



BARA Facts

Newsletter of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association

April 2010

Website: <http://w2ow.org> OR <http://www.wtsn.binghamton.edu/bara>

President's Corner April 2010

I had quite the scare a few weeks ago. I was engaged in a QSO on 20 meters with a station in Mississippi (which I needed for the Worked All States award, which I'm over half-way to receiving) when smoke started coming out of my Yaesu transceiver! I immediately powered down, then used the internet to look up the phone number of the OM I was conversing with and called him on the telephone to let him know why my station had suddenly gone dead.

I was using PSK-31 at the time, a popular digital mode. I mentioned in my last column that I'd been getting into digital modes recently. Well, I've been able to log a lot more states (and a couple dozen countries) that would be difficult or impossible for me using SSB, because the digital modes are far more efficient (kind of the way CW carries much better than voice). What I hadn't realized is that digital modes operate at "100% duty cycle", which means the full power of the transmitter is engaged the whole time one is transmitting. (This is not the case with CW, which is only powered on for the dits and dahs, nor SSB, which varies the power in relation to the volume of one's voice.) This apparently can stress your transmitter.

I put my Yaesu on the workbench, started pulling it apart, and when I separated the automatic tuning unit (attached to the side) from the transceiver, I discovered that the tuner smelled bad, but not the transceiver. I disassembled the tuner, but didn't see anything obvious, so I put it all back together and got back on the air. Apparently I'd cooked a little

insulation off something in the automatic tuner, but it still functioned perfectly, and my transceiver was unscathed. Lucky me! I now know that I must dial my power back when using digital modes, as my tuner can't handle the 100% duty cycle for more than a few seconds at a time.

I hadn't been on the air much up until a couple of months ago, but this digital modes thing has got me hooked! Not only can I easily work DX, but since I'm not speaking, I can operate silently after my XYL has gone to bed :) I plan to give a presentation at a future BARA meeting on how easy it is to work digital modes (I've been using RTTY, PSK-31, and a bit of Olivia). I'm hoping that we have a pleasant evening one month where we can trek up to the shack & do a hands-on demonstration (as I mentioned in my last column, I plan to outfit our shack with the necessary hardware and software to do this).

I'd love to hear about *your* radio horror stories! Please send them to Bill Jakaitis (KB2SIN@stny.rr.com) so that he can print them in the newsletter.

73 de Allen Lutins KC2KLC
KC2KLC@LUTINS.ORG

The Port Crane Hamfest for April 18 is getting closer. Advance sale tickets available for \$5.00. We will need 8 to 10 helpers for table setup on Saturday. On Sunday during the hamfest, to make things easier, we are asking the ladies to help my Wife Sharon N2WGM with tickets sales at the door. We will need 4 ladies per shift. We need 4 people per shift to direct the customers to the parking places. Then there are the usual duties of the BARA table, prizes, talk in, table take down and cleanup after the Hamfest. We also need a person or two to put up signs early that Sunday morning and take them down in the afternoon. They will be attached to existing sign posts with C clamps. I have the list started and need more names, so if you can help please let Brian or myself know. Remember the more that chip in and help, the easier it is for everybody involved to get the work done. Those working a 2 hour shift or other work will receive their ticket free. Please let me know if you can help. Brian K2DLB 797-3770 and Ford AB2HS 754-1214. 73s Ford

Upcoming Hamfests

April 10th, 2010

Orange County Amateur Radio Club
Middletown, NY

Town of Wallkill Community Center

[2 Wes Warren Drive](#)

Talk-In: 146.76 (PL 100)

<http://www.ocarc-ny.org>

BARA Hamfest 2010

It is getting that time of year for the BARA Hamfest. This year as some of you know the date and location has changed:

New Date **SUNDAY April 18th**

New Location **Port Crane Fire Company**

844 State Route 369

Port Crane NY

Time is 6 AM for Vendors and 8 AM the doors will open.

Just follow the NEW signs to the hamfest.

Breakfast and Lunch will be served by the Port Crane Fire Co.

9 AM VE Testing Walk-ins welcome.

Tables are available for \$10 each. Reserve early as they are going fast.

About 20 left.

Commercial Vendors are

KJI Electronics

Sauder Electronics

Quicksilver Radio

Radio Oasis

The Wireman/ Scott Clovis

Also QCWA

National Weather Service

Contact Brian Adee K2DLB @ K2dlb@arrl.net 607-752-3230

Ford Drake AB2HS @ Ab2hs@stny.rr.com 607-754-1214

Signup for working the fest and receive free admission ticket.

Any questions please feel free to contact either one of us

Check the flyer at the website www.w2ow.org

Back to the Basics

In this article I would like to go over some basic questions, definitions and/or formulas. This will be old hat for most but for some, a refresher. I will split this up into Technician, General & the Extra class.

Technician Class

T1B03 –What system does the FCC use to select new amateur radio call signs?

- A. Call signs are assigned in random order
- B. The applicant is allowed to pick a call sign
- C. Call signs are assigned in sequential order
- D. Volunteer Examiners choose an unassigned call sign

General Class

G2F04 – What does it mean when a CW operator sends "CL" at the end of a transmission?

- A. Keep frequency clear
- B. Operating full break-in
- C. Listening only for a specific station or stations
- D. Closing station

Extra Class

E1C01 – What is a remotely controlled station?

- A. A station operated away from its regular home location
 - B. A station controlled by someone other than the licensee
 - C. A station operating under automatic control
 - D. A station controlled indirectly through a control link
-

Answers to March “Back to the Basics”

Technician	C
General	A
Extra	D

Contest Calendar April, 2010 (ARRL)

None scheduled for the month of April

Radio buffs tune in to solar cycle

By [Lee Badman](#) *Syracuse Press* March 14, 2010

Just as El Nino can significantly affect the Earth's weather patterns, the solar cycle can greatly influence radio propagation.

What is the solar cycle? It is a roughly 11-year cycle of sunspot activity that peaks midway through each go-round. In the most basic terms, more sunspots equal better propagation, and more activity on the bands.

We are currently in the beginning of cycle 24. Each cycle has been numbered since the cycle was first observed by scientists. So far, "24" has been slow to get busy, and ham-radio operators and shortwave listeners have been looking forward to better conditions for the last few years.

There are signs that 24 might be getting ready to put on a show. While talking on a local repeater several nights ago, Ken Blume (K2UPI) noted that he had recently experienced abnormally good HF conditions.

The following day, Kevin Shannon (WA2ISC)

reported luck on 15 meters -- a band which hasn't been doing much for some time. Both Blume and Shannon have been through their shares of solar cycles, and the excitement in their voices was palpable.

If cycle 24 is really here to stay, it should be an incentive for the radio-curious to get their licenses and experience just how interesting -- and fun -- amateur radio can be.

The new cycle might also rekindle the radio spark for some of our colleagues who have gone quiet lately, and should make life on shortwave interesting for those in listen-only mode, once solar flare activity heats up in earnest.

More information on solar cycle 24 can be found at solarcycle24.com, and a wealth of information on space weather in general is at

www.spaceweather.com.

Send news or questions about amateur radio to Lee Badman, KI2K, at

features@syracuse.com or Stars, P.O. Box 4915, Syracuse, NY 13221.

Barafest

WANTED: Kenwood Microphone for a Kenwood TM-241 2 Meter Mobile. Email – Bill @ kb2sin@stny.rr.com with price.

Joke of the Month....

YOU MIGHT BE A HAM IF.....

1. YOUR WIFE SAID "LET'S GO SEE AUNT ANNA" AND YOU THOUGHT SHE SAID ANTENNA!
2. YOUR WIFE SAID "COULD YOU CUT THE GRASS?" AND YOU THOUGHT SHE SAID POUND THE BRASS!
3. YOUR WIFE SAID "WE'VE BEEN INVITED TO BREAKFAST" AND YOU THOUGHT SHE SAID HAM FEST!
4. YOUR WIFE SAID "SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH THE CHECK BOOK" AND YOU THOUGHT SHE SAID LOG BOOK!
5. YOUR WIFE SAID "IS MY SEAM STRAIGHT?"

AND YOU THOUGHT SHE SAID, " IS MY BEAM STRAIGHT?"

BARA Dues

\$18/year Single member; \$27/year Family

You might be hard of hearing too!!

2010 Club Officers

President	Allen Lutins	K2KLC	729-4817
Vice President	James Lawson	KC2JED	761-5595
Secretary	Andrew Rudy	KC2QYA	
Treasurer	Paul Slocum	N2NCB	687-2057
Directors	Warren Marks	KC2NGR	648-6840
	Bill Jaker	WB8RAE	785-5361
	John Rudy	WB2FQZ	669-4308
	John Carrington	WB2SGS	648-8364
W2OW Trustee	Mel Snitchler	WE2K	723-9612
Editor	William Jakaitis	KB2SIN	648-2112

Next General Meeting

7:30 PM, Wednesday, April 21st

Town of Binghamton Town Hall, 279 Park Avenue, South of the Ross Park Entrance

Board Meeting

7:00 PM, Wednesday May 5th

Conference Room, WSKG Studios, 501 Gates Road, Vestal

Exam Session

7:00 PM Monday, April 26th

Vestal Public Library, Route 434 Vestal

Local Repeater Nets

146.73 (PL-100) MHz STAR Net (NTS Feeder) Every

Evening at 6:30 PM Local Time

146.82 (PL 146.2) MHz BRAT Net (Informal BARA) Sunday

Evening at 8:00 PM Local Time

BARA, The Binghamton Amateur Radio Association is an ARRL Affiliated Club

e-Mail Address: w2ow@arrl.net



Our Printing Sponsor: Unicorn Electronics, Valley Plaza Drive, Johnson City, NY

