Bill Gary K8CSG 537-9240

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Please send address, phone, email and other changes to Marian Denton at NARS, P.O. Box 690342, Houston, TX 77269-0342, email W5NC@juno.com

FOR NARS INFORMATION CALL

Marian Denton, 469-8331, for General Information and Bill Gary, 537-9240, for VE Exam Information or send email 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 Jim KJ5X

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

*All telephone #'s are 281 Area Code

NARS REPEATERS

2 M - 146.060 / 146.660 MHz
Digipeater - 145.71 MHz
Call (W5NC) Alias (NARS)

NARS Web Page

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

Coordinator H O WA5MLT
Trustee Walter KK5LO

NARS NEWS is published monthly by
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Send all Articles and Materials for the
Newsletter to: 24415 Deep Meadow,
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Northwest Amateur Radio Society is a
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American Radio Relay League.

ARRL Club No. 2120

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