

NARS NEWS

The Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Houston, Texas

February 2000

Aerobatic Aircraft, Flying and Contests

NARS counts among its members a unique individual who builds, and flies in contests, his own aerobatic aircraft. Dan Clark, KK5LD, will discuss how he builds and obtains certification for his aircraft. He will display samples of raw fabric, finished fabric, an aircraft piston and other parts of his aircraft.

Dan will also tell how he test-flies the aircraft. He will describe the contest environment, the administration of contests and some of the flying techniques. This will be followed by a fifteen-minute video of actual contest-style flying. Depending upon time constraints, a question and answer period will follow.

Come out and learn about one of our members' very unique hobby -- not radio, but certainly different and interesting.

Amateur Radio License Class Scheduled for 2000

The 2000 session of the Northwest Amateur Radio Society's (NARS) class for achieving a Technician Class amateur radio license will begin on Thursday, March 9, at the Prince of Peace Catholic Community. The Prince of Peace facility is located on Tomball Parkway (Hwy. 249) between FM1960 and Cypresswood. The license class will begin at 7 PM.

The first session will consist of registration and an introduction to Morse Code. The entire course will continue for two nights each week, Tuesdays and Thursdays, for a total of 19 sessions. The complete course will cover Morse Code (five words per minute) plus the necessary rules and regulations to successfully complete all examinations required for a Technician Class license including HF operating privileges. The cost of registration is \$20.00.

The textbook for this course is "Now You're Talking", published by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). This book can be purchased at various Radio Shack stores, Electronic Parts Outlet, or at Houston Amateur Radio Supply for under \$20.00. A limited number will be available for purchase at registration. For more information or to reserve a seat, call Marian Denton, KB5SGV, at 281/469-8331 or Joe Sokolowski, KD5KR, at 281/353-2196. An e-mail to either of the above will also work (e-mail addresses are on the back of the Newsletter). There is limited enrollment, so get your reservation in early!

-- Joe Sokolowski, KD5KR

Important Dates

Friday, February 18 7:30-9:30 PM
NARS General Membership Meeting at
Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church, 6000
Spring Cypress Road

Saturday, February 26, 8:30 AM
License Exam Session. Tomball Commu-
nity Center, S. Cherry & Market streets (just
South of Main Street),

Tuesday, February 29, 7:30 PM
NARS Board of Directors meeting, George
Edwards' home, 17007 Hillview Lane

Contests:

February 11-13
YLRL YL-OM SSB Contest

February 14
School Club Roundup

February 18-20
YLRL YL-OM CW Contest

February 19-20
ARRL Int'l CW DX Contest

February 25-27
CQWW 160-meter SSB Contest
REF French Contest, phone
UBA Contest, CW
YL International QSO Party
RSGB 7 MHz Contest
CQC Winter QRP QSO Party
North Carolina QSO Party

February 6
North American SSB Sprint

February 12-13
World-Wide RTTY WPX Contest
Dutch PACC Contest

February 13
North American CW Sprint

March 4-5
ARRL International SSB DX Contest

Deadline for articles to appear in March
issue - **Monday, February 28.**

BREAKFAST at Victor's

4710 W. FM 1960

**Saturdays
7:30 AM**

Fox Hunting QRP Style

President's Corner January, 2000

Thanks to the hard work and good planning on the part of your fellow club members, the NARS Year 2000 started on a very positive note in the form of the Awards Banquet. Our special thanks go to our outgoing Vice President, Jack Dougherty, WA8GHZ, for coordinating the banquet and awards committees to make this happen. Once again, we received positive comments on the facilities, the food and service provided Wyndehaven Terrace Banquet Facilities on Cutten Road. We had over 90 members and guests attending and if you missed the banquet this time around, we hope to see you there next January 19, 2001 - same time and place.

Those who attended the banquet this year had the pleasure of witnessing the rare presentation of a Life Membership Award to Ken Harlan, KA5AKG, for his 15 years of service to the club as its first President, NARS News Editor, Field Day Coordinator, Repeater Trustee and Maintainer, and Novice/Technician Class Coordinator. The list of club activities that Ken has been involved in over the years could fill this Newsletter. I think Paul Frantz summed it up during his presentation at the banquet when he quoted from the President's Column in NARS News of January 1986:

"Pasing on and receiving the benefits of experience is one of NARS' strong points. There is no better teacher than experience, and there is tremendous satisfaction in sharing it. Likewise there is hardly a better way to find a solution than by talking with someone who knows. NARS is blessed with an almost infinite range of experience. So let NARS be your forum and information center in 1986. Participate in meetings, arrive early and meet new friends, participate in club activities and committees and make your ham radio hobby an enriching experience through NARS."

Ken wrote those words in 1986 and has been an excellent example of how to put those words into action ever since.

There is no way for me to improve on Ken's observations and admonition, but I can encourage you to take them to heart and apply them to this coming year and for years to come.

Last year your board members and individual members, activity coordinators, administrative secretary and individual volunteers and project teams, collected dues and processed information on over 200 members, published and distributed monthly newsletters, maintained a website, conducted VE sessions, presented a license class, planned and conducted monthly meetings and weekly nets on 2 and 10 meters, and fielded teams to man and support 4 major special service events - and the list could go on. This club doesn't run itself" as some have observed. It takes commitment, dedication, participation and a lot of work and hopefully fun in getting it done. Let's all pull together to make 2000 a banner year!

-- 73, George, K5VUU

After a fox hunt in England an Englishman was overheard telling his Texas guest that the proper call to hunt is, "Tally Ho, the fox", not "There goes the @#&*%!!, shoot him in the a--".

Well, since October 26th there have been a bunch of NARSians answering the call to hunt two nights a week on 40 meters. A lot of them are Texans, too. "What is a 40-meter fox hunt", you ask? Well, it is not like the VHF hidden transmitter hunts that you have heard of at hamfests. About five years ago Chuck Adams, K5FO (now K7QO) came up with the idea for an operating event to get the solder burners and tinkerers that hang around on the QRP-L reflector to put down their tools and soldering irons and get on the air to operate their home-built QRP radios. The idea was that two nights a week (Tuesdays and Thursdays) one station (the fox) would get on the air using five watts or less and make as many contacts with other QRP stations (the hounds) as he could in a two hour period. There is a different fox station each night in a different part of the country. He operates between 7.035 and 7.045 MHz for a two hour time period between 0000Z and 0400Z. It sounds like shooting fish in a barrel, doesn't it? We know who, what frequency, what day and what time, so what's the challenge? Well, when you limit the power output to five watts and conduct the exercise on 40 meters at night the difficulty factor goes up considerably.

There are about 3000 subscribers to the QRP-L reflector. I don't know how many of them play in the fox hunt but there must be a couple of hundred. A good fox will log close to a hundred contacts in the two-hour period and some of the less experienced foxes will log less than 50 contacts, so you can see that getting into the Fox's log is not a sure thing

when you do find his signal. Forty meter propagation changes from 0000Z to 0400Z and there is a good chance that if you hear the fox at the beginning of the hunt you will lose him before it is over, or if you don't hear him at first he may well come up later. This puts the pressure on to work him as soon as you hear him because he may suddenly go away.

Last year they started a team competition where teams of four hunters compete to see which team can make the most fox contacts during the season. The winning team gets their names put onto one of the plates on the big team plaque that travels from winning team to winning team each year. Last year W5SB, KQ5U, KK5LD and K5ZTY got their names put on that plaque. However, it looks like we are not going to repeat this year. I think there are about sixteen teams and we are in 3d or 4th place, with the first place team running away from the pack.

The fox hunt has been a great event to introduce reluctant code ops to on-the-air copying and sending. It has introduced a great many hams to QRP operating, hams who otherwise may never have tried it. And it has shown some old CW haters that Morse Code can be fun. You don't need any special equipment to participate. Just turn your transmitter down to 5 watts output and jump in. You can operate at any code speed that you like. The foxes will adjust their speed to yours. The last fox for this season will be on Tuesday night, March 22, so you still have time to tune in and catch one or two. The exchange is your signal report, state, name and your QRP-L member number, or if you don't have a member number send your power output. Example: 599, TX, Bill, 5W. There are about 12 NARSians participating on Tuesday and Thursday nights. Why don't you dust off your old code key and join us?

72, Unca' Zed

BANQUET DOOR PRIZE SOURCES

NARS appreciates the generosity of its door prize sponsors. We encourage all members to support these vendors by their patronage and the reference of others to them. These door prizes provide a nice feature of our Annual Awards Banquet. To all of you, a GREAT BIG THANK YOU from the NARS Board of Directors and members.

CITY

ELECTRONIC SUPPLY

7015 Atwell

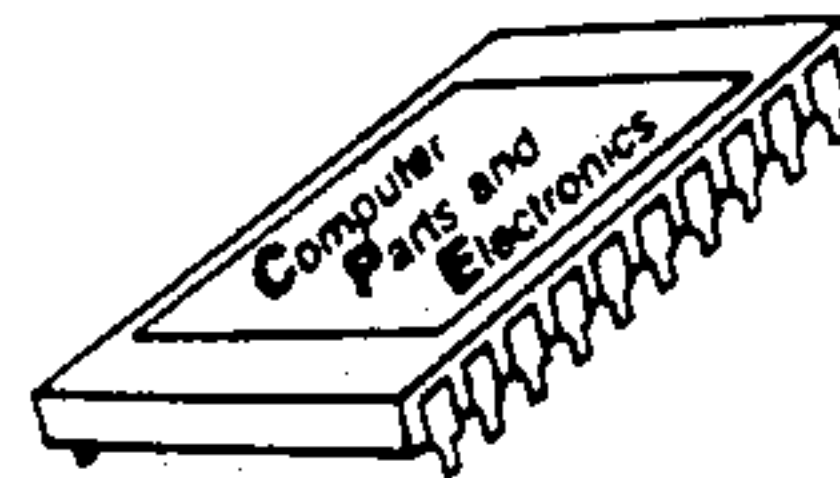
VICTORS

DELICATESSEN & RESTAURANT

4710 W. FM 1960

ELECTRONIC PARTS OUTLET

3753 Fondren
17776 Tomball Parkway



COMPUTER PARTS & ELECTRONICS

7000 N. Freeway • Suite 200
Houston, Texas 77076
713/699-0213 Fax 713/699-0263
www.cpehouston.com

DICK ROONEY

W5VHN

JOE SOKOLOWSKI

KD5KR

HOUSTON

AMATEUR RADIO
SUPPLY, INC.

George DiLetto, KDORW
President

Exit 68 I-45 North
181 Cypresswood Drive
Spring, TX 77388

800-471-7373
281-355-7373
Fax 281-355-8007

DX News

*O List Master, List Master!
Wherefore art thou, List Master?
Deny the calls and hear my name
Or I'll no longer be a DXer . . .*

The FCC launched a guided missile into the ranks of amateurs at the end of December. It was known as the Report and Order which will restructure amateur licensing in the United States, and which will find wide-ranging opinions among those already licensed.

Two of the Local QRPers immediately came racing up the hill to discuss this happening with The Old Timer. One of them he recognized as a mature chap who had long held an Extra Class license. The other was one of the newer, Technician-Plus license holders. "What do you think about these changes the FCC has announced", asked the older Extra Class holder? The Old Timer thought for a bit and said "Well, I don't think I am in favor of everything in the Report and Order."

"What do you mean", thundered the young QRPer. "What is wrong with it? I think it's just great! Now I can get my Extra Class without having to copy that dumb old Morse Code. Nobody uses that stuff anymore anyhow. Now all I have to do is pass the written test for Extra and I've got the job done, and all before April 15, 2000."

"Hold on there a minute, my friend" said The Old Timer. "I don't think you understand what the FCC had to say in their R&O. Right now you only have a Tech-Plus license, and to get to full Extra Class privileges before April 15, 2000 means you must pass twenty words a minute, plus the General, Advanced and Extra Class written elements!"

"But that's not what the guys on the bands are saying," protested the young QRPer. "And why would I ever want to copy twenty words a minute of Morse Code?"

The Old Timer sighed. "Do you want to become a top-notch DXer," he asked? "If so you will want and NEED to learn Morse code. Some of the rarer DX stations often use only Morse Code, which make it a little tough to work them on phone. And I don't care what the guys on the bands are saying, anymore than the FCC will care. The rules are changing, but they are very clear."

Grumbling all the while, the young QRPer and his older friend wandered back down the hill, again wondering about the Old Timer and what he had said.

Propagation began improving as January and the new year grew older. In the middle of the month there was a pretty good opening into Europe in the mornings on 10 and 15 meters. For most of January things appeared to be less than wonderful. Twenty meters and the bands above went dead fairly early in the evenings, leaving nothing for late-night DXers but old movie re-runs on television. The SFI wandered up and down but never with any indications of serious intent. High A indices kept the absorption rate so high that it seemed to be swallowing up most of the really good DX.

LOCAL EVENTS: XZ0A came up on schedule from the Andaman Sea. Bruce, N1LN, reported the first local contact via CW. K8CSG was still busy working on the Millennium DXCC award and may have passed up an opportunity. Jim, KJ5X, reported the second local contact with XZ0Z. This new Millennium DXCC award was an interesting project. All it required was a log extract of 100 different DXCC entities contacted during year 2000, plus a check for ten dollars, sent to the ARRL. It took K8CSG fifteen days to complete the 100 counters and the application was in the mail. (The certificate arrived eight days after the log extract was put into the mail.) Later, Steve, N5EN, WA5MLT, KF5SB and Loyd, KM5OE, reported contacts with XZ0A. KD5AYF joined the ranks of DXers with his first DX contact, i.e., the Canary Islands. Welcome aboard, George. N5ET reported a contact with XZ0A, a rare one. K8CSG finally snagged XZ0A on 15-meter SSB on Jan. 27, the first time I had heard him well enough to copy him. They must be using wet pipe-cleaners for antennas judging from their signals into Texas.

DX WORKED: V51HK (Namibia) 20m 2148Z; FO0ERI (Australis) 10m 1957Z; VQ9JA (D. Garcia) 20m 1342Z; CE9/R3CA (Antarctica) 20m 0101Z; Z32XX (Macedonia) 10m 1457Z; M2000A (Greenwich Meridian) 10m 1508Z; 3D2AG/p (Rotuma) 10m 2010Z; 7X4AN (Algeria) 10m 1619Z; V73CW (Kwajalein) 10m 2212Z; V51HK (Namibia) 20m 2148Z; SV3AQR (Greece)

10m 1424Z; 9H1EL (Malta) 10m 1522Z; YB0DX (Indonesia) 15m 2333Z; XZ0A (Burma) 15m 0013Z; FP5BZ (St. Pierre & Miquelon) 15m 1655Z; 7P8HH (Lesotho) 20m 2212Z; 5U7X (Niger) 15m 2230Z; VP6BR (Pitcairn) 15m 0028Z.

QSL ROUTES: V51HK via DL6 OBS; XZ0A via W1XT; YN9HAU via HR1RMG; YS8ZKK via DK6KK; ER2000D via ER4DX; FO0ERI via LA7XX; VQ9JA via N1ZZZ; CE9/R3CA via UA9OBA; VP6BR via OH2BR.

The Swiss are mounting another major DXpedition in the Indian Ocean for October this year. Their efforts resemble the recent trip to St. Brandon and is heading for Agalega, which counts the same as St. Brandon for DXCC. One wonders at this near-duplication of effort. In any case they are mounting a major effort aimed at sixteen full days of operation from Agalega beginning on or about October 7. The DXpedition team is truly multinational in its makeup, but the Swiss make up the key positions in the preparation and planning group.

The group planning an assault on Clipperton Island should have something definite in their scheduling and planning to announce soon. They have a very attractive web page at www.qsl.net/Clipperton2000. This will be an experienced group with good transportation and good radio support. They are still looking for money, however.

The Lakshadweep (Laccadive) (VU7) and the Andaman Island (VU4) groups are reportedly not in the cards for 2000. Neither of these two counters have ever been easy to work. There is no indigenous activity in either group, and DXpeditions encounter extreme difficulty in getting the Indian government's permission to visit either group. Earlier there had been plans rumored about a trip to Lakshadweep early in 2000, but that appears to be dead now. The last activity from there was in March, 1989,

DX News (Concluded)

while the last operation from the Andamans was in October, 1987. Since then, nothing! However, Burma, Albania and China were all off the air for extended periods and finally made it back into activity. Remember, BE BELIEVERS!

East Timor is making progress toward joining the modern world. The Secretary-General of the United Nations recently stated that "East Timor has won the approval of its own international country code" (for telephone calls); the country code is 670, although it will take some time before the code becomes operational. There was no word on a call sign prefix block, which would open the door for a new DXCC Entity. This is probably a mere matter of time. Be patient, and BE BELIEVERS!

The YV fellows had announced a planned DXpedition to Aves Island in the Caribbean for the first quarter of 2000. Those plans have now been deferred indefinitely although the DXpedition is still pledged to take place. The hurricane which devastated Venezuela also damaged the infrastructure on the island and the YV Navy cannot not handle their transport needs. Ramon, YV5EED, promises he will provide information on the DXpedition as it becomes available. Right now, look for something else to work. . .

JA3IG should come up on Lord Howe Island on February 8. JM1LJS should be QRV on T88 on Feb. 11 or so. QSL to JH8DEH. DJ4OI, DJ3OS and DF6IC should be active on Christmas Island (VK8X?) beginning on February 16 and continuing to near the end of the month. QSL to their home calls. The dry spell from 9Q should begin to go away soon. The Democratic Republic of Congo (more recently known as Zaire) expects to have about 20 residents

licensed as amateur operators. Activity may begin in February, but no one knows for sure. There have been some operators on both the North and South Cook Islands recently, i.e., ZK1NCI and ZK1BJA. And, last but not least, the Mexican fellows are planning a visit to Socorro Island in the Revilla Gigedo group for early March, 2000. This one is not at all difficult for Texas hams to work when it is on. However, for someone who does not have it worked and confirmed is is good DX (note KD5AYF).

3V8ST, a Scout station in Tunisia, was active recently, providing a second contact point with this rare, DXCC location. SU9ZZ (Egypt) has been working US stations on 80-meter CW recently. This is a scarce DXCC counter, also. VP6BR (Jukka) has arrived on Pitcairn for an extended visit and significant DX activity. YK1AO (Syria) has been busy working RTTY DXers on 20-meters recently. YK is somewhat difficult to work, so grab this one when you can. ZC4CM operates from the British Sovereign Military Bases on Cyprus. This DXCC counter appears in fits and starts from time to time and without much warning. Work it when you can.

Last-minute notes: The Clipperton DXpedition is going on schedule and is firm now. And, the Lyon DX Group has announced plans for a two-week DXpedition to Tromelin Island during the summer of 2000, probably August. This one is still in the planning stage and they are looking very hard for money. Both of these are pretty rare DX locations. Look out for them!!!

-- 73, Bill, K8CSG

Lunch Bunch Schedule

Feb. 16 -- Charlie's Hamburgers
Feb. 23 -- Brown Sugar's BBQ
Mar. 1 -- Bennigan's
Mar. 8 -- Chinese (TBA)

Millennium Year Starts With Big VE Session

The January 2000 VE session led off with a bang. In a very busy session, the NARS/Compaq Team of VEs handled a large contingent of 25 candidates, some trying to take advantage of the newly announced licensing rules in advance. The large group of candidates was served by a strong contingent of VEs led by Jim Kirk, KJ5X, in the absence of K8CSG.

Eight new Technician Class licenses were earned, one new Technician Plus license, two new General Class licenses and one Extra Class license was earned. The Extra was won by a "retread", a former ham who had let his license lapse and is coming back to Amateur Radio. This gentleman took and passed the 20 wpm code test and all five of the written exam elements for a one-day clean sweep. Six other individuals took and passed the Extra Class written element, thus laying the groundwork for upgrading from Advanced Class to Extra Class when the new licensing rules go into effect. For the 39 elements on which they were examined, 35 were passed for an overall pass-rate of 89.74%.

Participating VEs included: KJ5X, W5VHN, W5SB, KK5YU, W5MJ, WC5CW and KK5LO, all from NARS; K5WH from Compaq, and W9DX from TDXS. I thank all of these fellows for putting in a busy Saturday morning on this large, hectic session. Two of them, KJ5X and WC5CW, received special recognition certificates at the NARS awards Banquet the night before for their loyal work on nine sessions during 1999.

-- Bill Gary, K8CSG

Welcome, Congratulations and Condolences

Congratulations to Norma, wife of Ken Harlan, KA5AKG, upon her release from the hospital.

Best wishes, also, to Marian Denton who is recovering from foot surgery.

Welcome these new members to NARS:

Timothy Ford, KD5ITM, Technician; John Booth, KD5INF, Tech +; and Gordon Davis, WA5SSB, Advanced.

Congratulations to George, KD5AYF, upon his upgrade to Tech-Plus, and to Doug, KC5NRR, on his upgrade.

NARS Resource List

General Help:

Bill Stietenroth K5ZTY, 281/893-3901
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/UHF:

Brian Derx N5BA, 713/894-5942

Computer Operations:

Bob Argo KC5JZO, 281/288-7430

Computer Programming:

Keith Dutson WD5DXL, 281/351-7683

Interference (Basic Advice):

Harry Gage N5WIZ, 281/370-7488

Mark Tyler 281/587-0256

Card Checking for Awards:

DXCC - Bob Walworth N5ET, and Linda
Walworth KE5TF, 281/363-0209

WAS, VUCC - Brian Derx, N5BA

281/894-5942 N5BA@arrl.net

WAZ - Bill Gary K8CSG, 281/537-9240

CQDX - Bill Gary K8CSG

NARS Public Information Officer:

George Levandoski, KD5AYF

713/895-0700 kd5ayf@mindspring.com

PRESIDENT & BOARD CHAIRMAN

George Edwards, K5VUU
281/376-4209 gedwards@onramp.net

VICE PRESIDENT

George Levandoski, KD5AYF
713/895-0700 kd5ayf@mindspring.com

SECRETARY

Tom Hoherd, KK5YU
281-370-2941 kk5yu@worldnet.att.net

TREASURER

Keith Dutson, WD5DXL
281/351-7683 kdutson@wt.net

DIRECTORS

Bill Gary K8CSG
281/537-9240 k8csg@arrl.net

Joe Sokolowski KD5KR
281/353-2196 kd5kr@juno.com

Steve Niles, N5EN
281-580-6080 n5en@wt.net

Bill Stietenroth, K5ZTY
281/893-3901 k5zty@juno.com

ACTIVITIES CHAIRMAN

George Levandoski, KD5AYF
713/895-0700 kd5ayf@mindspring.com

VE EXAM COORDINATOR

Bill Gary K8CSG 281/537-9240
k8csg@arrl.net

NARS Information

ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY

MarianDenton KB5SGV, 281/469-8331
w5nc@juno.com

*Call Marian for general information
about NARS. Send address, phone, e-mail
and other changes to:*

NARS Administrative Secretary

P O Box 690342

Houston, Texas 77269-0342

NETS

10M Ragchew: Monday 8:00 PM. 28.444

Coordinator: Jim Kirk, KJ5X

jrkkirk@wt.net

281/537-0718

2M Information: Wed. 8:00 PM. 146.66

Coordinator: Bill Gary, K8CSG

k8csg@arrl.net

281/537-9240

WEB SITE

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

Webmaster: Ben Worell KM5OT

km5ot@bfwweb.com 409/773-4484

Trustee: Walter Hock KK5LO

kk5lo@flash.net

281/350-6633

REPEATERS

2M -- 146.060/146.660 (KA5AKG)

70 cm -- 449.375/444.375 (KA5AKG)

Digipeater -- 145.710(W5NC aliasNARS)

MEETINGS

Monthly General Membership at
Spring-Cypress Presbyterian Church
6000 Spring Cypress Road

Third Friday each month -- 7:30PM

Saturday Breakfast at Victor's Restau-
rant -- 7:30 AM

Wednesday Lunch Bunch at various
locations 11:30 AM (Info. on 146.660)

NARS NEWS is published monthly by the
Northwest Amateur Radio Society

Editor: Bill Gary, K8CSG

281/537-9240

k8csg@arrl.net

Send all articles and materials other than e-
mail for the Newsletter to:

NARS Newsletter

14834 Falling Creek Drive

Houston, Texas 77068

Northwest Amateur Radio Society is a Spe-
cial Service Club affiliated with the Ameri-
can Radio Relay League.

ARRL Club No. 2120