

NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

December 1998

December 18 is Home Brew Night!

This is the night you've been waiting for! Drag out that prized project and bring it to the meeting. Even if it's not a prized one, if it has a story behind it that will educate, inspire, humor or otherwise beneficially affect your fellow club members, then it is worth bringing. Bring a little extra cash for some additional fun. There will be a silent auction of miscellaneous articles donated to NARS by Dick Rousseau KU4QK. This is all GOOD stuff. Plus, there is that mobile HF antenna matching coil (bug catcher) donated by Alex Stalinsky WA5UHT during his presentation last July. Nothing will remain unsold. So come and have some fun and a deal you won't believe!

Jim Kirk KJ5X

Important Dates

Friday, December 18, 7:30 PM - NARS monthly General Membership meeting, Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church - Eyeball QSOs, 7:00 PM.

Tuesday, December 29, 7:30 PM - NARS Board of Directors meeting, Terra Nova Clubhouse, 5200 Woodville

Friday, January 15, 1999, 7:30 PM - NARS monthly General Membership meeting, Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church - Eyeball QSOs, 7:00 PM.

Saturday, January 23, 1999, 8:30 AM - VE License Exam Session, Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just South of Main). NOTE: NO SESSION IN DECEMBER.

Contests:

January 1, ARRL Straight Key Night (SKN)

January 2-3, ARRL RTTY Roundup

January 9-10, North American QSO Party - CW

January 16-17, North American QSO Party - Phone

January 29-31, CQ WW 160 Meter CW

Notice:

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

Deadline for articles to appear in January issue - Thursday, December 31.

NARS Banquet Plans - Second Notice

Date: January 15, 1999

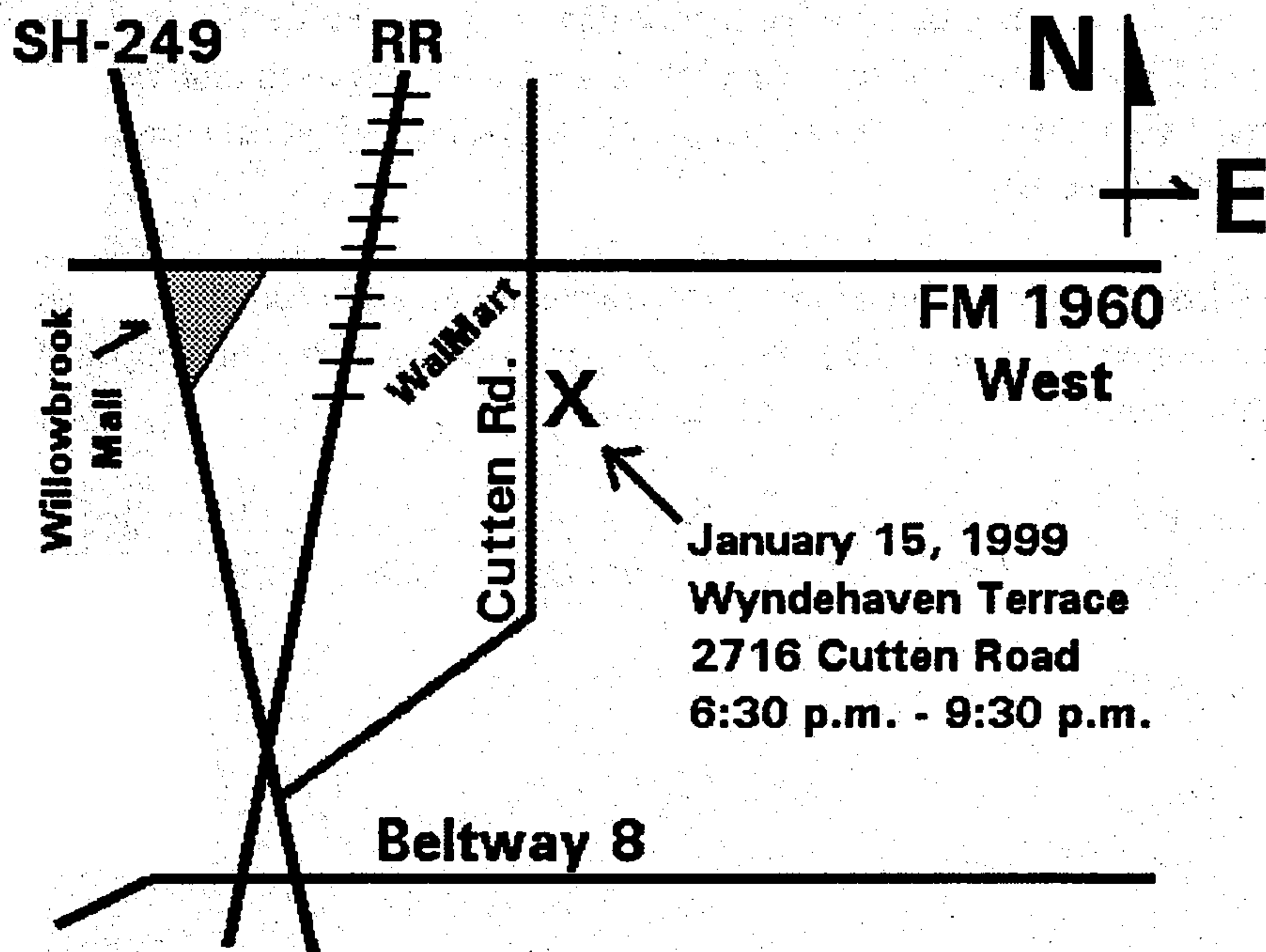
Time: 6:30PM - 9:30PM

Place: Wyndehaven Terrace

Address: 12716 Cutten Road (Just south of 1960)

Cost: \$15 Member, \$15 Member Guest, \$18 Non Member

RSVP PLEASE!!! To Dianna Hudspeth KC5VSF (409)447-2737 (Local Call) You may pay in advance directly to Dianna, or to Keith Dutson, or send a check or money order payable to NARS, to PO Box 690342, Houston, TX 77269-0342 *Please come and enjoy a great evening!!!!*



BREAKFAST

at Victors

4710 W FM 1960

Saturdays

8:00 AM

President's Corner

December 1998

December – a special month for the NARS gang. We have just completed the grueling task of electing new officers for the coming year, and now we can enjoy what's left of it with the traditional Home Brew presentation. This is always a fun event. All participants get to brag on their accomplishments, and roast the competition at the same time, resulting in a lot of laughs and even the creation of a few new one-liners! I'll be there in all my glory, and back with the famous "KD5KR Big Foot" power supply. I know, last month I announced that I would not be exhibiting "Big Foot" this year, but due to a tremendous groan of despair from the membership I realized how much this means to you all. So, "Big Foot" will be back by popular demand this one last time!

Also, we will be having a silent auction to place in the hands on the membership some very good but slightly used "stuff" donated by Dick Rousseau, KU4QK. Here's your chance to pick up some bargains of the first order, so bring some cash with you, cause IOU's and promissory notes will not be accepted – not from this bunch! (Checks O.K. with fourteen ID's.)

One other event to plan for is the Annual Banquet on January 15th. There should be an announcement in this newsletter outlining the details. It's important that you get your reservation and \$'s to Dianna, KC5VSF, as soon as you can. Do it now, before we're all booked up!

Joe Sokolowski KD5KR

NARS Board of Directors Meeting 11/27/98

Treasurer's Report – The checkbook balance 10/31/98 was \$2916.37.

Banquet Program Feature – 1998 NARS IN REVIEW – a slide show of events that occurred during the year.

ARRL Fund for the Defense of Amateur Radio Frequencies – Request received from the ARRL for another donation.

December program – Silent auction and Home Brew Night.

Bob Argo KC5JZO, Secretary

VE Session Results

The final regularly scheduled VE session was held in Tomball on November 28, 1998. Eight candidates were examined by the VEs, with generally excellent results. Three new Technicians were certified, one new Technician-Plus and one new Advanced Class licensee. Additionally two candidates passed the written element for the Extra Class license. The overall pass-rate for the session was 81 percent. Participating VEs included Bill K8CSG, Bill K5ZTY, Bill W5SB, Peter KF5ND, Bruce WC5CW, Ben KM5OT and Walter K5WH (Compaq).

Bill Gary K8CSG

RESISTORS 101

When I was in 4th grade, my mom was helping me remember the names of the Great Lakes, but the only acronym she could come up with was HELL, which covered Huron, Erie and two Lakes of your choosing. It was a decidedly impolite study aid for a 4th grader, and not very complete since it only helped to remember 4 of the 5 Great Lakes. Years later the acronymn, HOMES, arrived on the scene to the joy of students in the area.

Well history repeats. For all of us who learned an impolite resistor color code ditty, here's a much nicer one which you can pass on to your scouts, daughter, and others in polite company. I wish that I had learned it as:

Better Be	Right Or	Your	Great Big	Venture	Goes West
Black Brown	Red Orange	Yellow	Green Blue	Violet	Grey White

Jack WA8GHZ

DX News

More sunspots brought bigger smiles, As DX rolled across the miles. But none smiled bigger than W5SB, The proud new owner of a tall tower and big antenna, he! . . .

The unmistakable sounds of approaching QRPers coming up the hill caused The Old Timer to rouse himself slightly and to prepare for another onslaught. One of the more vocal of the group was leading the pack. In his typically direct manner, he demanded to know "Where do these idiots who call themselves DXers come from?" Seeking a bit of clarification, The Old Timer asked which particular idiots he was referring to. "These guys who get on the DXpedition's transmitting frequency and act like it is the international intercom," blurted out the QRPer, who was almost frothing at the mouth. "Well" welled The Old Timer as he considered the best way to get out this mess, "maybe they are a bit misguided." "Misguided?" bellowed the QRPer, blowing froth into the face of The Old Timer. "These guys don't know the first thing about working DX. They are always asking who the DX is, where he is, which way they should point their beams, and who his QSL manager is --and all of it right on the DX transmitting frequency. What can we do about them?" he demanded before pausing to catch his breath. "Just ignore them," said The Old Timer. "In time they will become bored and go away if you don't react to them." Son of a Gun! The pack calmed down a bit to think about what they had been told. "You mean we should just sit there and listen to such junk?" asked one of the less noisy types. "That's about it," said The Old Timer. "These idiots have always been around. You know what the True Believers say, don't you? Those who can work the DX, work it; those who can't, get in the way of those who can." What more could be said on the subject? The QRPers began stumbling back down the hill, talking among themselves about what they had heard, while The Old Timer lay back to

resume his nap!

The propagation numbers for November opened at around SFI 115, A=3 and K=2. They quickly moved to 150ish, 5 and 2 during which time good DX was plentiful. Not one but two E30s were on the air simultaneously. On November 4, A51DX appeared, implying something. . . A major solar storm erupted on Nov. 8, driving the A index up to 47. This was followed by another storm on Nov. 14 which created similar results, much of this during the Pratus Island DXpedition. Rotten signals resulted. Eventually they recovered to a more normal 150+, 9 and 3. The numbers hovered in a similar range through most of November.

LOCAL EVENTS: Walter, KK5LO, got November off to a great start by working E30HA (Eritrea) on the first day, as did Bob Walworth, N5ET. George, K5VUU, got off to a good start with Zone 19, UA0FDX, on Nov.1. KJ5X, W5PDW, and W5BA also reported working E30HA. That makes seven NARS members who have worked this rare one. George, K5VUU, continues to creep up on DXCC with 96 countries now confirmed. K5ZTY was heard working ZL8RS in Kermadec. Later in the month he worked D68WU (Comoros Is.) on 40m. Conrad (W5MN) worked XZ1N in Burma when most of the rest of us could not even hear the XZ station. XZ1N showed up on Thanksgiving Day and was readable over most of the USA. Despite a couple of tours through the numbers, no one in Houston was heard working them. Right after the CQWDX CW contest ended XZ1N came up on 14190. A quick phone call to Dick Rooney enabled him to get a solid contact, which I believe will put Dick, W5VHN, on the DXCC Honor Roll. Great, Dick!!!

DX WORKED: FR5DX (Reunion) 20m 0401Z; ZS75SIG (So. Africa Sp. Event) 20m 1315Z; GD4PTV (Isle of Man) 15m 1705Z; DU3BS (Philippine Is.) 15m

2312Z; HL5QY (S.Korea) 15m 2317Z; UA0FDX (Sakhalin Is. - Zone 19) 15m 0035Z; YC8VIP (Indonesia) 10m 2212Z; JW9XGA (Svalbard Isl.) 15m 2236Z; 3B8CF (Mauritius Isl.) 20m 0321Z; E30HA (Eritrea) 10m 1257Z; 5H3RW (Tanzania) 10m 1839Z; V63AO (Kosrae Isl.) 10m 2003Z; DS5RNM (So. Korea) 10m 2245Z; BY4BNS (China) 15m 0025Z; E30GA (Eritrea) 20m 2328Z; ZL8RS (Kermadec) 10m 2202Z; VK9LX (Lord Howe Is.) 20m 1454Z; 5B4AGC (Cyprus) 10m 1532Z; TR8CA (Gabon) 10m 1549Z; 5V7A (TOGO) 15m 2342Z; TU2DP (Ivory Coast) 15m 1523Z; XX9AS (Macao) 20m 1429Z; DU100SAN (Philippines) 20m 1431Z; XZ1N (Myanmar/Burma) 20m 1452Z.

DX HEARD (NOT WORKED): ZD7BG (St. Helena); ET3AA (Ethiopia); YT1VP (Yugoslavia); 3W5FM (Vietnam); BV2RS (TAIWAN); FT5ZH (Amsterdam Island) 20m.

QSL ROUTES: ZS75SIG via ZS5BBO; UA0FDX (Sakhalin Is. - Zone 19) P O Box 55, Uglegorsk, Sakhalin Isl. 694900 Russia; JW9XGA via LA9XGA; E30HA via HA5YPP; 5H3RW via DL0MAR; E30GA via K4JDJ; ZL8RS via ZL1RS; VK9LX via VK2ICV; 5B4AGC via buro or new CB address; TR8CA via F6CBC; 5V7A VIA GM4FDM; TU2DP via K4MQL; XX9AS via KU9C; XZ1N via W1XT.

AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY: Many folks need Burma, now called Myanmar, and their chance is coming during late November - early December. A group is planning a DXpedition for Nov. 21 to Dec. 16. They expect to have four stations with a good array of antennas on top of a respectable hotel. Here is what should be a good opportunity for those who need Burma to take it off their list. QSLs will be handled by W1XT.

Continued on page 4

Operating Courtesy

Have you ever been operating on HF with a good contact and had your reception interfered with by another station operating too close to you? Sure you have! Have you unthinkingly done the same thing? Probably.

On today's crowded bands, operating courtesy becomes important. It is really nothing more than common sense. A good operator sets an example for others to follow. A courteous amateur operator always listens before transmitting so as not to interfere with stations already using the frequency. If the frequency is occupied, move to another frequency far

enough away to prevent interference (QRM). Know how much bandwidth each mode occupies and guide yourself accordingly.

A good rule of thumb is to leave 150 to 500 Hz between CW signals and at least 3 KHz between carriers in single sideband (phone).

A good amateur operator transmits so as to keep the contents of the transmission within the bounds of propriety and good taste. It's not just an operating courtesy; it's a FCC rule! Reference Part 97 for complete details in the FCC Rule Book,

published by the ARRL. So make sure your audio level control (ALC) is properly set as shown by the ALC scale on your transceiver S meter. If you stay within the bounds of the scale you won't be guilty of sending out signal splatter.

All of us should try to be more courteous than the other person; you contribute to the image of the Amateur Radio Service as being a self-disciplined, self-policing service with good standards. Observing the FCC rules will enable all to enjoy happy operating.

Harry Gage N5WIZ

DX News - Continued

Continued from page 3

Lord Howe Island was on the air November 22 to December 1. QSL to VK1CV direct.

BQ9P, Pratus Island, was on the air Nov. 12-19 with erratically weak signals. QSL via KU9C. BQ9P appeared on schedule with generally weak signals here in Texas. It has been frustrating trying to work them. Pratus Island is third on the most wanted list of needed countries. It is surprising they have such poor signals when the JAs and BVs have good readability here. All of the local Deserving DXers listened extensively, but few had any success. W5MN worked them with his taalllll-ish tower, which proves antenna height does have meaning.

The Space A group showed up in Eritrea after all, operating as E30GA and working a lot of RTTY. They were on 15 and 20m SSB on Nov. 6, with a sometimes readable signal. The usual pileup traumas prevailed, i.e., the pack was in full bellow. After the initial trauma pangs, things settled down a bit. KD5AJ, K5NZ, K5VUU, KQ5U and I

worked him on Nov.8. QSLs go to K4JDJ. On Nov. 12 they got their amplifiers out of customs and appeared on 20m with a big signal -- which promptly brought forth the idiots, all asking where he was listening, who his QSL manager might be and what his callsign was. All such information is available to stations which take the time to listen a little, but so many have to repeatedly ask questions and then call on the DX station's transmitting frequency rather than observe the split. When will they learn?

Jack, WA8GHZ, has plans for additional trips into 3C (Eq. Guinea) again during 1999.

This time, to avoid being classed as a "slim" by the DXCC desk at ARRL, he plans to be so legal that his contacts will count for DXCC. The paperwork is being cranked up well in advance already. Details regarding his dates of travel will be announced when firm.

K5LBL reports good success and loads of fun with his ten-meter mobile during drive times. He has enjoyed working some DX and quite a number of states.

H.O., WA5MLT, (new NARS president-elect) is preparing to move back into the DXing business at his new country home. He had a new temporary ten-meter dipole up and is already working some DX, i.e., LU, EA8 and about fifteen more countries. H.O. is not beginning from scratch, as he already holds DXCC and WAZ certificates from one of his previous "lives" Welcome, H.O! When does the tower come?

Remember in last month's DX News where I described the new "Big Gun DXer" who was expected to emerge in the shadow of W5SB's new 115-foot tower. What a surprise to learn that it may be XYL Marian, KB5SGV, who turns out to fit that description. On the day before Thanksgiving, Marian was heard working LY62ZZ (Lithuania), Z3 (Macedonia) and YU (Yugoslavia). Later that day at the NARS Lunch Bunch gathering she observed that she only needs 97 more for DXCC. (It's really only 96, Marian. Remember, the USA counts, too!) Go get 'em, Marian!

Bill Gary K8CSG

What's in a Callsign?

Before answering the question, maybe we should review what a callsign really is. According to the FCC, your callsign is your unique identification both as an operator and station. But the bigger question is "what's the real impact of a callsign?" Your radio pin?

Secretly don't we all want a Kilowatt, Yankee, or a Norway in the suffix of our call? I mean come on, some callsigns just sound cooler, better! It's claimed that some callsigns work better when contesting. Some work better when DXing. For example, if you are in a pileup and the DX station solicits the 5th call area stations whose suffix ends in "K" and your callsign is AI5AK, KU4QK, or KK5WK, you MY FRIEND are in luck. On the other hand, have you ever heard two thousand hams screaming "kilowatt, kilowatt" or "whiskey, kilowatt" at the same time? It's devastating if your callsign ends in Japan or Lima! Simply because the band will have faded by the time they get around to the "L's." Even worse is that the bottom could drop out of the entire 5th call area, and the DX station moves on to the sixes! THERE IS NOTHING WORSE.

While the answer is different for each one

of us, I propose we take the "cool callsign" thing into our own hands. You can order a vanity callsign like Kilowatt five Kilowatt Yankee Norway. Or, just add your favorite character to the end of your existing call. Try this one: Kilowatt Delta five Echo India Papa - Zulu. See what a difference the "Z" makes. It really is remarkable. Here's another one: Whiskey Delta five Golf Norway India - Tango. It's amazing!

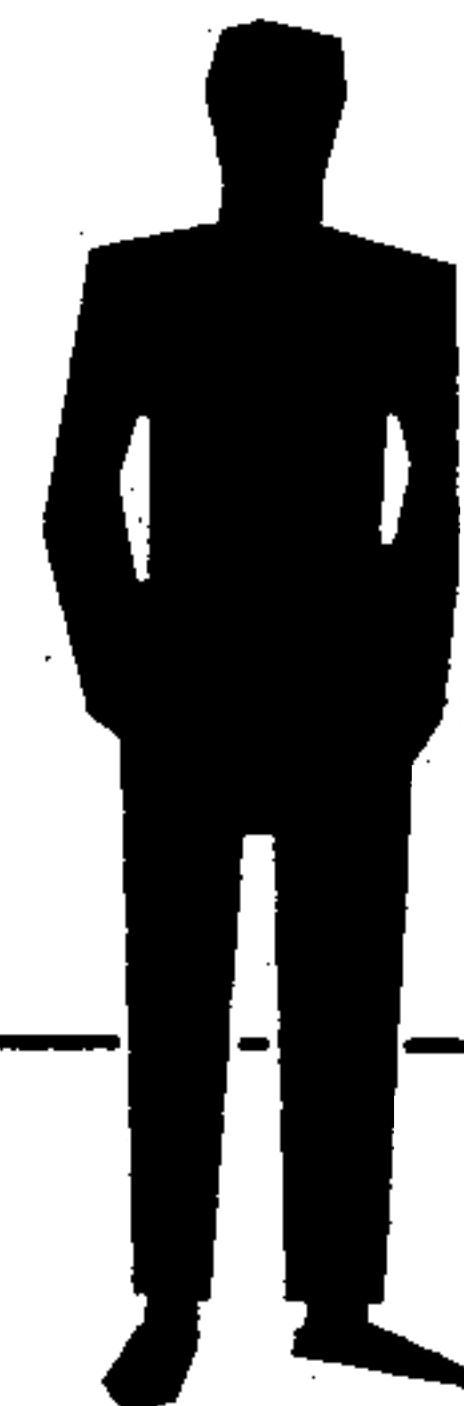
Other callsigns are perfect right out of the shoot. Try these suffixes: Bravo X-ray Romeo; Bravo X-ray Zedd, Golf Hotel Zulu; Lima Alpha, Mexico Japan; Norway Zanzibar. Well, you get the idea and there are many others. Kilowatt Japan five X-ray - it's tight; it has all of the right characters; it's cool, and it sounds even better mobile FROM w6-land.

On second thought, maybe you're the one that makes the callsign and the contact what it really is by giving it your own special character. Can't ya just hear Richard, K5RrrAaaFff. I guess my fav is W5MmmJay. When I hear Madison ID, I want to pull over, face the flag, and salute. Mr. Smooth!

73 de Whiskey Alpha five Mayonnaise Lettuce (&) Tomatoes Zanzibar!

Where's my form 610-1

H. O. WA5MLT



by Keith Dutson

Once again, it's farewell, dear friends, as your newsletter editor. Bill Gary K8CSG will be editing the January, 1999 issue.

But, it's not farewell to the good times and fellowship with club members that have created a great amount of enjoyment since I joined NARS. The treasurer's job will keep me in touch with most of you for at least another year. Also, I will continue to be an active participant in mailing the newsletter, since maintaining the mailing database is part of the treasury job.

Thanks to those of you who have offered kind comments on my performance over the past three years. It means so much to me and bolsters the sense of pride that has been a continual source of inspiration to continue as editor.

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HOUSTON
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SUPPLY, INC.

George DiLetto, KDORW
President

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181 Cypresswood Drive
Spring, TX 77388

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281-355-7373
Fax 281-355-8007

Welcome

Join us in welcoming the following new NARS member: Dick Hussey (working on license)

Also, congratulations to:

*John Mudd W0TLO, upgraded from advanced to extra
Bill Hood KD5EKA, upgraded from novice to tech plus
Buddy Lindner KC5NSW, upgraded from tech plus to general*

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
WAZ - Bill Gary K8CSG, 281-537-9240

NARS Public Information Officer:

Open (apply to Board if interested)

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*Call Marian for general information about
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changes to:*

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Houston, TX 77269-0342

NETS

10 M Ragchew: Monday 8:00 PM. 28.444
Coordinator: Jim Kirk KJ5X
jrkirk@wt.net 281-376-0718

2 M Information: Wed. 8:00 PM, 146.660
Coordinator: Bill Gary K8CSG
bsnn87a@prodigy.com 281-537-9240

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URL: <http://www.flash.net/~nars/>
Webmaster: H O Townsend WA5MLT
wa5mlt@flash.net 281-955-8216
Trustee: Walter Hock KK5LO
kk5lo@flash.net 281-350-6633

REPEATERS

2 M - 146.060 / 146.660 (KA5AKG)
70 cm - 449.375 / 444.375 (KA5AKG)
Digipeater - 145.71 (W5NC alias NARS)

MEETINGS

Monthly General Membership at Spring-
Cypress Presbyterian: third Friday, 7:30 PM
Saturday Breakfast at Victors Restaurant:
8:00 AM
Wednesday Lunch at Various Locations:
11:30 AM (Info on 146.660)

NARS NEWS is published monthly by
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Send all articles and materials other than
email for the Newsletter to:

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