

NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

May 1998

Field Day Preparation

Come to this month's meeting for an interesting, informative discussion of the planned 1998 NARS Field Day. Bring your questions regarding preparation, timing, operating, scoring, or whatever comes to mind about the biggest event each year sponsored by our club. Meet the leaders and organizers, and learn their goals for this year. Sign up to help with setup, service, tear down, or all three. And, above all, join in the fun of just ragchewing about the various topics that will be tossed out to the floor.

Keith WD5DXL

Contest Connection Texas QSO Party Time

I guess you have to be living under a rock to not know that May 23rd and 24th is the 1998 Texas QSO Party. You also would not know that it's one of the biggest NARS events ever. Never have we NARSians rallied to such a large scale of activity [except Field Day, maybe? -ed.]. Mobileers are putting the finishing touches on their rigs and have planned their trips through Texas counties. Never have we had more mobile HF rigs primed and ready to go. Come 9:00 AM on Saturday morning they will be on their way. Before returning on Sunday afternoon they will have covered thousands of miles including about 150 Texas counties.

The Texas QSO party, rich in tradition, has been sponsored for many years by the Texas DX Society. In recent years TQP has fallen on hard times. In an effort to help revive TQP, NARS has joined forces with TDXS to help promote this once popular event. Henry Schneider W5HNS, coordinator of this event, tells me that there was a time when all the Texas counties were covered. In fact, one year all the counties in the Five-call area were covered. I guess as they say that was the good old days. This will be the third year NARS will be involved to a much smaller scale. Efforts are being made to get more Texas clubs involved.

In addition to the mobile rigs out running around in the counties, fixed stations will also be slugging away trying to attract out of state contacts. Many of our members live or have vacation homes outside of Harris County. These folks will play an important part in our success in TQP.

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Important Dates

Saturday, May 9, 7:00 AM - Buffalo Bayou Regatta (canoe race), San Felipe just west of Voss.

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

Saturday, May 16, 12:00 AM - Annual NARS Picnic, Keith Dutson's place, 24415 Deep Meadow, Tomball, directions: 281-351-7683.

Saturday, May 23, 8:30 AM - VE License Exam Session, Tomball Community Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just South of Main).

Tuesday, May 26, 7:30 PM - NARS Board of Directors meeting, Terra Nova Clubhouse, 5200 Woodville

Friday-Sunday, June 5-7, ARRL West Gulf Convention, Ham-Com '98, Arlington Convention Center, Dallas - Ft Worth

Contests:

May 9, ARRL Spring Sprints - 902, 1296, 2304 MHz

May 16, ARRL Spring Sprints - 50 MHz

May 23-24, Texas QSO Party

May 30-31 CQ WW WPX CW

June 13-15 ARRL June VHF QSO Party

June 20-21 All Asia DX CW

June 27-28 ARRL Field Day

Notice:

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

Deadline for articles to appear in June issue - Sunday, May 31.

BREAKFAST

at Victors

4710 W FM 1960

Saturdays

8:00 AM

President's Corner

May 1998

Can you believe it? Here it is, five months into the year, and I can't seem to catch up. I think the only man who ever got all his work done by Friday was Robinson Crusoe! But still, things seem to keep moving along when you have good friends and associates to help you meet your goals.

This year's novice/tech. class is a good example. A project such as this does not just happen by itself. It takes folks who can pick up the ball and run with it. George K5VUU and O.J. K1OJ did just that. These two took on the task of teaching code to a group of individuals who didn't know a dot from a dash. At the last VE session, four of the students took the code test and three were successful in their attempt. All this in less than three weeks! The course continues on and by the end of May more will attempt getting their very first ticket. Many more, I'm sure, will be successful by then. Then there's Bill Rister KC5EZQ, the man behind the scene, on duty each session insuring that all goes as planned. One can go on, citing the numerous others giving of their time to lecture the various aspects of achieving that first plateau of amateur radio. These are the people that make things work.

Let's look at another example – the Texas QSO Party. Here's another activity that has sparked the interest and excitement of many. Bill W5SB and O.J. K1OJ worked the audience like true professionals resulting in participation that was unbelievable. Last Saturday's breakfast attendance was the largest in many months, all eager to hear more of this special activity. Henry Schneider W5HNS, VP of the Texas DX Society, showed up at Victor's and marveled at the turnout we had. You too can still get in on this action. Poke Bill or O.J. in the ribs and tell him you want to hear more of this exciting venture (Well, maybe a tap on the shoulder would do just as well.).

Dianna KC5VSF is overseeing this year's NARS picnic. The site will be Keith Dutson's Ranch on May 16th. Be sure to get more details on this event in another article in this month's NARS News.

See what I mean? I figure I don't have to catch up with people like this nearby. This is what makes NARS work! This is why we're almost two hundred strong and still growing!

Joe Sokolowski KD5KR

Public Service Events

Your radio skills are needed.

Buffalo Bayou Regatta (canoe race), Saturday, May 9 (rain date May 10)
Contact: Scott Byrd N5KEU, home: 281-537-6033
Location: San Felipe just west of Voss.

Be there at 7:00 am – race starts at 8:00 am. At least 15 hams are needed, each with a two-meter HT. Lunch will be served at the end of the race. Bring sunglasses, hat, suntan lotion, lawn chair, paper and pen.

VE Session Results

VE EXAM RESULTS – MARCH

COMPAQ and NARS VEs held another amateur examination session on March 28. Four candidates were examined on six elements, with a pass-rate of 83 percent. One Extra Class, one Codeless Technician and one Technician-Plus licenses were earned. NARS VEs were Michael KM5LJ, Larry WA5SAJ, Walter KK5LO, Bob N5ET, Jim KJ5X, Bruce WC5CW and Bill K8CSG, while Compaq was represented by Walter K5WH and Willie KB5TES.

VE EXAM RESULTS – APRIL

The NARS/COMPAQ VEs conducted the regular examination session on April 25, 1998 in Tomball. Thirteen candidates submitted to examination on a total of 30 elements. Ten elements were passed, resulting in a pass-rate of 33 percent. Two new Novices, two Technicians, two Technician-Plus and one Extra Class licensee resulted, with several of the written elements bring passed with 100 percent scores. Three of our current radio class members passed the 5 wpm code examination. These VEs participated: Bill K8CSG, Rudy KB5ZXO, Dick W5VHN, Jim KJ5X, Mike N5OZJ, Bruce WC5CW, Walter KK5LO, Walter K5WH, Jerry KK5CA and Rick KZ5E. Willie KB5TES provided good administrative support.

Bill Gary K8CSG

NARS Board of Directors Meeting 4/29/98

Programs – May – Field Day preparation.

Rose Hill Node – Equipment has been removed for cleaning and checkup prior to new installation.

Annual Picnic – Date changed from May 9 to May 16, 1998; location is Keith Dutson's house.

Bob Argo KC5JZO, Secretary

DX News

I don't believe the half I hear, Nor the quarter of what I see! But I have one faith, sublime and true, That nothing can slake or slay; Each spring I firmly believe anew, One of the Slim's will be true-blue...

Propagation was moderately good as April began, with the solar flux index at 106, the A-index at 3 and the K-index at 0. This enabled the Temotu DXpedition to get off to a good start with 5x9 signals on 20 and 15m. At the end of April's first week, the SFI had climbed to 133, with A=4 and K=0. These good numbers produced loud signals from H40 for extended periods, as well as lots of other good DX. By April 19 the SFI was down to 101. As the month continued the SFI fell lower and lower. On Apr. 23 it was 88. As the final week of April began, a solar flare considerably messed up the bands, with the A index rising into the high 20s. Although the SFI stayed constant during the last week, the A index declined to single digits as the effects of the solar flare wore off.

NARS members attained good results with the H40AA operation during the first day. N5ET worked them within the first hour. K8CSG and K5NZ followed with good QSOs within the next twelve hours. K8CSG worked them eight hours later on 15m, followed by KJ5X, W5VHN and KD5AIJ. Others (later) include K1OJ, K5MN, KK5LO, W5PDW, KM5LA, WF5W, K5VUU, WA5UA, KM5AO, K5WNO, KM5OE, KB5ZXO, K5ZTY, KK5LD, KM5OT, KQ5U, W5SB and WA5SAJ. I feel this is a very notable accomplishment for members of NARS, a club that a few years ago had an extremely low level of interest in DXing. That list includes a total of 24 NARS members who worked H40AA.

Back in 1971 I worked some country in West Africa, probably either Mali or Mauritania, with Frank Turek, DL7FT, as the operator. Over the succeeding years I have worked him in many similar DXCC locations. It was a pleasure recently to find him as ZK2FT on Niue Island in the Pacific Ocean. This was hardly one of the despised-by-some

"15-second QSOs", as we had a nice little chat about previous contacts from various parts of the world. Later, we had a quick QSO on 24 MHz with 100w and my R5 vertical. He plans to operate from Tokelau, ZK3FT, Tonga, A35FT, Fiji, 3D2FT, and Rotuma, 3D2FT/R. Frank is a dependable QSLer and I have many of his DXpedition cards in my files.

DX WORKED: XUF2B (Cambodia) 20m 1500Z; H40AA (Temotu Is.) 20m 1325Z; 3D2CB/R (Rotuma) 12m 0011Z; ZK2FT (Niue Isl.) 15 and 12m ~2354Z; FW2EH (Wallis Island) 15m 0301; SU8LXR (Egypt) 20m 2000Z; 3D2CB/R (Rotuma) 12m 2354Z; YB0AI (Indonesia) 20m 1302Z; JT1BG (Mongolia) 20m 1437Z; FO0FI (Austral Islands) 15m 1807Z; FO0MIZ (Austral Is.) 10 m CW 2005Z; T32RT (. E. Kiribati) 12m 0041Z; VK2IVK 20m 1417Z; A35FT (Tonga) 10m 0114Z; FO0FR (Marquesas Is.) 20m 1542Z; ZL1UE (New Zealand) 20m 1356; VK4VG (Australia) 20m 1404Z; 9M6CT (E. Malaysia) 20m 1445; 3D2TK (Fiji) 15m 0258Z; 3D2KZ (Fiji) 15m 0208Z; BV98ARL (Taiwan) 20m 1244Z.

DX HEARD BUT NOT WORKED: VU2DK (India) 20m 1441Z; H40AB - Jim Smith in Temotu on various freq.'s at various times; TZ6JA (Mali) 20m 2143Z; SV2ASP/A (Mt. Athos) 20m 1825Z; YJ0AWP (Vanuatu) 40m 1045Z.

QSL ROUTES: H40AA via OH2BN; SU8LXR via SU1ER; TZ6JA via JA3EMU; 3D2CB/R via OKDXF; ZK2FT via DL7FT; JT1BG via S.Baatar, P O Box 158 Ulan Bator 13, Mongolia via Japan; FO0FI (Austral Is.) via K6SLO; FO0MIZ via VE3HO; T32RT via W6UC; A35FT via DL7FT; FO0FR (Marquesas Is.) via K6SLO; 9M6CT via Box 7, Bangkok, Thailand.

Egypt is normally a bit difficult to work. During early April SU8LXR was operating from Luxor, the Valley of the Kings, in celebration of the Hajj, the annual pilgrimage of Muslims to Mecca. The station attracted significant pileups but could be worked with persistence. QSLs go to SU1ER.

LOCAL EVENTS: John, WA5KOI, reports he had a good chat with 5R8FK in Madagascar on 30m early in April. Sounds like John is edging very close to CW DXCC. Nice going, John! Jerry, KK5CA, reports he had a great time in the CQWPX contest, working about 7.5 hours for 100+ contacts and 87 multipliers. One new country was worked - Bolivia. Mike, KM5LA, and Jim, KJ5X, worked A35RK on Tonga on 10m. New one for Mike. I worked Frank, A35FT, on 10m and 15m in the evening of April 19. Steve, KD5AIJ, surprised some by working FO0FR in the Marquesas Islands from his car on Apr. 22. Nice work, Steve! Walter, KK5LO, Mike, KM5LA, Bill, K5ZTY, Loyd, KM5OE, and O.J., K1OJ, also worked FO0FR. Bob, K0DQW, reports some new DX worked (next time I will remember what it was he worked).

Mike, KM5LA, reports another new one worked - 4X50DS/SK. This interesting callsign has some special significance. In celebrating their 50 years of independence and amateur radio, Israel is creating special commemorative callsigns for more of less prominent Israeli hams that have become silent keys. Current hams in Israel are using these callsigns. There are special QSLs, which are quite attractive, for confirming these contacts.

It was enjoyable helping Loyd, KM5OE, put up a new LP antenna at his mother's place on Old Walters Road where he does his DX operating when in Houston. It was the first time I had seen a Tennadyne log periodic antenna, which appears to be very well built and appears to work nicely. Loyd now has about 50 or so confirmed countries for DXCC.

K5ZTY has a real tower foundation in his yard now. On Good Friday we filled a very large hole with concrete. His tower may break off at the top of the foundation, but it WILL NOT pull the foundation out of the ground! Looks like Bill learned from his work with Madison Jones a couple of years earlier.

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DX News – Continued

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A small group from California (Bob Ferraro and son) showed up on Rurutu Island in the Austral Group in mid-April signing FO0FI. I first noticed them via a posting on the cluster by Steve, KD5AIJ, just after he worked them April 14 shortly before I got home from a session with some Cub Scouts and Jim Kirk. On the way to lunch on Wednesday I heard John Ellis tell of working them that morning and then heard Al, W5CA, tell me his tale of woe after chasing them the night before for over an hour.

After returning from the Lunch Bunch, I found them on 15m working Europeans only. Shortly, they turned away from them and began working US-types. By

then I had set up the split on my transceiver and tuned my amplifier. Two calls yielded a solid QSO. The next day I worked them on 17m and 10m. They appeared from Nuku Hiva in the Marquesas Islands on schedule, working the low bands during the evening of April 21 as FO0FR. On Apr. 22 they appeared on 20m SSB around 1524Z. I logged him on 20m at 1542Z, again at 1821Z on 15m and at 2140Z on 10m. FO0FR closed on April 28 with 24700 total QSOs. These are island groups in Fr. Polynesia, which will likely become new DXCC countries before long. Under the new rules, Fr. Polynesia will become a Point 1 country, thus changing the relationship with the Austral and the Marquesas Islands. Kan, JA1BK, has also been active from these islands

signing FO0MIZ. On April 16 he was worked on 10m CW from the Austral Islands, after operating from the Marquesas April 10-12.

April was a pretty good month, DX-wise. Two major DXpeditions attracted big followings, while smaller visitations by other DXers gained notice.

The H40 operation began the month in a big way, with the FO0 operations from Rurutu and Nuku Hiva winding it up in good fashion. FO0FR continued to work pileups on all bands from Nuku Hiva through April 28, with a planned departure on that date.

Bill Gary K8CSG

Contest Connection – Continued

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As of this writing these are the mobile crews:

K1OJ operating as W5NC, his XYL Margaret will again chauffeur their minivan covering 30 coastal and southwestern counties. OJ will be operating CW most of the way with his new rig and screwdriver antenna.

George K5VUU and Rob KD5BXZ have teamed up to cover 50 East Texas counties all the way up to the Red River. George will also be sporting a new rig. Jack WA8GHZ and his XYL Ann will head North up the central part of the state to the Abilene area including Throckmorton County where no hams reside. They will log about 27 or so counties.

The largest of the crews will accompany Hank KK5WK and his big motor home. Walter KK5LO, Deral K5WNO, and newcomer Richard KD5DNC will keep Hank on the right road and hopefully keep the TS-50 running at a high rate reporting from about 27 counties. The problem there will be to keep Hank away from the watermelon stands.

Next is Larry Lockhart K5LBL. He will be heading up I-45 toward Dallas covering all the counties along the way. Larry will be accompanied by one of his junior ops.

Several others have indicated they will do some traveling: Ben KM5OT, Steve KD5AIJ, and Robert KK5TC. Robert will be heading up to the Dallas area as well. By the time you read this there may be more mobiles planning to hit the road.

As I mentioned earlier several of our members will be operating from the counties where they live or spend the weekend. Those will include Mike K5NZ, with Bill K5ZTY and Joey KC5BAK. They will operate both CW and Phone from Mike's place in Grimes County. H.O. WA5MLT will travel up to Leon County and operate with "Cuz" Conrad W5MN. Rudy KB5ZXO will be hosting a crew at his place on Lake Conroe. W5PDW and Rick KZ5E will operate at John's place in Montgomery County. Dan KK5LD and Keith WD5DXL will operate from Dan's airplane hangar/apartment in Waller County. I understand Dan has to operate

upside down in a chair hanging from the ceiling. Unless I've forgotten some one, that leaves my crew and me. I will be ably assisted by Jim KJ5X. I will have three rigs on the air. My number one rig will be set up in a competitive situation trying to pile up the contacts and a lot of points. Rigs two and three will be operating 40 and 75 meters listening for the mobile stations feeding new counties to us. I'm hoping to use newcomers, rookies and anyone who wants to come over and operate these rigs.

With all the hardware in place, the antennas tuned, gas in the tanks, keys polished and microphones woofed, the NARS crew is ready to hit the roads. We hope everyone returns home on Sunday road weary and, after the fixed station operators shake the cramps out of their tired backsides, we will count our totals. With a little luck and skill we will have surpassed the little DX club across town, and we will wear the crown and be King of Texas again.

Party Hardy!

Bill Denton W5SB

Antennas and Your Ham Shack

This is the first of a series of articles titled "Your Ham Shack". I will deal with the practical aspects of things in your shack such as computers, logging programs, rigs, antenna tuners, antennas, feed line and what ever else I can think of that may help the newcomer. Many of these things I have dealt with in my own experience. You may or may not agree with my view. That's the fun of it all, getting other opinions. If you would like further comment from me or have a suggestion on future articles please e-mail me at, bdenton@tent.com.

Where do I start? Everyone has his or her own pre-conceived idea of which antenna works best. I guess the question I have to ask is what is the definition of best. I do know that all antennas are for not for all folks. I went to one of those high falutin' seminars once put on by one of those Ph.D. guys. The only thing I remember him saying that meant anything to me was, "do the best under the conditions that exist." I think I know what that means. If you have a postage stamp lot and deed restrictions, you do the best you can under the conditions that exist. You fill up you attic with dipoles, or put them on the back fence or under the eave of your house. Put them somewhere. A bad antenna is better than no antenna. Do whatever you have to do.

When I got back on the air in 1991 after taking a radio vacation for 20+ years, I didn't have the foggiest idea what kind of antenna I wanted to put up. I had only worked 75 meters in the past. That only required a dipole and some RG-8. I used a push up pole and the ends tied off the corners of the fence. That was it. No tuner or antenna analyzer, just a cheap Knight Kit SWR bridge. I trimmed the ends until the SWR was minimum, and away I went. Now-a-days you can't make an antenna work unless you have a \$300.00 analyzer. I did know that I wanted to work something other than 75 meters. I also knew that I would have to use my trees as supports. A tower was

out of the question since it would have to be 125' just to clear the tree tops. What to do? I dug out all my old hand books and started looking at wire antennas. I wanted something with gain, cheap, and worked well. The first thing I did was put up a reference dipole. All test antennas would be compared to it. Right or wrong that's the way I went about finding the best antenna for my situation. For a year I put up every kind of wire imaginable. Those old books are crammed with them. People sent me their ideas from all over the country. One by one I put them up and gave them a try. I want to stress the point of the reference dipole. By comparing all the antennas to it, I got a really good idea of what worked and what didn't. Most of the antennas tried did work but without that reference I wouldn't have known how well. I hear hams all the time say how they worked ZL2XXX on a wet noodle; with a tuner its SWR is 1:1. Well, at times band condition will allow that, but for the most part his WN antenna won't cut it through the QRM and bad conditions.

After testing many antennas I finally found one that was head and shoulders above all the rest. My old book told me that a Lazy H would give me about 6db on 10, 15 and 20 meters. It was a large looking thing and needed to be 35' above the ground to work well. I had just the spot for it. With my slingshot and fishing reel, I shot a couple of lines over my tallest trees. A few bucks of Radio Shack antenna wire, some 1/2" ladder line that I had used on some of the other antennas, a few pieces of PVC pipe for insulators and a couple of hours, the "H" was up and cooking. Boy did it ever! When I first switched to it I knew it was going to be the antenna for me. My first contact was a fur trapper in the Arctic Circle running his rig on a car battery. That was it. Had I not used the reference antenna I may have stopped with the skeleton cone that someone told me was so great. I used the "H" for quite a while before I stumbled on to an old antenna designed in the late

1930's by Professor John Kraus, W8JK. He was looking for more reliable communication to the Belgian Congo where he was trying to talk to some of his friends there. He was using a vertical of some sort with little success. He thought that if he could direct all his energy in one direction more of the signal would arrive in the Congo rather than being scattered in all directions with the vertical. He designed as far as I know the first beam antenna. It was a big bulky thing precisely aimed at the Congo. It worked. For the first time he had reliable communications there. Hams around the world began using what had been dubbed the "8JK". For the first time they could direct their signal where they wanted it to go. But it couldn't be rotated; it was too big. Years later two Japanese men, Mr. Yagi and Dr. Uda invented a thing called a Yagi made of aluminum and was easily rotatable. Bye-bye 8JK, Prof. Kraus' wire beam was a thing of the past. Well, almost. I wanted to give it a shot. To make a long story short, I constructed one and couldn't get it in the air. It was so clunky, a real Rube Goldberg. I managed and after a lot of testing and adjusting, I used it for a long time, and I still get great reports on it. I actually have two of them - one pointing NE and the other NW. I just switch between them when I want to change direction. They are bi-directional so two antennas just about cover the world. I love them because they are great conversation pieces. Nobody except for a few old timers knows what they are. I love them, but yes they are being replaced.

Don't be afraid to experiment. Don't take someone's word on an antenna working good, just because he worked ZL2XXX once. He may not be able to do it again. It may be the best he can do under the conditions that exist for him. The last antenna you try may be the best one.

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Antennas and Your Ham Shack – Continued

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A couple of thoughts on feed lines. Although I have used 450-ohm ladder line exclusively for a long time, it's not for everyone. It's bulky, is hard to get into your shack, the SWR goes out the roof when it gets wet, etc, etc. You need some sort of matching device to satisfy your rig, maybe a tuner or balun depending on the antenna. Tuners are a pain when changing bands. Recently we built a 6 band 2 element quad. All 6 bands come into the shack on one coax. That is nice. I still have some ladder fed antennas and like the way they operate. Although it's generally true that transceivers like a 50-ohm load, don't overlook the use of 75-ohm cable. I use RG-6 on my 160 vertical and have found that it works quite well. Although it may read 50 ohms at 1.2:1 SWR on the analyzer, by using the 75-ohm cable the SWR is now 1.7:1. The difference is insignificant. I will say the resonant frequency shifted down 30 KC's or so with the RG-6 but this could have been

calculated if I had used it to start with. Many contesters with the big sticks and many antennas each use 75-ohm hard line they get from the cable companies. Some use a 75 to 50 balun between the line and antenna, while others just make an adapter and use the line direct with no balun; either way works fine. The formula for finding the difference between 75 and 50 ohms is 75 divided by 50. So if your antenna measured 1:2:1 at 50 ohms and you added 75 ohm cable, the sum of the two would be $1:2:1 + 1.5:1 = 1.7:1$ – very acceptable. This cable is relatively easy to find. Cable companies have stockpiles of it. They don't reuse old cable and they have short pieces on spools too short to use on long runs. A common misconception is that dipoles require 50-ohm cable. Many articles say to use 75 ohm. If you use 75 ohm, I suggest the use of RG-11. It has a copper shield, is easy to work with and connectors solder to it readily. Most all CATV cable has aluminum shielding. Connectors are more difficult. When I use RG-6 I use the standard crimp-on

"F" connector. So far I've had no problem with them even at high power levels.

I can hear some of you muttering, "I always thought copper braid would be better". The fact is that the FCC and FAA have very stringent requirements on leakage from cable systems. They have specially equipped airplanes that fly over systems and test for stray signals. The reason for this is that some of the cable channels fall into the aviation spectrum and could cause interference with navigation aids. The aluminum foil and braid shield has a lower leakage value than does copper.

The thing I want to emphasize is to not be satisfied with the antenna that comes in the plastic bag. Experiment and find the one that fits your needs. Maybe the one in the bag does. Good hunting.

See you next time.

Bill Denton W5SB

YV5AJ y Amigos

One of the few pleasures of being away from home, family, and friends is meeting some very fine people in various parts of the world. My "day job" has recently required several months travel in Venezuela, and I took the opportunity to apply for a visitor's radio permit some 2 months ago.

Since that time, and in the process of surmounting local bureaucratic challenges in finally obtaining my YV5 operating permit here, I had the great pleasure to meet several members of the Radio Club Venezuelano (YV5AJ) here in Caracas, Venezuela. And, at the invitation of their President, YV5AMH/Reinaldo, I recently attended one of their weekly gatherings at the Radio Club's house here in downtown Caracas. Among others, I remember meeting YV5MWG, YV5ANE,

YV5HZ, YV5AMH and YV5BNR plus too many others to recall names and calls, but all great gentlemen.

Bill, YV5ANE, was the designated host for my visit to the club's Wednesday evening social, which featured empanadas and "beverages," not the receiving kind. Bill is the resident "Elmer" of the club and teaches most of their license courses. There is no "Now You're Talking" or any other study book here. That makes for both tough learning AND teaching.

The club's Contest-oriented members are building a station out at a country house, which they've just acquired. The members have already installed 4-stacked elements at 180 feet for 40 meters! And as I write this, the members were going out on a work party over this

3-day holiday weekend to add some more skyhooks (Alpha-powered, of course).

But for casual operating from the clubhouse in downtown Caracas, there is a nice operating setup in an upstairs' room (TS-530, 440 and a vintage mint S-Line for viewing) plus the club runs a packet station and a 10-meter beacon. The Net Control for Venezuela's daily 40-meter net is presided by YV5BNR (Napo) from the clubhouse. In another upstairs' room, the club maintains a library with fairly complete QST and CQ magazine collection, reference books and the like. And the Venezuela BURO is operated from the clubhouse in a tidy upstairs' room, complete with separate mailboxes for each member.

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YV5AJ y Amigos – Continued

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But back downstairs for some more “beverages” and empanadas while watching the World Cup Football match in the club’s education room (Argentina

beat Brazil).

The members were very gracious hosts for the evening, their clubhouse is well suited to their purpose, and I sincerely appreciate several members’ assistance

in pushing my license application through. These are good folks; call on them if you have an opportunity to be in Caracas, Venezuela.

de YV5/WA8GHZ Jack Dougherty

QRZedd de W5NC – On the Web

There are a few more changes and additions this month I’d like to draw your attention to. Some of the additions are for fun, some are directed toward contesting, and some are directed toward those of us who may decide to upgrade someday.

But first, notice the two new menu choices: Buckmaster and Download. A couple of months ago the QRZedd option was added and it just seemed right to add the Buckmaster option. While they both offer basic lookup facilities, they each offer unique information. The Download option provides a facility for posting and downloading programs and files of value and interest to the membership. To accommodate the two new additions, I’m sure you’ve noticed the type in the Menu pane is a little smaller. That’s tough on us old buzzards, but life is full of give and take.

Speaking of the Download option, OJ – K1OJ has provided club members with a configuration file for applying to the TR logging program. This particular configuration file is setup for the Texas QSO Party later this month. The file contains the latest rules and set-up stuff. Download this file, open it with a text editor, fill in the blanks, and replace your existing “logcfg.dat” file with this one. If you are going to operate mobile you may find it a bit difficult to operate and log at the same time. Here’s your solution; you’ll also find revised/cleaned up TQP forms ready for downloading/printing. (To download the TQP forms, open each file one at a time. While viewing the form, select File=>Save As. You will then be prompted to pick a location for saving.

The file can be opened and printed from any web browser.)

After posting the Texas QSO Party configuration file, I got to thinking, “What else could be added to the Download page?” My answer came after attending the opening night of ham classes organized by Bill – KC5EZQ and others. As a result, the “Morse Academy Tutor” program, developed by Joseph Speroni – AH0A, has been added and is available for downloading. Then at the April VE session, Rudy – KB5ZXO reminded me that we should add links to sites that offer practice written exams. Well ... after a little searching on the web, an option has been added for downloading the “AA9PW Exam Generator for Java” program developed by Simon Twigger – AA9PW. Both of these programs are outstanding. Check them out; I really think the Download option holds great value for our membership.

Click on the NARS banner and our QSL card appears. Yep, its gotta be cleaned up, but there it is. Roll your mouse over the state of Texas and the ARRL Special Services Club logo appears.

Thanks to the following for their suggestions, questions, and updates this month: OJ – K1OJ, Rudy – KB5ZXO, Ben – KM5OT, Bill – KC5EZQ, Keith – WD5DXL, Myles – KG5AI, Bill – W5SB, Jack – KM5LJ, Jack – WA8GHZ, and Marian – KB5SGV/W5NC. Wow!

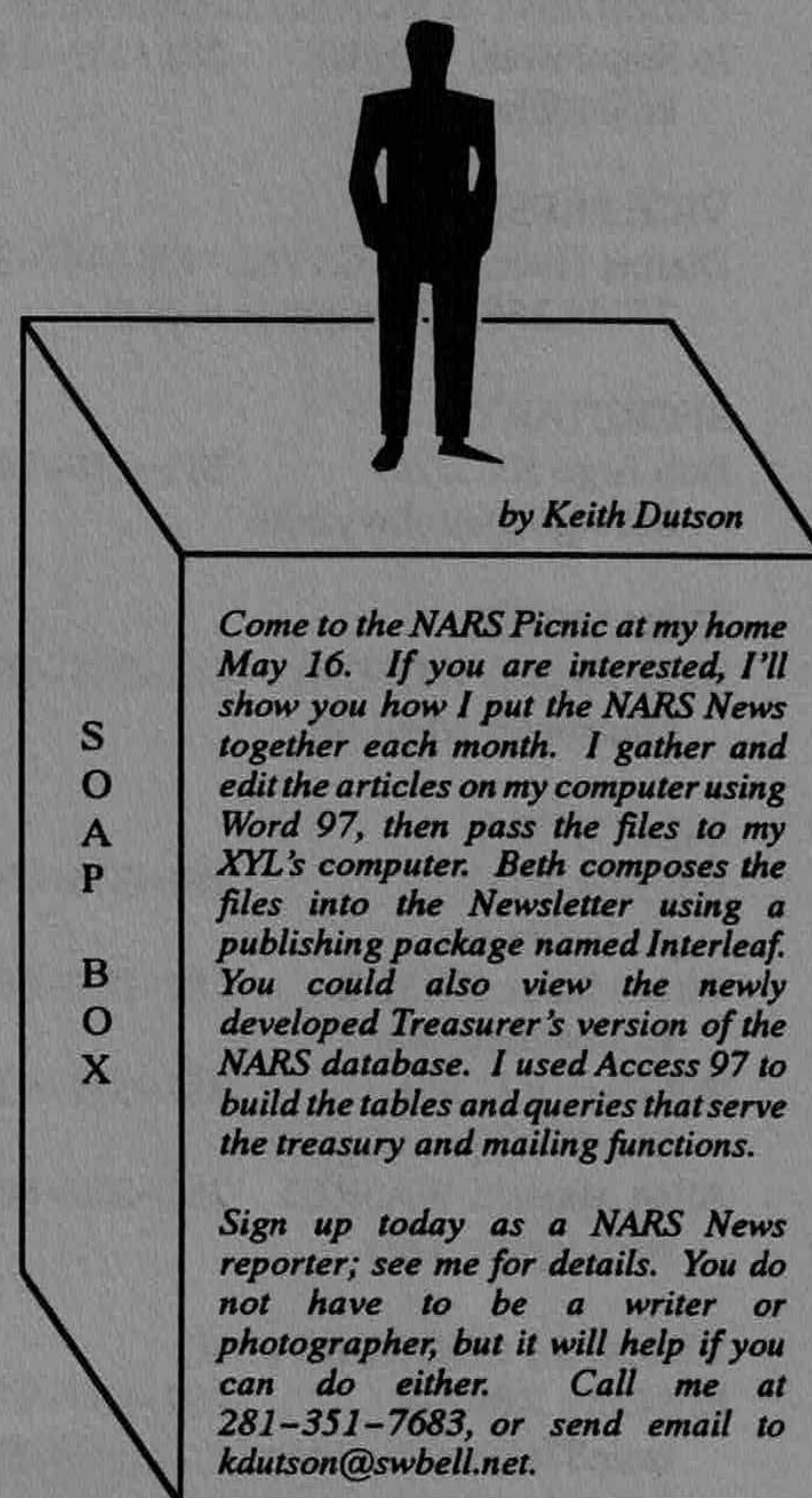
Finally, you can have it both ways – well ... the Menu pane that is. At the bottom of the Body pane you’ll notice a left and

right arrow. Click on the arrow pointing right and the page will reload placing the Menu pane on the right. And, you get the idea.

Thanks to each of you our web site continues to mature.

E-mail me, wa5mlt@flash.net, with your questions, groovy ideas for future web site improvements, suggested links, notification of broken links, or Flash information.

73 de H. O. WA5MLT



by Keith Dutson

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Come to the NARS Picnic at my home May 16. If you are interested, I'll show you how I put the NARS News together each month. I gather and edit the articles on my computer using Word 97, then pass the files to my XYL's computer. Beth composes the files into the Newsletter using a publishing package named Interleaf. You could also view the newly developed Treasurer's version of the NARS database. I used Access 97 to build the tables and queries that serve the treasury and mailing functions.

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.

Welcome

Join us in welcoming the following new NARS members: April

Tom Atkins, Cal Daetwyler, Marjorie Dearmont, Dean Dearmont, Richard Fisher KD5DNC, Ben Gilmore, Larry Grindel, Steve Hatherley KD4IEH, Stephen Hatherley II, Danny Hatherley, Jake Hatherley, Carole Henson, Colin Jennings, Penny Lennon KC5QKE, Charles Liebling, Bob Mladenka KC5KWC, William Peplow, Mark Plagens W5RDR. James Read, John Siebern, Steve Spence, Carl Stephenson W5CEP, Anita Townsend, and Lee Williams. Also, welcome back to former member Robert Martin KK5TC.

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)

NARS Information

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wa5re@flash.net

VE EXAM COORDINATOR

Bill Gary K8CSG 281-537-9240
bsnn87a@prodigy.com

ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY

Marian Denton KB5SGV 281-469-8331
w5nc@juno.com

Call Marian for general information about
NARS. Send address, phone, email and other
changes to:

NARS Administrative Secretary
PO Box 690342
Houston, TX 77269-0342

NETS

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

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

WEB SITE

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)

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