

Feed Line

GARA - We're putting the "Spark" back in Amateur Radio®



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Emergency Communications Bill to Include Ham Radio

A bill to enhance emergency communication at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) includes Amateur Radio operators as part of an overall effort to provide interoperability among responders. The 21st Century Emergency Communications Act of 2006 (HR 5852), an amendment to the Homeland Security Act of 2002, passed the US House this week on a 414-2 vote and has gone to the Senate. Its sponsor, Rep David G. Reichert (R-WA) -- who chairs the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Science and Technology - says his legislation is designed "to improve the ability of emergency responders to communicate with each other" -- interoperability.

"Until the events of September 11, 2001, many people in this nation believed and assumed that first responders from different disciplines and jurisdictions could actually talk to each other," Reichert -- a former police officer -- told the House in support of his bill. "It wasn't happening. It is still not happening today. Unfortunately, that was not the case then, and, as demonstrated by the inadequate responses to Hurricane Katrina, that is not the case today."

Reichert told his colleagues that the inability of first responders to communicate with each another effectively led to the loss of many lives along the US Gulf Coast last year. "This is simply unacceptable," he said.

His measure also would require the DHS to strengthen its efforts to improve emergency communications. HR 5852 calls for Amateur Radio operators to be part of a "Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group" (RECC Working Group) that would be attached to each regional Department of Homeland Security office. The RECC

Working Groups would advise federal and state homeland security officials.

In addition to radio amateurs, membership in the RECC Working Groups would include state and local officials; law enforcement, first responders such as fire departments; 911 centers; hospitals; ambulance services; communications equipment vendors, telephone, wireless satellite, broadband and cable service providers; public utilities; broadcasters; emergency evacuation transit services; state emergency managers, homeland security directors or representatives of state administrative agencies; local emergency managers or homeland security directors, and "other emergency response providers or emergency support providers as deemed appropriate."

Federal government representatives to the RECC Working Groups would include representatives from the DHS "and other federal departments and agencies with responsibility for coordinating

interoperable emergency communications" with state, local, and tribal governments.

According to the bill, the RECC Working Groups would function to assess the survivability, sustainability, and interoperability of local emergency communications systems to meet the goals of the National Emergency Communications Report. That report would recommend how the US could "accelerate the deployment of interoperable emergency communications nationwide."

The RECC Working Groups also would be tasked with ensuring a process to coordinate the establishment of "effective multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency emergency communications networks" that could be brought into play following acts of terrorism, natural disasters and other emergencies.

HR 5852 has been referred to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Vanity Call Sign Fee To Drop September 6

The regulatory fee to obtain or renew an Amateur Radio vanity call sign will drop slightly starting with applications received by the FCC on or after Wednesday, September 6, the FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB) said this week. The new fee will be \$20.80 for the 10-year license term. This year promises to be a big one for vanity call sign renewals, since the initial round of vanity grants under the current system occurred in 1996. Licensees who want to retain vanity call signs issued under the current (post-1995) system must pay the regulatory fee when renewing.

"Consistent with our established

practice, we plan to collect these regulatory fees in the August-September 2006 time frame in order to collect the required amount by the end of the fiscal year," the FCC explained in a July 17 Report and Order (R&O), "Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for Fiscal Year 2006," in MD Docket 06-68. The FY 2006 vanity fee is a bit higher than the \$20.10 for the license term that the Commission had proposed in a Notice of Proposed Rule Making last March. The current vanity call sign fee of \$21.90 remains in effect for applications received by the FCC before September 6.

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Tech Tip

by Tom Forrest, N4GVK
Feed Line Editor

Ever had one of those days when you have to crawl under your desk to plug in a USB cable or another peripheral cable?

It seems that you can never get the cable in the right position without scrambling to find a flash light. USB cables can be especially a real "pain" to get in the right position.

To aid in your quest to get the plug in the correct orientation, so you can at least have a fighting chance, mark the cable with white paint or just use good old "white out" that's probably in your desk drawer.

Just dab a spot on the top side of the USB cable and you're all set. Next time you grab the cable, you immediately know which side is "up."



Place a drop "white-out" or white paint on the top side of cables to assist in the the orientation. (Photo by Tom Forrest, N4GVK)

This "Tech Tip" was accepted by QST for magazine for future publication.

Ham Happenings NEWS briefs

New Hams - Congratulations to Alexie Doggett, KI4QNC, daughter of John Doggett, KI4BMS, on obtaining her technician class license. Also welcome to new members of GARA, Alexie and Jason Wall, N4JKW.

Vintage Rountable Net Starts

The SPG Vintage Roundtable was recently started as reported by Alan Jones, W4LGH, of St. Augustine, FL. The net will meet on Sunday evenings @ 1700UTC on 14.289.

The SPG (Screen/Plate & Grid) Roundtable Net is a very informal meeting of Hams who enjoy operating Vintage equipment. If this is for you, PLEASE come and join us. Discussions can be just about anything, from operating tips to mods and restoration of said equipment. If you don't have any Vintage gear, but still have an interest, again please join us.

Its just a fun time for all of us to get together and talk on the air.

I had earlier posted an article on here about how much fun I was having playing with my Drakes (4B Twins & a TR-3) and was very surprised at the number of people who enjoyed this as well. So I figured, what a great way to meet on the air and talk about it.

73 de W4LGH - Alan

<http://www.w4lgh.com>, via E-Ham.net

Web Site For US Repeaters

Jim Glass, AB9IF reports he is the Webmaster for USRepeaters.com. Jim states that USREPEATERS.Com answers a loud cry for a dedicated repeater directory that is simple and easy to use. He has over 18,000 repeaters on the site now and is adding them daily. He is working on adding a Map system that will let members search for repeaters from any location to a specified radius for any band. This site is a free resource to HAM Radio Operators. via Jim Glass AB9IF



New GARA Web Site Feature

A new feature, a special page for Articles & Downloads, has been added to the web site index tabs on the left side of the home page www.w4gso.org

The page is for viewers to download technical Ham radio related articles and programs written by anyone wishing to post there. Most of the articles at this time are written by our Engineering Chairman, Arch, KT4AT, but the page is open to anyone that has a technical paper or a program.

The written text files are posted in PDF format. If you know of an article or downloadable program that you would like on the new page, contact the author to get permission and then contact the webmaster, Tom Forrest, N4GVK, n4gvk@bellsouth.net.

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GARA Meeting Minutes



REGULAR MEETING

July 24, 2006

The regular meeting of the Greensboro Amateur Radio Association was held Monday evening July 24, 2006, at 7:15 PM at the Golden Corral Steak House off Wendover Avenue.

The President, John Doggett, KI4BMS, called the meeting to order. His initial action was to extend the Club's sympathy and condolences to Arch, KT4AT, on the death of his mother. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as printed in the "Feed Line." One visitor, Ed Stephens, was present. Fifteen members were present.

There was no old business. Reports were given by the following: Roy Smith, N4BYU, reported for the Engineering Committee. Activities for this group are at a standstill while Arch, KT4AT, is in France. As the Operations Chairman and Repeater Trustee he had no report.

"Al" Allred, K4ZKQ, reported that Income and Expenditures are well in line with the forecast for the year.

Rudy Langley, KG4HCT, Vice-

President, had no report regarding programs beyond this meeting.

There were no other Board Members present when the reports were requested.

New business items presented related to the following:

- The list of K4CAV's ham gear for sale, as distributed to those present;
- Tour de Furniture, August 5, 2006, additional ham operators are needed for adequate coverage of the route, contact John;
- Tour to Tanglewood, additional ham operators are needed for adequate coverage of the route, contact Tom Hatley, KF4JZD;
- Labor Day Shootout, additional ham operators are needed for adequate coverage of the route, contact Allen Bradley, KD4IUN;
- Natural Science Museum, Allen Bradley, KD4IUN, reported an increase in usage of the station, and thanked the hams who were helping in this project;
- Jamboree-on-the-Air, Lee Price, KD4GCF, urged participation in this Boy Scout project scheduled for Oct. 21, 2006, said that he was already committed to help at another location.

The president announced the following events:

Lunches: Mondays, 10:45 at Jake's Diner, and Fridays, 11:00 at the K&W Cafeteria on Holden Road; C o f f e e : Fridays, 8:00 pm at Starbucks on Battleground. The Doggett Picnic/Barbecue: September 16, 2006 – to start about 5:30 – 6:00.

He also reported that the Club had received an invitation to the wedding of Tom and Vashti's daughter scheduled for August 19, 2006 at the Emerywood Baptist Church in High Point.

Rudy Langley, KG4HCT, Vice-President, introduced Ed Stephens for the program. He presented an interesting program regarding the various aspects of investing for retirement. He responded well to the numerous questions that were prompted by his presentation.

The meeting adjourned 8:45.

Respectfully submitted, W. D. 'Al' Allred, K4ZKQ, substitute secretary

There was no GARA Board meeting for July.

Vanity Call sign Fee Drops from Page 1

Amateur Radio licensees may file renewal applications no sooner than 90 days of their license expiration date. While the regulatory fee payment is required from licensees wishing to keep their current vanity call signs after renewal, vanity holders can opt to get a sequential call sign and avoid paying any fee when they renew.

Amateur Radio licensees holding vanity call signs granted prior to 1996 do not have to pay a regulatory fee when renewing. This is because Congress did not begin requiring the FCC to annually recover its regulatory costs until 1993. Additionally, such licensees are not specifically tagged as vanity call sign holders in the ULS.

The ARRL VEC will process license renewals for vanity call sign holders for

a modest fee. The service is available to ARRL members and nonmembers, although League members pay less. Routine, non-vanity renewals continue to be free for ARRL members. Trustees of club stations with vanity call signs may renew either via the ULS or through a Club Station Call Sign Administrator, such as ARRL VEC.

The ARRL's new license renewal/modification Web pages <http://www.arrl.org/fcc/memberlicenseinstructions.html> contain complete information on license-filing procedures, including step-by-step instructions on how to renew or update a license using the ULS <http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls/>

Amateur Radio History

This is a good link for the history of Amateur radio. it starts with the beginning to 2001. www.ac6v.com. It's about 33 pages if you print it.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Greensboro Amateur Radio Association will be August 28, 2006 at the Golden Corral Steak House off Wendover Ave. We eat at 6:30 and the meeting begins at 7:15. A presentation will be made by Bill Mauldin, WG4R, Bill who is a GARA member and has just published his second book, *State Troopers of America*. He is an avid law enforcement historian and badge collector. Please come and bring a friend. If you are not a member and would like to know more about GARA, visit our web site at www.w4gso.org or email us at info@w4gso.org

Area Activities

FOURTH MONDAY – at 6:30 PM, the **Greensboro Amateur Radio Association** has their regular monthly meeting at the Golden Corral on Landview Dr., off W. Wendover Ave. 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.

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 6:30 PM **The Guilford Amateur Society** holds their monthly meeting at the Greensboro Police Western Sub Station at 300 Swing Rd in the community room. Refreshments at 6:30 PM and the business meeting begins at 7 PM.

SATURDAYS – at the K&W Cafeteria on Big Tree Way, hams get together for **Saturday Breakfast** at 7:30 AM. Talk-in is on the 145.150, W4GSO repeater, with 100 Hz. tone.

MONDAYS & FRIDAYS – at 11 AM, Greensboro Hams get together for lunch. On Monday they meet at Jake's Diner at Wendover and Big Tree Way and on Friday lunch is at the K&W Cafeteria off South Holden Road. 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 Starbucks on Battleground (summer location till Daylight Savings time changes)

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