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BARA Facts

Newsletter of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association

January 2010

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

President's Corner January 2010

Happy new year fellow hams! I recently attended the BARA holiday party, and was delighted with the turnout (some 50 people by night's end!). It demonstrates to me that, even though attendance at business meetings may be sagging, there is still a vibrant interest in amateur radio in this area, and in keeping the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association alive.

Explaining the relevance of amateur radio in the 21st century to a wider audience is tough (until communities experience disasters that rely on hams' communications expertise). Keeping BARA relevant to our community is also a challenge. The biggest difficulty facing our club is a paucity of compelling programs. Members are not keen to attend business meetings if they are all business and no fun. We have our regular SkyWarn training to look forward to, and I plan to give a presentation on linking computers to radios. But if you have (or know of anyone that has) anything interesting to present, please contact myself or our Vice President (who organizes programs) James Lawson (jwlawson@stny.rr.com), as it is important that we give our members a good reason to keep paying their dues!

That said, BARA members certainly have plenty to look forward to this coming year. Our annual Field Day event is growing bigger each year. I regrettably had to miss it last year, but I intend to be up at our shack this year, and hope a number of you will join

me for the good time that's always had there. There's also our annual hamfest, which for the first time will be indoors. Between not having to worry about the weather, and the efforts and enthusiasm of our organizers Ford Drake (AB2HS) and Brian Adee (K2DLB), this year's hamfest promises to be the most successful in years.

Remember that the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association is not simply a handful of hams who pull together a few activities each year – it is each and every one of you, interacting amongst other members, other hams, and the community, to maintain a strong amateur radio presence in our region. I often tell you in my columns that I'd like to hear from you. I am not being rhetorical when I say this – **I really mean it**. Please, if you have anything at all to share regarding your radio experience, your BARA membership, or anything related to technology, do send me an email (address listed below) or call me (my number is listed on the back of the newsletter).

A happy, healthy and prosperous new year to you all!

73 de Allen Lutins KC2KLC
KC2KLC@LUTINS.ORG

Letter from the Editor

I hope everyone had a Wonderful Christmas and a safe New Years Eve.

It was brought to my attention by our President that I failed to post the time of Last Month's Christmas party at the Spot Restaurant in last month's BARA Facts.

I would like to apologize to everyone and sincerely hope everyone was able to attend this prestigious event and the lack of time didn't inconvenience anyone.

Once again I am asking for your input to this newsletter. I have added quite a bit of information on my own, which I enjoy doing but it is more fun hearing from other members.

Thank You! 73's - de kb2sin William Jakaitis
Kb2sin@stny.rr.com

Upcoming Hamfests

January 9th, 2010

Skyline Amateur Radio Club

www.skylineradioclub.org

Marathon Civic Center @ Lovell Field

Talk-in – 147.180+

February 27th – The 29th annual winter hamfest in Horseheads, NY.

February 28th – LIMARC Indoor Hamfest – Hicksville, NY

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

T1D03 – What is the Minimum age required to hold an amateur license?

- a) 14 Years or Older
- b) 18 years or Older
- c) 70 Years or Younger
- d) There is NO minimum age requirement

General Class

G1A03 – On which of the following bands is image transmission prohibited?

- a) 160 Meters
- b) 30 Meters
- c) 20 Meters
- d) 12 Meters

Extra Class

E1B03 – Within what distance must an amateur station protect an FCC monitoring facility from harmful interference?

- a) 1 Mile
- b) 3 Miles
- c) 10 Miles
- d) 30 Miles

Answers to last month's "Back to the Basics"

Technician – D

General – A

Extra – A

Did You Know.....

The Following Famous People are also Amateur Radio Operators?

Walter Cronkite (SK) – KB2GSD

George Pataki – Ex NY Gov. K2ZCZ

Chet Atkins (SK) – Singer – W4CGP

Ronnie Milsap – Singer – WB4KCG

Arthur Godfrey (SK) – TV Personality – K4LIB

Patty Loveless – Singer – KD4WUJ

Priscilla Presley – Actress – N6YOS

Donnie Osmond – Singer - KA7EVD

Barry Goldwater (SK) – Senator - K7UGA

King Hussein – King of Jordan – JY1

HAMFEST REMINDER

BARA Hamfest – New Location... Port Crane Fire Station, 844 Route 369 – Sunday April 18th. For reservation of tables, hamfest info or tickets, please contact:

Brian Adee – K2DLB – k2dlb@stny.rr.com – (607) 752-3230

Ford Drake – AB2HS – ab2hs@stny.rr.com – (607) 754-1214

Advance sale tickets available.

\$6.00 at Door

\$5.00 Advance

How Old Are We?

That is a subject that comes up every few years. When the question is asked there is usually an answer that differs from the last. Why? Because time marches on and when different layers of club related minutia are turned over different facts are re-discovered. Way back in 1977 or so, when I was first asked (or did I ask) the question about the club's age, 1928 was somehow determined to be the date. I can't recall the source for that date. Regardless based on that 'finding' a celebration was planned to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the club. Club jackets were ordered and a arm patch designed to celebrate the occasion.

A side bar about the patch. I designed the patch, which was basically black, with a embroidered yellow tower and tri band beam. In red was "50 yrs" at the tower base along with "W2OW" in bright red prominently displayed across the middle of the tower. Around the 4 inch circumference was "Binghamton Amateur Radio Association 1928 - 1978" in yellow. I think it looked pretty sharp. When the patches were received all was OK, until I discovered one with RADIO misspelled as RADTIO. Luckily there was only one.

Years later while pawing through some aged tax fillings of the club, it was noted that the originating date of the club was stated as 1919 on a number of the documents. So, based of that the year 1919 was

accepted and various then current documents changed to reflect "since 1919".

Then, sometime later, someone mentioned (I wish I could remember who so I could give credit) that there was a number of articles in QST which mentioned the Binghamton Amateur Radio Club. On review, the 1916 December QST on page 38 contains the following:

"Binghamton Progressive Radio Association the Binghamton Progressive Radio Association held their first meeting of the 1916 and 1917 season in their club which is located at the corner of Glenwood and Main Streets. The club House consists of a one-story building which was bought and erected by the club members one year ago. The meeting was opened by the President who gave a short talk of the past year. The discussion arose as to the purchase of a new set. It was decided to install both damped and undamped wave sets. The club will be glad to make a test with any amateur. You can reach us by calling 8WO or 8WW or 8ALO. Within a month or so the club will be using its own call."

When first read, the 1916 was picked up and used as the originating date. But anyone reading the article must conclude that the club existed in 1916 since "erected by club member's one year ago." is clearly stated in the 1916 QST article. So as of today, (3/23/2009) the year 1915 is a documented date of the club actively in operation. I assume and hope that without too much effort one can find documentation that would place club activities years prior to 1915. But wait we must until that tidbit of information can be located.

I do note that the call for stations to contact 8WO at Binghamton, N.Y. in the Dec 1916 QST did pay off. In the April 1917 QST on page 57 8WO listed 150 stations as having been contacted with the following notation. "Most of these stations are heard quite frequently and they have to be QSA on account of bad induction and street cars which are very troublesome and last but not least the little spark coils."

So, documented amateur radio club activity has existed in Binghamton since 1915. Next time you're in the company of a "more experienced" HAM ask him / her of the early wireless days. You may be presented with the next piece of the early day puzzle of the radio club. De WB2GHH

Contest Calendar
January 2010
(ARRL)

January 1st – Straight Key Night
2nd-3rd – ARRL RTTY Round-Up
3rd – Kids Day
23rd – 25th – ARRL Jan. VHF Sweepstakes

**A Year in the life of a BARA Board of
Director**

I would like to take this opportunity to address every member of BARA. Let's call it "**A year in the life of a Board of Director**". First I want to ask a question that I really don't expect an answer to. It is more to provoke thought. How many of you have served on the Board of Directors in any capacity? For those of you that have not, I want to tell you what I was told and what the reality is.

When I was approached about being a Board Member, I was told that I would just look out for the best interests of the general membership. Whenever an issue was brought up, think of what the members would want.

At the Jan. board meeting the very first order of business was to "volunteer" for donut duty. Now, there are 8 board members and 10 months when donuts are provided for our pleasure. It isn't important to know why but 2 board members did not participate in "volunteering" so 6 people had to cover 10 months. That meant that 4 members had to serve double duty.

Has anyone ever heard the Treasurer report that the donuts cost X number of dollars this month? That's right, volunteering didn't mean that you just went and picked them up. You put your hand in your pocket and paid the tab. So, every member of the board has donated one years dues and 4 of them have donated 2 years dues based on 2 dozen donuts costing about \$18. Have you ever heard that the coffee, cream, sugar and assorted accessories have been paid for out of BARA's general fund? I'm willing to bet that the expense is borne by our Treasurer out of his own pocket. Did anyone ever look in the "donations" can

at the end of a meeting? Even on the months that I volunteered to bring the donuts, I'll drop a dollar in the can. Maybe I think that the two cups of coffee that I drink is worth a buck. Maybe I also think it is OK to pocket the winnings from the 50/50 on the rare occasions I have won instead of donating it back to the club. Can you blame me?

What is a popular question brought up by BARA members? "What does BARA do for me?" Granted, it isn't radio related but other organizations don't feed you at their meetings. Not when the cash is flowing out faster than it is flowing in.

Well, January is out of the way. Now it's May and the HamFest. What is the ratio of board members to general members at set up and break down? I don't know either. Who benefits from the profit made at the HamFest? I know that one! Everybody. Before I was on the board I would show up at the HamFest about 10:00, wander around and look at a few things and go home. Up until this last year I had to drive 30 miles one way to just get there. Since I got on the board, I show up around 7:00 to help sell tickets and rarely got to the 4H building at all. At least BARA got my \$5 admission fee. Let's skip to August. Eight months have passed and no one from the general membership has approached me about any issues they want the board to discuss. Now we have the annual picnic. Yes, everyone brings a dish to pass and there is a vote at the July meeting on how much should be spent on hot dogs, hamburgers and that sort of stuff. Who provides the charcoal? Until recently it was Jack Connor. At that time he was on the board. Now I am "volunteering". A lot of you may think that I'm complaining. I don't mean to give that impression. I am simply pointing out that if you add up all of the "perks" that the general membership receives and subtracted it from the BARA treasury we would be in the red by now. \$180 for donuts. \$50 for coffee and supporting accessories. \$10 for charcoal. Small things you say? Does it come out of your pocket? No and no one is asking you.

December Board of Directors meeting. A list of members is given to everyone and it is divided up so that each member can call their share on the list and find out who is coming to the annual holiday party. This year our president has offered to call the entire

list but in the past it was divided up among the board members.

What I'm trying to say is it isn't always apparent what your officers do but it should be apparent that the members best interest AND comfort is first and foremost on their mind. I will gladly continue to serve on the board as long as the membership thinks I am worthy but it sure would be nice to actually have an election once in a while with sixteen or more names on the ballot. Lacking those sixteen names tells me that either the members are content with the way things are handled or there isn't any desire to step up and make changes.

If anything that I have said here offends anyone, I am truly sorry but if it provokes some positive thought, it is worth it.

Best regards,

Warren
KC2NGR

Looking back.....

Looking In the W2OW Rear View Mirror to
December 2001

Well, not to far back in time but it's a way to fill a bit of the present "BARA FACTS." From: "**The President's Corner.**"

Times flies when you're having fun. The last two years flew by so I guess I must have been having fun. Maybe too much fun. The BARA Constitution indicates I must give you a state of the club type report. So here it is. Unfortunately during the last two years the club membership has fallen, participation in club activities has dropped and opportunities to wave the BARA flag, with the hope of attracting new membership, were lost. For example, due to the lack of a volunteer to head up Field Day - there wasn't any. A special event station and display at Link Field during their 50th anniversary did not take because of lack of interest. That was a shame since BARA provided communications at Link Airport opening day fifty years ago. Other 'good ideas' have died on the vine due to lack of member interest.

On the positive side the club is most fortunate to have those dedicated members whose actions assure the continued functioning of the club. For example: The Constitution was updated. KID's night was a success. The Broome County SKYWARN Training session was again hosted by BARA. An informational 'CLUB FLYER' was completed. The ARRL WNY SM attended and spoke at the March meeting. The BARA August picnic was a success. The HAMFEST was a success and was also enjoyable because at least 34 members participated in its set up and execution. A hill top lease was extended through June 2006. A number of CONTESTS were run at the hilltop. Members participated in PUBLIC SERVICE events. Members supported local and state agencies as a result of 9-11. A complete set of ARRL video tapes was acquired and are available to members. The December dinner meeting was, as always, a wonderful event. The Board conceptually approved the "BARA, Ester Valky AA2AP Memorial Scholarship"; replacement of the "90 FOOT TOWER"; and development of a "REST ROOM" facility. An "ELMER PROGRAM" has been established. A "LIBRARIES DONATION" project was approved. Finally, the financial status of the club remains cautiously "GOOD" with concerns for impact of lower membership.

Well, after having written this, maybe BARA has taken a couple steps forward. It has been fun being at the helm of an 83 + year old organization. May BARA (and I) have many more years of fun. God Bless America. De wb2ghh
