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BARA Facts

Newsletter of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association

December 2001

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

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 to 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 its 50th anniversary did not take place because of lack of interest. That was a shame because 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. KIDS night was a success. The Broome County SKYWARN Training session was again hosted by BARA.. An informational 'Club Flyer' was completed. The ARRL WNY Section Manager attended the March meeting and spoke to the club. 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. Our hilltop 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 is 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",
President: George Allen, K2CM
Vice President: Bob McCabe, KC2DSS

and development of a "REST ROOM" facility at the shack. 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 the 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 Jack, WB2GHH

Christmas Party Reminder

Don't forget that the December 19th Meeting is the BARA Christmas Party and will be held at Russell's Steak House, 1001 West Main Street, Endicott (across from the Enjoie Golf Course). If you are planning to come and have not let the club know, please contact Hedy at 748-4387 by Monday, December 14th. Cocktail Hour starts at 5:30 PM with Dinner Service beginning around 6:30 PM. Cost is \$18.00/person and includes a selection of Orange Roughy, Chicken Cordon Bleu, or Prime Rib from the Banquet Menu. The Christmas Party is always a fun and a well-attended event. If you haven't any plans for that evening, please consider spending a few hours of fun and fellowship with us!

Election Results

The Election of Officers and Directors for the year 2002 was conducted at our November meeting in accord with our amended constitution. There being no nominations in addition to the published slate and no nominations from the floor, the club Secretary was directed to cast one vote FOR the slate and the election was declared unanimous. Officers and Directors for 2001 are as follows:

Secretary: Ed Krymowski, NE2W
Treasurer: Paul Slocum, N2NCB

Directors (4):Bob Handel, K2FU
Ed Plesnar, KB2SCF
Ron Reagan, N2RWK
Mel Snitchler, WE2K

Many thanks to these members for their willingness to step up and serve our club and many thanks to our outgoing Officers and Directors who have served our club for the past year (or more): Jack Connors, WB2GHH; Bill Coleman, N2BC; Merle Rigby, K2AOV; and Tom Tefft, W2TRT. BARA is fortunate to be able to fill the slate each year and to avoid the crisis of not being able to fill the slate.

Space Station Contact a Success!

On Friday, November 16th students from St. James Middle School in Johnson City made contact with the International Space Station through the Club Station at Kopernik Observatory.

By all accounts the activity was a success and you could feel the excitement in the room as the footprint of the station came within range and the crew at Kopernik made their final tests and adjustments.

John Kray, KA2CNG, was the main force behind arranging the contact and began the process about three years ago. Richard Crow, N2SPI, handled the technical details of operating the radios and working the students through the contact. Jerry Babcock, KG2FY assisted with setup, logistics, and a myriad of other duties. Many other amateurs helped with assistance and support. Ford Drake, AB2HS, arranged links to the SVARA VHF and UHF machines so that the contact could be heard throughout the valley.

A large audience of students, parents, and local amateurs joined the St. James students who had studied and prepared for the big moment. Many people throughout the Valley took time off from their morning work and activities to listen in and some invited non-amateurs to listen in with them.

Although the contact lasted only ten minutes (including a last-minute frequency change due to interference) the students were able to ask a number of questions. Amateur Radio also received some favorable exposure and we applaud the team that made this contact a happen!

Uncle Tungsten

For questions or additional information please contact Bob Soltis, WA2VCS, (607-754-7940 or soltisrj@vnet.ibm.com).

Oliver Sacks is best known as a writer on the strange and something wondrous things that happen within the human mind. As author he is probably best known for the book on which the movie *Awakenings* was based. His latest book, *Uncle Tungsten, Memories of a Chemical Boyhood* is a very personal memoir of his boyhood in England between the wars. Although not strictly a “radio book” it will likely awaken pleasant memories for anyone who played with batteries, chemistry sets, and wires in childhood.

Dr. Sacks was fortunate to have been born into a family of distinguished scientists and inventors. As a child his parents and relatives encouraged his interest in science and technology. One uncle in particular — Uncle “Tungsten” — was a pioneer in the design and manufacture of incandescent electric lamps and the romance of the metals used to make lamp filaments is a central theme. Sacks weaves a tale that summarizes the scientific discoveries and personalities of the 18th, 19th, and early 20th century and he writes with eloquence and feeling of a time when scientific discovery was charged with promise and unadulterated by cold war fears.

If you are looking for a good book as a Christmas gift for someone or for yourself this book is well worth checking out. *Uncle Tungsten* (ISBN 0-375-40448-1) is published by Alfred A. Knopf and is available at \$25.00.

Change to VE Testing Schedule

Bob Soltis, WA2VCS, contact VE for the monthly W5YI/VEC Tests offered at Emergency Services announces a change of time and location for the Sessions.

The December Testing Session will be the last one scheduled at Emergency Services. Beginning in January 2002 the tests will move to the Vestal Public Library and they will be scheduled for the *Last Monday of each Month* (except for May and July). The May Session will be held the Monday before Memorial Day. In July there will be no Session.

Sessions will be held in the Conference Room (or in the Lecture Room if the Conference Room is unavailable). *Registration begins at 7:00 PM and due to Library Hours the Session must conclude by 9:00 PM.* Pre-registration is not necessary.

The Vestal Public Library is located near the intersection of NY Route 26 and NY Route 434 East (near the SkyLark Diner).

Who's Turning Those Lights On & Off?

