



# **Western Tidewater Radio Association**

## **"HAMTOWN WAVE"**

Volume 2, Issue 6

June 2007

PO Box 323 Smithfield, VA 23431-0323 <http://www.wt4ra.org>

Next Meeting - August 13, 2007



### Presidents Corner:

Here we are at the beginning of the "activity season" for Amateur Radio. Many events are coming up in the near future, both for the club and for amateur radio in general. Of course, May brings the annual pilgrimages to "ham radio Mecca" – Dayton Hamvention. One of these years, I will actually make that pilgrimage and experience the ultimate Hamfest event.

For the Western Tidewater Radio Association, we have May events on the calendar in the near future, and that means plenty of opportunities to get out of the shack and help out with club activities. First, we have another VE session coming up, which will actually be complete by the time you read this. Coming in May, we have the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter WTRA business meeting and program on Monday May 14<sup>th</sup>. This meeting will be held at Cowlings in Smithfield at

6:00pm and will feature a presentation on Katrina ham radio operations. We will also be discussing Field Day plans – so please come out and support the club at the meeting.

Thanks to the efforts of Fred – KG4BKI, we have a Technician Class license class starting May 15<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm and continuing each Tuesday and Wednesday for the following three weeks, concluding on May 30<sup>th</sup>. That class will culminate in a VE session at the Bronco Club picnic on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. So come on out and help Fred bring some new hams into the fold!

After the Bronco Club on June 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> is the annual Field Day event. This year, Jim has secured the Picnic A shelter at Nike Park to house our activities. I am sure as Field Day approaches, Jim will be requesting input and assistance with Field Day plans, so standby to help out with that!

And finally (for now), coming up in July is the annual Pork, Peanut and Pine festival at Chippokes Plantation. Bruce – KE4GFM is coordinating a special event station for that festival, and we hope that there will be a lot of club members who will come out and help speak with the public and operate on the air for that event.

So please be receptive to requests from the various coordinators of these events and chip in any help you can for them. As my granddad used to say “many hands make light work”, not to mention these look to be fun and exciting events and I hope all of you will come out and join in the fun!

73 for now  
Chris – N4KIT

### The Exam Room:

**REMINDER:** Time is running out on the current General class question pool! The new pool will become effective on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007. Copies of the new pool and the figure graphic may be obtained from:

<http://www.w5yi.org/page.php?id=24>

If you are working on your General upgrade, be sure to keep this in mind, as there will be new exams after the 1<sup>st</sup> of July!

As a reminder, listed below are the frequency privileges which Technicians are now entitled to use:

80 meters: 3525 – 3600 kHz CW only

40 meters: 7025 – 7125 kHz CW only

15 meters: 21025 – 21200 kHz CW only

10 meters: 28000 – 28300 kHz CW and data only  
28300 – 28500 kHz CW and SSB Phone

Upcoming VE sessions:

June 3<sup>rd</sup> Bronco Club Picnic 10:30 am

Western Tidewater Radio Association Club Officers and Committee Chairs:

President: Chris Peters, N4KIT ([n4kit@wt4ra.org](mailto:n4kit@wt4ra.org))

Vice President: Jim Wise, W4PRO ([w4pro@wt4ra.org](mailto:w4pro@wt4ra.org))

2nd Vice President: Jarvis Hearn, W4VWH ([w4vwh@wt4ra.org](mailto:w4vwh@wt4ra.org))

Treasurer: Dick Harrell, W4RBH ([w4rbh@wt4ra.org](mailto:w4rbh@wt4ra.org))

Secretary: Tom Stanfield, N4WXS ([n4wxs@wt4ra.org](mailto:n4wxs@wt4ra.org))

Trustee: Ron Primer, N4TJI ([n4kit@wt4ra.org](mailto:n4kit@wt4ra.org))

Repeater Chair: Dick Harrell, W4RBH ([w4rbh@wt4ra.org](mailto:w4rbh@wt4ra.org))

Public Information Officer / Newsletter Editor: Ron Harvey, W4RRH ([w4rrh@wt4ra.org](mailto:w4rrh@wt4ra.org))

Ham Radio Events Calendar

We have scheduled 1 VE session as follows (Chris – N4KIT):

- We are tentatively scheduled to hold a session at the Bronco Club Picnic. It will be held June 3<sup>rd</sup> this year. The VE session will be given around 10 am. (Chris – N4KIT)

## **Bronco Club 2007**

- Pig-Pickin' – Tailgating
- HOSTED BY FRANKLIN REPEATER USERS
- **SUNDAY, JUNE 3, 2007**
- 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM
- Admission \$7.00 at the gate covers:
- NC Barbeque Lunch
- 'Junk in the Trunk' Tailgating
- Program following lunch
- Door Prizes
- VE Testing at ~ 10:30 AM
- Raffle Prize – (TBA)
- Talk-In – 147.300 (131.8)

### **Directions:**

**From Franklin take US 258 South to RT 687  
Right on RT 687 (gravel) ~3 mi. to Bronco**

**From NC take US 258 North to RT 687  
Left on RT 687 (gravel) ~3 mi to Bronco**

**Jul 14-Jul 29, 1100Z-0300Z, Williamsburg, VA. Williamsburg Radio Association, W4J. Celebrating the VA 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary from Williamsburg area. 14.325 7.230 3.855. Certificate. WRA - W4J, 719 Colonial Ave, Williamsburg, VA 23185. [n4ari@amsat.org](mailto:n4ari@amsat.org) and [www.qsl.net/n4ari](http://www.qsl.net/n4ari)**

**July 14th, 2007 8:30 am - 3:00 pm Hampton Roads' Disaster Volunteer Day  
Liberty Baptist Church, Hampton - Contact [n4stu@arrl.net](mailto:n4stu@arrl.net) for information.**

**July 21 and 22 from 0900 until 1700 each day. - Chippokes Special Event Station (SES)**

## WT4RA Workbench

This month's newsletter brings a new column called the "WT4RA Workbench". This column is meant to function as a place for members to post "how-tos" on their favorite topics in ham radio. These topics could be modes, simple interfaces, "cable management devices" like the W4RRH coax guide etc. There will be no regular writer for this column. Rather, my hope is that Ron will be inundated with submissions for this column from club members and can pick and chose which to put in a particular newsletter. So in the spirit of helping out newcomers, here is my submission "How to install a PL-259":

### How to Install a PL-259 Connector (Chris Peters)

One of the most basic tasks a ham will do (over and over again!) is install PL-259 coax connectors on their coaxial cables. There are probably as many opinions on the proper methods as there are hams, so I will qualify this by saying this is how I do the job and it has served me well over the years. First, some tools you will need:

- ✓ Sharp knife or utility knife
- ✓ Lineman pliers (sometimes called "Kliens")
- ✓ A heavy duty soldering iron (a 50w to 75w gun works best for me. The 25w pencil used for PCBs soldering is unsuitable for this job!)
- ✓ 2 pairs of vise grips (I use needle nose)

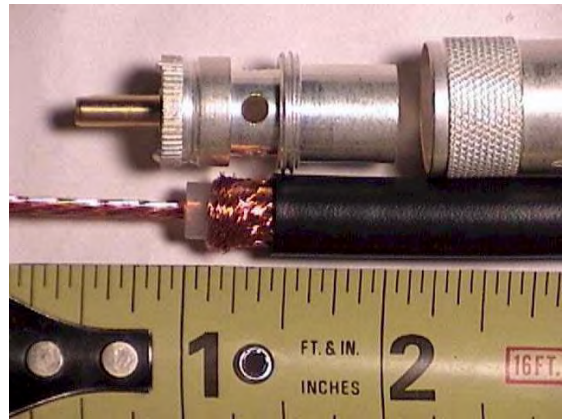
The first thing to realize is that 50 ohm coaxial cable used by hams comes in a variety of sizes and this will determine whether or not you need to use an adapter in the PL-259 connector (see photo at right).



We are going to start with coax with an outside diameter of 0.402 inches. The most commonly used of these by hams are RG-8U and RG-213. These cables do not require the use of an adapter with the connector. Let's start by preparing the cable end to receive the connector:

1. Carefully strip back the outer jacket about 1 1/2" from the end of the cable using your utility knife. Be careful not to cut through the copper braid. Remove the jacket.

2. Next, about 3/8" to 7/16" from the jacket edge, toward the end of the cable, carefully cut through the braid and dielectric down to the center conductor. Again, be careful not to cut through or nick the center conductor. Remove the braid and dielectric. The result should look like the photo at right.



3. Now it's time to solder the connector together. First be sure there are no stray strands of the braid in contact with the center conductor, as this will short your connector. Then, slide the screw sleeve onto the cable and then insert the prepped cable into the connector body until the dielectric bottoms in the connector.



4. Lightly, so as not to distort the connector body, clamp the vise grips to the connector body as shown. This will hold the connector still while you solder and also act as a heat sink to prevent melting of the jacket or dielectric while soldering.

5. Now, solder the braid by heating the connector body between the solder holes (4). Flow solder into the connector through the solder holes. The solder should flow nicely, but do not flow too much solder in. Be sure all four solder holes are filled.

6. Next, solder the center conductor by heating the outside of the center pin and flowing solder into the end of the pin. Be sure the tip of your soldering iron is clean so as not to get a blob of solder on the outside of the pin. Again, don't use too much solder as this can short the connector.

7. Leave the vise grips in place until the connector has cooled. Trim the excess center conductor from the end of the pin and screw the lock ring down onto the connector body.
8. Check the connector with a multi-meter to be sure the connector has not shorted in the process.

If you are installing the PL-259 onto RG-8X or other cable with a smaller than 0.402 outside diameter, you will need a reducing adapter to compensate for the smaller cable. In this case, the braid will need to be folded back around the adapter as illustrated below.



Thin coax with adapter



Braid folded back over

adapter



Adapter screwed into

connector body and ready to solder braid

## Officers and Committee Reports

### FROM THE VEEP (Jim Wise) w4pro

#### Field Day

As Field Day Chairman, I plan to lay out my ideas on the basic structure of this annual WTRA effort. Also, I will be looking for input from prospective participants in regard to the number of stations and modes of operation. The main shelter at Nike Park has been reserved for our Field Day use.

**Jim Wise, W4PRO**  
Program Chairman

### Treasurer's Report / Membership / Repeater Report (Dick Harrell):

#### Treasurer's Report (by W4RBH):

Main Account Balance as of 5/20/2007	\$ 1259.45
Remaining anticipated expenses for 2007	\$ 442.25
(Includes 5/14/07 Field Day budget increase of \$100.00)	

#### Recent expenses:

Insurance	\$ 150.00
Repeater Maintenance	\$ 36.49
Field Day Site Reservation (Day 1)	\$ 35.00
Dinner for Guest Speaker	\$ 11.26

VE Program Account Balance as of 5/20/2007	\$ 41.03
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Membership Report (by W4RBH): Currently there are 44 members on roll. Our newest member is Alex Peters, KI4UNO. Alex has been attending meetings and club events for some time and it is great to now have him as a member. Everyone is requested to welcome Alex to the WTRA.

Repeater Report (by W4RBH): On May 5, Ron, N4TJI, and I were able to successfully replace the RF transistor used in the internal 25 watt amplifier of the WT4RA repeater. We are now able to properly drive the external amplifier. Following level adjustments, the RF output from the external amplifier was measured and found to be its normal 130 watts.



Repeater coverage should be back to exactly what it was before the April 13 (Friday) failure. The failed RF transistor was found to have a base to collector short. In support of the repair effort a replacement transistor and thermal grease were ordered from RF Parts Company, and de-soldering braid was obtained locally.

A special thanks to Ron for his help and the use of a couple of “special” tools. I really needed the extra set of hands and his expert guidance, especially for the two disk ceramic capacitors soldered directly between the transistor’s base and collector tabs with leads only about 3/32 of an inch long each.

### Secretary’s Report

#### Western Tidewater Radio Association Minutes for meeting May 14, 2007

1. On Monday, May 14, 2007, at 6:00 PM, the Western Tidewater Radio Association convened for a dinner meeting at C.W. Cowlings Restaurant in Smithfield.
2. At 6:27 PM, the business portion of the meeting was officially called to order by Chris, N4KIT.
3. Attendees introduced themselves around the table; there were 22 members and 4 guests present.
4. Secretary's Report: The minutes of the February 12 meeting were posted in the club newsletter at <http://www.wt4ra.org/newsletter/vol2no3.pdf> and on the club website at [www.wt4ra.org/minutes.html](http://www.wt4ra.org/minutes.html); motion by Fred, KG4BKI to dispense the reading of the minutes as published was seconded by Ron, W4RRH and it carried.
5. Fred, KG4BKI announced a Technician Class starting at the Smithfield Library; one confirmed enrollment; choice of book for sale tonight or at the class.
6. In Honor of Ralph, WB4ZNB (SK), a memorial brick will be placed on the Diamond Terrace at the entrance of ARRL Headquarters. Contributions may be sent to Richard Harrell, c/o WTRA, PO Box 323, Smithfield, VA 23431. Make check to Richard Harrell with WB4ZNB Memorial on the note line.
7. Audit Committee Report: Ron, N4TJI reported that “everything adds up.”

- 8. VASC-ARG Committee Report: Dick, W4RBH gave a report on the renovations; antennas to be removed May 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>; anyone interested in helping, let Dick know and he will contact Ken.**
- 9. At 6:36 PM, all further business was tabled to place orders for meals.**
- 10. At 6:41 PM, Chris, N4KIT resumed the business of the meeting;**
- 11. Treasurer's Report: Dick, W4RBH reported on the club's treasury; motion by Stu, WA4JUO to accept the treasurer's report was seconded by Mike, KI4KZQ and it carried.**
- 12. Repeater Report: Dick, W4RBH gave an update on the status of the repeater.**
- 13. Field Day Report: Jim, W4PRO discussed details of the upcoming Field Day event.**
- 14. Old Business: None.**
- 15. New Business: Stu, WA4JUO is working on the criteria for nominating new presidents for election.**
- 16. Fred, KG4BKI announced the June 3<sup>rd</sup> Bronco Club event and mentioned the Garmin StreetPilot raffle.**
- 17. Chris, N4KIT asked the floor to remind non-hams of Fred's class.**
- 18. At 6:58 PM, dinner was being served and all further business was tabled until after the meal.**
- 19. At 7:53 PM, Jim, W4PRO turned the floor over to Bill, WB4UYA who gave a presentation on his experience as a communications volunteer on the gulf coast after hurricane Katrina devastated the area.**
- 20. After the program, and with no further business to be brought forth, a motion by Dick, W4RBH to adjourn was seconded by Mike, KI4KZQ and the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.**

**Tom D. Stanfield, N4WXS**  
**Secretary**

## VA RACES Inc, District 10

### Contact Information

Title	Name	Call	Email Address
District Emergency Radio Officer	Chris Hanslits	W4VX	<a href="mailto:w4vx@charter.net">w4vx@charter.net</a> <a href="mailto:w4vx@wt4ra.org">mailto:w4vx@wt4ra.org</a>
Emergency Radio Officer – Isle of Wight County, Town of Smithfield	Bruce Powell	KE4GFM	<a href="mailto:ke4gfm@wt4ra.org">mailto:ke4gfm@wt4ra.org</a>
Emergency Radio Officer – City of Franklin	Fred Weaver	KG4BKI	<a href="mailto:kg4bki@wt4ra.org">mailto:kg4bki@wt4ra.org</a>
Emergency Radio Officer – Southampton County	Chris Hanslits	W4VX	<a href="mailto:w4vx@charter.net">w4vx@charter.net</a> <a href="mailto:w4vx@wt4ra.org">mailto:w4vx@wt4ra.org</a>

### NETS

Name	Time/Date	Frequency (MHz)	Comments
WTRA/D10 Net	19:30L Thursdays	147.195 (100Hz PL)	Traffic Welcome
Franklin Repeater Users	21:00L Sunday	147.300 (131.8Hz PL)	Traffic Welcome
Mid Atlantic Emergency Net (MAEN)	20:00L First Wednesday of the Month	5.3305 USB Primary 5.3465 USB Secondary	60 Meter HF Net Regional
Old Dominion Emergency Net (ODEN)	18:30L First and Third Monday of the Month	3.947 LSB +/- the QRM	75 Meter statewide HF voice net
Virginia Digital Net (VDN)	Tuesday 19:15L Friday 19:150L	3.578 USB, 1000 Hz AFSK. Starts with CHIP64	Traffic Net (NTS), Good place to experiment with new HF digital modes and traffic handling

**Classified** - (Items don't have to be radio equipment. Anything electrical or electronic is fair game. A couple non – electrical items are OK, but we don't want to make the Newsletter a miscellaneous trading post.) **(New guideline: Items that have not sold in three (3) months will be deleted unless owner requests that they be run for a longer time.)**

**Jim Jackson (W4EVN) (365-0125) (last listing)**

- **Kenwood TS 430-S w/SSB&CW filters, FM board, PS 230 Power Supply, MC 50 Desk Mike and operating and service manuals. \$475.00. This unit has new finals installed by Burghart Radio.**

- Icom 725 w/ SSB & CW filters and MARS Mod. DC cable and Icom Hand Mike, operating manual. \$335.00
- All the above units have full power from 160-60 meters and can be seen and/or tested at my home.

## Links of Interest

### WTRA HOME PAGE

[www.wt4ra.org](http://www.wt4ra.org)

[www.qsl.net/n4ari](http://www.qsl.net/n4ari)

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

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

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

[www.w5yi.org](http://www.w5yi.org)

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

[www.hello-radio.org](http://www.hello-radio.org)

### NWS Wakefield

<http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/akq/>

### Wakefield radar loop

[http://weather.noaa.gov/radar/loop/D\\_S.p19r0/si.kakq.shtml](http://weather.noaa.gov/radar/loop/D_S.p19r0/si.kakq.shtml)

### WVEC-TV loop

[http://www.wvec.com/weather/image/ry/doppler/skymax\\_loop\\_large\\_region.gif](http://www.wvec.com/weather/image/ry/doppler/skymax_loop_large_region.gif)

### WTVR-TV loop

<http://files.wtvr.com/radarloop.gif>

### NexStorm lightning real-time

<http://www.yorkcounty.gov/weather/nexstormlightning/StormVue.html>

### National Hurricane Center

<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>

### Weather Matrix

<http://www.weathermatrix.net/>

### Weather Underground

<http://www.weatherunderground.com/>

### Intellicast

<http://intellicast.com/>

### WC4R weather

[www.williamsburgWX.com](http://www.williamsburgWX.com)

### Hurricane Watch Net -

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

### Ham Operator Locator Map

<http://hams.mapmash.com/hammap.php>



## Emails Received

Ron, you are doing a great job with the newsletters!!!

Thank you for all the thoughtful guidelines.

Janet N4JMA

**Please submit items you would like to be in the WTRA Newsletter to w4rrh@wt4ra.net no later than the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month.**

**Send old pictures you have and let's see if someone can guess who you are, how old you were, where you were, where the picture was taken, what you were doing, etc.**