

# HARMONICS



THE VOICE OF THE ROWAN AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

April 2008 -Issue 263



## Minutes: March 10, 2008

The RARS met at 7:00 PM at the Rufty-Homes Senior Center.

Present were: Tommie Wood, **N4YZ**; Ralph Brown, **WB4AQK**; Nona Morris, **KA4NHL**; Jim Morris, **KA4MPP**; HC Ledbetter, **WB4IDQ**; Frank Waring, **AF4D**; Ralph Mowery, **KU4PT**; Butch Edge, **W4WEE**; Nelson Large, **W4FQV**; Larry Wright, **N4QY**; Wayne Ashworth, **N4YZ** and two visitors Patrick Fahey, **N3FLC** and Tom Williams, **AF4Q**.

Tom Williams brought in miscellaneous ham equipment to give away. Some was taken and some he took back home.

Minutes were read. A correction was made on the Fred McGinnis, **WD4KJZ** account. It is

\$3840.83 and regular account was \$462.23 less checks.

Larry Wright checked on the site at Sloan Park – will cost \$84 for 2 days. Have not secured site yet. Derwood Puckett **K4PXU**, is in Florida, so no information from him on Dunn’s Mt. Park. Hopefully he can be reached by e-mail. Field Day is still being check on.

Unable to contact Janet or Gray Smith on information on incorporation. Some discussion on law passed last year on incorporation – non profit. President Tommie will check with a lawyer on a new NC law for incorporation of clubs.

Larry Wright made a list of ham things at the library but forgot the list. We need to up date license manuals and etc at the library. Larry Wright suggested we ask for the old books back when replacing with new up to date ones. These materials are usually bought with

Wayne Ashworth brought a DVD on DX Expedition, ZL8R Raoul Island, Kermdec 2006, The Micro Lite Pactic DXpedition, filmed and Produced by James Brooks 9V1YC

Tommie Wood made the motion to adjourn. Was seconded by HC Ledbetter. Motion passed.

Nona Morris, KA4NHL, Secretary

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**Going to a Hamfest?**  
**Be at the Meeting Monday April 14 to pick up some Firecracker flyers to distribute.**

## March SM report

### LICENSE CLASS IN GASTONIA

The Gaston Area Amateur Radio Club is sponsoring an amateur radio Technician licensing class. The class will last for 6 weeks, beginning on March 27, with testing on the 7th week. The cost of the class will be \$35, which includes the cost of the book, the testing fee and a 1-year membership to the GAARC. The classes will be from 7:00 PM --9:00 PM and will be held at the Gaston County Police Department, located near the intersection of Franklin Blvd and Hwy 321 South (S. Chester St.). For more information, contact Joe Hullender, N4JAH, at [hulljoe@gmail.com](mailto:hulljoe@gmail.com).

### ARES MEMBERSHIP CONTINUES TO RISE!

ARES membership has been growing by 5 or so every month, but this month's report showed an increase of 35 from last month! Our Emergency Coordinators have been working hard to get new members registered and everyone trained. EC's are the backbone of our organization ... thanks to all of you for everything you do!

### CATCH THE WAVES - GET READY FOR FIELD DAY!

ARRL's Field Day is just around the corner (June 28 & 29). This year's PR theme is "Catch the Waves". Please visit our Field Day information page <<http://www.arr.org/fieldday>> for all the details on Field Day rules, frequencies, forms, pins, logos and T shirts. The complete Field Day packet can be downloaded from the site as well. If you have unanswered questions about Field Day, contact ARRL Field Day Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND, via e-mail <[fcinfo@arrl.org](mailto:fcinfo@arrl.org)> or by phone at 860-594-0236. If you want to order exhibit kits containing printed flyers about Amateur Radio, you may order these materials <<http://www.arrl.org/brochures/>> on the ARRL Web site. The cost of the exhibit kits ranges from \$8-\$12 depending on shipping. To make sure you'll have the display material in time for Field Day, your order must be received before June 13.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

The Rowan Amateur Radio Society  
P. O. Box 593  
Salisbury, NC 28145

The Rowan amateur Radio Society exists to secure for its members the pleasures and benefits of associating with persons commonly interested in amateur radio in any and all its facets. Its purpose is to facilitate the exchange of information, radio knowledge, fraternalism and individual operating efficiency among members. Society programs and activities are intended to advance the general interest and welfare of amateur radio in the general community.

The Society is a nonprofit organization and seeks no payment for services it provides the community's agencies.

#### Membership

Membership in the Society is open to all applicants who express a willingness to abide by the Society's Constitution and By-laws. Persons may apply at regular meetings and are considered elected when approved by two-thirds of those members present

#### Meetings

Regular meetings are held on the second Monday night of the month at 7:00 PM at the Rufty-Holmes senior Center at 1120 S. Boundary Street

#### 2008 Officers

President - Tommie Wood, N4YZ, 704-637-0024  
[wood@earthlink.net](mailto:wood@earthlink.net)

Vice-Pres. -

Secretary - Nona Morris, KA4NHL, 704-278-4960  
[morrisonona@aol.com](mailto:morrisnona@aol.com)

Treasurer - Ralph Brown, WB4AQK, 704-636-5902  
[rkbrown5902@bellsouth.net](mailto:rkbrown5902@bellsouth.net)

*Harmonics*, the club newsletter is published mostly monthly. Submit articles, complaints, corrections, or comments to the club Editor. Material may be reprinted provided proper credit is given.

Editor - Ralph Brown, WB4AQK

On the web

[www.RowanARS.org](http://www.RowanARS.org)

## April Program

**Unsure about the program, but I know for sure that there will be reports on the Field Day site and probably discussions as to which to choose .... As well as volunteers for tasks. Another topic for discussion (and volunteers) will be the Firecracker Hamfest. There may be some new info on club incorporation also.**

**Is anyone interested in holding a foxhunt?**

- April 6: Down East Hamfest, Kinston -  
www.downeasthamfest.org
- April 12: Raleigh Hamfest -  
www.rars.org/hamfest
- April 18, 19 & 20: Eastern VHF/UHF Confer-  
ence, Enfield, CT
- April 19: Catawba Valley Hamfest, Morganton -  
cvhamfest.com
- May 3: State ARES Meeting, Raleigh
- May 10: Rockingham County Hamfest, Reids-  
ville - www.rcarc.com
- May 24: DurHAMfest, Durham - www.dfma.org
- May 25-31: Hurricane Preparedness Week
- June 14: Winston-Salem Classic Hamfest -  
www.w4nc.org
- June 28-29: ARRL Field Day

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## Financial report

As of April 11

### Income

Brought forward . . . \$4284.06  
 Income (refresh. Donat. 11.00)  
**Total . . . . . \$4295.06**

### Expenses

Refresh. reimburse. \$ 24.51  
 Postage (flyers) . . . . . 278.25  
 Donation Rufty-Holmes . . 200.00  
 HF Flyers . . . . . 425.22  
**Total . . . . . \$ 927.98**

**Balance . . . . . \$3367.08**

## McGinnis, WD4KJZ fund

Brought forward . . . . . **\$3840.83**  
 Expenses from above flyers,  
 Donation, & postage . . . . . 903.47  
**Balance . . . . . \$2937.36**

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I had at least one ham tell me that they wanted to see me continue the "Fred stories" so Here goes with the fourth installment.

Because of the use of "Ralph" and "Fred" for names and the RV, which I had at the time, I accused

Uncle Henry of supplying Bob Brown with local knowledge to use in his story.

## Reaching out to Fred

By Bob Brown, NM7M

You'll remember from what I told you last time, a doubting friend, Fred, feels that current propagation conditions result from tons of ionospheric electrons being swept up by spacecraft and their debris. In fact, he thinks there's some conspiracy aimed at covering it up. But he's never pointed a finger at anyone and being concerned about his welfare, I don't ask any questions for fear of provoking him further.

Anyway, Ralph, my RV-friend from W7 - land, thought he'd heard Fred on a 2-meter repeater, venting his anger. That bothered me as earlier Fred was satisfied to just put his complaints on paper; now he's more agitated, going the verbal route. It just has to be stopped there, even turned around. Maybe Ralph could help since he heard Fred last.

"Ralph, this is Bob, NM7M, y'there?" That's where I left it last time; remember? Ralph came back, "yeah, but let's get on the twisted pair, OK?" "Sure", I said, "Your nickel or mine?"

"My retirement check just came in so I'll handle it, stand by", said Ralph

After an eternity, the phone rang and it was Ralph He told me all that he'd heard, especially about the testy tone to Fred's voice. So after kicking it around a bit, Ralph agreed to get Fred on the repeater in the near future and try to draw him out, even blunt his anger.

The idea was to get him back into HF radio and show him that the bands weren't as bad as he thought. In short, convince him by his own experience that he'd been out of touch and all was not lost. For my part, I'd leave the 2-meter rig on and with luck and a lot of drivel, be there if and when Ralph and Fred got together.

After about a week, Ralph was in a QSO on the repeater and threw out some "bait", news about an upcoming flea market. Sure enough, Fred was monitoring, rose to the bait, and called Ralph. By Ralph's account given to me later, they had a more complete exchange of "credentials" than in their encounter at the flea market (the usual attempt to establish a pecking order) and the QSO went something like this:

“Anyway, good to hear you. What’ve you been up to? Work any good DX lately?” Nothing subtle about Ralph! Fred came back “No, I’m not on HF and really doubt there’s anything worth turning a rig on for!” Ralph rolled with that one saying “I dunno; I worked a 5W1 early this morning and heard a bunch of BZ’s and a BV too. What kind of rig and skywire you using? Back to you” and then he ID’d

Fred admitted that he hadn’t even been listening and had nothing in the way of an antenna. Ralph commiserated with Fred’s situation but pressed on, “What do you have around the shack? Anything that you can listen with?” Fred came back, saying he had some old Collins S/line gear, a 75S-3 receiver and 32S-3 transmitter with “tired” finals. The Collins receiver sounded promising and question of those finals could wait so Ralph praised the S/line gear and suggested Fred throw a hunk of wire to see what he could hear at his QTH . Ralph must have done something right as he said that Fred seemed rather agreeable to the idea and said he’d get back to Ralph later.

Sure enough “later” did come to pass and Fred recounted to Ralph what he’d done to get the receiver going. And when he heard of Fred’s efforts, it was all Ralph could do to keep from laughing . First Fred tried a “quick and dirty” job at getting the receiver going, tying it to the rain gutters around the house. By Fred’s account, the Collins receiver sounded like a “dead bug”. Strike one.

Thinking his skywire was grounded by all the downspouts, he disconnected them. OK, now it seemed more of a problem of impedance mismatch but Fred’s XYL complained about her poor flower beds when deluges came crashing down in free-fall during any rain. Strike two.

Fred thought about putting up a trapped vertical up the brick chimney and using the heating ducts as a counter poise. That didn’t get very far as his reconnaissance of the chimney produced nothing but soot and his XYL got on him for tracking it all around the house. Strike three.

In a moment of frustration, Fred just draped a hunk o wire around the wall of his shop an tried to listen with it, through the impedance mismatch and all . Wonder of wonders; signals were there! Maybe he was wrong; the only way to find out would be to put up a real antenna and start to checking out the bands. So, as Fred told Ralph, he checked around on another 2-meter repeater, getting suggestions and finally zero ‘d in on the idea of a trapped vertical

stuffed inside a long PVC pipe, an antenna disguised as a flagpole.

By Ralph’s account, there was glee in Fred’s voice when he spoke of the idea. That pleased me at first, thinking that Fred might be coming around. But then, the more I thought about it, the more I wondered. Then, I saw through it all. Fred suffering the delusion of conspiracy, was taking pleasure, perhaps trying to even the score, with his own little conspiracy. Hmm!

I asked Ralph what Fred was going to do about a counterpoise. Ralph said that Fred seemed experienced enough not to rely on a ground rod for anything but lightning protection. Then he asked me to guess how Fred “planned” to get a set of radials in his lawn, past the critical eye of his XYL and the distant curiosity of this neighbors.

When I heard “planned”, I knew there was a catch, more of his little conspiracy. And in a flash of understanding, I sensed that this “counter-conspiracy”, if you will, might be a way to restore our Fred’s balance . But it had to succeed, that’s for sure.

Not wanting to play “twenty questions”, I said “OK, I give up, Ralph. How does he ‘plan’ to do it?” Ralph Chuckled and said “He’s going to use worms!” All I could say was “Worms ? Aw c’mon!” Ralph laughed, said I didn’t get it and then in haste, he “QRXed”. When he came back he said his XYL had locked the keys in her car while at the supermarket. “I’ll be back shortly; in the meantime think about it; worms , W-O-R-M-S !” So I had to leave it there but worms, really?

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## Local VE 2008 testing

- |         |                   |
|---------|-------------------|
| May 3   | Concord           |
| July 12 | Salisbury Hamfest |
| Sept 13 | Concord           |
| Nov 15  | Salisbury         |