

# Forsyth Amateur Radio Club, Inc.



# Newsletter



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February, 2002

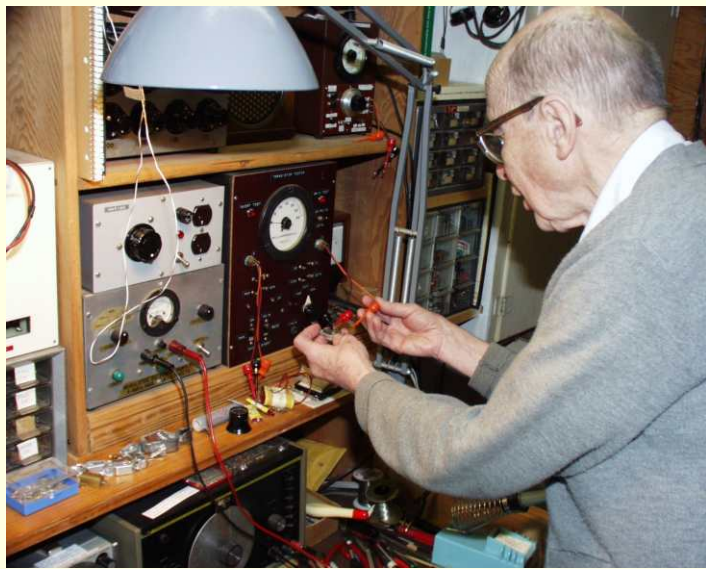
## Who says hams don't build anymore . . .

*Don Edwards, WB4KQN*

Wayne Stanley, W4RDG, and I have been chatting over the telephone occasionally for over a year. I kept promising to drop by but time is short and it seems like someone is always chewing on me to get something done so I didn't really get a chance until a few weeks ago. Wayne had been looking for a 1 or 2 RF amp meter and I had ran across a couple of 3 and 5 amp RF meters and wanted to drop them by.

When I dropped in Wayne was working on a copy of the Tuna-Tin 2 transmitter from March, 2000 QST. But what totally blew me away was Wayne's shop. There is all kind of test equipment around. Counters, meters, meter testers, Q meters, grid dip meters, signal tracers, power supplies, dah-de-dah-de-dah. Almost everything you can think of. What is astonishing is that all of it (except for a couple of oscilloscopes) is homebrew! OK, there are a few commercial pieces of test equipment, but they were lovingly restored and returned to service by Wayne. And what couldn't be has been meticulously taken apart and all the salvageable parts sorted and properly stored away waiting for the homebrew project that will be their turn to come back to life.

*Continued top of Pg. 2*



## Go fly a . . . plane? helicopter?

January meeting program highlights:



Our very-own VP, Tim King, KG4MQD, shows off his 'other' use for surplus cash, model flying, at the Jan., 2002 meeting. Tim brought various gliders, helicopters, and yes, even, jets. Above he shows off Robert's (KG4NEP) ducted jet. At the left Brian Mahan looks on as Daddy Mike, KB4WJA, adjusts a relic analog RC transmitter.

**Club Meeting  
Monday, Feb. 11, 2002**

**SPECIAL TIME!**

We will meet, as usual, on the 2nd Monday of the month at 610 Coliseum Drive in the Red Cross Building **BUT EARLIER THAN USUAL**. This meeting starts at 7:00 PM sharp in Room 109, but come early, say, 6:30-ish, to 'hob-nob' with your fellow hams. The reason for the earlier meeting is our bi-annual weather training, which is a longer program than usual. Come early to get a good seat. Come late and watch the televised version in overflow room 09.



## Amateur Radio Exams

Amateur Radio exams are given at the American Red Cross, 690 Coliseum Drive, Winston-Salem, NC (Beside WXII-TV), first Saturday of most months at 9:00 A.M. by the W4VEC VEC Group. For more information see the W4VEC VEC website at: [www.w4vec.com](http://www.w4vec.com) or contract Rick Batte', N4MBI at [n4mbi@ols.net](mailto:n4mbi@ols.net) or 336-924-1881. Be sure to bring two forms of ID, one being a photo ID, your SSN, original license, photo copy of your present amateur license, and any CSCE's. Also you need to bring your FRN which is required by the FCC. This can be obtained from the CORES database, or you can refer to the letter that you received or will receive from the FCC.

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Wayne is demonstrating one of his specialized pieces of test gear. This is a Gate-Dip-Meter, but only for the broadcast band for working on old radios. In the inset it is checking the tuning of a old BC radio.

**Forsyth Amateur Radio Club, Inc** is a non-profit (IRS 501(c)3) North Carolina corporation for the promotion of Amateur Radio, and for the education and training of hams and the general public primarily in Forsyth County, North Carolina.

FARC was originally incorporated as the Winston-Salem Radio Club on December 31, 1930 and has been in operation ever since. We currently maintain a state-of-the-art ham station in the basement of the Red Cross, 610 Coliseum Dr., Winston-Salem, NC and also maintain two 2-meter repeaters, 146.64 (100 Hz tone) and 145.47 (100 Hz tone).

For more information mail us at FARC, PO Box 11361, Winston-Salem, NC, 27116 call 336-723-7388 or visit our web site at [www.w4nc.org](http://www.w4nc.org). Club email is to [w4nc@triad.rr.com](mailto:w4nc@triad.rr.com).

Officers for 2002 are:

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To join our list server send a blank email to  
[w4nc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:w4nc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

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We trade newsletters with other clubs, and many local clubs are on our mailing list. If your club has a newsletter and would like to trade please send us a copy.

There is not enough room here for complete pictures of Wayne's entire shop. There are at least five work benches all with nice test equipment. And what you assume at first glance is an unfamiliar piece of commercial gear, when you look closer is actually a superbly-crafted piece of Wayne's homebrew. One of Wayne's interests is in measurement, characterization and understanding of components. He has written a number of programs that characterize networks and filters. While I was there Wayne asked me about current capability through RF capacitors.

At first this seemed a simple question. But the more I've turned this over the more complex it becomes. Large capacitors such as are used in broadcast antenna tuning networks will generally have a current capability stamped on them along with a voltage rating. Smaller capacitors (such as those hams generally use in ham RF filters) have only a voltage rating. When these capacitors are combined into a network at RF frequencies voltages and currents through them can vary widely, and because I and E are not in phase the magnitudes may not be what might at first glance be expected because of circuit and component Q. Wayne has some recent correspondence with Zack Lau, W1VT (of Communications Quarterly, QEX and other ham authorship fame) about this that I'm anxious to see. Apparently this is an area that is not as well characterized as you would expect, at least for smaller components.

*Continued next page*



This is a view across two workbenches and showing the library of electronic texts in the background. The oscilloscope and generator in the foreground are made by B&K but compare to the quality of the two pieces of gear built by Wayne to the right of the generator.



**PIANO TUNING**

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KG4LDB

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WARDG, continued from Page 2

One of Wayne's passions is the restoration of old broadcast receivers from the 1920's and 1930's. He has a number of beautiful Atwater-Kents and other brands (which I didn't recognize). All restored, of course. Another surprise is that Wayne is a ham author. The issue of QST which has the Tuna Tin 2 on the cover (mentioned last month) has an article by Wayne in it. He describes a most useful and interesting device to check meters for function. Since it is handheld it could be a lifesaver when shopping for a special meter at a hamfest to complete some special project.

Wayne doesn't travel out at night much, so he doesn't often get to Club meetings. Perhaps, though, if we ask nicely, we might could impose on Wayne to show up at a future meeting and give us a little show-and-tell.



Clockwise from upper left: 1. A homebrew transistor tester that automatically determines which lead is C-B-E and if the device is NPN or PNP. 2. Wayne's homebrew transmitter which has a neat link coupling arrangement. The coupling coil in the back corner is rotated about 1/2 way and is adjusted from the front panel by a standard CW-CCW control. 3. Wayne's bench for working on broadcast radios with AC power control, signal tracer, generator, RF probe, etc. All homemade of course. 4. One of Wayne's nicely restored old radios. 5. Wayne himself in the center.

## Cool Web Sites

OK, this one is neat. It's called iLink. There has been several methods of connecting ham rigs over the internet. As a rule they've been plagued by various problems, sound quality for one, and licensing issues for another. There is a quite new system called iLink that has probably solved many of these issues. Go to <http://www.ilinkboards.com/index.html> and read about the system. You don't need a board to use the system, you only need a board if you are going to connect to a rig. You just need the software. Once the software is installed, you will need to register. It may take an hour or so to validate you and your callsign.

I had a really nice long chat with a ham in Texas the first night. We were both over the internet, not on the air, and the audio was room quality. There are a number of sites all over the world that have rigs connected and you can key up (OK hit the space bar) and give a CQ and your call. Or just pick someone out of the list and call them. Just be sure you have a mic connected to the sound card first.

If you stay logged on someone can call you. There is a DTMF code associated with your call. Someone in say, Scotland, can access a repeater and punch in your code and call you. *Neat-o!* The guy I chatted with in Texas has a simplex rig on a 440 freq. at his house and accesses his system

*Continued next column*

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*Cool Web Sites continued:*

over the car rig. Then when he goes into work he puts the rig into low-power cross band repeat and chats with hams all over the world on his handheld. Hummmm, I'm not sure I would go this far just yet, but it is an interesting idea.

Try it, it's spiffy. Yes, I can hear the 'Ludites' tossing their 'sabots' and sputtering "But, but it's not REAL ham radio!" Well, you know the world changes. Try it. You might like it.

## Ham Radio in the local News

**Tough Bird: Amateurs' off-the-shelf satellite flies high**

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ANNAPOLIS, Md.

"Once every 100 minutes, a bargain-basement satellite loops around the Earth, sending and receiving digital messages over antennas made from a metal tape measure. A sailor on a solo crossing of the Atlantic bounces signals off the satellite to stay in touch with his family. New Zealanders on a cross-country hike use it to communicate with friends back home. And any ham-radio user who has the proper transmitting equipment and is within 2,000 miles of the 25-pound satellite can use it to send single-line text messages."

The above AP article appeared in the Friday, January 25th Winston-Salem Journal on Page 2. The article tells about the construction of the \$50,000 24-pound satellite by navel cadets, one of more than 10 'birds' built by university students around the world. It was built with off-the-shelf components. According to the article there have been 44 Amateur Radio satellites.

## Odds and Ends:

**Norm Byerly, N4ANE**, very graciously donated a large load of goodies for sale at the Club Table at the Hamfest in June. Thanks Norm!

**Construction article!** Henry, N4VHK, has been building a little 40 or 80 meter transceiver which will be featured in an upcoming newsletter. We might even have a circuit board available.

**Andy Pitts, WA4GIC - SK.** There is a memorial site at [www.rbdc.com](http://www.rbdc.com). Comments are welcomed from those who knew Andy.

**Would you like to become a member of FARC?** It's easy! Dues are \$24/year (\$12/year for over 65 & students). Feel free to drop into any meeting, we'd love to have you. Second Monday of every month at the Red Cross, 610 Coliseum Dr. Or email [w4nc@triad.rr.com](mailto:w4nc@triad.rr.com) for more details.

Tech. Report continued

The same PL id's and squelch tails will be implemented on the 145.47 machine in the future.

**Tech News this month:**

- \* 146.64 NCBH repeater status
- \* 145.47 Sauratown Mt repeater status
- \* Autopatch news
- \* "Repeater Tips"
- \* For our New HAM's
- \* Murphy's Law "Quote of the month"
- \* What's new?
- \* FARC Tech Notes 2002-01
- \* FARC repeater "user" commands

January 2002 has been another good month for the FARC repeaters.

**146.64 NCBH system:** The North Carolina Baptist Hospital (NCBH) repeater has been operating well. Temperature inversions have been minimal. Our sister machines in Hendersonville, NC on 146.64 MHz have been heard occasionally in the early morning hours, and Raleigh, NC has not been heard since their new tower has been installed. Discussions have taken place with our Hendersonville partners concerning the same 100 HZ PL assignment. PL changes will be made to minimize future interference.

**145.47 System:** The Sauratown mountain repeater has been operating well. However, It has been necessary to operate the repeater in a PL mode, exclusively, to minimize interference.

Repeater Updates:

- Normal monthly configuration updates were performed to maintain both repeater systems.

**For our new and out-of-the-area HAMS:**

(1) The 146.64 MHz and 145.47 MHz machines are configured with a PL-Defeat. The PL-Defeat can be useful for members that don't have a PL encoder installed, or for Hams passing through the area. The PL-defeat can be enabled by properly identifying and issuing a DTMF 325. The repeater will respond with an "OK-UP", and the PL will be disabled for a 10-minute period. At the end of the 10-minute period the repeater will automatically reset itself to a PL-Mode.

(2) If you would like to manually reset the PL at the end of your QSO. Enter 325 again to enable the PL and the repeater will respond by saying, "OK Down". Please remember to reset the "325" PL Inhibit when using on the .47 machine. Onsite interference has "falsed" the 325 timer into thinking an active QSO is still in progress and the PL has not automatically reset.

(3) How do I know if the 146.64 machines PL is enabled? When the 146.64 machine PL is enabled. The repeater ID will say "PL 100Hz" and will give a CW "PL" on occasional squelch tails. When the 146.64 machine is in carrier mode (COS), the PL id's will be absent from the ID and the squelch tails.

*Continued next column*

**Autopatch News:**

Attention All FARC Members!!:

**There have been number of UNIDENTIFIED AUTOPATCH TRANSMISSIONS taking place on the 146.64 MHz machine.**

-This is an unacceptable practice, and one that is outside of the FCC rules. Please help us monitor and do your part to politely educate these Autopatch users in the proper process of identifying their transmissions.

-Please note that if the unauthorized Autopatch transmissions continue, violators may lose their Autopatch privileges and phone numbers will be blocked in the repeater. If you have questions, please contact the FARC Technical committee.

**\* SpeedDials Changes since last month:**

- New Users: None Changes: None
- Note: Any FARC member desiring a "SpeedDial" number assignment or number change, please contact WB9SZL via email or telephone.
- Updated SpeedDial lists are updated twice a year and are available for distribution in the FARC club shack.

**Feb 2002 Autopatch Report:**

Autopatch Type	Nov 2001	Dec 2001	Jan 2001	2001 YTD
Manual:	41	83	42	829
Speeddial:	20	31	2	308
Emergency:	0	0	0	0
Total:	61	114	42	1137

**Repeater Tips:**

- Recommend programming your rigs to transmit the FARC 100 HZ PL tone at all times. This way you will always be able to access FARC repeaters.
- Members having a PL-Decode capability can also utilize this feature to minimize interference from "sister repeaters" operating on the same frequency. This feature is available on the 145.47 machine.
- Recommend to secure your mobile mic**, between QSO's on a mic clip. This will prevent the accidental keying/jamming of the repeaters; in the event the Mic gets "stuck" between the bucket seats of your vehicle.

**For our new Ham's**

What is does the following mean (ole-HAM slang terms??)

- 73: Best wishes
- Hi Hi: Same as a Laugh or Chuckle
- 807's: Old Linear Amplifier tubes (big) or Adult beverages
- Salt-Mine: Work Location
- Rig: Your Transceiver
- Finals: Final RF Power Amplifier in your Rig

**Murphy's Law Quote of the Month:**

"A transistor protects the fast-acting fuse by blowing first"


**What's New?**

The new 145.47 receiver tuned-up well. Unfortunately the newly received crystals are defective, and will be sent back to the manufacturer for replacement.

The 145.47 and 146.64 repeater will be visited during the month of Feb 02 to check the system integrity and perform adjustments.

Annual Southeastern Repeater Association (SERA) dues and FARC repeater coordination documents were completed and forwarded to SERA.

*Tech. Report is continued on the next page*



Yes, due to requests FARC now accepts advertising in the newsletter. If you would like to help support the newsletter, please contact Don Edwards (email: wb4kqn@triad.rr.com). Ad deadlines are 3 days before the end of the month. Rates for a space this size are \$20 for 3 months (minimum), \$30 for 6 months, and \$50 for 12 months.

*Tech. Report, continued from Page 4*

A new Digital Signal-Report capability is now available on the 145.47 machine. Please see details below.

### **New 145.47 MHz Repeater -Signal Report Test Capability:**

**\*\* Note that this new capability was originally designed for the FARC .64 system, but has been implemented on the .47 system first. This capability will be implemented on the .64 system in the near future.**

Over the past several years, I've noticed that many of our FARC Autopatch users occasionally experience difficulty in performing a successful Autopatch or accessing the repeater. This can be caused by a variety of changing conditions, but for the most part are a result of not having a full-quieting quality signal, into the repeater. This condition is normally experienced when you operate at the fringe of the repeater.

The Autopatch DTMF decoders in the repeater controller are designed to be quite sensitive and very selective. Proper DTMF Tones (good quality), free from static, are essential in assuring that the proper telephone numbers are interpreted by the repeater controller.

To assist FARC members in determining the quality of their signal, a New "**Digital Voice Recorder" (DVR) function** has been interfaced to our 145.47 MHz repeater. The introduction of this function will now allow our members to check the actual quality of their signals into the 145.47 MHz system.

#### **DVR Operation:**

The new 145.47 system DVR function is designed to "digitally record and automatically playback" a (7) Seven second sample your signal, as it is received by the repeater receiver.

The procedure to use the DVR function is as follows:

#### **DVR Example:**

Press your Push-to-talk (PTT) button, Say: "[CALLSIGN] Signal Test",

- Press: **725\*** on your keypad
- **Now** release your PTT button
- Repeater will say: "Start Test Now"
- Key-up and immediately record your (7) seven-second-test message.
- Un-key and your seven second test message will automatically play back through the repeater.
- You will instantly know how your signal sounds through the repeater.

This completes your DVR signal test procedure"

I trust that many of you will find this new DVR functionality a useful tool in determining the quality of your signal, as you make antenna changes, low power tests, and operate mobile throughout the area.

*Continued next column*

*Tech. Report continued*

#### **Comments:**

Other new features are envisioned to be designed and integrated into our FARC repeater systems in the future. Announcements of new FARC repeater system features will be presented in the FARC monthly newsletter.

### **146.64 REPEATERAUTOPATCH PROCEDURES**

Version: January24, 2002

#### **Autopatch:**

Autopatch is an automatic "linking-system" between the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) and the 2 meter 146.64 MHz FARC Repeater. Autopatch can be invoked either manually or via a "pre-stored" (telephone) know as a SpeedDial Number. Most members request their home telephone number be programmed as their SpeedDial number. SpeedDial numbers are a privilege extended to all FARC club members and can be received upon request.

When using the Autopatch facility, **Please remember:**

- FARC Autopatch is for local calls only.
- To identify your transmission at the **beginning** and end of each Autopatch session.
- Please make sure your signal is "solid into the repeater" before attempting an Autopatch. If your signal is marginal, the repeater tone decoders will be unable to successfully complete your call.
- The Autopatch timer is limited to 3 minutes
- Key your mic at least every 90 seconds, so the Autopatch won't time-out with inactivity.
- The FARC Autopatch facility is provided to the Amateur community for **NON-Business calls**.

#### **AUTOPATCH PROCEDURES EXAMPLE**

(Perform this operation in one transmission)

Press your Push-to-talk (PTT) button, Say: "*W4ABC Autopatch*",

Press: \* 7 2 3 7 3 8 8 on your keypad

-**Now** release your PTT button

- Repeater will say: "Autopatch 723 7388"

- Telephone will ring

- Once your party answers, press your PTT, to carry on your conversation

Press: # (to terminate your Autopatch)

Repeater will say: "Autopatch completed at 8:16pm, Please ID

Identify as: "*W4ABC Autopatch complete*"

This completes your Autopatch procedure

For a SpeedDial call substitute the SpeedDial number for the telephone number.

#### **Comments:**

If you have questions regarding the use of the Autopatch, or optional repeater functions, please contact Dale WB9SZL, on 146.64 MHz, via email at [wb9szl@triad.rr.com](mailto:wb9szl@triad.rr.com), or leave a message at: 1-336-766-9675.

*73, Dale Mierisch, WB9SZL  
FARC Tech Committee Chairman  
Email: [wb9szl@triad.rr.com](mailto:wb9szl@triad.rr.com)  
1-336-766-9675*

### **FARC Meeting Minutes**

#### **Monthly Membership Meeting:**

The monthly club meeting of the FARC was held at the Red Cross building at 7:30 pm on Monday, January 14, 2002.

**Program:** Tim KG4MQD gave a very interesting and informative presentation on model the R/C aircraft hobby, including technical information and displays.

*Continued on Page 6*



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Minutes, continued from Page 5

**Old business:** The club Mosley HF antenna has been sold; it will be taken down in March, at which time it will be replaced with a new, lighter and more capable Force 12.

**New business:** On behalf of the Vagabond net, Bryce KF4ZFN requested permission to use 145.47 machine for their daily (14:30 until 16:00) net. It was put to motion by N0KTY, moved by KG4LDB, seconded, and approved.

**Treasury report:** KT4KV reports that membership dues are being collected, and the treasury remains in good standing.

**Technical report:** WB9SZL reports that both machines continue to function normally, and the "repeat-back" feature should be in place in February.

**VEC report:** N4MBI reports 4 new licensees this month.

**Comments and announcements:** Our contesters won us 3rd place in the NAQP SSB. The newsletter will soon be available by e-mail. The International Space Station is installing Ham-radio antennae and should be "on the air" soon. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.

### Board Meeting:

The monthly board meeting of the FARC. was held at Cobalt Eats and Drinks on Monday, January 21, 2002 at 9:30 pm. From 7:30 to 9:30, the Board was continuing upgrades to the Red Cross building cable and TV system which began several weeks ago.

**Old business:** Plans were finalized regarding the bi-annual newsletter mass mail-out. This mail-out serves two purposes, membership recruitment and notification for SkyWarn training. A budget of \$600 was approved for postage and printing.

**New business:** Hamfest preparations were discussed. Chairman KG4LDB continues to contact vendors and spaces are filling up. As part of our upgrades to the Red Cross building TV and cable system, a microphone and PA system are needed to go with the CCTV system, and a budget of \$300 was approved for purchase. The location for Field Day was discussed, but no decision had been reached as of 1/21. The meeting adjourned at 10:40 pm.

*Submitted for approval,  
Dan O'Leary KG4ECI, Secretary*

## Hamfest Calender



*Courtesy of ARRL &  
SERA Repeater Journal*

**10 Feb 2002** Virginia State Convention, Richmond, VA  
<http://www.frostfest.com> Email: [w4pw@arrl.net](mailto:w4pw@arrl.net)

**24 Feb 2002** Briarpatch & Foothills ARCS, Elkin, NC  
Email: [kg4fla@hotmail.com](mailto:kg4fla@hotmail.com)

Note: Tom, N4IOZ, has verified with KG4FLA that the hamfest is still scheduled for February 24 at the Elkin Armory as usual.

**9-10 Mar 2002** Mecklenburg ARS, Charlotte, NC

***This is a 'biggie' and it, along with Shelby over Labor Day, are both events not to miss!***

<http://www.w4bfb.org>

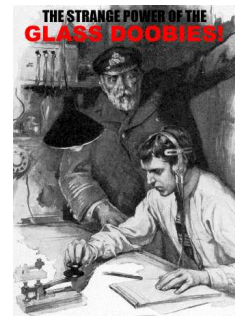
Email: [hamfest@w4bfb.org](mailto:hamfest@w4bfb.org)

*Con't next column*

## THE STRANGE POWER OF THE GLASS DOOBIES (and other mysteries)

*By Joe Tyburczy*

*W1GFH, Burbank, California*



**WHAT REALLY HAPPENED ON THE TITANIC** - The fantastic power of the doobies is known to but a select few. Legend has it that the most sought-after examples were RCA president David Sarnoff's personal set of green pyrex insulators, which were said not only to have been responsible for his receiving the TITANIC's distress signals, but to have pulled in the squawkings of distant galaxies!

Not so on the ill-fated TITANIC. The 6-wire, flat-top antenna installed by the Marconi Company had hard rubber insulators at its end junctions. Wireless operator Harold Bride begged to be allowed to replace these with glass or porcelain type insulators, but both Marconi and White Star Lines management refused, stating "we find no particular advantage to modifying the present system".

On April 15, 1912 as the Titanic was sinking, Bride desperately tapped out his distress call for several long minutes before the first reply was heard. "UR SIGS WEAK OM" answered the vessel Carpathia, "TRY USNG GLASS INSLTRS". Back in New York, young David Sarnoff listened in fascination as the signals poured into his headphones.

In light of the subsequent disaster and loss of life, shipboard and coastal wireless installations promptly replaced existing rubber and wood insulators with glass or porcelain ones. In radioman's slang, these new antenna insulators were called "**doobies**".

**I FIRST ENCOUNTER THEM** - You won't find these at any Radio Shack store. I first observed their otherworldly properties after finding them at a flea market table in Derry, New Hampshire many years ago, quite by accident. I purchased two of them for 50 cents, and set them to work on a 40-meter dipole made from hard-drawn copper wire that same day. My aged Hammarlund Super Pro fairly leaped to life. Signals began to drift in from the Arctic Circle to the Caspian Sea! My speaker thudded with bleeps and groans, the cacaphonic honks and tweets of legions of ham operators pounding telegraph keys in far-flung lands!

That night, the old Super Pro glimmered in the darkness, its twenty-odd tubes thumping with the barrage of microvolts pulsing through their circuits. I found that I typically enjoyed up to 3db gain in received signals. Had I run across an odd temperature inversion, sunspot surge, solar flare, or other temporary anomaly of ionospheric propagation? No, by God -- it was the doobies!

**LOST AND FOUND AGAIN** - When it was time to move, I packed them away, thinking I'd save them for some future day when they'd serve as part of the ultimate antenna system. Years passed. Boxes were shuffled about. When I next went to look for them, they'd vanished. Over the course of several moves they'd somehow been misplaced. I searched high and low, to no avail. I resigned myself to the fact that they were indeed gone forever.

But the mystical power of the doobies would draw me to them anew. Just last year, I ran across a notice on the Internet for a small ham radio flea market to be held in -- of all places -- Derry, New Hampshire! Something told me that this was not mere chance. I begged Hank, my friend in New England, to go there in search of these elusive talismans. After much persuasion, exhortation, and outright threats, he relented.

On that chilly Saturday in October, Hank drove through torrential rains and hubcap-deep mud to arrive at a centuries-old Elks lodge nestled among the pines. In the basement, a handful of damp figures milled among worn-out radio gear. Hank searched the sparse tables for signs of insulators, but none appeared. Finally, as he was about to leave, he spotted an old gentleman hacking a throatful of phlegm behind a card table in the dank cellar. He approached him and asked " You don't by any chance have any glass

*Continued next page*

*Glass Doobies, continued*

antenna insulators?" . With great difficulty, the old man produced a crumpled box from beneath his table. "How many of the dang things do ye want?" he wheezed.

There, before Hank's eyes were the fabled pyrex insulators of legend in their original boxes! He quickly negotiated for four of them at \$5 each. "Ayep. I almost didn't come out heah this morning," added the man, "c'ept I knew I had to sell off these things before I die, which'd be any day now".

And so, once again, the sounds of faraway lands burble and burp from my speaker. No matter how weak, or how distant, there's nary a signal that can't be heard by my fashionable Japanese transceiver. Because tonight, out at the ends of my dipole antenna, a pair of pristine, pyrex doobies glint in the moonlight.

*While web surfing one night and looking for something else entirely (PSK-31 actually) I ran across Joe, W1GFH's web site. He has written a number of stories, which are great. Some of them are even about ham radio. I emailed Joe and asked permission to include one here in the Newsletter and Joe graciously agreed. When you have a chance head over to <http://www.qsl.net/wb1gfh/index.html> and enjoy! de Don, WB4KQN*



## The Contest Crew Update

*By Henry Heidtmann, N4VHK*

This has been an exciting couple months for the guys in the contesting wing of the club. As I write this, the latest CQ magazine sits on the Kiva desk. What a surprise it was to find our own Ed, KU4BP listed in the results of the WPX SSB contest held last spring. I knew Ed finished well, but the claimed scores listings which appear on the internet shortly after the contest had Ed in a tight race for the 4 land low power all band category, with very little chance of a top ten US. Well, due to an incredible job of quality logging (which means quality operating in these days of computerized log checking), Ed not only took 1<sup>st</sup> place in NC, but 1<sup>st</sup> in 4 land and finished 8<sup>th</sup> in the US!

Whether it was the Dunkin Donuts coffee (Ed's contesting staple) or the great conditions from a small shack located in downtown Winston-Salem, we all have something to be proud of. It just goes to show you that you don't need huge towers, acres of beverages and tens of thousands of dollars to compete on a national level in HF contests. You just need years of experience, a little luck, and a dog named Schaefer sitting next to you. Congrats, KU4BP!

Continuing in the fine tradition of the Crew, three of our newer contesters raided the Kiva for a 12 hour event called the North American QSO Party in mid-January. Raja KB6MTH, Robert KG4NEP and Chris KG4CZU manned the rigs in a multi-two effort. The result was another record breaking contest, as they broke all the previous W4WS efforts of the past 6 years. 1264 QSO's in 12 hours, with 100 watts and ice all over the 2 yagis. John N0KTY and myself played back seat drivers for the contest (a job I really enjoy) and we watched them pass multipliers like seasoned pros, run 238 QSO/hour pileups and deal with constant SWR problems. The result is looking like a 5<sup>th</sup> place finish in the US in the multi-2 category, with the top 4 finishers

## PHOTO RESTORATION

Do you have precious photographs that are faded, damaged or deteriorating? Those photos can be copied, scratches and destroyed areas repaired. Black & white prints can be colorized. Copies printed on canvas or photo paper. The original photos are not harmed.

Don Edwards 336-413-3838

operating stations with nothing less than several acres of towers, stacked antennas and \$3000 transceivers. We continue to amaze ourselves and have a good time, which is the ultimate payment for a job well done. Nice work, guys.

Several of us took a stab at the ARRL 10 Meter Contest in mid-December from Gene, WB4MSG's Pfafftown QTH. Gene has been working on rig/computer automation with the Writelog program, and over 1,000,000 points were put in the log. This is a mixed mode contest, SSB and CW, and the automation offered by Writelog and Gene's hardware handiwork makes this contest a real fun time. Nothing beats a good CW run; and nothing beats breaking our old records from year to year. Ask Gene for all the details about Writelog; it is an amazing logging tool for any shack, and the price is right.

We're all getting ready for the NC QSO Party which is now sponsored by FARC. The contest will start at Noon Eastern on Sunday, February 24<sup>th</sup> and end at 10PM that night. The objective is to work as many NC stations as you can, trying to work as many different counties as possible. In-state stations can work out-of-state stations as well, which gives everyone in NC the opportunity to be on the good side of a pileup. Though members of the FARC cannot win the usual awards in the contest, we will be awarding special club members awards; sort of an in-club competition. The rules are located on the FARC website ([www.w4nc.org](http://www.w4nc.org)) and I hope everyone gets on and participates. It will certainly be a great chance to test your station out, and the contest is only 10 hours long.

The club station, W4NC, will be activated as a bonus, as well as several mobile operators running the W4WS call sign for another bonus. If you have HF mobile capability, contact me if you want take a little drive and activate some NC counties. We hope to activate the surrounding counties, and maybe even stretching out towards some of the western mountain counties that don't have many hams. Be a part of the fun and spend some time operating. If you don't have a logging program, just hand log your contacts on paper and we'll even add up you score for you! That's as easy as it gets. We have already heard from many NC operators who will be in the contest, as well as from outside-NC ops who will jump the state line to operate mobile. Its sure to be the best NC QSO Party to date. Again, let me know if you want to operate mobile for the club or if you want to help man W4NC.

Good luck to all, and I hope to see you on the bands!

73, Henry, N4VHK

## Winston-Salem Hamfest Update

Don, WB4KQN, Woody, KF4PLQ and yours truly met with Lynn Byrd at the fair grounds office on Tuesday the 22nd. Everything was verified as to space, etc. Also noted is the lack of access conflict with the electronic games sales occurring the week before which makes for a smoother flow from the parking lot through the gate. Chef Henry, N4VHK, said that B-B-Q will be back in the menu. Awwright! He will need some extra help so volunteers step up and be counted.

We could use a new FARC sign to replace the big orange one that is showing its age, can anyone help with that? Now is the time to pool your junk, oops, highly desired *collectibles*, and plan to come to the event. Future updates to follow. Thanks everyone!

*Paul J. KG4LDB*

*Hamfest Chairman*

## NC QSO Party!

Sponsored this year by FARC! Will be held 1700 UTC February 24 through 0300 UTC February 25. Please check [www.w4nc.org](http://www.w4nc.org) for rules and details. Henry, N4VHK is doing the legwork. We would like to have every NC county on the air. Also W4NC at the Red Cross and W4WS will be operating as special bonus points. At [www.w4nc.org/active.html](http://www.w4nc.org/active.html) there is a map of each county that we know will be activated. Even if you can't operate from home, come out and help us operate at W4NC or W4WS. It will be great to be on the *receiving end of a pile up*.

## FCC Exam Report

This past session on January 5 we had 2 new Techs, 1 new General (who came from ground 0 all the way to General!), one who passed element 3 written and one new Extra. A very productive session.

## W4VEC VEC Testing Schedule for 2002- Winston-Salem, NC

DATE/MONTH	LOCATION
02 February 2002	Red Cross and at Elkin Hamfest
02 March 2002	Red Cross
April 2002	No Testing
04 May 2002	Red Cross
June 2002	Winston-Salem Hamfest ONLY
July 2002	No Testing
03 August 2002	Red Cross
September 2002	No Testing
05 October 2002	Red Cross
November 2002	No Testing
07 December 2002	Red Cross
January 2003	No Testing
February 2003	Test Session at Elkin Hamfest ONLY.

73, Rick, N4MBI

## Wow! I'm speechless...

From: "Henry Heidtmann"  
To: <afa4gd@n5gtd.com>  
Sent: January 16, 2002 17:28  
Subject: W4NC QSL card

Hello, George-

My name is Henry Heidtmann, N4VHK, with the Forsyth Amateur Radio Club in Winston-Salem, NC. At our first meeting of the year this past Monday, our callsign trustee forwarded a package of mail which he had received at his home address over the past year (He doesn't get to many meetings!!!)

I was thrilled to find a note from you "returning" one of our original club QSL cards that you acquired off E-Bay. As the meeting was occurring, I opened it up, stopped the meeting and read your note. The group (56 members) was stunned to say the least. We have never seen one of these cards in its original, unwritten form. It is being framed to hang in our club station. I have also scanned it and have placed it at the top of our website for all to enjoy. (<http://www.w4nc.org>)

The card dates back to 1936, and shows our original club shack and the 3 wooden 85' towers. Though the towers are long gone, the original shack structure still exists in a lady's backyard. It is her storage shed. We often drive by the place and she'll occasionally open it up to show local hams.

Your thoughtfulness is very much appreciated, and we would like to write this up and place it in our newsletter, with your permission. I'd also like to forward it to QST, again, if you would allow us to use your name (I'll use your new callsign). I apologize for not responding sooner, but we literally just received your note. Your deed represents all that is good about the wonderful hobby of Amateur Radio. Thanks again for thinking of us.

Best 73,  
Henry Heidtmann, N4VHK

Henry

You are more than welcome to use my letter. I Love Ham Radio and all it stands for. You have my permission to use it any way you need to promote amateur radio and fellowship.

Big 73 from N5GTD in Oklahoma.

ARES

28JAN02



With scheduled public service activity in hibernation until March or April, the weekly Forsyth County ARES Net on the 145.47 repeater becomes our primary function for training, information and discussion concerning emergency service. The net meets each Wednesday night at 20:30 local time, and all hams within range of the repeater are welcome to check in.

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ARES Continued FARC Newsletter, February, 2002

An average of 15 people are checking in each week, including stations from Forsyth, Stokes, Surrey, Davie and other surrounding counties.

Currently three hams are alternating as Net Control station: Harry, KF4OZF; Terry, KC80EZ; and Fred, NA4P. Additional volunteers to serve as Net Control are welcome. If two more hams would join the rotation, nobody would have to serve more than once a month. A Net Control script and procedures list will be provided to anyone who is interested.

Although sunstroke has seemed more likely in the past few weeks, a winter weather emergency remains a possibility. Our official SKYWARN station for this area is the 145.25 repeater in Greensboro. Paul, KG4LDB, who serves as Asst. EC for SKYWARN, is currently plotting accessibility of the 145.25 machine for Forsyth hams and for hams living west of Forsyth County. You can help him by stating your capability to contact 145.25 during your first ARES Net check-in after receiving this newsletter.

Severe winter weather which knocks out electric power and telephone lines could cause us to operate an extended communications net until normal communications are restored. Many employers expect their employees to report to work despite weather conditions; so we could be short of available operators for weekday net duty. Of course, inclement weather closes schools. That means teachers, staff and maybe students could be available for net duty. Second and third shift workers, part-timers and retirees could also be available. Any other ideas?

If you're potentially available for weekday net operations during an actual emergency service operation, and if you don't mind including your status in our ARES records, please mention your availability next time you check into the ARES net, or send me an e-mail at [mansfieldkw@aol.com](mailto:mansfieldkw@aol.com).

Jim Mansfield  
Acting EC, Forsyth County ARES

## Editor's Corner

Hi all! Another newsletter is now in the can. Whew! There was a lot to show-horn in this month. Thanks to all the contributors. This can't be done without help. If this is the first FARC newsletter you've received don't let it be your last! Join us. We'd love to have you.

One last bit: To the right is an excerpt from the Carolina DX Association newsletter. They are bragging on 'their' Ed, KU4BP. Well, they can't have him, he's ours. But we'll share, I guess, occasionally. Great job Ed!

'Til next month,

73, Don  
WB4KQN

## Well Done, Ed!

(The November 2001 QST showed our own Ed Swiderski had fared quite well in the 2001 ARRL International DX contest operating from the "Kiva" of the Winston-Salem Contest Club. I wrote a note to Ed asking how he got Henry Heidtmann to relinquish the kiva to him. Below is Ed's reply. —The Editor)

"Well, Henry was like a "mother hen" that weekend. He was urging me to break his NC record that he established in the 2000 contest where he finished 2nd overall in W/VE. He was in and out of the "KIVA" checking my progress all weekend. I still kid him about taking 80m away from me on the first night.

The funny thing about ARRL DX SSB last year was that Henry and I had planned to do a M/S or M/2. Turns out he had unexpected visitors for the weekend and it was decided for me to go SOLP at 23:57Z. No planning at all and we didn't have 160m available.

I'm not really one to "crow" but I did have my best contest and DXing year in the 7 1/2 years I've been licensed. I have my DXCC, 5BDXCC, WAZ and 5BWAZ progress on my website along with WAE and WPX totals. I set a new Roanoke Division record for ARRL 10m in SOLP SSB last year.

Also, this year I created and started issuing the Worked All North Carolina Counties Award (WANC). An award for working all 100 NC counties. (A writeup was done in CQ). Am also a CQ Awards Checkpoint along with being an ARRL WAS checker.

Off to the bands this morning, Ed KU4BP

(FB, Ed, keep on truckin'. —The Editor)