



The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association

Feed Line

Providing Amateur Radio news for the Triad



Brian Wilson, NX4U, Editor

www.w4gso.org

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A Note from your Funds Trackers

How Your Club's Funds Are Tracked



The directors treat Club funds as “your funds.” Your directors account for Club funds in the following manner:

• **The Treasurer, Craig, N8STA has a four-part function:**

1. He gets the mail from the post office box and separates membership renewals from invoices. He also receives membership renewals at club meetings. Dues are deposited to the Club's checking account. Invoices are verified before payment.
2. He gives each member paying in cash a receipt when dues are paid. For persons who mail checks, their cancelled check is sufficient. This provides a paper trail for the income, identified by member name.
3. He pays the bills by check after invoices, or requests for reimbursement, are verified.
4. Each month, he sends to the Financial Officer (Al, K4ZKQ) a list of the financial activities through the current date. Membership renewals are identified by name. Expenditures are identified by check number, payee, and purpose.

• **The Financial Officer, (Al, K4ZKQ), has a two-part function:**

1. He prepares a forecast by month for the current year as a means of comparing current results with the Club's experience for the three or four previous years.
2. He summarizes the individual transactions by appropriate categories. These totals are compared to the forecast in the monthly report.

Craig, N8STA Al, K4ZKQ

NEXT MEETING

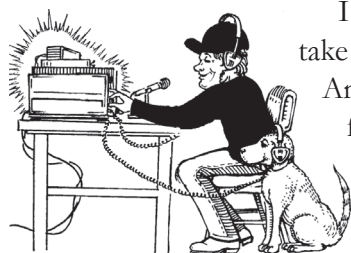
Monday, February 27

The next meeting of the Greensboro Amateur Radio Association will be Monday, February 27th, at Captain Bill's Seafood & Steakhouse, 6108 West Market Street, Greensboro, NC 27409, between Guilford College Road and Swing Road. This month's meeting will be entitled “PSK31- A Weak Signal Narrowband Digital Mode” and will be presented by David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF.



Morse Code and Me

By Tom Bertolino, KB1P



I had been studying for the code test for a while, and I was sure I was ready to take the level 1 test when I heard that Morse code was no longer a requirement for Amateur class licenses. So, I stopped studying Morse code and began to prepare for my General, then my Extra class license exams.

That was over five years ago. Now my interest in learning Morse code has been rekindled. I went looking for my ARRL code discs. I dusted them off,

see **Morse**, page 5

GARA Meeting Minutes

Regular Meeting Minutes January 23, 2011

The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association held their monthly meeting on January 23rd 2012, at Captain Bill's restaurant located at 6108 west Market Street in Greensboro.

The meeting started at 7:35pm with Vice-President Todd Smith, AK4TS, explaining about a mix up with the reservations. Todd also said that we will postpone the program scheduled for this month until next month.

Todd spoke about our lack of a president and assured everyone that the club will move ahead.

Todd recognized several new members, and we also had some visitors from the High Point Amateur Radio Club including the club president Warren Gallimore, KA4LOQ, who spoke about the loss of their repeater site and thanked GARA for the donation that we made in the way of a cabinet for their repeater.

Todd then had everyone identify themselves. Todd said he was glad to see the new members, and reminded everyone that it is time to renew your membership.

Roy Smith, N4BYU, spoke about a fox hunt that will be held on February 19th 2012. The fox hunt will start at 13:30 behind the Wendy's restaurant located near the Brassfield Shopping Center. Roy also spoke about what a fox hunt is and what is involved.

Jim Waynick, N4JLW, spoke about Guilford County ARES, the group that he is the EC of and invited everyone to check into the nets and come to the meetings.

Todd spoke about the different nets that are held weekly. Weldon Fields, W4AJT, spoke about the NC ARES Net held every night at 19:30 on 3.923 MHz

Chris Thompson, K4HC, spoke about the North American QSO Party held this past weekend and encouraged every one to participate in upcoming contests. Chris also spoke briefly about Logbook of the World (LOTW). Todd said that we will be having a program on LOTW coming up this year.

Todd spoke about the K4NSC station at the Natural Science Center and encouraged everyone to use it. Todd said that there will be a work party coming up soon at the station.

Todd introduced Bill Blackwell, KM5DW, who makes name tags at no charge for club members.

Todd introduced Fred Lomax, KK4BAW, one of the club's new members-at-large who invited people to contact him with

any issues or ideas they may have. Fred also spoke about ideas that he has for this year. Fred said that we need to help older hams with transportation, antenna work, elmering etc.

Roy spoke about the annual GARA club picnic coming up this summer and stated that the date is not set but will be finalized soon.

Engineering Chairman David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF, stated that everything is working well. He said, "We had a short term interference problem on the D-Star repeater a few weeks ago." David also spoke about the N4G special event station coming up on March 17th & 18th. David said that there will be an operating test coming up this coming weekend.

Financial Officer Al Allred, K4ZKQ, gave the treasury and financial reports and stated that membership is up from last year.

Secretary Greg Spencer, KG4UQV, had nothing to report.

Operations Officer Roy Smith, N4BYU, had nothing additional to report.

Todd said that Tom Forest, N4GVK, has resigned as web master, and we have one volunteer and would like to ask if anyone else would like to hold that position.

Todd said that we also still need someone for the office of president.

The meeting ended at 20:40.

Respectfully submitted by Greg Spencer, KG4UQV, GARA Secretary.



The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association

President ** Vacancy **
Vice-President Todd Smith, AK4TS
Treasurer Craig Bondy, N8STA
Secretary Greg Spencer, KG4UQV
Financial Al Allred, K4ZKQ
Engineering Chair David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF
Operations Roy Smith, N4BYU
Member-at-Large Fred Lomax, KK4BAW
Member-at-Large Gaither Frye, KD4CTY
Appointed Position:
Webmaster & Newsletter Editor
Brian Wilson, NX4U

The Feed Line is ©2012 by the Greensboro Amateur Radio Association and published monthly. Our address is P.O. Box 7054, Greensboro, NC 27417. The purpose of the newsletter is to provide the club and prospective members information about the club and amateur radio in general. Material and information should reach the editor by the first Friday of the month for the next edition of the newsletter. Opinions expressed in "The Feed Line" do not necessarily represent the views of the officers, directors, editor or members of the Greensboro Amateur Radio Association. Material may be reproduced, provided proper credit is given to GARA.

Board Meeting Minutes January 21, 2012

The GARA board of directors met for a second time in January. The meeting was held at 9:30 AM on Saturday, January 21st 2012, at the Benjamin Branch Library. Those in attendance were: Fred Lomax, KK4BAW; Al Allred, K4ZKQ; Roy Smith, N4BYU; David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF; Todd Smith, AK4TS; and Greg Spencer, KG4UQV.

Todd said that we have a lot of things to discuss this month so that is why we are having this meeting.

Todd brought Fred up to speed on the board and GARA's soccer involvement. We then discussed some recent changes to the GUSA and what GARA's role should be in the future. David made a motion to have GARA limit our activities to communicating the scores only and GARA should keep a log of what we transmit then a GUSA staff person would enter the scores into the computer. Al will work with Allen Bradley, KD4IUN, to write a letter GUSA describing our future involvement. Todd seconded, one opposed, the motion carried. David made a motion to have the letter brought before the board and the membership before it is mailed. Todd seconded and the motion carried.

Todd said that Tom Forrest, N4GVK, has resigned as GARA web master, and we need to look for a replacement. Todd said that he would like to have a Director of Communications officer on the board. Roy made a motion to accept Tom's resignation and ask for volunteers at the next club meeting. Todd seconded and the motion passed with one abstention.

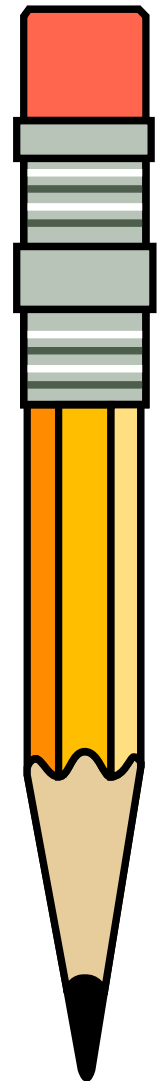
Todd said that Gaither Fry, KD4CTY, had expressed a desire to step down from the board. Roy made a motion that Todd asks Gaither his intentions, and if he does not wish to continue then we ask Patrick Moore, KB2RAC, if he would like to be member-at-large. David seconded, the motion passed.

We discussed the need to find a new president and what kind of person it takes. David made a motion that we ask for a volunteer at the next club meeting and in the Feed Line then if not the board will continue. Al seconded and the motion carried.

Director of Communications position; Al made a motion to defer discussion on this matter to the next board meeting, Todd seconded the motion carried.

The meeting ended at 11:35am.

Respectfully submitted by Greg Spencer, KG4UQV, GARA Secretary.



Our Condolences

Our condolences go out to Thomas Grohal, KV4AK, on the passing of his father, Stanley Grohal. Mr. Stanley Grohal, 82, of Pleasant Garden, died Monday, February 13, 2012 at Moses Cone Hospital.

A memorial service will be held 2 p.m. Saturday, at Lambeth-Troxler Funeral Chapel, with the Reverend Michael Barrett officiating.

Mr. Grohal was born March 9, 1928, in Maple Ridge, Pennsylvania, to John W. and Anna H. Grohal.

He retired from the US Army and served during WW II. He was married to the late Helen Grohal.

Mr. Grohal is survived by his son, Thomas Grohal, of Pleasant Garden; sister, Genevive Borcas, of Mentor, OH and several nieces and nephews. The obituary and online condolences may be made to www.lambethtroxlerfuneralhome.com *Published in News Record on February 16, 2012*

Engineering Update for February, 2012

From David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF

The keepers of the D-STAR US trust server have come out with some improvements in the gateway software package. After testing it, it has been installed on the D-Star gateway. The features of the update are mainly in the area of logging events; the log is much less “verbose” as apparently some operators were having trouble with log files taking up a lot of space on the disk. Our system does a weekly “logrotate”, throws away logs older than 4 weeks, for most logs, so it wasn’t really a problem for us, but we made the update anyway. Each gateway reports every 15 minutes it’s current status to the US trust server, including whether the software is up to date. You can see these status reports by pointing your web browser to: <http://dsync.dstarusers.org/index.php> If you click on W4GSO you’ll see that it’s status is “green”.

The VHF repeater seems to be running well, I have not heard any issues with it. I try to monitor it during the morning and evening drive times during the week. I hear it getting a lot of use, which is good!

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about your club repeaters, either VHF or D-Star, please contact me at aj4tf@arrl.net



N4G Special Event Station Update

We had a very successful test on Saturday January 28th for the N4G special event station at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park (well, technically at the Colonial Heritage Museum in Tannenbaum Park). We erected a 80-40 coax-fed fan dipole, and a G5RV. The 80-40 had a little bit of trouble tuning up on 20m, most likely due to the length of feedline that we were using, but worked great on 80, 40, and 15m. The G5RV was working well on 20m.

We did an inspection inside the adjacent museum building while we were transmitting, and no interference to any building systems was observed.

It took about a hour to set up the 80-40 dipole, and just a short time to set up the G5RV. Originally the G5RV was set up on a fiberglass mast, but the location of the mast turned out to be too close to the building. Instead, we hoisted the center of the G5RV into one of the trees, and anchored the ends in an inverted V configuration; this proved to work pretty well.

We were able to make some contacts on 80m, 40m, 20m, and 15m. The farthest contact was in Serbia. Pictures of the test are here:

<http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.2895540359716.130051.1596553404&type=3>

Video clips of the test are here:

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL70127D5EF2B984A7>

We did learn some things which will be added to the operating plan for the event, which was the whole purpose of the test.

Next milestone: The real event on March 17th - 18th!

Thanks to all who participated and supplied equipment and supplies.

73,

David AJ4TF

Morse

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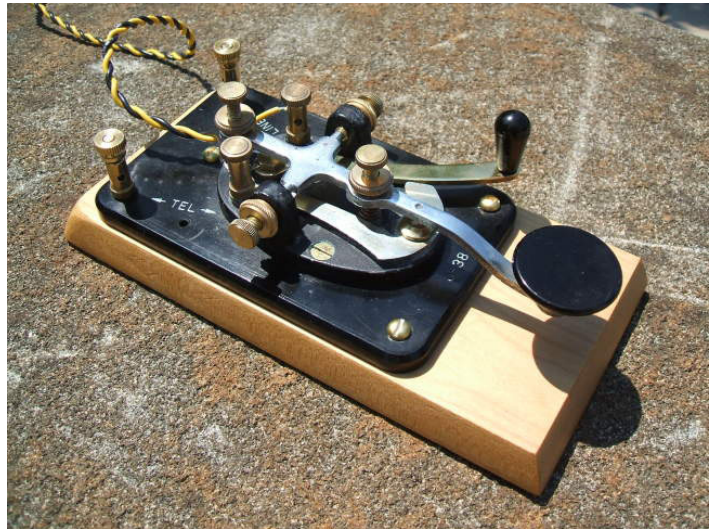
uploaded them onto my computer then to my MP3 player and started the learning process all over again. My wife and friends who saw me with my ear phones on asked me what I was listening to. I replied. I am listening to Morse code. They give me a funny look and said OOOOKayyy!

I soon discovered that learning Morse code is like learning a new language, and learning a new language at my age is not easy especially if you're well on your way to being tone deaf. I'm hanging in there though and learning slowly. I am certain; I will eventually get all those dits and dahs in the right order. I know that someday, longer than sooner, that I will wake up and it will make sense to me. I will be able tell if the letter is an S or an H, or if it is a P or an X and, I will be able to transcribe the practice code test on the ARRL code disc the first time. I am confident this will happen, but when, I don't know.

To help speed up my learning progress, I thought listening to Morse code on the 20 Meter Band would help me. I was hoping I could recognize some letters or even be able to transcribe some words or a QSO. Boy did I get a shock. Is there anyone out there sending code below 25 words per minute? I was amazed at the speed Hams are sending and receiving code. How could anyone send code so fast and understand what is being sent at those speeds? I soon found out I have a long way to go before my 3 to 5 words per minute copy rate will be allow me to transcribe anything more than an occasional O or and S.

Not to be discouraged I buckled down studied more, and started to look for other ways or methods to learn code and improve my copying speed. I Googled Morse code and CW and found a site run by Simon N Twigger, AA9PW. [aa9pw.com/morsecode/] It offers practice code tests and a way to test your ability to copy at different speeds. You can choose letters, numbers, punctuation and pro-words or a combination of all. You can also get live CW RSS news feeds. You decide what you need to learn or practice, select it from the menu, then hit the "generate Morse code" button, the code will then play on your computer's media player. Once you have transcribed the sent code you can check your copy by clicking on the review text button. If you are studying code or trying to improve your copy speed I recommend at a minimum that you look at this site and maybe try one of the options offered. I found that this site has helped me.

Another thing I thought I needed to do was to listen to and transcribe actual CW QSO's. To do this I needed to find a Morse code decoding program. So I started to search the internet to find a program. I discovered that there are many decoding programs offered on the net. Some are free; for others you will need to pay a fee after a trail period. These programs allow your commuter, through a sound card, to decode Morse code. Some programs will actually send code after you type what you want to send. To use these programs you will have to connect your rig to your computer through a serial port. So you will need the appropriate decoding program, a sound card and cable to connect computer to your rig. I downloaded a freeware program called CW Decoder. CW Decoder is not rated as the best decoding program. It has its pluses and minuses. But, I found it easy to set up and use and it met my requirement to transcribe code. Once my computer was connected to my rig, and I brought up the CW Decoder program, I tuned my rig



see More Morse, page 6

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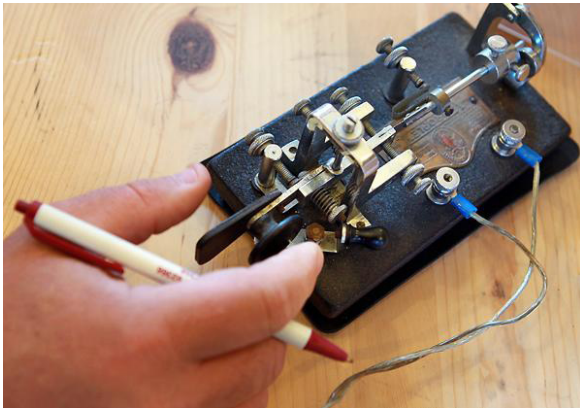
More Morse

continued from page 5

to a frequency sending code. I then aligned the program to the frequency. When everything was aligned the program began to decode the QSO's.

Now through the aid of my computer I could listen to actual QSO's. I could see what conventions were being used during CW QSO's and how different Hams were using the pro-words and abbreviations to simplify their transmissions. The more I listened the better I understood how code is sent and received. I was starting to put it all together. I began to identify some rhythms in the way code is sent (even though there is a slight delay between the time the code is sent and the time the program transcribes the code). I now can identify when station sending CQ, but my copy speed has not allowed me to pick out the station's call sign yet.

This summer, I bought a cell phone (an android model) that was smarter than me. I soon found a free app called Morse Code CT which I also use to help me to learn Morse code. This app has several options that allow you to customize your learning. This app gives you the option to choose to between transmit or copy. You can vary WPM speed from 5-25. You can also change the send tone frequency from 550 to 2000 Hz (which I like because my



difficulty in hearing some frequencies). You can choose what letters, numbers or combination of letters numbers that are sent. You can also choose how many letters/numbers are in each group, and how many groups are sent. I found that I use this app (with my phone's ear phones) when I am away from my computer, traveling or waiting in some doctor's office. This is just one of the many Morse code apps out there. I am sure you could find one that you like.

I know that if I continue to listen to the code discs, test myself on Simon N Twigger's site, and continue to monitor CW on the bands my copy speed will improve and I will master receiving Morse code.

Jump Kits, part 3

By Gaither Frye, KD4CTY

Emergency: *An event where immediate action is required to intervene between life & death.*

Disaster: *A large emergency.*

Be prepared so you are not afraid.

Mitigation: *This is the easy part and the hardest part all at the same time. The list is short but your attention span may falter.*

Follow any earthquake and hurricane preparations that FEMA and your insurance company may offer.



see Jump, page 8

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 six (6) individuals each month who passed their test(s) and earn either their Technician, General or Extra class license.

Next month's testing session will be on March 17th 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

All Photos Courtesy of Roy Smith's iPhone, N4BYU



*John (Greg) Spencer - KG4UQV
Upgrade to Extra*



*Kenneth V Worland - KK4GSM
New Technician*



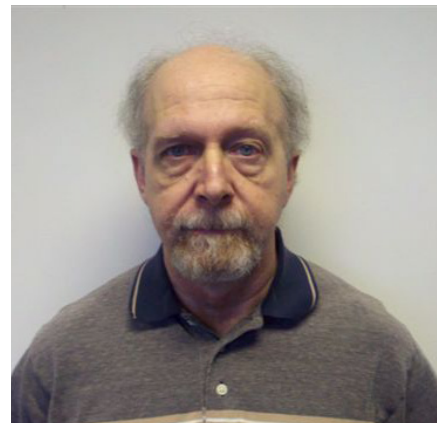
*Roger D Joyner - W4AYO
Upgrade to General*



*Dalmer M Badgett - KF4FVG
Upgrade to General*



*Donald R Wright - KK4GSN
New Technician*



*Douglas B Andrews - KK4GSL
Passed Tech & General*

Jump

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Here is my list: 30 year shingles when you re-roof your house. They have a higher wind rating than 15 or 20 or 25 year shingles. Put foundation straps on your house.

If you are building a house, install a sprinkler system. A sprinkler system will pay for itself with insurance savings in a few short years. And your family will be safer.

Install earthquake straps on your hot water heater. Anchor any tall furniture to the walls. Especially you want to anchor book cases.

Minimize the amount of heavy or sharp stuff that can become free floating inside of your car during a roll over. If it hits you in the head, will it hurt or injure anyone? Put it in the trunk.

Have you done your E.D.I.T.H. drill? (Exit Drill In The Home) Are the kids practicing 911 calls? The first question that they will need to know is "Where is the emergency?" Are you constantly practicing observing the weather and your surroundings? Is your Jump Kit 90% or more ready? Have you signed up for a class to increase your skill sets?

Emergency: *Now that I/we survived, why are things not like they used to be?*

I / my family is any one or more of the following: cranky, can not sleep, sleepy all the time, nervous, edgy, irritable, mean, silent, quiet, over verbal, louder, can not concentrate, irrational fears, not wanting to _____, a pronounced or subtle shift in personality, or anything that shows up from pre-disaster behavior. Or if there is no shift at all.

Some mental discomfort is useful and almost mandatory. But extended, or extensive, or no discomfort are a warning flags.

Pay attention to these flags. Get some help. Search for safe places to retreat and process mentally. Meditate, yoga, pray, self help group, exercise (this one is huge-do it), take a vacation, tackle a new project, start a new hobby, are a few of my suggestions.

Avoid making BIG decisions.

Survived

CISD – Critical Incident Stress

Debriefing

Mental repercussions

Communicable disease

More items for consideration for your Jump Kit:

Signal Flares,

Highway Flares,

Chem Light Sticks, (rotate them before they expire) Use the old ones at Halloween or for training.

N-95 masks



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

Feb to July 2012

March 17, 2012

April 14, 2012

May 12, 2012

June 9, 2012

July 14, 2012

August 11, 2012

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

P.O. Box 7054

Greensboro, NC 27417

www.w4gso.org

FIRST CLASS MAIL

The Official Publication of GARA