



The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association

Feed Line

Providing Amateur Radio news for the Triad



Brian Wilson, NX4U, Editor

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How to Listen

By C. W. Thompson, K4HC

In working HF contacts, especially DX contacts, one of the first things (and often the second and third thing, as well) people are told to do is to LISTEN. It seems obvious that in order to make a successful two-way radio contact, each person must hear the other, and be able to communicate, if even briefly for a signal report and to exchange call signs. It is repeated often enough – LISTEN

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This Month's Program

Our next meeting will be October 26, 2015. The meeting will be held at 7:15 pm in 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 October is: "Technics & Guidance for a New Hams", hosted by Tom Bertolino, KB1P. Tom will host an open discussion/forum which will attempt to answer any ham related questions. So if you are: new to the hobby and have questions; or if you are a seasoned operator who can answer a question or just give some helpful advice, please come to the meeting. Some reminders:

- GARA's General Election is scheduled for November 23rd monthly meeting.
- Any GARA member in good standing and holds a valid amateur radio license can run for any board position. If you would like to run for a board position or you know anyone who in your opinion that would make a good board member notify me or any current board member
- GARA's 2016 membership is due by January 1, 2016. You can pay your dues: at any meeting (we now accept; credit cards, checks, or cash); or at our Web Site (<http://www.w4gso.org/>) by clicking on the, "About" tab then on, "Join" tab then fill out the form and follow the directions; or you download the form and mail it in with your check. (You can download the form by going to the web site and clicking on the "About" tab, then on the "Join" tap, go to the paragraph titled "Membership Fee: \$24/year click on the underline "Membership Form").
- GARA has new name badges. If you do not have your, you can get your name badge at any meeting.
- If your ARRL membership is up soon or you want to join ARRL, you can do it through GARA. Renewal/ Join forms are available at this meeting.

NEXT MEETING Monday, October 26

The next meeting of the Greensboro Amateur Radio Association will be Monday, October 26th, 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 is "Technics & Guidance for a New Hams", hosted by Tom Bertolino, KB1P.

GARA Meeting Minutes

Regular Meeting Minutes August, 2015

The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association held their monthly meeting on August 24, 2015, at Captain Bills Seafood Restaurant located at 6108 West Market Tom Bertolino, KB1P, called the meeting to order at 7:15pm. Tom asked everyone to identify themselves.

CLUB BUSINESS and OFFICER REPORTS

Allan Minter, W1AEL, asked for some help with a tower foundation he is building.

Scott Toth, KV4UP, gave the treasury report. Scott also spoke about the need for GARA members to use visit the GARA website.

Betty Williams, KC2BFN, said she will be working on the Open House now that we have a date set. Tom spoke about the Open House.

Chris Thompson, K4HC, gave the presentation on applying for ARRL awards

Linda Worland, KK4LHH, made a motion to adjourn, Chris Thompson, K4HC, seconded and the motion was approved. The meeting ended at 8:09pm.

Respectfully submitted by Greg Spencer, KG4UQV, GARA Secretary.

Regular Meeting Minutes September, 2015

The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association held their monthly meeting on August 24, 2015, at Captain Bills Seafood Restaurant located at 6108 West Market Tom Bertolino, KB1P, called the meeting to order at 7:15pm. Tom asked everyone to identify themselves.

CLUB BUSINESS and OFFICER REPORTS

Tom advised that he will not be running for president next year, Cameron Conover, AJ4TW, said that he will not run for reelection either.

Tom said he did not get the pictures from the last VE session, David Macchiarolo, AJ4TF, said the

High point clubs VE session was last Saturday and no one came to test.

David Bond, KK4VCG, said he is trying to form a nominating committee.

Betty Ferguson, KC2BFN, said she is looking forward to the Open House.

Tom spoke about the nominating committee and why it is the most important committee a club can have. Tom said he would like to see 2 people run for each position.

Tom said the Open House will be held on October 10th at Hinshaw Methodist church 4500 Gate City Boulevard. Tom asked about interest in having a swap meet for members only at the Open House, the overall consensus was favorable.

The November 23rd meeting will be officer elections.

Jim Hightower, W4JLH, said he is working on a date and location for the Christmas party.

David Bond, KK4VCG, gave a presentation on Mesh networks

David Bond, KK4VCG, made a motion to adjourn, Chris Thompson, K4HC, seconded. All in favor and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Greg Spencer, KG4UQV, GARA Secretary.

The Greensboro Amateur Radio Association

President Thomas Bertolino, KB1P
Vice-President Cameron Conover, AJ4TW
Treasurer Todd Smith, AK4TS
Secretary Greg Spencer, KG4UQV
Financial Scott Toth, KV4UP
Engineering Chair Jesse Lindley, K4AX
Operations Chair Roy Smith, N4BYU
Member-at-Large David Bond, KK4VCG
Member-at-Large Patrick Moore, K2CPR

Appointed Position:

Public Information Officer
Betty Williams, KC2BFN
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 - September, 2015

The GARA board of directors held their monthly meeting on September 14th 2015 at Lawndale Baptist Church, located at 3505 Lawndale Drive in Greensboro. The members present were; Tom Bertolino, KB1P; Scott Toth, KV4UP; David Bond, KK4VCG; Patrick Moore, K2CPR; Roy Smith, N4BYU; and Greg Spencer, KG4UQV.

Tom, KB1P, called the meeting to order at 7:06pm.

Tom gave the bank account balances.

The board discussed the incoming mail pickup situation and who should pick up the mail and how frequently.

The board discussed board members responsibilities.

Jesse Lindley, K4AX, could not attend so he emailed the engineering report to the board.

Roy, N4BYU, made a motion to suspend the Sunday evening Net until the club can get Newline back up and running. After a bit of discussion Patrick, K2CPR, offered to run the Sunday evening Net and play the podcast of news line until the club can get the hardware up and running on the new repeater. Roy rescinded his motion after Patrick's offer was accepted.

David, KK4VCG, said he will do the September program on Mesh networks.

Roy said that the late Weldon Fields, W4AJT's son had offered to donate Weldon's CW keys if GARA can find a place to display them.

Open House: Tom said that John Strandberg, W4DX, will be the point of contact for the Open House. We discussed exhibits. We discussed having a swap fest for GARA members only at the Open House. Tom said he has booked the Library meeting room for the rest of the year.

Election's: The board discussed the nominating committee and discussed changing the nominating process. Patrick said that he will speak about the nominating process at the September meeting.

The board discussed the issue of liability in light of the new credit cards with the fraud prevention chip. We decided that it would be in GARA's best interest to put off purchasing of the new credit card readers until the price comes down as our type of transactions are not really prone to fraud.

David, KK4VCG, made a motion to close the meeting and Patrick, K2CPR, seconded. The meeting closed at 8:18pm. *Respectfully submitted by Greg Spencer, KG4UQV, GARA Secretary.*

Board Meeting Minutes - October, 2015

The GARA board of directors held their monthly meeting on October 12th 2015 at the Kathleen Clay Edwards Library located at 1420 Price Park Road in Greensboro. The members present were: Tom Bertolino, KB1P; Cameron Conover, AJ4TW; Jesse Lindley, K4AX; Scott Toth, KV4UP; Patrick Moore, K2CPR; Roy Smith, N4BYU; and Greg Spencer, KG4UQV.

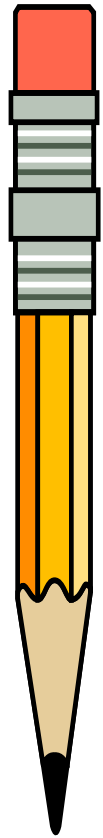
Tom called the meeting to order at 7:15pm.

The board discussed the upcoming elections

Cameron said the presentation for the October meeting will be an overview of the election process by Tom, KB1P, with board members outlining the responsibilities of their positions. Also, Tom will present some helpful information for new hams.

The board discussed having a raffle at the November meeting for a Baofeng UVB-5 HT. Tom, KB1P, made a motion to purchase a Baofeng UVB-5 to be used as a raffle item. Cameron, AJ4TW, seconded and the motion carried. Jesse said he would donate the radio.

The board discussed the nominating committee.



Board (continued from page 3)

The Christmas party will be held on December 8th, no location set as of this time.

Tom said the December 14th board meeting should have both old and new board members present.

There will be no general meeting in December

Jesse said he is testing the D-Star power amplifier.

Patrick said he would like to see GARA host a hamfest.

Tom said the Open House went well, Roy, N4BYU, made a motion to send Hinshaw Methodist Church a donation of \$100 for the use of the church for the Open House. Scott, KV4UP, seconded and the motion carried. The board discussed some things to do for next year.

The board discussed the 501C3 filing, the newsletter and the website.

Jesse, K4AX, made a motion to adjourn. Patrick, K2CPR, seconded and the motion carried. The meeting ended at 8:12pm. *Respectfully submitted by Greg Spencer, KG4UQV, GARA Secretary.*



From the President's Shack - Sept.

There are only two general meetings until November's General Election. It seems a long way off, but November will be here before you know it. GARA has had a problem in the past with finding members willing to run for board positions. I remember the first year I became a club member the Nominating Committee could not find member to run for president. After about three months Donna Ferguson, KD4WIK, stepped up and volunteered to become president. As a new member who joined GARA in October that year (one month before the election), I was not privy to the problems the Nominating Committee had trying to get members to run for the board or do I know if there was a problem trying to get members to serve on the committee. But what I know is the success of the election and the future of the club depends on the quality of its members who step up and volunteer to run for a board position. Unfortunately, sometimes a qualified member needs a nudge to step up and run for a position. This is where the Nomination Committee supplies stimulation to convince the member to run.

Many club members underestimate the importance of the Nominating Committee; I believe this committee is the most important committee GARA forms.

The Nominating Committee consists of Chairperson and two to three members, and meets for just over a month. The chairperson and the committee members are charged with finding qualified club members to run for GARA's elected board positions. To qualify to be on the committee you have to be a member in good standing and not serving on the current (outgoing) board.

The Nominating Committee members: helps a member to make the decision whether to run; nominates qualified members for board positions, who if elected will affect the way the club is run for next year and set policies that will influence how the club operates in the future. This is why I believe nominating committee is the most important committee GARA forms.

It's not too late to volunteer for the Nominating Committee. When you volunteer to serve on the committee, you influence the direction the club takes by nominating qualified members to run for board positions.

If you want to serve on the Nominating Committee or just want more information on what are the

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committee's duties and responsibilities, please let me know. My email address is kb1p@arrl.net. Or just talk to me at a club meeting.

The longer it takes to form a committee, the harder it is to convince a qualified club member to run for a board position.

The next scheduled event is GARA's Open House on Saturday, October 10th, from 1000 to 1600 at Hinshaw United Methodist Church, 4501 Gate City Boulevard (High Point Rd), Greensboro, NC. Setup will be 0900. If you are interested in showing off your special project, please contact me or one of the board members.

Tom Bertolino, KB1P, President, GARA

From the President's Shack - Oct.

If you have not heard yet, I will not run for President. I believe that a person should not serve for more than two consecutive years as president. It is time for someone else in GARA to step up and run for president, and take the club into the future.

I would like to thank GARA's membership for your support and the board members I served with for the past two years for their support and guidance.

We finely did it! We received notification from the IRS stating that GARA is a 501(c)(3), Public Charity. Thanks to everyone who helped to achieve this goal.

If you did not attend GARA's Open House this year you missed a good time. We had more new hams and people who wanted information on Amateur Radio then we had last year. The new hams had a lot of questions: what type of radio should get; how do get on a net; what is the difference between a formal, directed, and informal net. Where can I get information about just being a good ham?

In an attempt to answer these and other questions that new ham might have, the presentation topic for this month's meeting will be "Technics & Guidance for a New Hams." I will host the presentation, but it is really open discussion/forum which will attempt to answer any ham related questions. So if you are: new to the hobby and have questions; or if you are a seasoned operator who can an answer a question or just give some helpful advice, please come to the meeting. I am hoping to have a good discussion that will help our new hams.

A reminder GARA's elections are scheduled for the November's General Meeting (the 23rd of November).

GARA Board members are elected for one year term. Current Board members if they choose to run will need to be nominated and reelected. Being a current board member should not be prerequisite to run for a board position. Any GARA member in good standing and holds a valid amateur radio license can run for any board position. If you would like to run for a board position or you know anyone who in your opinion would make a good board member notify me or any current board member, and if that person agrees to run they will be placed on the ballet.

Mark is date on your calendar. This year's "Ham Radio Christmas Social" will be held on December 8th at Captain Bills, time 6:30 pm. If you plan to attend, please contact Jim Hightower, W4JLH, at w4jlh@bellsouth.net, more info to come.

Tom Bertolino, KB1P, President, GARA



Congratulations! You Passed!

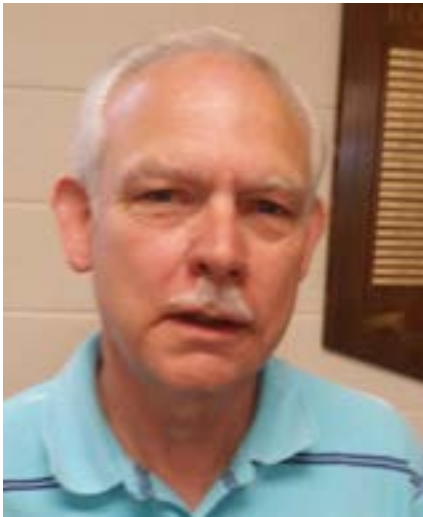
Every month on the second Saturday, except in March when it is the third Saturday, W4VEC holds a testing session for those who live in the area. This provides an opportunity for individuals to be able to test for their amateur radio license or upgrade. Thanks to Roy Smith, N4BYU, and a group of volunteers, each month there are new or upgraded hams in our area.

In September, there were two (2) who passed their test(s), and in October, there were five (5) who passed their test(s), earned either their Technician, General or Extra class license.

Next month's testing session will be on November 14th 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.

Photos Courtesy of Tom Bertolino, KB1P, and/or Roy Smith, N4BYU



***Sam Poindexter - KM4LUD
Passed General***



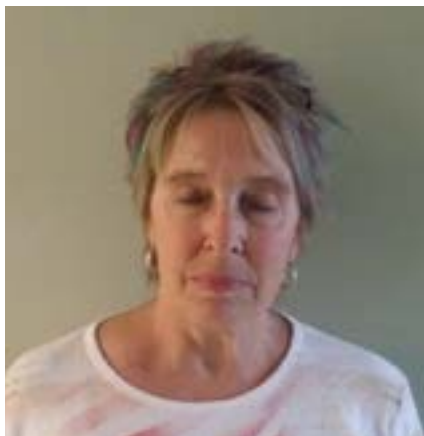
***Ken Melvin- KM4NFQ
Passed Tech***



***Patrick Moore - K2CPR
Passed Extra***



***Kevin Thompson - KK4OJL
Passed General***



***Lynn Betsy - KM4OBD
Passed Tech***



***Mark Lane, Jr. - KM4OBC
Passed Tech***

September Engineering Update

From Jesse Lindley, K4AX

This has been a much slower year for me, as far as ham radio is concerned, versus last year and the flurry of activity that the ARRL Centennial QSO party generated for me and some of the guys locally. I started a new log under my still somewhat new to me call K4AX in December of 2013. Under my former call I'd not completed worked all states or DXCC, but had several thousand contacts. I started working "new ones" on hf quickly as everything was new for my K4AX call, and started working the ARRL QSO party in earnest around March. Got a new HF rig at that time as well, a IC 7410, integrated it with my ALS-600 amp, and I was off to the races, working any station I could to get points in the QSO party, any new W1AW state on the air, and any new DX I could find on each band and mode. By the end of the year I placed 7th in NC for the ARRL Centennial QSO Party, and had worked mixed, phone, and digital DXCC, and WAS mixed, phone, digital, and on two bands.

This year finds me slacking off a lot more, and the bands have slacked off a lot more to boot. I traded in the Icom IC 7410 to W4DX, and purchased a used Flex-5000A SDR HF rig and have enjoyed playing with that. ATNO dx contacts (all time new ones) are down to a trickle for me. I'm at 215 total, and around 170 confirmed on Logbook Of The World. I did get CW DXCC in the bag and so far have worked 159 DX entities in the last 12 months. K4HC is always putting out spots so I always jump when I see a message from him and I'm near my HF rig. Thanks to him tonight alone I put E6GG and 3D2KM in the log! I and a few others have put many new ones into the log because of him!

On to the machines. The VHF 145.150 machine is still going strong, and so is the backup. Soon the main VHF will become the backup. We currently have two G.E. MASTR II machines, one performs a bit better than the other on RX and doesn't have a noticeable squelch tail because hang time and it shall become a solid performing backup should we need it, if we have teething problems with the new DR1x that is going online soon or it's Arcom RC210 controller.

I took a small break from working with the controller, mainly because of needed odds and ends and bits and software to get everything set up. Still working on repeater macros, and the scheduler for the controller that puts it into the correct modes for nets and emergencies. I've still not worked out the WX alert receiver, but it should not be a problem, the controller has 3 ports and multiple other audio input ports. All that should be needed to be done there is to rewire the plug out of the WX 1000 receiver for the RC210 controller. When it receives a WX alert from any of the surrounding counties it puts the alert out on our repeater.

Working with the controller software has been great, a much improved system over our previous controller. Changes are almost instant when made and makes for quick testing. Audio through the controller, and tone deviation still need to be set and soon I hope to get that done with Cameron AJ4TW as he has a signal generator and tone generator to get the job done. Between that and tweaking the controller

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Engineering (continued from page 7)

macros and scheduler I hope to be done with it, and gain back my project desk space! It has been a good experience that I don't want to repeat anytime soon. I have always had great respect for the work that has gone into our current controller programming and now I have a great understanding of the effort that it took to get it done.

A couple of small complaints that I read about the Yaesu DR1x is that it has a overly tight squelch, and a noisy squelch tail. A

couple of months ago Cameron and I adjusted the squelch tail on the in built controller on the repeater to make it much more sensitive, matching our current repeater and beyond. However it will not be needed, with a external controller, the only squelch will be tone the C.T.C.S. (pl tone) on a user's radio, as most repeaters are setup. With the audio and hang time delay on the controller there is no squelch tail. Special thanks again to Duane Brantley K5CA who built the controller for G.A.R.A.!

The Dstar UHF repeater had a issue last week in that it wasn't transmitting at all, or intermittently. I first noticed on Monday the 15th when driving home from work. A quick check on my phone of the Dstar Gateway website showed it was receiving my transmissions. When I arrived at the site and parked next to the building I couldn't not hear the transmitter at all. Restarting the machine and gateway controller brought everything back. Again on Tuesday after work and driving home the machine was not transmitting. When I arrived at the site, it started working before I got out of the car. Finding nothing wrong after of 30 minutes of testing I went home. Thursday was worse, machine was off the air most of the day and I worked late so I couldn't get out to the site.

Friday I went out with Patrick K2CPR and David KK4VCG to check the repeater and computers. It had started working on it's own by then. After testing with multiple long transmissions and not having drop out, we listed to K4HC and AJ4TF having a qso. David reported that at one point when he unkeyed that K4HC was already replying, indicating that possibly the repeater had dropped mid transmission on him. Finding nothing else, we decided to pack it in and leave as it was getting dark. Upon leaving the site Patrick noticed that though he could hear the machine in his car, it was a weak signal while driving away. As it was so late, we decided that the best thing to do was to pull the amp off line and go with the repeaters built in PA instead for the next week to see what happens. I have doubts that this could be the problem as during the previous days at the site, when the machine wasn't transmitting I couldn't pick it up with my HT sitting on top of it. Time will tell however, and I prefer the problem to be the amp than something else with the actual machine. Probably go will go without the amp for the next week to ten days, and see if this issue comes back. If it doesn't, that's pretty telling, but I am going to put the amp back online sometime after next week's Dstar net and see what happens after testing it into a dummy load at the site for a bit.

I guess that's about it! I hope everyone enjoyed the Labor Day weekend this Month, and hope to see everyone at the G.A.R.A. open house!

Jesse Lindley, K4AX



Listen (continued from page 1)

LISTEN LISTEN. I think that there is more to it than that – you need to LEARN to listen, and hear, and comprehend what you receive over the air.

I should be up-front – I have no training in this area. But I do feel I have something to share.

In a face-to-face conversation, a very large part of communication is from other than vocal sounds. Body language, facial expressions, and gestures convey a huge amount of information. By transitioning to radio communications, all of that is lost.

When signals are strong, and the two parties share a common native language and culture, most of that lack can be overcome without difficulty. Throw in a little noise, weaker signals, distractions and different languages into the mix however, and the results can range from humorous to downright frustrating. Add inexperience in working the more difficult contacts, and a complete breakdown of communication – a “busted” QSO, can result.

I’ve watched over the years newer operators observe experienced operators make valid, solid contacts, where there was no question about the exchange – and wonder just HOW did he hear that? Both operators (sitting side-by-side, often listening on headphones) had exactly the same input. The more experienced operator, however had learned HOW to listen – most often preceded by a period of difficulties himself. Unfortunately, there is very little written on just how one gains this experience.

Listening “harder” is not the key. Listening “louder” is not the key. The key is to train the best filter in the world – the one between your ears – to discount the extraneous, and glean the message out of the mess.

Remove distractions. A recommended first step is to do your best to remove extraneous noise from your local environment. Turn off the TV. Turn off the two meter rig. Get a decent set of comfortable headphones. Learn to use the controls on your receiver. Practice listening to weak signals.

Less can be more. This part can seem contrary, and many, sometimes very experienced operators, still have yet to master this concept. Take for example a signal that, at S5, is 6 db above the noise, with the Preamp turned on. The noise level in this example is S4. Turn off your Preamp, and while the desired signal drops to S3, the noise has dropped to S2 – the Preamp doesn’t care if it is amplifying noise, or a desired signal...both are EQUALLY amplified. The desired signal is still only 1 S unit above the noise, but there is much less noise to contend with. This same concept can be extended to your Attenuator and RF Gain controls. Tune in a strong signal on 75 meters in the evening – hopefully a night with a great deal of static. Note that between words, or during pauses in the conversation, how the noise takes over. Try reducing your RF Gain control until the static is greatly reduced, or even eliminated. Now notice how much more comfortably you can listen to the conversation. It may take some practice to find the right balance, but it’s there.

In my observations, many operators even run their Preamplifiers on 75 meters – where it is almost never needed – in order to give the received signals a greater S-meter reading. Stronger MUST be better, right? Try this exercise, and I think you’ll change your mind.

Regarding the Preamplifier – if you’re seeing an S-meter deflection (even a minimal deflection) with the preamp Off, turning it on will almost NEVER help you – it will simply amplify the noise along with the signals you’re trying to hear.

Additionally, using the Preamp unnecessarily has an unintended BAD result – the introduction of intermodulation products in your receiver. Especially in strong signal environments (think during a contest, or Field Day, or when the bands are very active on a weekend), too much gain in the receiver stages actually worsens your receiver performance. Try turning the Preamp OFF, and possibly even adding your attenuator if the signal you are trying to hear is loud. If you can still comfortably hear that

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Practice (continued from page 9)

station, additional gain will NOT help you.

Practice listening to weak signals. Another exercise that will help you master the concept of listening is to tune across the band and identify EVERY signal that you can hear. Don't skip over the weaker ones – these are the ones you need to pay more attention to. Remember those headphones I told you to get at the beginning of this article – USE THEM. Start at one end of the band, and take the time to actually identify each station you can hear at all. Don't worry, the only person keeping score here is you. You don't have to share your results with anyone. At first, it will be more of a struggle – but with regular practice, you'll find yourself identifying stations more quickly. You'll probably end up working more stations as well, as you'll find them before they've been spotted to the cluster. By practicing this regularly, you're training your brain to hear the signal, and ignore the noise. A really good operator can even copy signals BELOW the noise – maybe not well enough to carry on a full-blown conversation, but enough to work the contact and exchange signal reports.

Learn YOUR receiver. Virtually every receiver has controls that allow you to enhance the desired signal to one degree or another. These often include a Noise Blanker, IF/Passband Shift and Width controls, Notch Filter, Preamplifier, Attenuator, Digital Signal Processing Noise Reduction, RF Gain control, different width Passband Filters; the list is not exhaustive. Adding to the confusion of learning what these controls do, is the sometimes contrary naming that manufacturers sometimes use. One example is Yaesu's "IPO" or "Intercept Point Optimization" control. This is basically a preamplifier – but the confusing part comes from the fact that when IPO is OFF, the preamp is ON – and vice-versa.

Use your available filter bandwidths to reduce the amount of noise you have to contend with. On SSB, a 2.8 kHz wide filter provides full, rich audio. For strong signals, without close-by transmissions that encroach on that bandwidth, this can be very pleasing to listen to. However, that bandwidth allows more noise through, and requires a stronger signal to copy intelligibly. Try using a 2.1, or better yet, a 1.8 kHz wide filter for trying to copy those weak signals. Fidelity suffers, but you can actually understand more. This takes some practice, as the voice characteristics are different than when you listen with a wider filter. For CW, I tend to use a 500 hz filter for general operation, and a 250 hz filter for weak signals and crowded conditions. For truly weak signals, I often use a 50 hz or 100 hz filter to gain as much advantage as possible, removing noise from the equation. Switching to the narrower filter requires that I tune around more slowly in order to find the weak ones.

Another control that takes some practice to master is the Noise Blanker. This control is great at reducing impulse noise; like ignition noise, or power line buzz. The downside comes into play when there is a nearby strong signal on the band. This strong signal, when the noise blanker is engaged, introduces noise in your receiver. It can give the false impression that a particular signal is distorted, or splatters. Many newer radios include NB level and pulse width adjustments, that can be adjusted to best suppress the impulse noise. The higher you set the level, the more prone your receiver is this type of interference. Use the Noise Blanker when needed, of course – but if you can adjust the level, try setting it to the lowest value that reduces the impulse noise; and turn OFF the Noise Blanker when it's not needed.

In summary, then are these take-aways:

1. Remove distractions
2. Practice listening to weak signals – preferably using comfortable headphones
3. Turn OFF the Preamp when not truly needed. Add attenuation when appropriate
4. Learn to use the various controls and features of YOUR radio. Don't just accept the default settings

Finally – Get on the air and make some contacts.

Calendar of Events

- Oct 26 GARA General Meeting (Captain Bill's Seafood & Steakhouse, Greensboro)
- Nov 9 GARA Board Meeting
- Nov 15 JARSfest 2015 (Benson, NC, www.jars.net)
- Nov 14 VE Session (Hinshaw United Methodist Church, Greensboro)
- Nov 23 GARA General Meeting "GARA Elections" (Captain Bill's, Greensboro)
- Nov 28 VE Session (Red Cross Building, High Point)
- Dec 8 Ham Radio Christmas Social (6:30 pm at Captain Bill's, Greensboro)
- Dec 12 VE Session (Hinshaw United Methodist Church, Greensboro)
- Dec 14 GARA Board Meeting
- Dec 26 VE Session (Red Cross Building, High Point)
- Jan 9 VE Session (Hinshaw United Methodist Church, Greensboro)
- Jan 9 Winston-Salem FirstFest (Summit School, Reynolda Road , www.w4nc.com)
- Jan 11 GARA Board Meeting
- Jan 25 GARA General Meeting (Captain Bill's Seafood & Steakhouse, Greensboro)
- Jan 30 VE Session (Red Cross Building, High Point)
- Feb 8 GARA Board Meeting
- Feb 13 VE Session (Hinshaw United Methodist Church, Greensboro)
- Feb 22 GARA General Meeting (Captain Bill's Seafood & Steakhouse, Greensboro)
- Feb 27 VE Session (Red Cross Building, High Point)
- Mar 11-12 Charlotte Hamfest
(Cabarrus Arena & Event Center, Concord, www.charlottehamfest.org)
- Mar 14 GARA Board Meeting
- Mar 19 VE Session (Hinshaw United Methodist Church, Greensboro)
- Mar 26 VE Session (Red Cross Building, High Point)
- Mar 28 GARA General Meeting (Captain Bill's Seafood & Steakhouse, Greensboro)

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@ar1.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 Sept. to Dec, 2015

Nov. 14, 2015

Dec. 12, 2015

Jan. 16, 2016

Feb. 13, 2016

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