



The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association

Feed Line

Providing Amateur Radio news for the Triad



Brian Wilson, NX4U, Editor

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Are You Ready for N4G?

by Brian Wilson, NX4U

In less than three weeks, members of GARA, headed by David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF, will once again operate the Special Event station with the call sign, N4G. As the website, www.n4g-gch.org says, "The special event commemorating the 233rd anniversary of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse on March 15-16th, 2014, will have the call sign – N4G." This is an exciting time for many club members and an excellent time to participate on the HF bands. If you would like to volunteer your time to participate in set-up, teardown, or operations, please contact David at aj4tf@arrl.net or just give him a shout on the repeater. I feel confident you will have a great time and learn much. This is also a good warm up for Field Day, which is only three (3) months away!

N4G
Special Event Station
Commemorating the 231st Anniversary of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse
March 17-18, 2012

Greensboro Amateur Radio Association
N4G, Special Event Station, PO Box 7054, Greensboro, NC 27417 USA
n4ggch@gmail.com www.w4gso.org

Confirming QSO with:

STATION	DAY	MO	YR	UTC	BAND/FREQ	REPORT	MODE

Tnx For Nice QSO

This Month's Program

Our February Meeting will be held on Monday, February 24th at 7:00 pm at Captain Bills Seafood & Steakhouse located at 6108 West Market Street in Greensboro. Come early, have dinner, and catch up on the latest club info, gossip, and connect faces to call signs.

The presentation topic for this month is Vanity Call Signs. The presenter is Tom Bertolino, KB1P. The presentation will cover: what is a vanity call, who can get one, how to choose one, and how to apply for one.

Some reminders:

- Your club membership runs from January to December. GARA dues were due on January 1st. If you have not paid your dues save a stamp, you can pay your dues while you are at this month's meeting. Craig Bondy, N8STA, GARA's treasurer will have the both the Club and ARRL join/ renewal forms with him.

- If you are a D Star user, the board asks if you would make a \$25.00 donation to help cover the costrunning the D Star repeater.

See you at the meeting

NEXT MEETING Monday, February 24

The next meeting of the Greensboro Amateur Radio Association will be Monday, February 24th, at Captain Bill's Seafood & Steakhouse, 6108 West Market Street, Greensboro, NC 27409, between Guilford College Road and Swing Road. The program for this month's meeting will be vanity Call Signs. The presenter is Tom Bertolino, KB1P. The presentation will cover: what is a vanity call, who can get one, how to choose one, and how to apply for one.

GARA Meeting Minutes

Regular Meeting Minutes January 27, 2014

The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association held their monthly meeting on January 27, 2014, at Captain Bills Seafood Restaurant located at 6108 West Market Street in Greensboro.

Tom Bertolino, KB1P, called the meeting to order at 19:04. Tom asked for everyone to identify themselves and said that he would like to start the meetings at 19:00 so we could finish up earlier. He, also, welcomed the visitors and new hams that attended.

Tom spoke about the omission of the engineering chairman position on the ballot in November which resulted in no one being elected to fill that position. The GARA board of directors appointed David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF, to fill the position temporarily until the club could vote at the next general meeting.

Tom made a motion to elect David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF, to the position of Engineering Chairman, Layman Idol, KK4LLY, seconded, and the motion carried.

Tom listed the objectives of the board of directors for 2014, as follows:

Encourage input from membership; start an alternate way for GARA to accept payments using Pay Pal; cut operating costs, as the club has been operating under a deficit for the last three years; and increase income (several ideas are being studied)..

OFFICER REPORTS

Cameron Conover, AJ4TW, nothing to report. Greg Spencer, KG4UQV, nothing to report.

Craig Bondy, N8STA, gave the treasury report and stated that we now have 65 members that have renewed so far this year.

Roy Smith, N4BYU, said VE sessions are held on the second Saturday of every month except in March.

Contact Roy for more information on testing.

David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF, gave the engineering report and spoke of some issues that were dealt with recently concerning the D-Star repeater. David also thanked the club for reelecting him.

Fred Lomax, KV4PI, said that there will be a Science Fair at General Green Elementary School. Contact Fred if you would like to help.

Jesse Lindley, K4AX, said that he and Fred Lomax have been discussing starting a GARA forum online.

SCHEDULED EVENTS

The N4G special event station will be held on March 15th & 16th. Contact David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF, to volunteer.

There will be a Science Fair at General Green Elementary School on March 28th. Contact Fred Lomax, KV4PI, for more information.

GARA picnic is scheduled for May 24th, Gibson Park, Shelter 2.

Tom introduced Anders Green, KI4WX, who gave the presentation on the upcoming Sandblast Rally in Cheraw, South Carolina

Linda Worland, KK4LHH, made a motion to accept the minutes as published, Layman Idol, KK4LLY, seconded, the motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 20:04

Respectfully submitted by Greg Spencer, KG4UQV, GARA Secretary.



The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association

President Thomas Bertolino, KB1P
Vice-President Cameron Conover, AJ4TW
Treasurer Craig Bondy, N8STA
Secretary Greg Spencer, KG4UQV
Financial Todd Smith, AK4TS
Engineering Chair David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF
Operations Roy Smith, N4BYU
Member-at-Large Fred Lomax IV, KV4PI
Member-at-Large Jesse Lindley, K4AX
Appointed Position:
Webmaster & Newsletter Editor
Brian Wilson, NX4U

The Feed Line is ©2014 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 - February

The GARA board of directors held their monthly meeting on February 10th, 2013 at Captain Bills. The members present were: Tom Bertolino, KB1P; Craig Bondy, N8STA; Todd Smith, AK4TS; Cameron Conover, AJ4TW; David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF; Roy Smith, N4BYU; Fred Lomax, KV4PI; Jesse Lindley, K4AX; and Greg Spencer, KG4UQV. Layman Idol, KK4LLY, was visiting at Tom's request.

Tom opened the meeting at 19:00.

Tom said that he asked some key non-board members to attend and Layman was the only who could attend. Tom had asked Layman to attend because he hosts the Technical Forum.

Cameron spoke about a GARA DX Challenge Contest idea that he had to help raise funds. The board discussed this idea, and The board will continue to explore ideas.

Greg gave a summary of the January board of directors meeting. Greg also stated that he had updated the GARA club page on the ARRL website.

Craig gave the treasury report and stated that the club now has 69 paid memberships with a total membership at 83 members.

Tom made a motion to give a courtesy membership to Brian Wilson, NX4U, who is The Feed Line editor and website manager, Cameron seconded and the motion carried.

Todd said the money coming in from dues will not be enough to sustain the cost of running the club and he recommended that the board look at increasing dues next year. The board discussed some ways of increasing revenue and lowering costs.

Fred said there is a social aspect to clubs, and the board needs to promote the use of the repeater.

Todd said he is working on setting up a PayPal account for GARA. He also stated that he has reserved shelter number two at Gibson Park for the GARA picnic. Todd said that the park would be a great place to hold a foxhunt during the picnic.

Tom passed out an income vs. cost analysis for the last few years that he put together. The board discussed the dwindling resources and the need to lower cost and increase income. Tom said that he has converted some of the old financial files from paper to digital files.

David said that in the interest of time, he had nothing further to report than what he had emailed the board recently.

Roy said that he has heard several people who are not members using the repeaters and said if club members hear them, they should encourage them to join GARA. He also spoke about donating to Amateur Radio Newsline and then made a motion to send \$125. There was no second, and the motion failed. Todd made a motion that the board inquire what is appropriate, Tom seconded, and the motion carried.

Jesse spoke about starting a web forum for GARA members and suggested that the club look at making some things that GARA could sell to raise money.

David said that the N4G permit has been approved, and he has had equipment pledged.

Tom said that the board needs to proceed with setting up the VoIP, as soon as possible. He also said that he would like to see one of the members-at-large take on the position of assistant secretary in case there was ever a time when the secretary was unable to make it to a meeting.

Cameron and Fred both volunteered to be assistant secretaries. Also, Cameron will line up presentations for meetings. Roy made a motion to adjourn, Jesse seconded, and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Greg Spencer, KG4UQV, GARA Secretary.

Info from Around NC

From North Carolina Section News by Bill N2COP

NORTH CAROLINA YOUTH NAMED TO ARRL NATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE – 14 year old Christopher Tate, KJ4UBL, has been appointed by ARRL President Kay Craigie, N3KN, to ARRL's national Public Relations Committee (PRC). The Burlington native is the youngest ARRL Public Information Officer (PIO) in the U.S. Christopher is known for his YouTube postings on Amateur Radio as well as his PR efforts across the state. In 2013, Christopher worked with section Public Information Coordinator (PIC) Woody Woodward, K3VSA, on media coverage for the QSO between the International Space Station and students of McNair Elementary School of Brown Summit near Greensboro. An Extra class license holder, Christopher enjoys CW, QRP and all aspects of HF. Christopher joins North Carolina Section Manager Bill Morine, N2COP, in serving on ARRL's PRC, which is busy with designing brochures and presentations ARRL will use this centennial year. Christopher is the son of proud parents Randy (KJ4UBM) and Elizabeth (KK4CMA) Tate.



ARRL PRESIDENT TO VISIT NORTH CAROLINA TWICE – ARRL President Kay Craigie, N3KN, will be at both the upcoming Charlotte Hamfest and RARSfest. Since 2014 marks ARRL's Centennial, Kay is promoting the League's 100th anniversary at many field events. She will make presentations during forums at both hamfests. The Charlotte Hamfest, March 7 and 8, will be the North Carolina Section Convention, and RARSfest, April 19, in Raleigh will be the Roanoke Division Convention.

SCHOOL CLUB ROUNDUP FEBRUARY 10-14 – Many NC schools, ranging from elementary through universities, have participated in the semi-annual School Club Roundup (SCR) event. Next round is the week of February 10th-14th. Some schools integrate SCR QSOs into class time, but most operate after school. If you know of a NC school operating in the upcoming SCR, please send an email notifying Section Manager Bill Morine, N2COP, at n2cop@arrl.org. Details of operation and rules can be found at <http://www.arrl.org/school-club-roundup>. With emphasis in educational programs on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), SCR is a great community outreach.

A CHANGE FOR THE NC SECTION MANAGER - Effective Thursday, February 20th, Karl Bowman, W4CHX, takes over as ARRL NC Section Manager. [Editor's Note: I want to print a personal "Thank You" to Bill Morine, N2COP, for his great job in serving as NC Section Manager.]

From the President's Shack

I hope everyone made it through this month's wintery weather without too much damage to your property or radio equipment.

March traditionally is the start of warmer weather and the start of ham sponsored events in the Greensboro area. GARA has two events scheduled for March. They are: the N4G Special Event Station and an information booth at the Technology Fair, General Greene Elementary School.

The N4G Special Event Station commemorates the 233rd anniversary of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse. This year the event is scheduled for 15-16 March 2014, at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park, Greensboro, North Carolina. The POC for this event is David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF. He plans to operate the special event station from 1300 UTC on the 15th to 1900 UTC on the 16th. David is looking for volunteers to help him setup, operate, and tear down. This is an excellent opportunity for hams to get on HF bands that are not authorized by their license class restrictions. If you are interested in volunteering for this event, you can contact David by email. His email address is aj4tf@arrl.net. You can get more information on this event by going to the N4G web site at n4g-gch.org

The second GARA event is an information booth at Technology Fair, General Greene Elementary School, Greensboro, NC. The fair is scheduled for March 28th. GARA is setting up an information booth promoting Amateur Radio. This is a great way to introduce school-aged children to the hobby. The POC for this event is Fred Lomax IV, KV4PI. If you would like to help Fred, you can send him an email at kk4baw@gmail.com.

I believe the most thankless job in GARA is serving on the Engineering Committee. When the repeaters are working well, I seldom hear anyone thanking David, AJ4TF, or giving his crew a "that- a-boy" for maintaining and keeping the repeaters in good working order. However, when a strange noise pops up, some interference is heard, or some problem in hitting the repeater occurs, then all heck breaks loose. Remarks start to fly. Why isn't the repeater fixed? Something is wrong with this machine! I was able to hit the repeater from here with my HT. Whatever the problem was in most cases the Engineering guys fix it within a couple of days after it was reported, and everything is copasetic until the next real or perceived problem occurs.

I rarely hear anyone take the time to thank David and his Engineering guys for fixing the repeaters.

Let's not wait until they fix another problem to give them a compliment.

Join me and take the time to give the Engineering guys a much needed and deserved thank you for taking their valued free time to keep our repeaters in good working order.

"That-a-boy" guys keep up the great work!

Tom Bertolino, KB1P
President, GARA



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 Roy Smith, N4BYU, and a group of volunteers, each month there are new or upgraded hams in our area.

In February, there was only one (1) who passed their test(s) and earned either their Technician, General or Extra class license.

Next month's testing session will be on March 15th (the THIRD Saturday, due to the Charlotte Hamfest) at Hinshaw United Methodist Church, 4501 High Point Road, Greensboro, 27407, at 9am. While walk-ins are welcome contacting the lead VE is preferred. Please contact Roy Smith at (336) 312-0647 or by email at n4byu@arrl.net

If you cannot make it to this test session, W4VEC holds a second test every month in this area. Test sessions are held at 10am on the last Saturday of each month at the Red Cross High Point Chapter, 815 Phillips Ave., High Point, NC 277262. Walk-ins are welcome. Contact information is Bob Williams, KB4TWG, email robwilliams@northstate.net, phone (cell), 336-812-5500.

All Photos Courtesy of Roy Smith, N4BYU



*Philip Snow, KK4YBG
Passed Tech*



*During the testing session, the Volunteer Examiners
watch while the participants work to answer the
questions correctly.*

Engineering Update for February, 2014

From David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF

UHF (D-STAR) REPEATER

The engineering committee has received some reports on the D-Star repeater that the receive sensitivity seems to be lower than normal, and the output power also seems lower than normal. Both

of these conditions appear to be intermittent. The recent extremely cold weather appears to have exacerbated the problem, but this is only a theory, and is not yet confirmed. There are several possible causes for these conditions, but a drop in sensitivity at the same time as a perceived drop in output power makes me suspect a problem in the duplexer/feedline/antenna chain. We plan to collect some RF test equipment and make a trip to the repeater with the test equipment when the weather warms up a little bit, to take some measurements and try to ascertain what is happening.

As I reported last month, I still need to work on the gateway database. Additionally, a recent update on the 'dplus' linking software (to revision "K") also needs to be loaded. 'dplus' is the gateway add-on software that is maintained by Robin Cutshaw (AA4RC) that allows us to link to other repeaters and reflectors. Neither of these pending updates is preventing the gateway from operating, however.

VHF REPEATER:

The VHF repeater is operating normally, and we have not received any reports of problems.

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

73, from the GARA Engineering Committee!



Contest Update/Changes from ARRL

There have been some changes in the ARRL Contest Branch following the January 23rd resignation of Mike DeChristopher, N1TA, as ARRL Contest Manager. Former Contest Branch Manager, Sean Kutzko, KX9X, catches us up on the situation. "Since Mike's resignation, a team of ARRL staffers, including former Contest Managers Dan Henderson, N1ND and myself, have come together to address the needs of the Contest Branch until a replacement is found. Dave Patton, NN1N, is managing this team.

"Our efforts are directed as follows:

- 1) Eliminate the backlog of overdue awards certificates and plaques;
- 2) Keep normal day-to-day Contest Branch functions running on schedule;
- 3) Restore the "customer service" side of the Contest Branch to superior levels.

"With the help of several ARRL staffers in the Awards Branch, we have sent out over 5,000 awards certificates in the last two weeks, including the 2012 CW and Phone Sweepstakes, the 2012 September VHF Contest, the 2012 August UHF Contest, the 2013 RTTY Roundup. 1,100 certificates for the 2012 10 Meter Contest were just sent to the ARRL mail room and should go out by the middle of the week. In addition, plaques for the 2012 CW Sweepstakes and 2013 RTTY Roundup were shipped. 2012 Phone Sweepstakes plaques were ordered last week and will be shipped within three weeks. We will continue to aggressively work on the backlog of overdue awards and hope to be caught up soon. You are welcome to monitor our awards progress at www.arrrl.org/plaques-and-certificates which is updated regularly.

Calendar of Events

- Mar 7-8 North Carolina Section Convention (2014 Charlotte Hamfest) www.charlottehamfest.org
- Mar 10 GARA Board Meeting
- Mar 15 VE Session (Hinshaw United Methodist Church, Greensboro)
- Mar 14-16 N4G Special Event (Guilford Courthouse National Military Park)
- Mar 22 VE Session (Red Cross Building, High Point)
- Mar 24 GARA General Meeting (Captain Bill's Seafood & Steakhouse, Greensboro)
- Mar 28 Technology Fair at Gen. Green Elementary School (1501 Benjamin Pkwy, GSO)
- Apr 12 VE Session (Hinshaw United Methodist Church, Greensboro)
- Apr 14 GARA Board Meeting
- Apr 19 Roanoke Division Convention (Raleigh Hamfest) www.rars.org/hamfest
- Apr 26 VE Session (Red Cross Building, High Point)
- Apr 28 GARA General Meeting (Captain Bill's Seafood & Steakhouse, Greensboro)
- May 10 VE Session (Hinshaw United Methodist Church, Greensboro)
- May 10 Rockingham County Swapfest (Reidsville, NC) www.rcarc.com
- May 12 GARA Board Meeting
- May 24 GARA Picnic Gibson Park (High Point)
- May 24 VE Session (Red Cross Building, High Point)
- May 24 DurHamFest (Bahama, NC) www.rowanars.org
- May 26 GARA General Meeting (Captain Bill's Seafood & Steakhouse, Greensboro)
- Jun 9 GARA Board Meeting
- Jun 14 VE Session (Hinshaw United Methodist Church, Greensboro)
- Jun 23 GARA General Meeting (Captain Bill's Seafood & Steakhouse, Greensboro)
- Jun 28-29 Field Day
- Jun 28 VE Session (Red Cross Building, High Point)
- Jul 12 VE Session (Hinshaw United Methodist Church, Greensboro)
- Jul 12 29th Annual Firecracker Hamfest (Salisbury, NC) www.rowanars.org
- Jul 14 GARA Board Meeting
- Jul 19 Mid-Summer Swapfest (Cary, NC) www.qsl.net/n4nc
- Jul 26 VE Session (Red Cross Building, High Point)
- Jul 28 GARA General Meeting (Captain Bill's Seafood & Steakhouse, Greensboro)
- Aug 12 VE Session (Hinshaw United Methodist Church, Greensboro)
- Aug 14 GARA Board Meeting
- Aug 26 VE Session (Red Cross Building, High Point)
- Aug 28 GARA General Meeting (Captain Bill's Seafood & Steakhouse, Greensboro)
- Aug 30 North Carolina State Convention (Shelby Hamfest)(Shelby, NC) www.shelbyhamfest.org

This purpose of this calendar to provide information on events in and around our area that might be of interest to our readers. As you might expect, there are many more events (public service, hamfests, flea markets, etc.) taking place in North Carolina and around the Greater Greensboro Area. If you know of an event that would be of interest to our readers, please contact Tom, KB1P at kb1p@arrl.net.

Area Happenings

FOURTH MONDAY – at 6:30pm, the Greensboro Amateur Radio Association have their regular monthly meeting at Captain Bill's Seafood & Steakhouse, 6108 West Market St., Greensboro, NC 27409. 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 54C)

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. 2014

March 15, 2014

April 12, 2014

May 10, 2014

June 14, 2014

July 12, 2014

August 9, 2014

Location: Hinshaw United Methodist Church, 4501 High Point Road, Greensboro, NC 27407,

Time: 9:00am

Contact: Roy Smith

Phone: (336) 312-0647

E-mail: n4byu@arrl.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