



The Signal Report

A Publication of the Greenwood Amateur Radio Society

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 8

AUGUST

[HTTP://WWW.W4GWD.ORG](http://www.w4gwd.org)

W4GWD@ARRL.NET

2009 CLUB

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**The W4GWD
Repeater Network**
147.165+ t107.2
443.900+ t107.2
W4DEW/R
146.910- t123.0

August Meeting

G.A.R.S. will meet Monday, August 17, 2009, at the Turner House on Bailey Circle in Greenwood at 7pm for light refreshments and 7:30pm for the meeting. The club meetings are now listed in the Index Journal on page 2A each month under "Community Calendar" and meetings are also listed in Greenwood's Town Planner which is circulated to most homes in the area.

W4GWD Repeater

Saturday, July 25th was a landmark day for the Greenwood Amateur Radio Society. Our 2 meter repeater has a new home on a commercial tower 12 miles north of Greenwood, SC. So far, everyone seems to be enjoying the repeater, as we are getting 3 state coverage. The site is provided to us by SCETV and our antenna location is about 525 ft. AGL. We'll soon have coverage maps up on the website that will show the entire W4GWD Repeater Network.



Upcoming Society Events

Chat 'N' Chew

Every Friday at 11:30am the members of the Greenwood Amateur Radio society meet at Ryan's Steak House, Bypass 25 NE, Greenwood.

Everyone is welcome to have lunch or sip your favorite beverage and chat for a while.

(Dutch treat).

October 06, 2009 VE Exam Session 7:00pm Greenwood Red Cross

GARS ARRL Volunteer Examiners (VE) Team will have an exam session 7:00pm Tuesday, October 6th at The American Red Cross Building, 520 Epting Avenue, Greenwood, SC 29646.

Weekly Net

Every Thursday night at 9pm on 147.165+, The Greenwood Amateur Radio Society holds the weekly 2 meter net.

Help spread the word to check into our net.

If you would like to fill in or be a backup net control please let Buddy Willis, W4DEW know.

Weekly Ladies Net

The GARS Weekly 2 Meter Female Amateur Radio Net began on Tuesday, January 8, 2008 at 8 PM on the GARS 2 Meter Repeater. This net will be held every Tuesday night at the same time.

All interested female amateurs are invited and encouraged to check in. Subjects of discussion will be anything of interest to women.

If you have any questions, please contact Jean (W4KKA) at 864-953-0004 or Jo (KC4UU) at 864-446-7187.

Integrated circuit:

You have the only one in existence. This theory will be borne out when you try to obtain a replacement.

Congratulations

Happy Birthday!

Bert Keck	KJ4VJ	Aug 28
Brab Dukes	WB4TRF	Aug 31
Darrell Manning	KI4BST	Aug 31
Donnie Henderson	KC4KZ	Sept 2
Marion Elledge	KC4IAV	Sept 11
Leo Henderson	K4LEO	Sept 12
Margret Haynes	KJ4HDK	Sept 26
Earl Powell	KC4AXY	Sept 27

Happy Anniversary!

Mitch (KJ4JGP) and Di Litwer	Aug 15
Marion (KC4IAV) and Edna Elledge	Aug 17
Phil (WW4I) and Jo (KC4UU) Henry	Aug 30
Dan (KK6AA) and Jean (W4KKA) Farmer	Sept 3
Donnie (KC4KZ) and Bonnie (N4GEZ) Henderson	Sept 15

Make Your Duck Fly with K4LEO

Handheld duck antenna performance can vary considerably depending on equipment, location and use.

Surrounding RF obstructions including structures, antennas, operator, etc., can degrade performance.

Normally, anything attached to the HT, such as a portable speaker-mic, power cable, etc., “can affect emission patterns.”

Tilting the HT can affect the radiation pattern.

Typically for best performance, the operator should face the repeater or receiving station. This places the HT between the operator and the receiving station. The operator can place himself between the HT and an interfering station to possibly reduce interference.

Long duck antennas can place the top of the antenna “above the operator’s head reducing operator-presence losses associated with short ducks.” This finding suggests raising an HT with a short or regular duck antenna as high as possible, even perhaps above the

head, might improve signal strength at the repeater.

In short:

- Hold HT toward repeater.
- Tilt angle (15-30°) might produce favorable benefits.
- “The operator’s body proximity and location can be very signal-degrading.”
- Raising the HT above the operator’s head might improve the signal to the repeater.
- Face the receiving station for best results.
- A ¼ wave whip may be one of the better HT antennas. Longer duck antennas don’t necessarily mean a better signal to the repeater.

Source: An Investigation of 2-Meter HT Antenna Performance, by Pierpoint and Brummer, Vertical Antenna Classics, ARRL, 24-30. Shared via K4LEO.

The View At The Top



Repeater Basics with N9YNF

One of the first things we are told about learning to use amateur radio is to get a radio and listen to others on the air. However this assumes that the people we are listening to have good operating habits. Bad habits are the hardest to correct, so if you did learn your operating habits over the air you might be in for surprise. Or maybe you knew this stuff all along. We are all guilty of one thing or another when we really look at this. The most common mode of communications in our area is the 2 Meter Repeater. Lets look at some recommended techniques.

The Basics

- When using phone mode speak in plain English.
- Use the correct official phonetic alphabet when identifying. The cute stuff is nice to help remember a call but not for id purposes.
- Listen to see if the frequency is in use before you call. If in doubt, ask, "**Is the frequency in use? "your call"**".
- Don't call CQ, just "**your call Listening**".
- Use "**Break**" only in emergencies.
- To interrupt give your call sign between the other stations transmissions.
- Acknowledge a station interrupting and turn it over to them as soon as possible. It just might be an emergency.
- Have you ever heard the squelch tail? Don't be trigger-happy. Let up on the PTT switch to let someone else in. PTT vs. RTL (Release to listen)
- Brevity, be short and concise with your conversations. If you want to catch up on someone or something go to simplex if possible.
- If several hams are talking pass it off by saying the person's name or call to pass it off to.
- If you wonder if you can hit the repeater, don't kerchunk it. Give "**your call testing**".
- Run on the lowest necessary power to operate, but don't try to call in on a very low power HT when everyone tells you it is unreadable. Increase your power. Ask for a signal report before you go too much further with your conversation. Remember that the goal is quality communications.
- Speak clearly, don't key and un-key your rig the instant you start and stop speaking. It takes a few seconds for the system to come up and down.
- Ignore jammers, but take lots of notes; the reason they jam is for the attention.
- Basic repeater traffic priorities:
 1. Emergency and Priority Traffic.
 2. System test or maintenance.
 3. Public Service (Skywarn etc....)
 4. Fixed stations should ensure that mobiles and portable stations have priority (especially if you can go to simplex).
 5. Fixed stations.
- Follow FCC identification rules. You have to do it every 10

minutes but not necessary to start a conversation with a local station.

- Remember that nothing is private on the air. If you have something private to talk about use the telephone (on both ends).
- Don't think out loud, your mind may be in idle but the repeater could be used during that time.
- No need for "**no contact**" or "**nothing heard**" or "**clear**" after making a failed call. All the other stations heard you not make your contact.
- Use extreme caution and it is even better not to repeat what you hear on police frequencies over the repeater. There are laws concerning the public dissemination of information from scanners. Informing the Skywarn net that "**they are reporting trees down**" in a specific area might be okay.

Auto-patch

- No business on the radio. Ordering a pizza is up to the local auto-patch group.
- Cannot be used to place a call to avoid long distance rates or phone tariffs.
- When you call a non-ham be sure they know the rules about language, business etc.
- Auto-patches can be terminated immediately if they violate rules of the auto-patch.
- Station identification must be observed.
- Keep the patch brief as possible.
- If you are in doubt about the legality of your patch, don't do it.
- Cannot be initiated by a non-ham including amateur automated systems. An amateur must be present.

Auto-patch and 911

- Know exactly where you are before you call.
- When you call use the following example "**I am a amateur radio operator, my call is "your call", I am calling from my car and would like to report a _____ at _____ . Over.**"
- Know what an emergency is - any live threatening situation. A flat tire or boil over is not an emergency. Even though the person with these conditions will need assistance.
- Don't use police signal / 10 codes. They are coded messages, which are against amateur regulations, and each police department may not use the same codes. Use plain English "**auto accident with injuries**".
- Remember that probably every other car around you has a cell phone and probably has already beaten you to the draw.... Remote areas or late hours are a definite time to make the call, downtown Greenwood during rush hour... probably not.

What is an Emergency? - Immediate danger to human life or property.

- Auto accidents
- Fires
- Airplane crashes
- Floods Hurricanes
- Tornadoes
- Criminal assaults
- Downed power lines or other severe road hazards
- Accidents while hiking, camping, skiing or boating.
- A person suddenly taken ill.
- Other traumatic situations.

Nets

- The Net Control is called that because that is what they are supposed be in, control.
- Call when called upon unless you are declaring an emergency. If you are late then wait for the call for late check-ins.
- Do you know what suffix means? It is the part of your call after your numeric, i.e. my call is N9YNF my suffix is YNF. So when the net control calls for check-ins suffix beginning Alpha through Oscar I don't respond. When Papa through Zulu is called, then I respond.

Other Stuff

- Before you go out of town for a vacation don't announce it on the air, especially over the nets. A dishonest person listening to the frequency could really cash in. Especially since many people can access the call sign databases on the Internet.
- Our repeater is sensitive to over deviation on microphone audio on weak signals, back off the microphone and speak normally and soft. Yelling into it will not help.
- If in doubt about the legality of any issue, use common sense and don't do it until you know what the correct legal answer is. It

will be better to ask permission than forgiveness.

- If someone tells you they have rough copy on you, use short tests to find the perfect hot spot or to adjust your power setting. DO NOT move 3 inches to the left and try the long QSO again. The idea is **quality** radio, **not quantity**, especially in emergencies.

Editor's note:

This generic guide was provided to us from N9YNF, and is a good general guide to repeater operations throughout. Different local operating practices may take place, so keep this in mind as you operate on someone's repeater.

With our repeater in it's new location, we all need to remember proper repeater etiquette, This includes being polite, waiting for the courtesy tone, giving time for others to jump in, then going ahead. We also need to listen very closely to people talking before jumping in, as sometimes it's considered rude to jump in right on top of people if they are having a quick person to person conversation. Also, make sure you have something worthwhile to say. Just getting on to hear yourself speak is considered a no-no.

Now if you hear a roundtable going on, toss your call in and wait. Someone will acknowledge you and add you in the order. Please wait for the courtesy tone and give a little time in between transmissions, a lot of people including myself are "quick on the draw". We have to be mindful of the increased traffic the 2 meter machine will receive that will only get more enjoyable as we expand coverage through the W4GWD repeater network.

73,

Ed.

Club News

The new repeater installation is working fine business. The Newsletter staff would like to thank the W4GWD tower crew, Buddy W4DEW, Tedd, AI4WN, Joe K4GBH, David AJ4PU, and Adam WJ4X who put in the work at the site, along with Robert WD6ELK, and our professional tower crew, with tons of support from John, KC4YI. More volunteers are needed for the ongoing projects that will be taking place at the W4GWD network sites, and if

you would like to help, give Buddy, W4DEW, a call.

The Signal Report staff and the Greenwood Amateur Radio Society would like to thank SCETV, John, KC4YI, and Robert WD6ELK for their assistance in the acquisition of our site and allowing us to be at such a top notch facility.

The new 2 meter repeater site is located just 12 miles north of the center of Greenwood, and affords HT coverage throughout Greenwood County with the antenna

around 525' AGL

Please remember our net on every Thursday night at 9pm. We would love to have everyone that can reach the machine check in so we get a good idea of coverage, as well as meet lots of new folks who'll maybe sit back, stay a while and join us "On the Stump"

Until Next Time,

You're always 5 and 9 with

The Signal Report

-Ed.

If you want to see your article here, please send an email to the newsletter staff WJ4X@amsat.org

COMING HAMFESTS and EVENTS:

15 Aug 2009

3rd Annual TARC Tailgate Party
Trident Amateur Radio Club
<http://www.tridenthams.org>
Talk-In: 147.150+ (no PL)
Contact: Dennis Zabawa, KG4RUL
307 Pine Cone Court
Ladson, SC 29456-3128
Phone: 843-572-4053 (after 10 AM EDT)
Email: kg4rul@comcast.net
Moncks Corner, SC
Moncks Corner Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge 19
1310 South Live Oak Drive

5-6 Sep 2009

Shelby Hamfest
Shelby Amateur Radio Club
<http://www.shelbyhamfest.org>
Talk-In: 146.88 & 147.12
Contact: Robby Hamrick, WA4RH
Box 1408
Ellenboro, NC 28040
Phone: 828-453-9121
Email: chairman@shelbyhamfest.org
Dallas, NC
Gaston County Park
1301 Dallas Cherryville Highway

3 Oct 2009

York County Amateur Radio Society (K4Y TZ)
<http://www.rockhillhamfest.com>
Talk-In: 147.030 neg (no tone)
Contact:
Sheila Parrish, KG4CDF
2358 J P Dirt Road
Edgemoor, SC 29712
Phone: 803-328-5983
Email: coy@navacore.net
Rock Hill, SC
Faith Assembly of God
2800 Faith Blvd.

24 Oct 2009

Sumter "OPEN AIR" Hamfest
Sumter Amateur Radio Association
<http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/2695/sara.htm>
Talk-In: 147.015 (PL 156.7)
Contact: Carl Ecabert, AA1MD
6105 Dubose Siding Road
Sumter, SC 29153
Email: aa1md@ftc-i.net
Sumter, SC
Sumter Jaycee Hut
314 Pine Street

IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR HAMFEST OR EVENT LISTED HERE, PLEASE CONTACT

ADAM, WJ4X@AMSAT.ORG

Club Corner

- ◆ Spread The Word! 147.165 Net Thurs. 9pm
- ◆ Remember to support your local and regional Amateur Radio Clubs. See what Special Interest groups are out there for you!
- ◆ Get your entry in for the Homebrew Challenge!

- ◆ Check out SERA, the SouthEastern Repeater Association. <http://www.sera.org/>

Let us know what you're up to by sending an email to:
WJ4X@amsat.org

Classifieds

Icom IC-V8000 75 watts on 2 meters. Comes with manual, bracket, and original box. \$125

email: Joe Mimms k4gbh@arrl.net

If anyone has any Ham radio stuff to sell or trade... list it in this column by calling Buddy, w4dew@arrl.net, 864-445-7574