



BARA Facts

Newsletter of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association

July 2010

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

President's Corner July 2010

Field Day has come and gone, and BARA's showing was strong this year. We had 15 members and 10 visitors up at the shack that weekend, and our operators made a total of 426 contacts across five HF bands, working up to three stations concurrently (our most distant contacts were several California stations). I went up on Friday for setup, and camped all the way through to teardown on Sunday. The weather was terrific, and I had a lovely campfire going each night. We had a number of notable occurrences, among which were:

- A successful amateur satellite demonstration by Drew Deskur (KA1M)
- Erection of the newly purchased 40 m temporary tower by Ray Terry (K1OW) and crew
- Andy Rudy (KC2QYA) vowing (and succeeding!) to make 100 contacts (including California and Puerto Rico)

Ray Terry logged the most contacts (178, on both voice and CW). I managed 63 contacts, and Lee Savidge (W3EFE), who (along with Ray Terry) worked late into the night, logged 60 stations. Other participants (most of whom worked the rigs at one point or another, and/or helped with setup/teardown) included Brian Adey (K2DLB), John Carrington (WB2SGS), Ford Drake (AB2HS), Vinnie Griggs (N1JPM), Bill Jaker (WB8RAE), George Kilpatrick (N2GSS), John Rudy (WB2FQZ), Mel Snitchler (WE2K), Tom Vroman (N2BGM), Ann Whyman (KB3UQX), Sam Chaplin (N2SLC), Rob Gault

(KC2VMP), Mark Hall (N2MTH), Evan Shelp (KC2USH) and Mike Christian, and Jack Connors (WB2GHH), who was observed on a brief drive-by visit with his family. Our visitors included a number of youngsters as well, several of whom are on target to get their ham tickets. I know some of y'all were taking photos – please let me know where I can get ahold of some copies (and let's get 'em posted to our website, too!).

This year I will make sure our logs are submitted to the ARRL. We certainly won't place near the top of our class (3A), but competition wasn't the point – we decided instead to focus on the emergency preparedness aspects of the event, as well as relaxing and having some fun while doing so. As always, the Field Day proved to be an invaluable learning experience for me. For example, I forgot to bring a key to key up my transmitter for tuning; none of the keys we had up there had the right plug, and we didn't have the proper adapter. After thinking about it for a bit, it occurred to me that my headphones had the proper plug, and their 8 ohm impedance might just be low enough to key my rig. I plugged 'em in, and sure enough my transceiver went into transmit mode, allowing me to tune it up. That's the kind of thinking that Field Day is intended to foster! I hope I'll see you up at the shack for next year's Field Day so you can share the wonderful experience that those of us who attended enjoyed.

73 de allen lutins KC2KLC
KC2KLC@LUTINS.ORG

QSO from the Board...

A reminder - the BARA picnic is coming up on August 18th (in lieu of the General Meeting). Our annual picnic will again be held under the pavilion at the far northern edge of Otsiningo Park in Binghamton.

BARA will provide water, soft drinks, hamburgers/hot dogs, and plates/utensils - please bring a dish of your own to share! Formal start time will be announced in the next newsletter, but the pavilion is reserved for the entire day, so come on out any time.

A Letter from the Editor

I have been asked to hold off on publishing the BARA facts until after the Board of Directors meetings each month so that they can relay to each and every one of you any pertinent information that was discussed at their meeting.

So, instead of getting your FACTS in the Mail between the 2nd and 7th, you will receive it after the Board meets.

I am still looking for articles each month, so if you have a favorite mode you like, such as Digital, Satellite etc, please share that info with the rest of us with a short paragraph or 2. It WILL be published! Also, if you have equipment you are trying to sell or want, send me the info and I will put it in the upcoming FACTS and I will place it in under the BARAFEST column.

73's de Kb2sin, William Jakaitis

Upcoming Hamfests

July 17th,
RadioComm 2010
Frankfort, NY
Utica ARC

July 24th, 2010
Alexander, NY
Genesee radio Club

Antenna Support System

A strange thing happened to me at the weekly pistol match over on Foley Road a few weeks ago. A

fellow shooter who happens to be a HAM came by and asked if I was interested in the "tower" he informed me about via e-mail. E-mailed about. When I indicated I had not reviewed my "stny" account for a while he dragged me over to the far side of the firing line where the owner of the "tower" was stationed. To make a short story long, the owner indicated he wanted to rid himself of the "mast" that his family had used as a flagpole and for raising a large star during the Christmas holidays. So started the saga of the "antenna support system" acquisition. I initially thought the task of acquisition would not be so tough since one of the club members (who had knowledge of the the military mast and what a few were selling for) made a significant donation toward its acquisition. His thought process was that the "rally around the pole" aspect of assembly on a field day or other situation would engage some club members in a meaningful, bonding task. Unfortunately the club's financial situation would not allow an expenditure of about \$150 from the Treasury for the aforementioned luxury. I thought heck I should be able to roundup the necessary \$. So out went the e-mail to know members of BARA. I must admit and truly appreciate the near immediate response of pledges. Now, little over a week, a number of those pledges have transitioned to actual \$\$\$. Based on the pledges I contacted the mast owner and asked him to hold off placing the item on Craig's list and a few other similar web sites as I was arranging transportation for the item. Fortunately, and without hesitation, Warren Marks agreed to provide the transport. So on Saturday May 15 I dug up some CASH and made "the deal." Shortly thereafter, Warren, I and the former mast owner loaded the mast on the pickup. The mast was unloaded at the W2OW site by 1030. Some may say why this mast? Well, it is very portable. The 5 inch diameter, four foot long +/- aluminum tubes are "launched" (placed in the approximate 18 inch square five foot long fixture that acts as the base and allows raising of the tube so that another tube can be placed below the first and with a belly band clamped to the first tube. That tube is "launched" (cranked) up to the preset position so that the next and next tubes can be attached. Guy rings are attached at appropriate level and guys attached and anchored to predetermined set points. The initial mast kit allows for a height of up to 75 feet. The extender kit (additional tubes) allows up to another 20 foot +/-

extension. The final pole assembly of about 10 feet was modified by addition of another piece of pipe to which a pulley was added in a way to allow one line of the pulley to be dropped inside the entire set of tubes while the other line with fasteners attached is external. I can't ever visualize use of the entire mechanism but can visualize having a bunch of fun at the easily achievable 30 to 40 foot level. Hopefully some of us can get to the hilltop before field day and gain some familiarization with the mast. The technical manual is in a binder under glass in the trophy case in the shack. Let's go launch something.

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

T4B09 – What property of a radio wave is often used to identify the different bands amateur radio operators use?

- A. The Physical length of the wave
- B. The magnetic intensity of the wave
- C. The time it takes for the wave to travel one mile
- D. The voltage standing wave ratio of the wave

General Class

G1A05 – Which of the following frequencies is in the General Class portion of the 40 Meter band?

- A. 7.250 MHz
- B. 7.500 MHz
- C. 40.200 MHz
- D 40.500 MHz

Extra Class

E1A02 – When using a transceiver that displays the carrier frequency of phone signals, which of the following displayed frequencies will result in normal LSB emission being within the band?

- A The exact lower band edge
- B 300 Hz above the lower band edge
- C. 1 kHz above the lower band edge
- D. 3 kHz above the lower band edge

Answers to June, 2010 “Back to the Basics”

Technician	C
General	B
Extra	A

Communications Today From a retired business manager.

I thought about the 30 year business I ran with 1800 employees, all without a Blackberry that played music, took videos, pictures and communicated with Facebook and Twitter.

I signed up under duress for Twitter and Facebook, so my seven kids, their spouses, 13 grandkids and 2 great grand kids could communicate with me in the modern way. I figured I could handle something as simple as Twitter with only 140 characters of space.

That was before one of my grandkids hooked me up for Tweeter, Tweetree, Twhirl, Twitterfon, Tweetie and Twittererific Tweetdeck, Twitpix and something that sends every message to my cell phone and every other program within the texting world.

My phone was beeping every three minutes with the details of everything except the bowel movements of the entire next generation. I am not ready to live like this. I keep my cell phone in the garage in my golf bag.

The kids bought me a GPS for my last birthday because they say I get lost every now and then going over to the grocery store or library.. I keep that in a box under my tool bench with the Blue tooth [it's red] phone I am supposed to use when I drive. I wore it once and was standing in line at Barnes and Noble talking to my wife as everyone in the nearest 50 yards was glaring at me. Seems I have to take my hearing aid out to use it and I got a little loud.

I mean the GPS looked pretty smart on my dash board, but the lady inside was the most annoying, rudest person I had run into in a long time. Every 10

minutes, she would sarcastically say, "Re-calc-ulating" You would think that she could be nicer. It was like she could barely tolerate me. She would let go with a deep sigh and then tell me to make a U-turn at the next light. Then when I would make a right turn instead, it was not good.

When I get really lost now, I call my wife and tell her the name of the cross streets and while she is starting to develop the same tone as Gypsy, the GPS lady, at least she loves me.

To be perfectly frank, I am still trying to learn how to use the cordless phones in our house. We have had them for 4 years, but I still haven't figured out how I can lose three phones all at once and have run around digging under chair cushions and checking bathrooms and the dirty laundry baskets when the phone rings.

The world is just getting too complex for me. They even mess me up every time I go to the grocery store. You would think they could settle on something themselves but this sudden "Paper or Plastic?" every time I check out just knocks me for a loop. I bought some of those cloth reusable bags to avoid looking confused but I never remember to take them in with me.

Now I toss it back to them. When they ask me, "Paper or Plastic?" I just say, "Doesn't matter to me. I am bi-saksual." Then it's their turn to stare at me with a blank look.

I was recently asked if I tweet. I answered, No, but I do toot a lot."

BARA-FST

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

For Sale:: Heathkit SG-8 signal generator (\$10)
Details and photos at lutins.org/forsale, or call me at
607-729-4817 >

Handling Field Day Traffic 2010 Observation by Anne Fanelli, WI2G, manager Empie Slow Speed Net.(as printed in the July 2010 "The ESS Bulletin."

This year's contest/exercise is now history, and prompted some observations of how the traffic system--NTS and independent nets such as ESS--holds up under a greater-than-usual load; this, of course, is what we train for as a part of disaster preparedness. Field Day is always a busy weekend for those few traffic-handlers who are at home, and noteworthy this year was an apparent increase in "extra" (as opposed to the 100-point

Radiogram to the Section Manager, insurance that at least one Field Day op per site knows how to utilize NTS) traffic from club sites. To more than one beleaguered liaison, I'm sure; Field Day has come to resemble a nationwide message booth. This would be a fine challenge, *but....*Much--if not most--of the traffic seemed to be originated by hams whose only experience of NTS is their local net. Don't get me wrong; local nets are fine (I cut my teeth with the courteous and helpful ops on the Big Apple Net in NYC), but they provide a lopsided picture of the traffic-handling network. Indeed, the very idea of a network is often glossed over. Traffic listed either a) drops magically from an often-unnamed source,

Sometimes cryptically referred to as "incoming" (which, for some reason, always makes me want to duck) or b) is sucked up as "outgoing" by a heroic representative of God knows where (seemingly the same poor soul, day after day), to disappear the same way. Little mention is made of the section net, the next rung up the ladder-- where and when it meets, or even its name. This was probably unnecessary in the past, when most VHF-net

checkins were at least somewhat familiar with HF operations and many were also active on their section voice and/or CW nets. Call me a curmudgeon if you like but amateur radio (like other endeavors) seems to have become increasingly polarized and fragmented, and NTS has become bottom-heavy to a near-intolerable degree. If you think of the traffic network (in terms of the number of participants) as a step pyramid, during periods of peak demand--like Field

Day and the various SETs--more traffic is often originated on the bottom

step (local nets) than can be effectively cleared by the top step (region and area nets, and the inter-area Transcontinental Corps). Region- and area-net reps are accustomed to carrying a load; a dozen messages is not uncommon. When VHF nets begin scheduling multiple sessions and casual checkins are swept up by gee-let'sget-in-on-the-fun giddiness, though, the volume of traffic originated by the many increases exponentially,

Overwhelming the ability of the few to handle well. Messages get garbled because it seems like there's no time to ask for a fill, with the next net starting in thirty seconds. Traffic gets lost, family relations prickly, and traffic-handling feels less like a rewarding part of a satisfying hobby and a lot more like finding yourself in Wal-Mart at Christmastime (with a long list!). It would help a lot if net managers gently nudged their members

up the pyramid. Just because there are a number of regular liaisons, certainly doesn't mean that they're the only ops capable of such a function. In fact, this was originally the primary advantage of NTS over the pre-WWII trunk-line network; a network consisting of many small links will create a smaller hole if one of those links fails than one made up of fewer, larger links. As oft repeated here, you don't have to commit to a permanent duty-roster slot to be invaluable. Any "regular," however dedicated, is occasionally absent for some reason; the ability to pick up an NCS or liaison function when needed will earn you the undying respect--and gratitude--of your net manager. Versatility--the ability to move with relative ease among the layers of NTS--is a big plus too, not least in (Lord knows) alleviating the boredom which usually accompanies repeating skills long mastered. Challenges keep us sharp! On a less kvetchy note, congratulations to our neighbors to the north Bob, KA2QV and Glenn, VE3GNA for resolving a routing conundrum new to us all. Several days after the Big Weekend, I received a Field Day greeting to a ham in Texas--for relay to a Russian ham on the International Space Station! I wondered why it took four days for the traffic to move from one op in Ontario to another, until my attention was called to the fact that the Texas routing was not part of the original message; it was

only after consulting their AMSAT rep in Ottawa that they agreed the best way to move this thing was via NASA in Texas. I must admit I wouldn't know where to begin routing something out of this world (literally) and am reasonably certain I'm not alone--a good reason to understand the limitations (not many, but some) of the traffic network before "dumping" traffic into it, simply because you are able to do so.

2010 Club Officers

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

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

Next General Meeting

7:30 PM, Wednesday, July 21st

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

Board Meeting

7:00 PM, Wednesday August 4th

Conference Room, WSKG Studios, 501 Gates Road, Vestal

Exam Session

NO TESTING In JULY!!!!

Vestal Public Library, Route 434 Vestal

BARA Dues

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

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

