



The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association

Feed Line

Providing Amateur Radio news for the Triad



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Geratol Net – Geritol Not...

By John Strandberg, W4DX

Ever since I got a wire up in the trees, I have been fascinated by HF. It's really remarkable what you can do with a very modest HF radio and the best wire antenna you can hoist upwards. Most of my time has been spent perusing around 15, 20 and 40 meters just trying to see who I can hear and work. On 75 meters, I've checked in some very good local and regional nets and I've tuned around the QSO parties and had fun making contacts. Otherwise, I've spent the least of my time on 75.

One evening last spring, I was tuning through the bands and got caught up listening to a really unusual net in the extra class portion of the 75 meter band. Net control would recognize each check-in with something bizarre like "Net, we've been joined by Alpha Alpha Zero Zulu Papa, Frank in Nebraska, Geratol 1932, Director 261, and Frank's got

a Q. Frank brings club call Whisky Zero November Lima, special Geratol number One Memoriam and director 603. Frank also brings another club Whisky Zero Wild Young Virgins with numbers on request". If that wasn't enough, seemingly endless check-ins elicited similar recognitions adding 'Initial Call', 'State Capital', 'Primary State Abbreviation', 'Double Letter Suffix', 'Mobile', 'YL' and more. Well, after listening a while (more than one night), I began to form somewhat of an understanding of this 'Worked All States' net. I was basically ready to check in but decided against it for two reasons: (1) the net was going to shut

Why Ham Radio Endures in a World of Tweets

Somehow it makes little sense that amateur "ham" radio continues to thrive in the age of Twitter, Facebook and iPhones. Yet the century-old communications technology — which demands such commitment that you

NEXT MEETING Monday, February 28

The next meeting of the Greensboro Amateur Radio Association will be Monday, February 28th, at the Golden Corral Steak House, 4404 Landview Dr, Greensboro, NC 27407, off Wendover Ave. near Sam's Club. This month's meeting will be a presentation by GARA's Engineering Chairman, David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF, on his experience with kitbuilding his Elecraft K2.

down soon for the summer static crash season and (2) it just seemed way too complicated to keep up with.

Last November, I happened to pull up the memory channel programmed with 3.668 and there they were. It all came back to me and I thought 'What the heck, I'll check in

see Geratol, page 6

by David Rowan, Wired UK; Photo: Gary Soup
<http://www.wired.com/epicenter/2011/02/ham-radio-tweets>

must generally pass an exam to receive a license — currently attracts around 350,000 practitioners in Europe, and a further 700,000 in the United States, some 60 per cent more than 30 years ago.

What is it about a simple microphone, a transmitter-receiver and the seductive freedom of the open radio spectrum that's turned a low-tech anachronism into an enduring and deeply engaging global hobby?

For a start, there is that thrill in establishing a magical person-to-person long-distance radio conversation that no commodified

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- Engineering Update
- Dayton Bus Trip

GARA Meeting Minutes

Regular Meeting Minutes January 24, 2011

The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association held their regular monthly meeting on January 24th at the Golden Corral restaurant located near the intersection of Wendover Avenue and Interstate 40.

Chris Thompson, K4HC, opened the meeting at 7:15pm and thanked everyone for coming.

Roy Smith, N4BYU, asked Allen Bradley, KD4IUN, to come up to the front of the room. Roy then gave a little history about how Allen got involved with the soccer tournaments and gave Allen and Madeline a plaque to commemorate their service. Allen said that he would like to retire and is asking for someone to take over the soccer tournaments.

Ernie Wall, NC4EW, gave the treasury report stating that "We finished 2010 rather well, everything is balanced out and the books are pretty much closed out now." Membership renewals are up. Ernie listed the bills that are coming due soon and that he is taking membership renewals.

Chris said that we encourage the D-STAR users to help with the extra

expense of the D-STAR gateway.

Al Allred, K4ZKQ, gave the treasury report. Al listed the income and expenses for the club last year.

Betty Williams, KC2BFN, member-at-large, said that she is still working her way through the QRZ roster and sending out e-mails trying to get more interest in the club.

David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF, gave the engineering report said he wrote a column for the Feed line which gave a lot of details on our equipment. Everything is working fine except for the occasional problem with interference causing the repeater to desense. David has talked to Arch, KT4AT, about the problem and Arch said that he would be willing to go out to the repeater site and take a look at the problem as soon as the weather warms up some. David also said that he would like for the club to acquire a good watt meter for use with

the repeater.

Todd Smith, AK4TS, member-at-large, said that he would be happy to act as a representative of the membership to the board. Please let him know if you have anything that needs to be taken to the board or you may come to a board meeting if you would like to present it in person. Todd also said that he would like to support the station at the natural science center.

Greg Spencer, KG4UQV, Secretary, said I have finished and mailed the thank you letter for the laptop PC that was donated to GARA by the Red Cross.

Bob Mays, KE4MOW, operations, said we are working on a date for a picnic coming up sometime this spring. Details will be coming soon.

Gerald Donnelly, N4PAX, Vice President, said he would like some idea of

see Minutes, page 9

Board Meeting Minutes Jan, 2011

The GARA board meeting scheduled for January 10th was cancelled due to a snow storm blanketing the area so the GARA board did an electronic meeting so to speak where we exchanged e-mails about the topics in question. Following is a summary of the topics discussed:

Gerald Donnelly, N4PAX, our new vice president, will be doing the program this month on tips for better internet searching with Google.

Bob Mays, KE4MOW, operations, working on the GARA picnic plans and date, stay tuned for details.

Todd Smith, AK4TS, member-at-large, wants to increase interest in the natural science center station.

David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF, Engineering, discussed D-Star problems. Also the tower owner (City of Greensboro) has done some work at the repeater site including the installation of an ice bridge to protect the feed lines from falling ice. We

are still having problems with interference at the repeater site. David has spoken with Arch, KT4AT, about the problem, and Arch said he would be able to go out to the repeater when it gets warmer and do some testing to help find the problem if it is equipment related.

Gerald suggested revising the club logo.

Chris said that Bob Davit has asked to remove the DTMF cover tones on the repeater to allow unrestricted access to the Eccolink node.

Chris also said we need to look at our insurance coverage and update the clubs equipment inventory.

These issues will be discussed in further detail at the February board meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Greg Spencer, KG4UQV, GARA Secretary.

The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association

President Chris Thompson, K4HC
Vice-President Gerald Donnelly, N4PAX
Treasurer Ernie Wall, NC4EW
Secretary Greg Spencer, KG4UQV
Financial Al Allred, K4ZKQ
Engineering Chair David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF
Operations Bob Mays, KE4MOW
Member-at-Large Todd Smith, AK4TS
Member-at-Large Betty Williams, KC2BFN
Appointed Positions:
Webmaster Tom Forrest, N4GVK
Newsletter Editor Brian Wilson, KJ4LKY

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Board Meeting Minutes February 16, 2011

Members Present: Al Allred: K4ZKQ, Bob Mays: KE4MOW, Chris Thompson: K4HC, David Macchiarolo: AJ4TF, Gerald Donnelly: N4PAX, Betty Williams: KC2BFN, and Ernie Wall: NC4EW.

President Chris Thompson started the meeting promptly at 7pm with a review of the meeting topics.

Gerald Donnelly reported on planned programs. David Macchiarolo will be giving the program at the February meeting, the topic being "kit building." For the future, Gerald is considering "show and tell" sessions at monthly meetings. His hope is that this will enhance the membership's personal knowledge of fellow hams. Gerald is investigating name badges for club members that will use the GARA club logo.

David Macchiarolo reported from Engineering. "Arch" has the malfunctioning GE Master II #2 and is analyzing it for possible repairs---nailing down the source of interference. The D-Star machine is working well. "Arch" has upgrades to be loaded---soon. David submitted a price list for a Bird Wattmeter #4304 and accessories. Bob Mays moved that the Board recommend to the membership that the purchase be made. Al Allred seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. David brought to the Boards attention the need to appoint

a D-Star administrator. Following some discussion, Chris Thompson moved that David be appointed to the position of Lead Administrator with Todd Smith as back-up. Gerald Donnelly seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. David also reported that he was moving forward with his research of controllers currently on the retail market.

Bob Mays requested that the Board select picnic date with a backup date. The Board selected Saturday, May 14th as the initial date and Saturday, May 21st as the backup. The picnic will be at Hagan Stone Park. Shelter selection is yet to be determined. Along the lines of the Open House, Bob indicated an initial interest in coordinating the event for the club but that he needed to check with John Strandberg and Will Ravenel before making a commitment.

Al Allred reviewed the 2011 budget forecast.

Ernie Wall gave a treasurer's report. Ernie also reported that the liability insurance payment would be made shortly.

David Macchiarolo reported that the High Point club has not reported back regarding GARA's grant offer to cover their repeater's phone charge---no strings attached.

Bob Mays moved that GARA send one hundred dollars to Newline. David Macchiarolo seconded the motion. The

motion passed unanimously.

Betty Williams reported that she would be communicating with new hams regarding GARA and that she would be working on a brochure to send out.

Gerald Donnelly initiated some discussion regarding a "Yahoo group" for the GARA membership. No action taken.

Todd Smith asked the Board's consideration on acquiring email addresses from QRZed. At this point the lights flashed, the meeting ended.

Respectfully submitted by Robert F. Mays, KE4MOW, Acting Secretary.



Photos by David M., AJ4TF

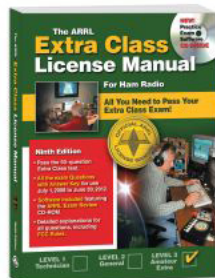
Kitbuilding Presentation for the Elecraft K2

David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF, Engineering Chairman, will provide us with a presentation on his experience building his Elecraft K2. You will witness through his photographic record, the steps involved in assembling such a wonderful HF radio. All details of electronic kitbuilding will be covered from soldering skills, organization of parts, and tips on how to make the process a successful one. If you've ever thought of building a radio from the ground up (no pun intended), then this is your opportunity to meet with and hear a successful veteran. Be prepared to discuss your efforts at kitbuilding as well! This should be a great time for all. Finally, you'll get a chance to know how to pronounce David's last name!

Extra Class – And Beyond....

Rick, WB3EXR and Chris, K4HC have been contemplating for some time, and GARA members have been requesting, also for some time, an Amateur Extra class study course. The time has now come where they feel ready to put this on.

This class is, however, going to be somewhat "non-traditional". Rick and Chris, along with Craig, N8STA, will be holding weekly interactive discussions on the W4GSO 145.15 repeater, starting on



Sunday, March 6th at 4:00 pm. This will be interspersed with occasional face-to-face meetings, but the majority of the "classes" will be over-the-air. Plan on no more than 2 hours per session, or being completed by 6:00 pm each Sunday. While subject to modification, we anticipate taking 12 weeks to complete the material.

Required study material will be the ARRL Extra Class License Manual, 9th

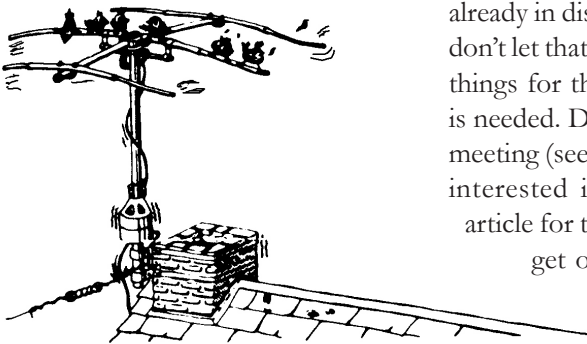
see Extra, page 9

From the President's Shack

GARA Members,

Today, as I write the sun was shining, and the temperatures remind me that spring is right around the corner. Remember to be safe during your spring antenna maintenance. Along with warmer weather, insects (including the stinging variety) will make their appearance. Winter storms and the recent wind we've experienced might make your natural antenna supports (trees) unsafe, with dead or broken branches waiting to drop on someone below. Please keep aware of your surroundings, and think through what you're about to do.

The GARA Board held its first



physical meeting of the year (January's being relegated to an electronic exchange due to the weather). Your board is enthusiastic, and looking for more activities, programs, and ideas to continue to help the club grow. We ended up last year with approximately 100 members (which continues to show significant growth over several years ago), and I want that to keep getting larger.

There is an Amateur Extra license course starting in March (see elsewhere in this newsletter for more details). We're already planning our next Open House for sometime in October. Several other things are already in discussion by the board, but don't let that stop you from suggesting things for the club to do. Your input is needed. Do a presentation at a club meeting (see Gerald, N4PAX if you're interested in doing that); write an article for the club newsletter; or just

get on the air and participate!

After all, it's a lot more

fun if you're DOING something!

73,

Chris, K4HC

NC QSO Party

Get ready. The NC QSO Party is scheduled for Sunday, February 27th from 12 Noon to 10pm local time (1700 UTC Feb.27 through 0300 UTC Feb.28).

If you've ever wanted to be on the receiving end of a pile-up, here's your chance. This once a year 10 hour event is the perfect occasion for any North Carolina operator to get the feel of contesting as stations around the globe will want to make contact with stations in all 100 counties.

This year retired Battleship North Carolina, operating as NI4BK, will be a bonus station along with stations in Cherokee and Dare counties, and the flagship station of Forsyth ARC, W4NC, host of the NC QSO Party.

For more details visit:
www.w4nc.com/2011ncqsoparty.html

From: Bill Morine, N2COP

Engineering Update for February, 2011

From David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF

The main focus of the engineering team is to continue to troubleshoot the interference issues that have been intermittently causing noise on the 145.15 repeater. We discovered that one of the GE MASTR-II radios that we use had a 10 dB sensitivity problem on its receiver input. We have removed that radio and it is under repair. The repeater is running on the backup radio, which has a noise floor of about -130 dBm. However, that is not the main problem... there is still occasional interference. There are several theories

floating around as to the cause, but we are planning to have Arch bring some of his equipment to the site soon, to try and do some measurements on the input side.

The D-STAR repeater is running well. Arch has a new software version for his D-Controller that we will apply to that machine on the next site visit.

A near-term project that needs to get done fairly soon is to perform an updated inventory of GARA-owned equipment. This is important to do as the equipment is insured, and we have to make sure we have the correct

listing for the insurance company. The engineering committee will be looking for a few volunteers to spend part of a Saturday in the near future to help with this task.

Lastly, we will be asking the membership to approve the purchase of a Bird wattmeter that can be used on both the VHF and UHF machines to maintain and characterize the transmitters and antennas. More details on this will be provided at the next GARA club meeting.

73,

David, AJ4TF

Congratulations! You Passed!

Every month on the second Saturday, except in March when it is the third Saturday, W4VEC holds a testing session for those who live in the area. This provides an opportunity for individuals to be able to test for their amateur radio license or upgrade. Thanks to Glenda Nicholson, AG4NC, and a

group of volunteers, each month there are new or upgraded hams in our area.

In February, we had 3 individuals who passed their test(s) and earn either their Technician, General or Extra class license.

Next month's testing session will be on March 19th at #3

Centerview Dr, Hickory Building, Greensboro, NC 27407 at 9:00am. While walk-ins are welcome contacting the lead VE is preferred. Please contact Glenda Nicholson at (336) 674-3810 or by email at ag4nc@bellsouth.net



*Manus Ross - KK4AGE,
Passed Tech*



*Michael A. Okpala - KK4AGG,
Passed Tech*



*David C. Arndt - W4DCA,
Upgrade to General*



Testing and Grading In Progress

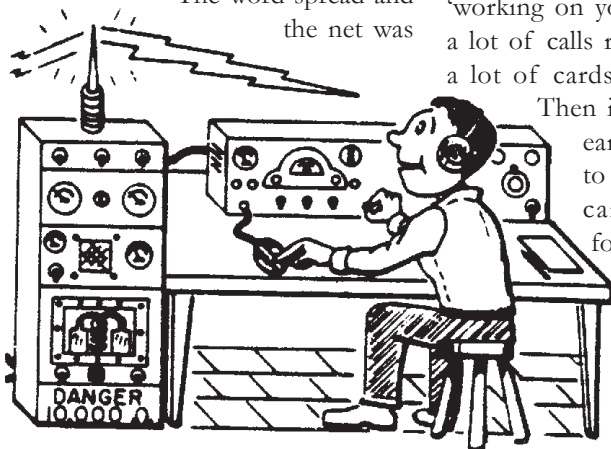
Geratol

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and see how I do working the 50 states with extra class formatted calls and not worry about all the complicated stuff'. I checked in and ended up having a blast working stations, making friends, and messing around with all the games (endorsements). It turns out they've written a couple of software apps that keep up with everything for you, all you have to do is log the contacts – still challenging to keep up with but the software definitely makes it manageable.

What is Geritol and how did the Geritol net come to be? Back when I was a kid, TV here was three channels black and white. Geritol advertisements were on every night offering that a couple of spoonfuls of the geriatric elixir Geritol would cure all that ails the elderly. Well, maybe a decade or so later, a few extra class hams were lamenting over the rumor that the FCC was going to open the 75 meter extra class band (3.800-3.825) to advanced class operators because the band wasn't being used. This group devised a scheme to set up a worked all states net in this band. The trick they came up with that was to get credit for a state, the station worked had to have a double letter suffix. Serialized awards would be given to stations that worked all 50 states – quite a challenge back then if you think about it.

The word spread and the net was



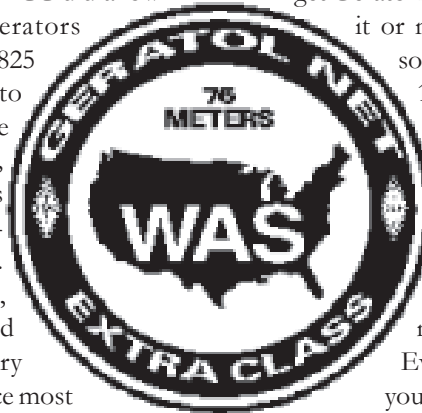
going.

In the early '70's, the ARRL was asked to administrate this new serialized WAS award along with its existing family of WAS awards. Rules for obtaining the serialized WAS award were published in the February 1972 issue of QST. In the fall of 1972, the FCC did allow advanced class operators access to the 3.800-3.825 sub-band but due to significant increase in extra class activity, a new extra class sub-band (3.775-3.800) was awarded. About the same time, someone suggested the unnamed net carry the Geritol name since most of the net participants were senior citizens. The name took hold and the net grew in popularity. Eventually the net participants began to represent all age groups. Since the Geritol name had lost its appropriateness, it was changed to the acronym GERATOL for 'Greetings Extra Radio Operators Tired of Operating Lately'. The net migrated as the FCC allocations of the extra class sub-band changed over the years and presently operates nightly at 3.668 Mhz. Eventually the ARRL stopped offering the Geratol award and the net has sustained itself through the effort of its participants.

The first time you check in, you're 'working on your Basic'. You'll get a lot of calls right off the bat... and a lot of cards from a lot of states.

Then it gets challenging. To earn the Basic, you need to work and receive QSL cards from extra class formatted calls in each of the 50 states. Lately, states like Minnesota, Connecticut, and Vermont have been tough. Any QSLs with

stations in Alaska and Hawaii are always very special. When you earn your Basic award, you get a Geratol number. Bring your new Geratol number up to the net and you are what's known as 'fresh meat'. You will be worked all night long nightly for your new Geratol number, but you get Geratol numbers back. Believe



it or not, within a week or so you will have worked 100 Geratol numbers which earns your Directors award. Now you get to bring up your new Director number, and you are 'fresh meat' all over again. Everyone wants to work you. Then you can just have fun playing the game.

I've really enjoyed playing this game. It's fun hanging out and getting to know some very experienced hams from all over the country. The only serious aspect about this net is how well the net controls run the net. Your operating skills improve the more you work the net – you really have to pay attention but you always have the opportunity to learn something. Oh, more than a few hams I've met on the net say the Geratol net was the reason they decided to upgrade to extra. Any reason is a good reason to upgrade to extra if you're active on HF. It's really worth the effort.

I plan on staying pretty active on the Geratol net until it shuts down April 30th. In the meantime, I'll still pursue ham radio for new stuff to do. When the net starts back up October 1st, I'll probably check back in and see where it goes. But, if I happen to run across a club station I could bring up to the net, who knows I might even start working on a brand new second 'Basic'.

For info on the Geratol net go to www.geratol.info or you can email w4dx@arrl.net for a couple of PDF info files.

Radio

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internet communication can compete with. In a world of taken-for-granted torrents of e-mails, instant messages and Skype video-chats, there is a purity and a richness in the shared experience of exchanging “73s” during a live “QSO” with strangers on another continent.

Why, the very ham slang that defines the community — 73 translating as “best regards”, and QSOs as two-way conversations — tells practitioners that they belong to a special, mutually curious and highly courteous club. And the fact that DXers (long-distance amateur operators) take the trouble to acknowledge received transmissions and conversations by sending their new contacts custom-designed postcards through the analog postal service ... well, that is charm itself in a world where it's considered excessive to end a communication with anything more effusive than a “bestest”.

You only need study a handful of these cards to understand, even today, the old-fashioned excitement of connecting with a stranger who might be many thousands of miles away. The postcards — known as QSL cards

— can be as quirky and personality-filled as the senders themselves. At times humorous and characterful, at others terse and geographically factual, they have naturally inspired

What is it about a simple microphone, a transmitter-receiver and the seductive freedom of the open radio spectrum that's turned a low-tech anachronism into an enduring and deeply engaging global hobby?

their own subculture that has spurred DXers to collect and display them much as they would colorful foreign postage stamps.

The cards invariably display as a minimum some basic factual information about the sender. This will generally

include the radio operator's individual call sign, his (there are not too many “hers”) location, and a few details about the signal detected. And just to show that the Twitter generation did not invent the linguistic contractions exemplified in text-message speak, QSL cards too rely on slang and abbreviations to pack information into a tight space.

So cards will display the “RST” — the received radio station's readability, signal and strength; perhaps details of the sender's “XMTR” (transmitter) and “ANT” (antenna); and occasionally a request to reciprocate, expressed as the shorthand “PSE QSL TNX” (please send an acknowledgement card, thanks) or the more chatty “hw abt a crd om?” (How about a card, old man?) Old man, by the way, is not a reference to the recipient's age — just as, on the rare occasions when the DXer is female, she is referred to as a “YL”, a young lady, whatever her chronological age.

DXers have been exchanging QSL cards since at least 1916, when Edward Andrews of Philadelphia — call sign 3TQ — recorded the receipt of a card from 8VX of Buffalo, NY. Over the next decade, the hobby took off — so much so that, by 1928, Paul Segal (W9EEA) had formulated

an “amateur's code” setting out six key qualities to which practitioners must adhere: “The radio amateur is considerate... loyal ... progressive ... friendly ... balanced ... [and] patriotic,” Segal specified, always ready for service to country and community.

Since then, the hobby has captivated royalty and celebrities alike. Among the most celebrated DXers have been the late King Hussein of Jordan (call sign JY1), Queen Noor (JY1H) and Juan Carlos, King of Spain (EA0JC). Had you picked the right moment, you could have chatted to Morocco's King Hassan II (CN8MH), the former Sultan of Oman (A41AA) or Bhumiphol

Adulayadej, King of Thailand (HS1A).

If monarchs have never appealed, you could instead have shot the breeze with Marlon Brando (FO5GJ), prime minister Rajiv Ghandi of India (VU2RG) or the CBS anchorman Walter Cronkite (KB2GSD) — not forgetting the singer Cliff Richard (W2JOF), Joe Walsh of The Eagles (WB6ACU) and genuinely beyond-this-world DXers such as Yuri Gagarin and Helen Sharman.

It's little wonder that collectors describe the buzz of receiving a new exotic foreign card as akin to that of philatelists discovering a rare commemorative stamp. That explains why the late Jerry Powell, a New Jersey ham between 1928 to 2000 (W2OJW), proudly displayed the 369 cards he had gathered from Okinawa to Papua.

Another obsessive collector, Thomas Roscoe of Brookfield, Ohio (K8CX), has created an awe-inspiring QSL museum where he displays his trophies from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe.



see More Radio, page 9



12th ANNUAL



NC4BL Dayton Hamvention by Bus May 19th, 20th, 21st & 22nd, 2011

The bus will leave from Burlington, NC (Exit 141) on May 19th at 7 AM with the following pick up locations and times:

| | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <u>Greensboro</u> | <u>Four Season's Mall</u> | <u>7:20 AM</u> |
| <u>Kernersville</u> | <u>Behind Hardee's</u> | <u>7:50 AM</u> |
| <u>Winston-Salem</u> | <u>Lowe's Parking Lot</u> | <u>8:15 AM</u> |
| <u>Mt. Airy</u> | <u>I-74 /Exit 8</u> | <u>9:00 AM</u> |
| <u>Hillsville, VA</u> | <u>I-77/Exit 14(Citgo Station)</u> | <u>9:30 AM</u> |
| <u>Wytheville, VA-</u> | <u>I-81/Exit 80 (McDonald's)</u> | <u>10:00 AM</u> |
| <u>Bluefield, VA</u> | <u>I-77 TBA</u> | <u>10:35 AM</u> |



The cost will be \$250 per person (which covers lodging for 3 nights at the University of Dayton (double occupancy) and the coach). It is advisable to order your Hamvention ticket (good for all three days) in advance for \$20 as they will cost \$25 at the door. Their address is: Hamvention Advanced Tickets, PO Box 1446, Dayton, OH, 45401.

A \$100 deposit is required with the balance due by April 15th.

(Note: I will take the first 50 people to make a firm commitment – either by sending in their deposit or contacting me personally)

Complete the form below—clip and send along with your deposit to:

Bill Lundy, NC4BL
151 Brady Johnson Lane.
Mt. Airy, NC 27030

or email: nc4bl@surry.net
Phone: (336)320-2135
Fax: (336)320-2136

Name _____ Call _____ Phone _____

Address _____ E-Mail _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Enclosed is deposit of \$ _____ (\$100 required by February 15th, 2011) Balance of _____ (required by April 15th, 2011)

Note: I would like to room with: _____ Call _____

More Radio

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(You can see his individual cards at hamgallery.com). Take a journey with Roscoe to Wallis & Futuna Island and Western Kiribati, to Kyrgyzstan and Kerguelen Island; visit "states" whose international status is somewhat contentious, such as the Republic of Ichkeria and the Principality of Sealand; celebrate one-off events such as Operation Desert Storm in Saudi Arabia, or the Queen Mary's last voyage.

But it's not simply the romance of card-collecting that continues to inspire DXers, nor the blunt urge to communicate. Instead, hams talk proudly about belonging to a global "brotherhood," with few rules and little bureaucracy and the ability to transcend language, religion and race — while never quite knowing who they might come in contact with.

Plus, of course, the chance to be a genuine real-life hero. Days after a magnitude 7.3 earthquake devastated Haiti in January, amateur radio operators were busy at work connecting rescuers within the country and contacting survivors' families. When a magnitude 8.8 earthquake hit Chile the next month, and the phone network collapsed, a radio operator named Alejandro Jara broadcast the first information from the ground.

Hams stepped in on September 11, 2001, and during Hurricane Katrina. Then there was Tony Pole-Evans, a bird lover with a short-wave radio on Saunders Island, who famously risked his life during Argentina's 1982 invasion

of the Falkland Islands to radio the first news back to Britain that 1,000 soldiers had landed on Goose Green.

How exciting it must have been

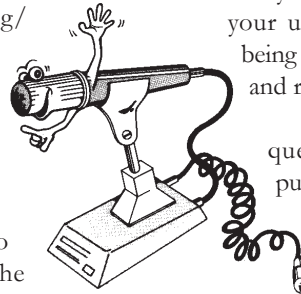
to intercept that particular radio call. And boy, what a QSL card to top one's collection. You can tweet all you like, but this is the way to communicate.

Extra

continued from page 3

edition, available online from the ARRL Store (www.arrl.org/arrl-store) or from various online vendors, such as www.Amazon.com. As we will be referring to specific pages and illustrations in the book during the on-air sessions, everyone needs to have their own copy of the manual.

Prospective Extras will be required to read the current chapter prior to each week's session in order to prepare themselves for the weekly discussion. While the primary focus will of course be in preparing you to take the Amateur Extra



class exam, Rick, Chris and Craig will also be taking things up a notch and including some things "Beyond Extra". Don't worry, the Beyond Extra sections will help your understanding, rather than being additional facts to memorize and regurgitate on test day.

Be prepared to ask questions, and also plan to put additional study time in, beyond the on-air or face-to-face meetings.

Interested parties are asked to submit an E-mail to k4hc@triad.rr.com, and indicate whether you have the study guide on-hand, or on-order.

73,
Chris K4HC

Minutes

continued from page 2

what kind of programs we are interested in and in that regard he has prepared a survey for people to fill out about what we would like.

Chris said that this is your club so let us know what you want.

Chris also said that Lee Price, KD4GC, needs some volunteers to help out with the Boy Scout camporee coming up on April 30th in Denton, NC.

Chris said that Bob Best, W4JG, has a Yaesu 767 transceiver for sale and he is asking \$600.00 for it.

Chris said that Rick Mainhart, WB3EXR, will help him teach an Extra class upgrade class coming soon. This will be an unconventional class done mostly over the air with some physical meetings. Power point presentations will be downloaded from the GARA Website by the participants. Please let Chris or Rick know if you are interested. An ARRL Extra class book will be required.

Gerald gave a presentation on internet searching with Google.

The meeting ended at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted by Greg Spencer, KG4UQV, GARA Secretary.



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E-mail items for Tom, N4GVK -- n4gvk@bellsouth.net

Area Happenings

FOURTH MONDAY – at 6:30pm, the Greensboro Amateur Radio Association have their regular monthly meeting at the Golden Corral, 4404 Landview Dr, Greensboro, NC 27407, off Wendover Ave, near Sam's Club. Please plan to gather at 6:30pm for dinner. The meeting is scheduled to start at 7:15pm

CLUB NETS:

SUNDAYS – at 7:30pm, the **Technical Forum** on the 145.150;

- at 9pm, the **GARA News and Information Net**. This net features *NewsLine* and is on the 145.150, W4GSO repeater. Roy Smith, N4BYU is always looking for net controls. Contact him if you would like to help.

TUESDAYS – at 8:30pm **The Triad SkyWarn Net** meets on the 147.225, K4ITL repeater, no tone required.

TUESDAYS – at 9pm, the **D-STAR Net** meets on 442.8625 (W4GSO B and Reflector 17C)

WEDNESDAYS – at 8:30pm, **The Guilford Amateur Society Rag Chew Net** holds their weekly net on the 145.250, W4GG repeater with an 88.5 Hz. tone. Jim Hightower, W4JLH is the net control.

THURSDAYS – at 9pm, **The Guilford County ARES Net** meets on the 145.150 repeater (100 Hz. tone).

OTHER ACTIVITIES :

FIRST MONDAY – **The Guilford County A.R.E.S.** monthly meeting is held at 1002 Meadowood St. off W. Wendover Ave, in the EMS building, beginning at 7pm.

THIRD MONDAY – at 6:15pm **The Guilford Amateur Society** holds their monthly meeting at Tex & Shirley's Restaurant in Friendly Shopping Center. Eat at 6:15pm and the business meeting begins at 7pm.

THURSDAY – at 11:15am, Greensboro Hams get together for lunch. Thursday lunch group is meeting at the K&W Cafeteria, 300 Forum VI Mall at Friendly Shopping Center. Talk-in is on the 145.150, W4GSO repeater with a 100 Hz. tone.

EVERY FRIDAY – at 8pm (approximately) Greensboro Hams get together for coffee at Starbucks at Edney Ridge Rd.

The W4VEC Testing Schedule

Mar. to Aug. 2011

March 19, 2011

April 9, 2011

May 14, 2011

June 11, 2011

July 9, 2011

August 13, 2011

Location: #3 Centerview Dr,
Hickory Building,
Greensboro, NC 27407

Time: 9:00am

Contact: Glenda Nicholson

Phone: (336) 674-3810

E-mail: ag4nc@bellsouth.net

GARA REPEATERS

145.150 MHz - offset, 100 Hz. tone

442.8625 MHz. + offset, Digital D-Star



Greensboro Amateur Radio Association

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Greensboro, NC 27417

www.w4gso.org

FIRST CLASS MAIL

The Official Publication of GARA