



# The Amplifier

Tar River Amateur Radio Club

January 2009

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WEB SITE: [www.tarriverarc.org](http://www.tarriverarc.org)

## Next Meeting

Tar River Amateur Radio Club meets on the first Monday of the month (except when it is a holiday). The January meeting of the Tar River Amateur Radio Club will be held Monday, January 5, at BODDIE NOELL ENTERPRISES, located at 1021 Noell Lane in Rocky Mount. The meeting will start at 7:00 p.m. Talk-in on WA4WPD repeater: 145.290-, PL Tone 107.2. The January meeting program will be planning programs for the remainder of 2009. *Bring your ideas and/or requests.*

## 2008 VE Exam Schedule

Bill, N2BT

The Tar River Amateur Radio Club, Rocky Mount, NC, will hold ARRL/VEC Amateur Radio Exams in 2009 as follows.

February 7	April 4
June 6	August 1
October 3	December 5

Exams will start at 9 a.m. and will be held at:  
The Braswell Memorial Library

727 N. Grace Street (corner of Grace and Peachtree Streets)  
Rocky Mount, NC 27804

Please bring the following items when attending a testing session.

- Photo identification (drivers license)
- Social Security Number
- Original amateur radio license
- Copy of amateur radio license
- Original certificate(s) of successful completion
- Copy of certificate(s) of successful completion
- Test fee of \$15 payable to ARRL/VEC (checks preferred)

For further information visit our club website at [www.TarRiverARC.org](http://www.TarRiverARC.org) or contact

Bill Thomas N2BT  
VE Team Coordinator  
Rocky Mount, NC  
(252)-442-6131  
Email: [N2BT@arrl.net](mailto:N2BT@arrl.net)

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## President's Corner

Robin, WA4WPD

January, start of a new year.

First some dates to take note of:

January 17-18 – Boy Scout Radio Merit Badge Class

February 7 – VE Test

June 27-28 – Field Day

September 14 – TRARC meeting on the second

MONDAY due to Labor Day

And don't forget the 2nd Saturday of every even month is VE test day.

Please note the Boy Scout Merit Badge class. We still need some help.

Most know of the impending DTV switchover. The FCC has asked HAMS to help. See <http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2008/12/10/10499/?nc=1> for the announcement. What is more interesting is North Carolina Public TV is also asking. Following are the notes.

### First Note.....

Dear Tim Slay N4IB,

I see per your ARRL section newsletter that the FCC is asking amateur radio operators to assist in educating the public about the analog broadcast TV shutoff that will occur Feb 17, 2009. This is good news.

UNC-TV provides tower space to many amateur groups for repeaters on our tall towers all across the state.

UNC-TV has an opportunity for amateur radio clubs in the Raleigh/Durham and surrounding area to fulfill some of the request the FCC has made to the ARRL. UNC-TV is in need of some assistance on the evenings of Feb 18, 19 and the 20th 2009 to answer phones and assist viewers that are having trouble with digital reception. We expect an onslaught of viewers that use antennas will discover problems when analog goes away.

We will have a 40 phone bank and will publicize numbers to assist viewers. In the past few months we have helped thousands of viewers with digital reception issues and I have trained some our limited staff and field engineers here to assist. When I go out and talk to senior centers and similar organizations in the rural areas, I find many viewers that have not yet installed a converter box or gotten a digital TV set. They are surprised to learn that the digital broadcast signal has been on for more than 7 years!

Perhaps there are some Ham clubs in the Triangle area that would be interested in helping fulfill their civic mission and help UNC-TV in this effort. We could provide a tour of the technical HD production

facilities of UNC-TV along with their visit. I would also provide orientation and access to signal mapping software that we use to predict receivability at viewers homes.

Let me know what you think, if this is something to consider and if so, you could get the word out on this.

I got my ham license in August. I had always wanted to be a ham and have many ham friends and co-workers. I purchased a used Icom 718 I saw on the QRZ swapmeet and have put up a couple of antennas and have made a few contacts already. Another ham friend gave me a 2 m 440 handheld.

Sorry to ramble on with this.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays,

Wayne Estabrooks - UNC-TV

KJ4GDW

(919) 549-7265

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### Second Note

Wayne - good to hear from you. I'll be glad to help you recruit some volunteers from the area. If we get enough folks, could we get a mention of amateur radio on the air? There are several very active radio clubs in the area so I'll start sending them the info. Do you want volunteers to coordinate directly with you? Thanks.

Tim Slay, N4IB

NC Section Manager

704-382-4646

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### Third Note

Tim,

Thanks for your quick reply. I think that is very possible that we could mention amateur radio on the air in relation to this effort. We need to let folks know about this service. I am not the final say on this but this is reasonable and the usual protocol with volunteer groups especially for something this important. We always try to thank volunteer groups that way.

I think this would be good for the amateurs also. I did discuss this with some of the UNC-TV management folks and they think this is a great idea. We haven't done much planning or coordination yet as I wanted to first get your feeling about this as soon as possible. Many of the UNC-TV management staff are on vacation this week so we cannot work out the details but you could begin to get the word out. We do have some time and as soon as I have more information I will coordinate with you. I have not yet discussed this with our volunteer services director but that department might coordinate the attendees. I also don't mind any

direct contacts or questions but I am quite occupied with viewer calls for help.

As you mentioned, we have several clubs in the area, perhaps a different organization or two each night might work. We are open to any arrangement that helps us with this. I do realize this is scheduled for weeknights so it has some effect on those that have to get up early to work for a living. Thanks for the quick reply and thanks for your help with this.

Regards,

Wayne Estabrooks Chief Engineer- Retired UNC-TV  
westabrooks@unctv.org  
<mailto:westabrooks%40unctv.org>  
(919) 549-7265

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### Last note

Folks - you can see from the string of notes below that UNC-TV is planning a phone bank staffed with volunteers to answer questions from viewers during the week of the DTV cutover (February 18-20). Wayne thinks hams would be good a great fit for staffing the phones on one or more of these nights and it fits in with the FCC's request that we assist our communities with this transition. I told Wayne I would pass his request on to clubs in the area. Perhaps you guys could sponsor a night during this time and commit to providing a certain number of volunteers? Wayne is promising everyone a tour of their facility and probably some on the air publicity. If any of your clubs are interested, let me know and I'll pass your info on to Wayne. Thanks & 73!

Tim Slay, N4IB  
NC Section Manager  
704-382-4646

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I know. Lot's of words this time. Most not mine. The Raleigh club is trying to get some volunteers. Does anyone want to help? Can we get some folks to represent TRARC? I can provide an analog TV, antenna and converter box to practice with.

Tell ya what. I'll have 'em at the January meeting. Maybe we can play some.

See y'all there.

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## Upcoming Hamfests

Jan. 10 – Winston-Salem, NC  
Feb. 7 – Frostfest, Richmond, VA  
Feb. 7 – Charleston, SC  
Mar. 14 - 15 – Charlotte Hamfest, Concord, NC  
April 11 – RARSfest  
April 24 - 25 – Southeastern VHF Society

Conference, Charlotte

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## Contests

January 1 - 5

ARRL Straight Key Night  
New Years Snowball Contest  
SARTG New Year RTTY Contest  
AGCW Happy New Year Contest  
ARRL RTTY Roundup  
EUCW 160 Meter Contest  
Kids Day

January 10 - 11

070 PSKFest  
MI QRP Club Jan. QRP Contest – CW  
Midwinter Contest  
North American QSO Party – CW  
DARC 10 Meter Contest

January 17 - 19

LZ Open Contest – CW  
International United Teenager Contest  
UK DX RTTY Contest  
HA DX Contest  
North American QSO Party – SSB  
ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes

January 22 - 26

NAQCC Monthly Straight Key Sprint  
CQ WW 160 Meter Contest  
YLISSB QSO Party  
REF French Contest – CW  
BARTG RTTY Sprint  
Winter Field Day  
UBA Contest – SSB  
Classic Exchange – CW

January 31

WAB Top Band Phone Contest

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## 2009 Club Dues/ARRL Dues

It is the end of the year and Fred is now accepting 2009 dues payments. Please pay early and let's all try to recruit one new member this year.

**If you are interested in becoming a 'new' ARRL member, we now have a special form that you can completely fill out, pay thru the club, and the club keeps \$15. If you are RENEWING your membership in ARRL, you may now pay thru the club, and it keeps \$2. ARRL dues are \$39 for regular and \$36 for SENIORS per year. There are others options also.**

Help support your club.

Pay your dues at the meeting or send your check to: Fred Winner KE4LXW, 8972 Lancaster Store Rd., Castalia, NC 27816.

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## Boy Scouts - Update

The Boy Scouts have asked us to teach a Radio Merit Badge class during their winter camp out. The camp out is the weekend of 17-18 January 2009. The class times are Saturday 10:30 - 12:20, QSO's during Saturday lunch and Sunday 10:30 - 12:20.

The requirements for 2009 have changed. I am re-working last years materials to the new requirements now. As soon as I have them approved I will post them to the files section of this newsgroup.

If you would like to help with this event please contact me at wa4wpd at arrl dot com.

Also mark the third weekend in October 2009 on your calendars. This will be the 52nd World JOTA event. The Tar River District has asked us to participate. We will need a full HF station with operators Friday thru Sunday. Plans are to teach a Radio Merit Badge class.

*Robin. WA4WPD*

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## **NC Section News**

### **FCC DTV HELP REQUEST**

Many of you have heard that through the ARRL, the FCC has asked radio amateurs to provide technical educational assistance to their communities concerning the FCC-mandated digital television (DTV) conversion scheduled for February 17, 2009. Clubs are encouraged to look for opportunities to distribute technical information and FCC materials in their communities. This might involve volunteering to speak at local civic clubs or church groups or setting up information booths at malls and community events. Hams should NOT make "house calls," sell any equipment or do actual installations. Beginning in early January, FCC staff will contact Section Managers and leaders of interested clubs and, where possible, arrange to meet to share even more information, audio, visual and printed materials. These efforts will also give you an opportunity to share information about Amateur Radio with the public and educate your community on the work of your local club. Wilmington was the first market to go 100% DTV on September 8th as an FCC test market. Wilmington area hams observed that the week before the transition and the two weeks after the cutover were the busiest, with lots of questions. The elderly and minorities are two groups who will largely be impacted by the transition. If your club is planning any activities related to this effort, please let me know (n4ib@arrl.org).

### **SECTION DIGITAL STUDY UPDATE**

Former NC Section Manager John Covington, W4CC, has taken over as chair of the Section Digital Study Group. John plans to present the groups findings

at the state ARES meeting in Raleigh this spring. If you would like to provide input or assist his efforts, please contact John at w4cc@arrl.org. As part of this effort, Lee Price, KD4GCF, has created a packet node map for North Carolina using Google Maps. You can find the map by going to <http://maps.google.com/maps> and do a search on "NC Nodes". If your node isn't on the map, please send the following information to Lee: Node Name; Frequency(or frequencies); LAN, WAN or Digi; Mailbox (if Kantronics Mailbos callsign, WinBBS, DOSBBS or other); Location; HAMSL; Node type (X1J4, BPQ, KA-Node, K-net, The Net, FlexNet, JNOS, etc); Node Stack (stack callsigns); and Antenna. Lee's email address is kd4gcf@yahoo.com.

### **TSUNAMI DRILL REPORT**

On December 1 I received an email from ARRL Emergency Preparedness and Response Manager Dennis Dura, K2DCD, initiating a drill that involved a tsunami hitting the North Carolina coast. Our Section Emergency Coordinator, Bernie Nobles, WA4MOK, was asked to gather information on available volunteers and their capability should an Amateur Radio response be required in the wake of this "disaster". Contact across the section was made mostly with Internet-based email. In less than 24 hours we were able to obtain responses and "commitments" from 351 ARES members who would be available between "immediately" and two days. That's 19% of the 1,824 ARES members in our section. I've asked Dennis for insight on how our section responded compared to others involved in the drill, but I'm grateful for everyone's response and support!

### **HELP NEEDED ON CW NETS!**

Even after almost 100 years of technological advancement, CW is still one of the most efficient, reliable and effective modes for sending messages. But activity has been dropping over the years and our CW nets need your help! Check-ins and net control stations are needed. A list of our section CW traffic nets is below. The Carolina Slow Net is a great place for beginners, but if the other nets are running a little fast, the net control station will be happy to slow down to whatever speed you're sending. The CSN web page, [http://bellsouthpwp2.net/r/g/rg\\_burns/index.htm](http://bellsouthpwp2.net/r/g/rg_burns/index.htm) has a good introduction to CW net operating. Please check into one of these nets and support CW traffic handling. If you'd like to volunteer as an NCS, contact our Section Traffic Manager, Dave Roy, W4DNA at w4dna@nc.rr.com!

*Carolinas Slow Net:* 8:00pm local time at 3.571MHz

*Carolinas Net - Early:* 7:00pm local time at 3.573MHz

*Carolinas Net - Late:* 10:00pm local time at 3.573MHz

## **MEDIA HITS**

We got some good coverage this month of SKYWARN Recognition Day. Thanks to a press release written by Jeff Orrock of the Raleigh NWS, SKYWARN Recognition Day in NC was picked up by the Associated Press and appeared on WRAL.com on December 6. The Cleveland County ARS had coverage of their SKYWARN event in the Shelby Star.

I knew that at 96, Bill Finch, W4EHF is still a very active traffic handler and radio amateur. Bill is also the founding net control station for the Tarheel Emergency Net, which started soon after the FCC removed the World War II restrictions on amateur radio. But I didn't know until recently that Bill is a champion badminton player and he is also the world-record holder for the 1,500-meter run among 95-99-year-olds! Bill is also something of a celebrity with a 2/3 page picture of him in the December 15 issue of Newsweek!

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

January 10: Winston-Salem FirstFEST

March 14-15: Roanoke Division Convention, Charlotte

April 11: NC Section Convention, Raleigh

## **NOVEMBER TRAFFIC**

K4IWW 333, N3BW 284, W2EAG 267, KI4YV 232, KD4WAX 128, W4DNA 99, WA2YBM 56, W4TTO 54, W3HL 48, K3AEB 47, W4FAL 42, KE4AHC 32, W4EHF 30, NC4VA 12, KD4ZPS 9, W4RSE 5.

## **NOVEMBER PSHR**

W4DNA 170, NC4VA 157, W4FAL 130, K4IWW 120, W2EAG 110, WA2YBM 110, KI4YV 100, W4TTO 100.

**NOVEMBER ARES MEMBERS:** 1,824, down 4 from last month.

ARRL North Carolina Section

Section Manager: Timothy B. Slay, N4IB

[n4ib@arrl.org](mailto:n4ib@arrl.org)

## **Ham Gear for Sale or Trade**

If you have any ham gear or other electronic gear to sell or trade, send a copy of your ad to [W4FRA@arrl.net](mailto:W4FRA@arrl.net).

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**FOR SALE** – Garmin GPS V – paid almost \$300, will sell for \$100. Includes owners manual, quick start guide, box, 12 VDC power cable. This unit is handheld with AA batteries. – Fred Winner, KE4LXW, 252-459-4332

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**FOR SALE** - Kenwood TH-215A w/manual \$50; Azden PCS-7200 220 MHz w/manual \$200; HyGain Mark IV Rotator, Mast, Thrust Bearings, package \$300; Radio Shack DC Power Supply, regulated, 3 Amp,

w/manual \$25; Icom IC-03AT, 220 MHz, \$100; Radio Shack HTX-202, \$50. - John Faulkner, KR4SV, 252-442-7946

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**FOR SALE** – I have moved to New Bern and have a few ham antennas for sale. Please let the club members know. I am asking about half price for each. All have manufacturer's assembly and installation manual and include the cables and related galvanized steel masts:

Cushcraft R7 vertical for 10, 12, 15, 17, 20, 30, & 40 Meters - estimate new about \$510, will sell for \$250

Cushcraft AR-6 vertical for 6 Meters - estimate new for \$108, will sell for \$55

Cushcraft 13B2 boom Yagi for 2 Meters SSB/CW/FM - estimate new for \$160, sell for \$80

I also have an Alinco DR-600 (works ok but needs a new lithium battery) and a mobile hand-held Icom (buttons stick). Make an offer.

Jim Dugan, W1JFD, 252-446-5319

[jimdugan@embarqmail.com](mailto:jimdugan@embarqmail.com), [W1JFD@arrl.net](mailto:W1JFD@arrl.net)

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**FOR SALE** – Benq 17-inch flat screen LCD Monitor, works good, I just treated my old eyes to a 22-inch monitor. Includes CD and all original documentation. \$65. – Les Zavadil, W4FRA, 252-446-7816

## **FOR SALE**

TH6 Antenna

Hygain Rotator

65' Rohn 25G

Tower and antenna have been dismantled and on ground

Contact KG4SPT at 252.946.7197 or [leary1@gotricounty.com](mailto:leary1@gotricounty.com)

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