

CAUTION !
If you are afraid
of heights,
Don't look at
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The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association

Feed Line

Providing Amateur Radio news for the Triad



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The Adventures of HyperDog

Story and Photos by Rick Mainhart, WB3EXR



GETTING THE RIGHT SHOT — Rick Mainhart, WB3EXR, front, prepares to shoot a line over a tree as his son, Craig helps hold the line.

The key to a good story, I'm told, is to have a title that grabs your attention long enough for you to find out what the story is really about. In this case, the story is not about a hyper dog, but another way to get your antenna support rope up into a tree.

Jessie, N4BFD told me about the HyperDog, a tennis ball-shooting slingshot that was meant to keep your Labrador Retriever happy chasing tennis balls without wearing your arm out. This device is an oversized wrist-rocket style slingshot, in that it has a handgrip and a support pad

that rests on your forearm. Same surgical tubing sling, just a bit larger than the usual wrist rocket.

I don't have a hyper Labrador Retriever, so I couldn't just tie a rope around the dog's collar and have it jump over the tree chasing the tennis ball, so I punched a hole through the tennis ball and ran some mason's twine through. I tied this small piece of twine into a loop, and at first tried shooting with the twine laid out on the lawn.

Any snag or tug on the line will cause the tennis ball to drop short (the shock on the twine really kills the tennis ball's momentum), and this limited my effective range. Without the twine, I could put a tennis ball over the top of an 80-100' tall oak tree.

I picked up an inexpensive casting reel at the local Wal-Mart, and at first tried attaching it directly to the HyperDog. While the reel fit nicely, and would stay put without a great deal of work, the fishing line kept getting tangled in the

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NEXT MEETING **August 25**

The next meeting of the Greensboro Amateur Radio Assoc. will be **August 25**, at the Golden Corral Steak House, 4404 Landview Dr, Greensboro, NC 27407, off Wendover Ave., near Sam's Club.

The program will be a video presentation about D-Star.

GARA Meeting Minutes



Regular Meeting Minutes July 28, 2008

The July meeting of the Greensboro Amateur Radio Association was held on July 28th 2008 at the Golden Corral beside Sam's Club near I-40 and Wendover Avenue.

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM by our president Chris Thompson K4HC.

Chris asked everyone to identify themselves. We had several visitors and new members.

Chris talked about the open house that we held on July 26th and thanked everyone who came out and those that helped to make it a success.

The minutes were voted on as printed in the newsletter Larry, KI4PRT, made a motion to accept and Madeline, KD4SVJ's seconded. The minutes passed.

There was no old business to discuss. New business: Jesse Lindley N4BFD and Chris will head a committee to research the possibility of converting the 442.875 repeater to D-Star. Anyone wishing to help or give any input for or against this idea please contact Chris or Jesse. Chris said that Bob Morris, W0EG engineering chairman has taken a new job

in Austin Texas and will be moving soon. Chris thanked him for his work on keeping the repeaters in great working order. We are now looking for a new engineering chairman.

Roy Smith, N4BYU, operations chairman, said that John Doggett, AJ4DV, Guilford County ARES EC who has been net control of the Sunday night news and information net for about four years, will no longer be able to hold the net due to his duties as ARES EC and his construction job. We are looking for a new net control for the Sunday night nets. Roy also spoke about the open house, which turned into a full house with lots of previous hams and several prospective hams. Roy said that the open house was a group effort, which was led by John Strandberg AJ4BT.

Chris said he would like to see a net manager and several people who could rotate calling the net, which runs about one hour. Dave Touvell KN4ZO said that he would do the net some weeks but did not want to do the net every week.

Tom Forrest, N4GVK, spoke about the net list that ARES has been using and said that GARA may want to look at that. Chris and Roy both spoke about the duties of the net control station and how easy it is as most things are already set up and ready to go.

Al Allred, K4ZKQ, our financial officer said that we are pretty close to the forecast with the exception of the open house cost and the purchase of the Technician class training manuals.

Ernie Wall, NC4EW, treasurer said "we have money in the bank, bills are paid and check book balanced"

Al spoke about the Triad Skywarn net on Tuesday night at 8:30PM on the 147.255 repeater and invited everyone to check in. Dave Touvell, KN4ZO, asked if there were any skywarn training classes coming up. Al said that none were scheduled in the near future and the class dates are listed on the Triad Skywarn website www.triadskywarn.org

Alan Bradley KD4IUN spoke about the

upcoming soccer tournament on August 30&31.

Allen said that he needs about 10-12 operators, Contact Allen if you can help kd4iun@arll.net.

Tom Forrest presented a presentation that he put together about the 2008 field day.

Respectfully submitted by
Greg Spencer KG4UQV GARA secretary.

Board discussion via E-mail

Greensboro Amateur Radio Association
Summary of board members e-mail meeting for August 2008

There was not an actual board meeting for August due to scheduling problems so we did an e-mail meeting.

Chris Thompson, K4HC, brought up some old business: first we need to find a new engineering chairman for the rest of the year as Bob Morris, W0EG, has moved to Texas to take a job with Motorola after RF Micro eliminated his job.

Chris also wrote about the boot camp weekend in which there were 11 people there on Saturday one of which could not come back Sunday due to a family commitment. Out of the 10 remaining all 10 are now new hams. Thanks to all who helped to make this a success. Chris will forward the money from the technician book sales to Ernie Wall, NC4EW, for deposit into the bank.

On August the 2nd there was a planning committee meeting to discuss the possibility of converting the 442.875 repeater to D-Star operation. The SouthEastern Repeater Association has been contacted to ask if this is possible and to see what frequency is available. Frank Lynch, W4FAL, of SERA wrote back that he sees no problem with us moving to D-Star and changing the frequency to 442.8625 and we are OK to do limited testing on our present 442.875

The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association

President Chris Thompson, K4HC
Vice-President John Strandberg, AJ4BT
Treasurer Ernie Wall, NC4EW
Secretary Greg Spencer, KG4UQV
Financial Al Allred, K4ZKQ
Engineering Chairman Bob Morris W0EG
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

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"Boot Camp" Study Session Weekend Yields New Hams



Photo by Tom Forrest/GARA

TEACHING CLASS —Rick Mainhart, WB3EXR, teaches a session during the "Boot Camp Tech" class as Chris Thompson, K4HC, sits on the far left waiting for his teaching session to begin.

by Chris Thompson, K4HC
GARA President

Following a "Boot Camp Weekend" training session for the Technician class amateur radio license on August 9th and 10th, which was attended by eleven total students, ten of them tested at the conclusion on Sunday afternoon (the eleventh student had family obligations on Sunday, and could not attend that day).

The class was led by Rick, WB3EXR and Chris, K4HC. It was a very FULL two days (all day on Saturday, and all afternoon on Sunday).

The students were uniformly very well prepared and involved, obviously having studied the material beforehand. We required that the manual be purchased ahead of time, and the students to become familiar with the book before the class.

This was a VERY successful weekend, and the students came from a very wide variety of backgrounds - ranging in ages from 74 to 12; from a novice class licensee of 30 years, to some who decided only in the week before to seek their license. When you hear these new hams on the air, please help make them feel welcome!

A very special thank you to Steve Marks, KE4FCW and Don Campbell, N4CAM with Guilford County Emergency Services, division of Emergency Management - who provided access to the training facility; and the W4VEC Test Team, led by Glenda Nicholson, AG4NC - who provided the testing services at the conclusion of the class.

By the way, all ten who tested passed their Technician class exam.

Jim Peeden, KA4PKF
Adrienne Foster, KJ4FWQ, (daughter of WD4NIA)
Karen Dinkins, KJ4FWR
Andrew Marks, KJ4FWS (son of KE4FCW)
Eddie Maness, KJ4FWT
Dan O'Connell, KJ4FWU
Sandy Bowden, KJ4FWV
Ben Bowden, KJ4FWW
Brandon Walker, KJ4FWX
Taylor Matzinger, KJ4FWY (son of NC4MM)



Photo by Rick Mainhart

EXAMS READY — Area volunteer examiners pass out the exams Sunday afternoon to the class.

Get Well ...

Get well to **Jace Standberg, W4JSJ**, son of **John Strandberg, AJ4BT**, who is recovering from what doctors speculate was Gullain Barre Syndrome. Jace is at home and progressing very good according to John.

Also get well to **Tom Hatley, KF4JZD** who was hospitalized recently.

Sympathy

Prayers of sympathy go out to the following families.

Ed Buffington, W4VGZ, became a silent key August 2. Ed was friends with a lot of Greensboro Hams. Ed served as a pastor at the Brookwood Baptist Church for the past eight years following a career with Western Electric. He was owner of Evans Custom Amplifiers. Ed was more active on the Burlington repeaters, but attended the Thursday lunch bunch occasionally.

Faye Watson Cagle., mother of **Alan Cagle, KE4HAV**, of Greensboro, passed away on August 11.

FCC to Raise Vanity Call Sign Fees

On August 11, the FCC announced that the cost of an Amateur Radio vanity call sign will increase 60 cents, from \$11.70 to \$12.30. The fee will increase 30 days after notice of the increase is published in the Federal Register; no date has yet been set for publication. The FCC is authorized by the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, to collect vanity call sign fees to recover the costs associated with that program. The vanity call sign regulatory fee is payable not only when applying for a new vanity call sign, but also upon renewing a vanity call sign for a new 10 year term.

The vanity call sign fee has fluctuated over the 12 years of the current program -- from a low of \$11.70 to a high of \$50. The FCC said it anticipates some 15,000 Amateur Radio vanity call sign "payment units" -- or applications -- during Fiscal Year 2009, collecting \$184,734 in fees from the program.

Vanity Fee Due for New, Renewal Applications



The vanity call sign regulatory fee is payable not only when applying for a new vanity call sign, but also upon renewing a vanity call sign for a new term. The first vanity call sign licenses issued under the current Amateur Radio vanity call sign program that began in 1996 came up for renewal two years ago.

Those holding vanity call signs issued prior to 1996 are exempt from having to pay the vanity call sign regulatory fee at renewal, however. Congress did not authorize the FCC to collect regulatory fees until 1993. Such "heritage" vanity call sign holders do not appear as vanity licensees in the FCC Amateur Radio database.

Amateur Radio licensees may file for renewal only within 90 days of their license expiration date. All radio amateurs must have an FCC Registration Number (FRN) before filing any application with the Commission. Applicants can obtain an FRN by going to the ULS and clicking on the "New Users Register" link. You must supply your Social Security Number to obtain an FRN.

ARRL Processes License Renewals, Including Vanities

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. - *From the ARRL*

Upcoming Events

- **August 30-31:** Shelby Hamfest
- **Sept 6 & 7:** Tour to Tanglewood 2008 Bike Ride
- **Sept. 20:** Doggett Picnic, "Doggettville"
- **Sept. 20 & 21:** Virginia Beach Hamfest
- **Oct. 11:** Forsyth ARC, Pfafftown Hamfest
- **Oct. 12:** Maysville, NC Hamfest
- **Nov. 16:** JARS Fest, Johnston ARC, Benson, NC

FOR SALE

ESTATE SALE

The following are items from an estate sale. Ameriton AL-811H, \$500; Kenwood TS870S, \$1300; KWPS52 Power Supply \$80; Kenwood SP 31 Speaker \$45; MFJ 3KW Differential Tuner \$175; Heil Pro Set Headset \$40; Antenna Analyzer \$100; Antenna & Roter 10 meter \$150. If you are interested in any of this equipment, contact Gerry Miller, at the following: Daytime phone number is 336-747-1648; Night phone is 336-945-2177 e-mail address is: gerry.miller@hanescompanies.com

TOWER FOR SALE

I have a 60 foot tower, antenna, and rotator for sale; Antenna-Hy-gain 3 element 20 meter beam (full size); Tower-came from Western Electric, 60 feet; Rotator-Yaesu G-1000 SDX. All cables, coax, and guy wires included. Make an offer - Contact Lee Wimbs, W1MBS at leewimbs@bellsouth.net or phone 336-288-8595

APPLE POWER BOOK COMPUTER

Apple Power Book laptop computer, running OS 9.2, new hard drive. This is the Wall-Street version. Comes with many accessories and nice carry case on wheels. Additional memory and the battery still holds a charge. Has 10 baseT port (RJ45) and a wireless PCI card. Purchased new by original owner, non-smoking environment. \$275 complete outfit. Call Tom, N4GVK, 294-6771 or e-mail n4gvk@bellsouth.net

Radio Operators Needed For Tour to Tanglewood

Tom Hatley, KF4JZD, is looking for radio operators for the Tour To Tanglewood Bicycle Ride, September 6 & 7. If you can assist as a volunteer radio operator, please e-mail him at kf4jzd@bellsouth.net

Send It In

Would you like to see a special story in our news letter? Contact **Editor Tom Forrest, N4GVK** at n4gvk@bellsouth.net and submit your suggestion. You do not have to be a GARA member to submit an idea or a "for sale" item.

"HyperDog" from page 1

sling, bringing the tennis ball to an abrupt stop ... generally within 5 feet of me.

The solution was to have my son hold the casting reel and stand just forward and to the left of the end of the business end of the HyperDog. First shot put the line about 60' up and about 45' away ... the perfect end support for my 80-meter dipole. I removed the tennis ball, and attached some kite string and while Craig rewound the fishing line, it pulled the kite string back to the launch point.

Once the kite string reached the launch point, I attached the 3/16" dipole support rope to the kite string and gently pulled the rope back through the tree to the anchor point. After tying the support rope to the tree (keeps it from getting yanked out of reach by a breeze), I untied the kite string, and pulled the dipole into position. I leave enough support rope coiled up at the anchor end to allow me to lower the antenna for repair without having to add rope (and a tree-catching knot).

When I bought the casting reel, I also picked up a spool of 25-pound test line thinking that if the 10-pound test line snapped under the strain I'd be ready. So far the 10-pound test has held up quite well. The reel will hold 75 yards of 10-pound test line, so I have plenty of line to work with.

I took a plastic toolbox and added some additional items to ensure I have everything necessary to perform an antenna installation. The list includes:

- Scotch 23 self-vulcanizing rubber tape
- Scotch 33+ Vinyl electrical tape
- ScotchKote weatherproofing compound
- A 100' tape measure
- A spool of kite string on a two-handled spool
- A spool of mason's twine
- An assortment of nylon cable ties
- The casting rod
- A spool of fishing line (25-pound test)
- A compass

A note about safety: Several people have gone to great lengths to tell me that they use a one-ounce lead fishing sinker with no problem, and they don't understand why anyone would use a tennis ball. I simply answer that given the choice, I'd rather get hit by a falling tennis ball than a falling lead weight. Also, finding a lost lead weight before a lawn mower does is much harder than finding a lost tennis ball, and the results are not as dramatic if the lawn mower finds the tennis ball before you do. Finally, the tennis ball is big enough that it doesn't want to get hung up in the trees, something to do with it's larger diameter, nice round shape, and it's ability to bounce off of things better than the lead weight does.

I also know that a lead weight shot from a slingshot will damage auto glass, where the tennis ball won't. I won't bother sharing the details on that one ... you'll just have to use your imagination!

Those of you who watch the New Yankee Workshop are familiar with Norm Abrams safety briefing on every show "and the most important tool of all, these

safety glasses". Take heed, and wear eye protection. Lines break, things snag, projectiles bounce and ricochet without warning; be prepared.

The usual disclaimers about NOT installing antennas near power lines apply. If in doubt, don't.

A demonstration is usually much better, and often a lot more fun than a couple (only a couple?) of paragraphs describing the technique. Chris, K4HC and I have already helped Steve, KE4FCW, with his mostly hidden installation ... although without the HyperDog. I'm sure there will be other opportunities.

Board discussion from page 2

frequency until we are sure we want to make the change.

John, AJ4BT, has obtained a D-Star presentation for the August meeting.

Ernie Wall, NC4EW, said that we might need to rely on individual members that have test equipment to help keep the repeaters in top shape. Also wrote that the bills are paid and there is money in the bank. Ernie thinks that the D-Star progress is encouraging and should be pursued. Al Allred, K4ZKQ, and Clark Doggett, KG4HOM, both agree with Ernie. John Strandberg, AJ4BT, would like Tom Forrest, N4GVK, to forward the Feed line editions to Michael J. Lewis, WA4KE, at SERA for inclusion in his column in the Quarterly repeater journal.

John also sends commendations to Rick Mainheart, WB3EXR, and Chris Thompson, K4HC, for their work during the bootcamp. Also very special commendations for developing and producing the Sunday night technical forum. This is meeting a very special need in the local amateur community and is of very high quality. The program for August is Digital voice for amateur radio by amateur radio video news, Gary Pierce, KN4AQ. Dave Touvell, KN4ZO, agrees with everyone else. Greg Spencer, KG4UQV, agrees with everyone also. We have not heard from Roy Smith, N4BYU, at this time.

Respectfully submitted by Greg Spencer, KG4UQV, GARA secretary



GARA Open House Overwhelming Success

These are a few photos from the GARA Open House held July 26 at the Blanche Benjamin Branch Library. Approximately 50 visitors turned out for the event.

Photos by Tom Forrest, N4GVK | GARA



AT OPEN HOUSE — Top, overall view, right, Will Ravenel, AI4VE, demonstrates antenna design; middle photo, Jesse Lindley, N4BFD, demonstrates software defined radios, far right middle is the Sky Warm



More photos — Arch, KT4AT, explains D-Star and his controller to onlookers and Roy Smith, N4BYU, right, mans the registration and information table.

This Repeater Adds A New Meaning to Being "High"



AT THE TOP — One of the DB-224JJ antennas, above, at the top of the tower flange at a height of 1863 feet. On the right the other DB224JJ antenna. The photo below shows both antennas. On the far left and in the center of the photo.

Photos by
Murray Adams, WA4DAN

by Tom Forrest, N4GVK
Feed Line Editor

When it comes to having a repeater antenna up high, the 224.16 Mhz. repeater in Raleigh is really on "top."

"The repeater is really a PCRN project and all the effort, expense, etc came out of my pocket, and a little came from PCRN," Danny Hampton, K4ITL, said (memberships to PCRN are always welcome and encouraged)

Danny, commented about the repeater, "I decided to make the 220 repeater a part of the CARES (Carolinas Amateur Radio Emergency Services) repeater network because I am the chief designer of the CARES network, which is another time consuming project that has been going on for several years now and will hopefully come to fruition this year."

"It will consist of 5 or 6, 220 repeaters covering Eastern and Southern N.C. and upper S.C. It was funded by 15 hospitals who wanted an emergency backup communications system should their internal and external phone connectivity and internet connectivity fail. When there are not emergencies, which will obviously be most of the time, the system can be used by the Ham community for general enjoyment," Danny continued.

He also added, "Much like PCRN, the repeaters can be linked one to another, one to all, etc." The Raleigh 224.160 repeater

may or may not remain a member of the CARES network down the road. It'll depend on how things go and how the CARES executive committee decides to run the system etc."

The K4ITL 224.160 repeater is a modified GE Mastr II system. The repeater can be used from Greensboro mobile, but you need to pick your spots.

The two DB-224JJ antennas are at the very top of the 12-foot face part of the WRAL-DTV tower. The top flange of the DTV tower is 1863 feet, so the 224.16 antennas are higher than that! The two antennas are 12 feet horizontally apart. This can be done because the system is using the duplexer to filter both the transmitter and receiver.

Murray Adams, WA4DAN, of Farmville, owner of Adams Tower, works on numerous towers in the area and adjoining states. He has assisted Danny,

REPEATER CABINET

— The equipment being installed for the 224.160 cabinet at the 1800 foot level on the tower.



on a number of his repeater projects donating his labor

Greensboro has the 224.960 (107.2 Hz. tone) repeater centrally located near downtown. It is local owned by Harold Clapp, KD4TPJ. It is not affiliated with the CARES group.

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 6:30 PM The **Guilford Amateur Society** holds their monthly meeting at the Golden Corral, 4404 Landview Dr, Greensboro, NC 27407, off Wendover Ave. Refreshments at 6:30 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)

• Hams at Hams every Friday afternoon, Cone Blvd. restaurant, at 5:30 - Talk-in on 145.150 repeater.

Greensboro Amateur Radio Association

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Web:
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