

Local Hams Ready When Winter Storms Strike



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The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association

Feed Line

Providing Amateur Radio news for the Triad



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"HAMsters" At Greensboro Day School - N4GDS

by Tom Forrest, N4GVK
Feed Line Editor

No, "HAMsters" aren't furry little animals that run on wheels in cages - that is, not at Greensboro Day School. Instead, they are young Ham operators-in-training, affectionately called "HAMsters" by teacher/instructor Carl Fenske, KC4WGA. They can be heard during school hours on local repeaters and HF frequencies from the school's N4GDS station.

"We have two groups - one on Wednesdays for those wanting to get a Ham license and one on Thursdays for those just interested," Carl commented. During the class, Carl teaches the basics of amateur radio using the Gordon West study guide. Since Carl started the classes



Photos by Tom Forrest/GARA

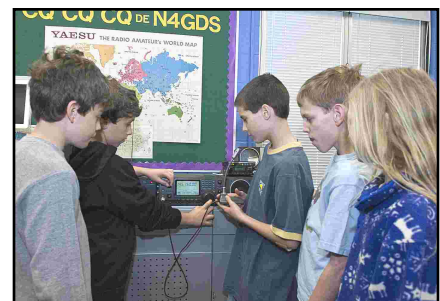
Greensboro Day School "HAMsters" – from left to right, front row first, Kabir Mann, Michael Hull (KJ4KJG), Will Hemphill, Jordan Burick (KJ4KIU), Corey Simonds, Leah Register, Grant Rohlfing, Alec White; second row, Matthew Guhne, Sahil Patel, Brian Apple, Mason Pool, Austin Brantley (KJ4JNN), Grace Wilson, teacher Carl Fenske (KC4WGA) and Alley Milam.

their tests at the Charlotte Hamfest March 14 and were issued their new calls on March 16.

The "HAMsters" meet from 12:15 to 1:00 p.m. on Thursdays. Students can use the equipment in the classroom during that time. Available equipment includes an Icom 746 with a tower mounted tri-band beam and a Yaesu HT, under the school call of N4GDS. The school club also has an APRS weather station.

Carl says he can't explain the sudden

interest in Ham radio among the students, but finds it exciting to have this many interested at one time. He encourages all of us who are more experienced operators to chat with these young enthusiasts when you hear them on the air.



Looking For A Contact – left to right, Michael Hull, Jordan Burick, Austin Brantley, Mason Pool and Leah Register try for a contact on the 145.15 repeater.

NEXT MEETING – March 23

The next meeting of the Greensboro Amateur Radio Assoc. will be March 23, at the Golden Corral Steak House, 4404 Landview Dr, Greensboro, NC 27407, off Wendover Ave. near Sam's Club. The program will be presentation by Will Ravenel, AI4VE, on Antenna Modeling.



in 1992, at least 15 of his students have gone on to achieve their amateur license.

Thus far, three of the current young trainees, have become licensed. Austin Brantley successfully completed his exam at the locally offered February test session. You can hear him on the air using his new call, KJ4JNN. Jordan Burick, KJ4KIU and Michael Hull, KJ4KJG, just passed

FCC Special Counsel Laura Smith Visits ARRL

FCC Special Counsel Laura Smith visited ARRL Headquarters on March 5 and 6, her first official visit as Special Counsel. Smith was named to the position earlier this year, filling the vacancy created when Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, retired in 2008; Hollingsworth served in that position for more than 10 years as the Commission's enforcement watchdog over the Amateur Radio Service.

While at Headquarters, Smith visited with various departments, such as the Lab, the Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (VEC), the Regulatory Information Branch and Membership and Volunteer Programs (MVP).

Spending all Thursday afternoon with ARRL Lab staff, Smith discussed power line noise and how it can affect Amateur Radio. "Since Riley had retired last year, very little had been done at the FCC with regard to the power line noise enforcement," said ARRL Laboratory Engineer and power line noise expert Mike Gruber, W1MG. "The Lab staff discussed the status of the ARRL-FCC Cooperative Agreement on power line noise with Laura and how best to proceed forward. While the ARRL is not in the enforcement business, the Cooperative Agreement was an attempt to help the FCC focus its limited resources in the area where they are most

needed -- enforcement. The ARRL's goal is to help resolve as many of these cases as possible with technical and other help before they ever get to the FCC."

Gruber also briefed Smith on some power line noise basics, including a



FCC Special Counsel Laura Smith

demonstration of some professional grade locating equipment. Using a Model T spark coil as a noise source, Gruber was able to show Smith how a utility can locate power line noise - in many cases, without too much difficulty.

According to ARRL Regulatory Information Branch Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND, the FCC committed to Smith visiting the ARRL once she accepted the position. "I think this visit has been a very productive two days. We are getting to know Laura, and she is getting to know our organization and what we, as the ARRL, can do to help her make her job easier to help the amateur community as a whole," Henderson said. "I just kind of played tour guide and facilitated the visit, introducing her to all the departments here at Headquarters."

Smith, a lawyer, is no stranger to the FCC or Amateur Radio. She began her legal career with the Commission, working in the Mass Media Bureau and Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB), working with Senior System Analyst Bill Cross, W3TN; she also served as Deputy

Division Chief of the Public Safety and Private Wireless Division. Smith also knew Hollingsworth through her father-in-law Richard M. Smith, former Chief of the Field Operations Bureau, at the time responsible for all FCC field engineering and enforcement activities. Richard Smith led many investigations of illegal uses of the radio spectrum, including the successful apprehension of "Captain Midnight" who overrode a satellite television broadcast signal. Smith also served as Chief of the FCC's Office of Engineering and Technology (OET).

"Riley worked for my father-in-law for years," Smith said. "My father-in-law was the Chief of the Field Operations Bureau at the FCC for 25 years. So enforcement is actually something that is a long-standing family tradition. A member of my family -- the Smith family -- has worked at the FCC continuously since 1964: Myself, my husband and my father-in-law."

Calling Hollingsworth "irreplaceable," Smith said what he did for the Commission and for the amateur community was "amazing. He volunteered for that job. He stood up and said, 'I'm an amateur. I love this community and I want to give back to it.' This position needs to be filled by somebody who is interested in doing it long-term. This [job] is not a stepping stone; it's not a short term process. This wouldn't work if I were trying to be Riley. I'm not going to be Riley. We're very different people. But we both have the same goal: To make the amateur community better."

Smith emphasized that an Amateur Radio license is "a privilege, not a right. When you come to the FCC and you sign up for a license and you get that license, you have agreed to abide by those Rules. That is inherent in the application process. As an applicant and a licensee, you have said, 'I will hereby comply with the Rules that have been enacted by the FCC.' So you have said, 'I will adhere to that.' And if you choose not to, then you are subject to losing that privilege."

Smith is not yet a licensed amateur. She said that she will get her license

The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association

President Chris Thompson, K4HC

Vice-President Willl Ravenel, A14VE

Treasurer Ernie Wall, NC4EW

Secretary Greg Spencer, KG4UQV

Financial Al Allred, K4ZKQ

Engineering Chairman Jesse Lindley, N4BFD

Operations Roy Smith, N4BYU

Member at Large Clark Doggett, KG4HOM

Member at Large Dave Touvell, KN4ZO

Appointed Positions:

News letter editor and Webmaster:

Tom Forrest, N4GVK

"The Feed Line" is ©2009 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.

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GARA Meeting Minutes



Regular Meeting Minutes February 23, 2009

The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association held its regular monthly meeting on February 23, 2009 at the Golden Corral restaurant near I-40 and wendover Ave.

Chris Thompson, K4HC, called the meeting to order at 7:18 pm and asked everyone to identify themselves.

There was no board meeting held this month so Chris polled the board members to see if they had any new business to discuss.

Al Allred, K4ZKQ, said that revenues were coming in faster and expenses were less.

Ernie Wall, NC4EW, said the insurance has been paid and the repeater repairs had not yet been paid for. No one else had anything to discuss.

We had Gene Rivas, N4UMI, and his XYL Joyce, KD4GCG, visiting from the Charlotte area. They were here to invite us to the Charlotte Hamfest and he had tickets for sale. The Charlotte Hamfest will be held on March 14 & 15.

The RARSFEST will be held on April 6 & 7.

Chris spoke about the Tech forum on Sunday night at 7:30 PM on 145.150.

Charles Lyons, NT1J, is recovering from a stroke and is expected to be going home on Saturday.

Steve Marks, N4SCM, gave a program about his duties at the Guilford county EOC.

The meeting closed at 8:12 pm

Respectfully submitted by
Greg Spencer, KG4UQV
GARA Secretary

Board Meeting Minutes March 9, 2009

The GARA board of directors held their monthly meeting on March 9, 2009 at the home of Will Ravenell, AI4VE. The meeting started at 7:00pm with Will, AI4VE, Chris Thompson, K4HC; Jesse Lindley, N4BFD; Al Allred, K4ZKQ; Ernie Wall, NC4EW; Dave Touvell, KN4ZO; Roy Smith, N4BYU and Greg Spencer, KG4UQV present.

Ernie, NC4EW, said that he has not received renewals from a few members yet.

Al, K4ZKQ, said the repeater repair bill has not come in yet. The finances are ahead of forecast.

Jesse, N4BFD, advised that the clock on the repeater controller has been adjusted for daylight savings time. Jesse

has talked with Arch and said he is making progress with the Gateway for the D-star repeater controller.

We discussed the News and Information net on Sunday and we will be revisiting this topic later. We discussed putting the program topic in the Feedline and on the website so members can know beforehand what the program will be about before the meeting.

Our March monthly meeting program will be on antenna modeling.

Chris, K4HC, said that D-Star repeater is getting good use and seems busier now than before the switch.

Roy, N4BYU, asked about classes and antenna building. Chris said that he had been thinking about giving people a choice between three antennas to build. We would develop a parts list for each antenna and let the people get their own parts, then assist them with assembly and tools if needed.

We are thinking about another Open House this summer, and Chris said that he would talk with John Strandberg, AJ4BT, about the date.

The meeting closed at 7:50 PM
Respectfully submitted by
Greg Spencer, KG4UQV
GARA Secretary

News Of Interest

Seagate's Barracuda 7200.11 Hard Drives Failing In Large Numbers

Seagate's 7200.11 series of hard drive, including the 1.5 Terabyte model, have been locking up because of faulty firmware. Their first attempt to fix the problem resulted in even more drives that failed.

The company has offered free data recovery to affected users. Even so, the brand's reputation may have been injured due to the problem.

Panasonic Buys Sanyo

Panasonic has purchased Sanyo for the sum of six billion dollars. It is said that Panasonic wanted Sanyo's battery business. This appears to be another part of Japanese company shuffling as has occurred recently in other mergers and consolidations.

That's Not A Bomb - It's An Antena

In Nebraska, a sad yet funny story out of Omaha. That's where Police and a Bomb Squad have blown up a trap from a ham radio antenna because nobody could figure out what it was.

It all happened on Thursday, February 26th. That's when both agencies were

called out following the discovery by a cleaning crew of a device that they thought looked like a PVC pipe bomb.

The house in question belonged to Bob Rennolet, W0AEX. There had been an electrical fire in the house 2 weeks ago and he had hired the clean-up crew but it had no idea as to what it had found. So, rather than take chances, the Bomb Squad decided to blow it up. That's when they realized it was not a bomb but a piece of W0AEX's ham radio gear.

Ironically, W0AEX lives next door to a fire station, so they didn't have far to go to put out the fire or blow up the trap. -
AR NewsLine

Wintry Mix Blankets Triad on March 1

From Local reports

A late winter storm March 1st & 2nd brought a significant snow fall to the area. Reports of five to seven inches were received depending on your area. Numerous power outages were reported by Duke Energy in Guilford County and surrounding counties.

According to Guilford County EC John Doggett, AJ4DV, Guilford County ARES



was activated by Guilford County Emergency Management and placed in a stand-by mode. The regular meeting of Guilford County ARES was canceled due to road conditions and an "on-the-air" meeting was held on the ARES 145.150 repeater.

A shelter was established at the Glenwood Recreation Center. Chandlee

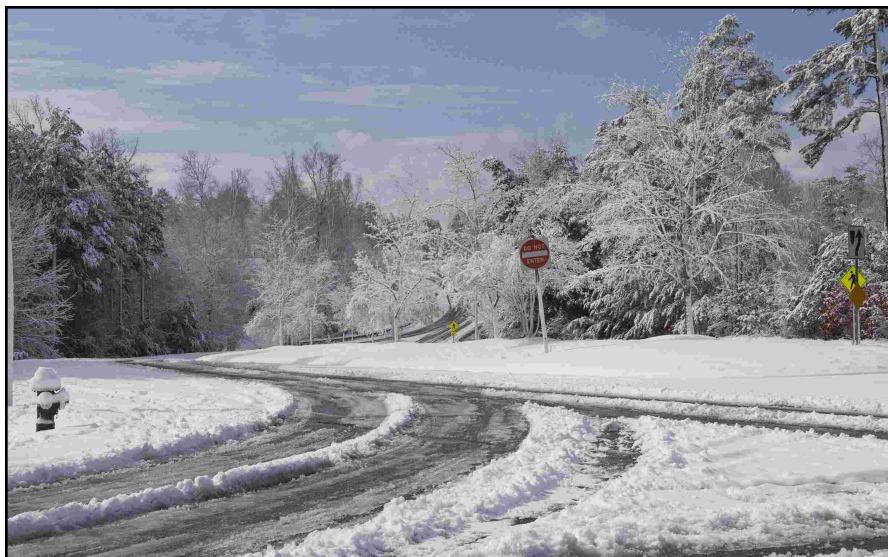


Photo by Tom Forrest/GARA

Snow and ice covered many roads in Guilford and surrounding counties March 1st and 2nd during the storm.

White, KJ4ADX, with the American Red Cross was at the shelter. There were no participants reported. SkyWarn activity was brisk and local Hams checked in to report observations. Most Hams who lost power were prepared with either a generator or fully charged batteries.

As with any pending storm, be it winter

or summer, make sure you have a "go-kit" ready. For a "go-kit" list, see the ARES web site at www.guilfordares.org, left side navigation buttons, close to the bottom of the list; you can download a PDF file. John, AJ4DV, wishes to thank those who were in stand-by mode during the event.

US Coast Guard To Discontinue Loran Stations

Last month, the US Coast Guard <http://www.uscg.mil>, announced that due to economic conditions, they would be closing down the 24 LORAN-C (Long Range Aid to Navigation) <http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/loran/default.htm> stations operated under the auspices of the USCG. LORAN stations provide navigation, location and timing services for both civil and military air, land and marine users.

According to the USCG, LORAN-C is approved as an en route supplemental air navigation system for both Instrument Flight Rule (IFR) and Visual Flight Rule (VFR) operations. The LORAN-C system serves the 48 continental states, their coastal areas and parts of Alaska.

LORAN-A stations were developed beginning in World War II, and signals were transmitted on frequencies in and around our present-day 160 meter band.

LORAN-A was responsible for reduced amateur radio operations, including frequency and power limitations, on 160 meters in the United States. In 1979, the Coast Guard phased out the LORAN-A stations; they were replaced by LORAN-C stations. The newer stations operated on 100 kHz, enabling the restrictions on the 160 meter amateur band due to LORAN functions, to be dropped.

According to the Coast Guard, the nation's oldest continuous sea-going service will continue to operate the current LORAN-C system through the end of fiscal year 2009; it is in the process of preparing detailed plans for implementing the fiscal year 2010 budget. According to USCG Vice Commandant and Chief Operating Officer Vice Admiral V. S. Crea, further details of the LORAN-C termination plan will be available upon the submission of the President's full budget *ARRL Letter 3/13/09*

FCC Counsel – From Page 2

"someday," but that she did not want to get her license just because her job involves Amateur Radio: "I didn't want to come into this job and become a ham, saying, 'I'm getting this job so I'm going to be a ham -- not because I'm interested in being a ham, but because it looks better on paper.' So ultimately I will become a ham." Smith said that her father-in-law, when stationed in the FCC's Field Office in Los Angeles, used to administer the Morse code test to prospective licensees: "So he has challenged me that before I can become an amateur on any level, I must learn Morse code and I must pass the test with him administering the Morse code. So I have a challenge."

**A 2009 GARA roster will be printed in the April issue of the "Feed Line." You must have renewed to have your name included.
GIVE YOU SUPPORT AND
RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP**

DX News Midway Atoll

Earlier this year, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) announced that they would open Midway Atoll www.fws.gov/midway to Amateur Radio operations for two weeks only, from October 5-19, 2009. Tom Harrell, N4XP, of Monroe, Georgia, and Dave Johnson, WB4JTT, of Aitkin, Minnesota, have put together a team of 19 operators from all over the world to activate Midway Atoll for a 10 day period as K4M www.midway2009.com

This the first time that USFWS has allowed amateurs to operate from the wildlife refuge since 2002.

"Midway ranks as Number 24 worldwide and Number 13 in Europe on DX Magazine's Most Wanted List www.dxpub.com," Harrell and Johnson said. "Activity will be on 6-160 meters with 5 to 6 stations. At least one station will be active on 20 meters around the clock for those who need it for a new country. Major efforts will be made to meet the demand to the most needed geographical areas, the low bands and RTTY."

The team has posted a list of planned frequencies on their Web site www.midway2009.com/kh4freqs.html.

The co-leaders said that travel to the atoll is only allowed by chartered aircraft: "Because of the size of the aircraft, the team is presented with unique challenges. As such, the aircraft will only be able to carry the team, requiring the equipment to be shipped by boat some months ahead."

In January, the USFWS started a program to encourage visitors to experience Midway's wildlife, history and culture, as well as non-wildlife-dependent activities -- including Amateur Radio. To ensure the safety of the wildlife on the Refuge, Midway Atoll Refuge Manager Matt D. Brown said that Amateur Radio operations will be permitted for two weeks only, and only within a designated area on the north side of Sand Island. Brown also said that while portable generators will not be permitted, there is 120 V power available at the operation site. Midway is located in the North Pacific Ocean (near the northwestern end of the Hawaiian



archipelago) -- approximately 1250 miles northwest of Honolulu -- about one-third of the way between Honolulu and Tokyo. At less than 150 miles east of the International Dateline, Midway Atoll is truly "midway" around the world from the Greenwich meridian. The atoll is an unincorporated territory of the United States and is the only atoll/island in the Hawaiian archipelago not part of the State of Hawaii. Atoll National Wildlife Refuge was published in the Federal Register on March 10, 1998.

When Midway became a national wildlife refuge, it joined a network of more than 500 separate units of the National Wildlife Refuge System, encompassing nearly 93 million acres, throughout all 50 states and several territories and possessions.

FOR SALE

Power, Supply & Meter

Antenna, dual band, power meter and Astron RS-20M power supply - \$65; Icom IC208 dual-bander - \$75; Comet CMX-3RS in-line UHF/VHF SWR and power meter - \$75. Call Fred Blackman, W4FB, at 336-841-4338.

Heath HW-101 \$150.00

This is the classic, top-selling Heathkit transceiver. Complete with matching power supply, microphone, and speaker, along with the original instruction manual and extra tubes. (I last used this rig approximately 25 years ago. To make this classic transceiver operational, electrolytic capacitors should be replaced.) Contact Pete, W8LOG, at 336-852-8791 or at pkauber@triad.rr.com

Alinco 5watt vhf/uhf with high capacity battery, remote mike/speaker/controller; charger, 1/4 wave mag mount, and vox operated head set. It is in good condition (enclosed .jpg). My interests lie elsewhere than ham radio. \$130 K4CJZ, Chuck, 887-9023.

Get Well ...

Get well wishes continue for GARA member **Charles Lyons, NT1J**. Charles has returned home and will continue stroke rehab. Larry and Jesse Lindley moved Charles's ham rig and connected it for easy access now that he is back home. Keep Charles in your prayers. Doctors are optimistic for a full recovery.

Al Minter, AI4NG, recently fell while on an afternoon walk. Al report he's OK, but hurt his knee in the fall. He's having to undergo some testing. Also, doctors have restricted his driving until the results of the test can be determined. Meanwhile, if you would like to help by driving Al to various places, give him an e-mail at: minter8203@att.net

Wedding Bells

Wedding bells were heard recently for GARA member **Clarence Tillery, NC4CT** and his new bride Amy DeBruyker. They were married February 1, at the West Market Street United Methodist Church in Greensboro. Clarence is a retired Professional Engineer and Amy is a retired State Farm agent. They will reside in Madison.

Voice of WWV Silent

The recorded voice of Time and Frequency Station WWV has fallen silent.

Announcer Don Elliot Heald, of Atlanta, Georgia, who gave WWV its human touch passed away on Thursday, February 19th.

Known in the broadcast world as Don Elliot, Heald had a distinguished career that ranged from work at Atlanta Georgia's WSB to his automated and internationally heard WWV broadcasts on shortwave. He was also the voice of the Audichron telephone dial-in Time-Weather-Temperature service and of the Protestant Hour radio show for over 40 years.

For nearly five decades Heald narrated the televised Christmas Eve service from Atlanta's Episcopal Cathedral of St. Philip, where he served as a vestryman, junior warden and senior warden.

(Various sources via AE6DW/AR NewsLine)

Area Activities

FOURTH MONDAY – at 6:30 PM, 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 6:30 PM for dinner. The meeting is scheduled to start at 7:15 PM

CLUB NETS:

SUNDAYS – weekly at 9 PM, 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.

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

TUESDAYS – at 8 PM, the **2 Meter SSB Net** meets on 144.225 Mhz. USB. Chris Thompson, K4HC is the net control station. (Not operational present time)

WEDNESDAYS – The **Guilford Amateur Society** holds their weekly net on the 145.250, W4GG repeater with an 88.5 Hz. tone. Jim Hightower, W4JLH is the net control.

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

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 7 PM.

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

THURSDAY – at 11:15 AM, 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 8 PM (approximately) Greensboro Hams get together for coffee at Guilford College (summer location till Daylight Savings time changes)

Technical Forum Sundays at 7:30 - 145.15 repeater

The W4VEC Testing Schedule April to Dec. 2009

April	11, 2009
May	9, 2009
June	13, 2009
July	11, 2009
August	8, 2009
September	12, 2009
October	10, 2009
November	14, 2009
December	12, 2009

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

Time: 9:00 A.M.

Contact: Glenda Nicholson

Phone: 336-674-3810

E-mail: ag4nc@bellsouth.net

Save The Date

**The annual Doggett cook-out will be Sept. 26, 2009.
Save the date and plan to attend for some yummy BBQ**

**More information to come.
(it's John ,AJ4DV's 40th birthday !)**

**Membership Renewal
Reminder For 2009 –
Don't let this be your final
issue of the information
packed "Feed Line." If you
have already renewed, a
BIG THANK YOU !!**

Greensboro Amateur Radio Association
P.O. Box 7054
Greensboro, NC 27417



Web:
www.w4gso.org

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