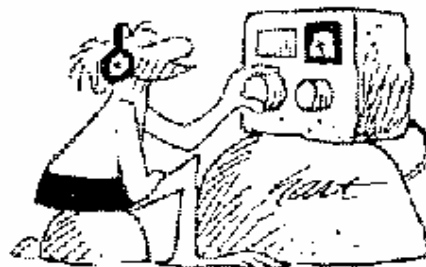


BARA FACTS



Binghamton Amateur Radio Association, Inc.
PO Box 853
Binghamton, NY 13902

Established 1919



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W2OW Fred W. Porterfield Memorial Station

W2OW Repeater 147.39/.99

Check out BARA on the web!

<http://www.wtsn.binghamton.edu/bara/>

PRESIDENT' CORNER

Well, we stacked in a couple more HAMFESTs under our belts since the last newsletter. You can tell who went to the Ithaca HAMFEST. Those are the HAMS that look 'well done'. A beautiful hot sunny day was had by all.

While youse guys were having fun, some of us had to 'work' on Saturday. I gave Pete, KB2JZG, a hand with communications at the Square Deal Sportsman Club. Up at 4:30 AM (hard to believe isn't it), on site at 5:45 AM. Pete and his crew were already there. The reason? Square Deal was hosting the USPSA / IPSC NYS Championships. Ask JZG for the translation. An international group of guys and gals competed in this (what I call unique) civilian marksmanship competition. One of the 8 stages included shooting from a simulated helicopter platform. It carried both the competitor, and directly behind him, the range officer. The shooter would release the 'helicopter' resulting in it swaying toward and then away from the targets. The competitor then had to load and fire at three sets of three targets each and two moving targets which were independently in motion. Fantastic. All 145 competitors really enjoyed themselves.

As I watched the activities I was thinking, "What a bunch of yahoos." "What kind of nuts drive up to seven hours to get somewhere by 8 AM, mill around in the sun all day greeting and making friends, trading 'stuff', and eating on site prepared gourmet foods." Hmmm.

One interesting side bar. I witnessed a bunch of guys during their exit (actually waiting for JZG's shuttle). Some of the group were police officers. One chap flipped an item to a rather large officer from the city of brotherly love. The item turned out to be a Duncan Doughnut key chain. The officer graciously accepted it and said he was going to put his cruiser keys on it. All this time I thought only HAMS had this kind of fun. When the group got on the shuttle and it pulled away, the guy sitting on the tailgate gave me a "73s."

A couple of BARA events coming up soon. On the evening of Tuesday, August 14th we are hoping to get sufficient assistance to put on a foxhunt tutorial and demonstration for the youth of a Vestal church. Give me a call if you can assist. Another opportunity to wave the BARA amateur radio flag in the hopes of capturing the interest of members of the younger generation. Then of Aug 15th, the annual BARA mini tailgate, picnic, meeting extravaganza on the hilltop. Get there early. Bring something to pass and nothing to leave.

Hope your all enjoying summer. Did I hear someone complain about the heat? Remember February.

CU on the radio. De wb2ghh@arrl.net

BARA PICNIC

It's August and time for the annual picnic/mini hamfest. The picnic is held at the BARA club site on Milks Road. The club will provide the spiedies, hot dogs, hamburgers, condiments, chips, plates, silverware and soda/water. You need to bring a chair, umbrella (even if its sunny so we can make sure we have great weather) bug spray, so you not a meal for the pesky little critters, and a dish to pass. This is a great time to try out a new recipe, most folks seem to willing to try just about anything. Desserts, salads, baked beans are always good. If you get a chance talk to your friends and see what they are bringing so we don't have 6 bowls of potato salad. I understand that Sharon, N2WGM will be bringing her ever famous and very delicious lasagna. Also, there no need to double or triple your recipe. (Sharon this does **not** include your Lasagna!!!!)

This is a great event to bring your kids, your grandchildren, your friends kids even your dog as he promises not to eat our dinner!!!. I will get a piñata if I know that there are going to be at least four kids at the picnic. So call me at 748-4387 if you're going to bring a child. Sometimes the best part of the piñata is watching the men put it up!

Rumor also has it that Paul, N2NCB may be out of town so get you thinking caps on and lets find a way to spend some money!!!!

So far we have our grill and grill master but we do need a few folding tables to put all of our fabulous food and supplies on. So if you have an extra table please give me or a board member a call.

The antenna's are all working so it's a great opportunity to work someone west of Conklin!!!!

Remember this is a mini hamfest, too. So load up your car with all your treasure and bring them up. And set up in the field by the shack about 5 PM. Last year a few folks found some stuff they really couldn't live with out!! Of course that was not the XYL's opinion.

We would like to start the picnic at about 6 PM and we end when either the bugs get to bad or all the good DX is gone. If you haven't been up to the shack lately and can't remember how to work some stuff this is the perfect time to come up and get a refresher course on shack operations. Contest Season is just around the corner and if you want to learn how to run the CT contest program I will be more then will to show you.

I hope to see lots of faces at the picnic. Everyone always seems to have a great dinner, lots of good conversation both on the air and off and remember it is always cooler on the hilltop so you may want to throw that BARA jacket in the car. See at the hilltop August 15 . 5 PM minifest 6 PM dinner.

de AA2MU

THEY MAY BE NEW BUT ...

On a recent trip I was a bit surprised and confused (more than usual). I dug out my Garmin GPS 12 and noted the battery indicator was on the low side. So, always being prepared, I dug further in my toy bag and pulled out a new (use by March 2005) 4 pack of AA Alkaline batteries manufactured by a very 'durable' company. I inserted the batteries in the GPS, turned it on and - blink. That translates to "blink period." My first thought was that I didn't have the battery polarity correct. I removed and reinserted the NEW batteries. Again - blink. XVC%^&*. That translates to - son of a gun. Inserted the OLD batteries. The GPS came to life and worked a bit sluggish because the batteries were over 80% depleted.

Upon arriving home I located my newest voltage level determination device, a Triplet Model 631. I couldn't find my old workhorse Simpson Model 260. Regardless, I checked the NEW batteries. Three of the four were 1.55 vdc. The fourth measured NADA. Translation, 0.0.

Lesson learned. **THEY MAY BE NEW BUT THEY COULD BE BAD.** Using a GPS for a number of hours, traveling in unknown areas, needing a battery change only to find that one of the NEW batteries is DEAD does not translate to a very good feeling. So before you start that trip, even though you have those brande new battery packets, I suggest you probe the package and voltage check each battery so you don't get surprised, "out in the field."

The same holds true for those spare HT battery packs. You know you "just" recharged them a few months back. Don't forget that NiCads loose their charge, just sitting on the shelf, at about 2% per week. You voltage check them and get a good voltage indication. Hmmmmnnn just how much charge have you lost over time?

de wb2ghh@arri.net

ONE THOUSAND MARBLES

by Jeffrey Davis

I'm a Ham radio operator and spend some time working with radios and electronics. So when I heard this story it really made me think! I hope that you will find some application in your own life as well...

A few weeks ago, I was shuffling toward the basement shack with a steaming cup of coffee in one hand and the morning paper in the other. What began as a typical Saturday morning, turned into one of those lessons that life seems to hand you from time to time. Let me tell you about it.

I turned the dial up into the phone portion of the band on my ham radio in order to listen to a Saturday morning swap net. Along the way, I came across an older sounding chap, with a tremendous signal and a golden voice. You know, the kind, he sounded like he should be in the broadcasting business. He was telling whomever he was talking with something about "a thousand marbles".

I was intrigued and stopped to listen to what he had to say. "Well, Tom, it sure sounds like you're busy with your job. I'm sure they pay you well but it's a shame you have to be away from home and your family so much. Hard to believe a young fellow should have to work sixty or seventy hours a week to make ends meet. Too bad you missed your daughter's dance recital."

He continued, "Let me tell you something, Tom, something that has helped me keep a good perspective on my own priorities." And that's when he began to explain his theory of "a thousand marbles."

"You see, I sat down one day and did a little arithmetic. The average person lives about seventy-five years. I

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know, some live more and some live less, but on average, folks live about seventy-five years."

"Now then, I multiplied 75 times 52 and I came up with 3,900, which is the number of Saturdays that the average person has in their entire lifetime. Now stick with me Tom, I'm getting to the important part."

"It took me until I was fifty-five years old to think about all this in any detail," he went on, "and by that time I had lived through over twenty-eight hundred Saturdays. I got to thinking that if I lived to be seventy-five, I only had about a thousand of them left to enjoy."

"So I went to a toy store and bought every single marble they had. I ended up having to visit three toy stores to round-up 1,000 marbles. I took them home and put them inside of a large, clear plastic container right here in the shack next to my gear. Every Saturday since then, I have taken one marble out and thrown it away."

"I found that by watching the marbles diminish, I focused more on the really important things in life. There is nothing like watching your time here on this earth run out to help get your priorities straight."

"Now let me tell you one last thing before I sign-off with you and take my lovely wife out for breakfast. This morning, I took the very last marble out of the container. I figure if I make it until next Saturday then I have been given a little extra time. And the one thing we can all use is a little more time."

"It was nice to meet you Tom, I hope you spend more time with your family, and I hope to meet you again."

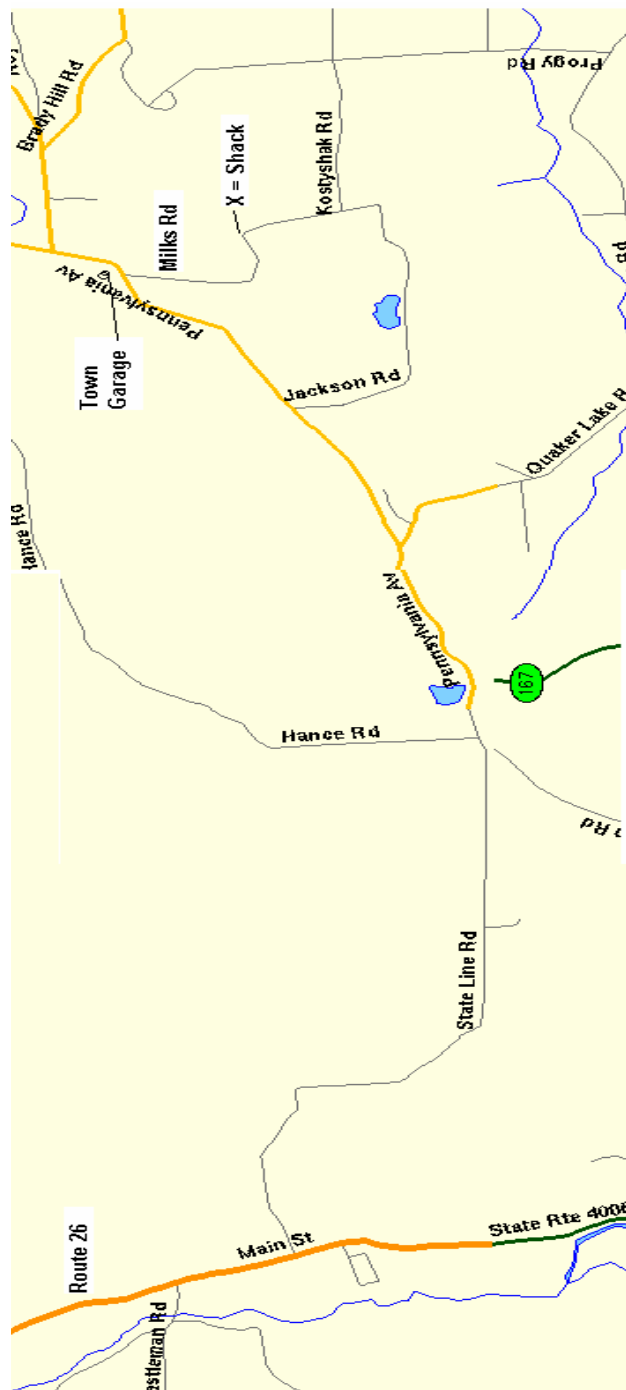
You could have heard a pin drop on the radio when this fellow signed off. I guess he gave us all a lot to think about. I had planned to work on the antenna that morning, and then I was going to meet up with a few hams to work on the next club newsletter. Instead, I went upstairs and woke my wife up with a kiss.

"C'mon honey, I'm taking you and the kids to breakfast."

"What brought this on?" she asked with a smile.

"Oh, nothing special, it's just been a long time since we spent a Saturday together with the kids. Hey, can we stop at a toy store while we're out? I need to buy some marbles."

Thanks go to K2MFB for pointing out this story.



A little reminder above – how to get to the shack.
Detailed directions appeared in the June newsletter.

**COME TO THE PICNIC
AUGUST 15th**