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BARA Facts

Newsletter of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association

September 2002

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

Don't Miss the September Meeting!

As you will see below BARA is faced with significant decisions that define the future of our club. These issues concern all Members and we encourage you to attend the September General Meeting to hear what is happening and to let us know what you think. We will devote the entire meeting to business and there will be no program as The Binghamton Amateur Radio Association — the oldest Radio Club in the Triple Cities — looks to its future.

The President's Corner

Big changes within BARA this fall. We have lost our lease for the hilltop property off Milks road. In discussions with the owners, we have been told that the property will be divided among the heirs and kept within the family. They have declined to renew our lease or to sell us a portion of the property because of family considerations.

In order to make an orderly transition from our old property to a new site, I have made the following committee appointments:

☞ **Decommissioning Old Site:** Ron, AA2EQ, and Bill, N2BC, will lead the team that decommissions the Milks Road site and installs our equipment at a new site (yet to be identified). This task includes taking down the towers, removing equipment, preparing an inventory, and arranging for storage.

☞ **New Property Committee:** Paul, N2NCB, will list and evaluate properties as they are identified and work with members on leads for new sites. He will assist in

negotiations and perform related duties as required. Paul will work out a checklist for evaluating prospective sites and rating their merits. This is a big job and any member who knows of potential sites should contact Paul.

☞ **Town/Municipal property investigation:** George, K2CM, will work with local towns to see if we can use town owned property for our site. This effort will parallel Paul's new property committee. We must explore all avenues this fall and I am currently working with a local town to see if they have a site that we can use. We would provide backup emergency communications for this town in the event of a town emergency. Other members will be talking to other towns under my direction.

☞ **Checklists & Management guidance:** Paul, N2NCB, will maintain checklists for decommissioning and procuring a new site.

☞ **Interface to SVARA:** Ford, AB2HS. The site change has an impact on the entire ham community and I have asked Ford to work closely with us on the procurement of a new site. SVARA maintains several repeaters in the Binghamton area and must be aware of our plans. Both clubs must work together.

☞ **Emergency Services Interface:** Jack, WB2GHH, will work with Jack, KB2YEN, and others to make sure that we meet the needs of amateur emergency services.

☞ **WSKG Tower:** Bill, WB8RAE, will continue work on the procurement of the WSKG tower. There are property use issues that must be resolved before we can accept the tower and use it. Our trustee, Frank N2HR, mentioned that this is an ideal site for VHF/UHF contesting and we will use this site if we can get the land use issue resolved.

Each of these committees will need help. Please volunteer your services and say "Yes" if you are asked to help. We have a big job ahead and this is a clear case where we need to work together.

Considerations for a new site include:

_ On or near a hilltop with drive-up access to the site and

plenty of parking.

_Utility electrical power is desirable. If this is impractical then we will have to invest in a generator and consider fuel storage and delivery.

_Sufficient room for a building, towers, and HF/VHF antennas with no restrictions on this usage and no neighbors.

_Low cost (or no cost) to acquire and low (or no) taxes.

_We do not want to lease property; we prefer a permanent easement or, as an alternative, outright ownership.

_On town-owned property we also need room for the equipment and antennas to interface with the town's communication system (with town approved operator) in an emergency.

The town that I am working with has asked if we could be part of their town emergency plan. If their communication system fails or is inadequate in a time of emergency, BARA would provide operators and equipment to provide communications within the town and to interface with county and state emergency services. This is an important need and consequently the town is working hard to find us a site that would meet our needs and theirs as well.

As members of our club, you should be aware that there is insufficient money in our treasury to purchase a property, erect a shack and towers, and install our equipment. Property considerations aside, the shack and tower expenses in themselves will be considerable.

At the September meeting motions will be made regarding the search for a new site and funding for a new site. Please do your best to attend the next club meeting; it will be an important one! — *George R. Allen, President, Binghamton Amateur Radio Association*

A Word from the Editor

I'm going to take a few minutes this month and mention a subject that has been on my mind for a while now. I'm writing as a member of BARA and I don't claim to speak for either the Club or the Board.

It's been suggested that BARA has missed opportunities to place itself before the public and that we don't do too good a job at publicizing either ourselves or Amateur Radio. I'd just ask you to stop for a moment and think. I'd like to reflect for a bit on what BARA should be doing and who should be doing it.

It's true that BARA does involve itself in contesting and that we also have a number of DX awards.

These reflect well on our Club and they do represent accomplishments to be proud of, but there are still some who would point out that "BARA just does contesting and DX, there's nothing there for other Hams." I disagree, the

Contesting and DX awards are there because the Contesters and DXers in the club enjoy those activities and stand up at meetings to announce events and identify themselves as the "*one in charge*".

That's something to think about.

In my experience every significant Club activity has taken place because someone stood up to say "I'm the one in charge, let's do it." Now sometimes that person happens to be an Officer or a Board member, but not always. The Officers and Board are there as the "representatives" and "monitors" of BARA. They volunteer to serve and the Membership ratifies their position by vote. *Although the Officers and Board may propose suggestions to the Club, their word is not final and they are not the only ones with "Good Ideas"*. They are members of the Club who agree to give up their time (two meetings a month plus Hamfest, Picnic, and other work) for BARA. Theirs are busy hands, but they are not the only hands in the Club.

Think about it.

If an idea is good enough for BARA to follow up then it is important enough for you to bring it up at a meeting. If something is important to you, tell us why and show us that it is important to us. The Contesters do.

The DXers do. BARA is not *their* club and it is not just *your* club, *it is our club*. — *Your Editor, Ed, KB2SCF*

BARA Elections — Coming Soon

The Election of Officers and Board Members will be coming up in just a few months (at our November meeting). Traditionally the Vice President heads the canvassing committee, but Ed, KB2SCF, has offered to assist Vice President Bob, KC2DSS. All BARA members are urged to consider offering their time and talent to the club. The duties are not onerous, although attendance at the Board Meeting is expected and you get first choice for all the other good jobs.

If you have ideas for BARA and a vision for our future, please contact Bob or Ed and throw your hat "in the ring!".

Bylaws Change

All BARA Members are reminded that there will be a final reading and vote on a change to the BARA Constitution at our September meeting:

VII.1. Directors: The board of directors shall consist of the officers and four Directors. The business of this association shall be managed by the Board of Directors. At least one of the board members elected will be a resident of New York State and a citizen of the United States.

VII.2. Quorum: Four members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum and the meeting of the Board of Directors will be held at least once a month. Each member of the board will have one vote. The Board of Directors may make such rules and regulations covering its meetings as it may deem necessary.

BARA in the News

From the archives of *QST* we note that the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association was in the news for 8 July 1935 when Whitney Point and Lisle were inundated with up to six feet of water.

D.G. Goetcheus (then president of BARA), his wife, Harry Spencer, and W8GPM made their way to Whitney Point and established communications with the outside world using a Transmitter/Receiver set provided by W8BQX. Power was derived from six storage batteries driving Harry Spencer's 32 VDC-110VAC motor-generator set. The team passed messages for the Sheriff and State Troopers until late afternoon at which time a telephone line was finally established.

For more details, see page 35 of the October 1935 issue of *QST*.

JOTA -Jamboree On The Air

On Saturday, 19 October (from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM, rain or shine) the annual Jamboree On the Air (JOTA) will take place. Once again Pete, KB2JZG, and Howard, AA2CO, will host the JOTA locally for ALL local Scout groups. Setup this year will be at the Maine Town Park on NY Route 26 in Maine, NY. Howard has secured the site and two covered pavilions with electricity will be available for operating

If you can volunteer please call Pete at 785-0666 or e-mail him (mrpetek@aol.com) — he will let you know what is needed. The Antenna Farm will include Pete's multi-band beam (used with great success in previous events) plus at least two long wire setups, but operators are needed to show the scouts what HAM Radio is all about! This is a great opportunity for us HAM's to show the community what we can do and to "strut our stuff," so please volunteer.

Atomic Time in the Shack

WWV is the traditional Time Standard in the Ham Shack and the new clocks that synchronize themselves to the WWV Low Frequency transmissions are tempting gadgets, but sometimes pricey. If you have been "on the fence" about buying one, but unsure about the price you will be pleased to hear that Wal-Mart has several models from Oregon Scientific that retail for \$12.95.

Your editor decided that the time had come to try one and the model RM103A — a satin finished silver rectangle — was selected. It came with a battery and it took only a few minutes to select the time zone and set the format to 24-hour military time. Setting the initial date and time was easy, but the instructions cautioned that it might take up to seventy-two hours for the time to begin synchronizing.

I'm happy to report that the clock works as advertised. Synchronization occurred within twenty-four hours and has been tracking well. The display is clear and illuminates at a touch of the "snooze bar" while the controls can be used without referring to the instructions.

End of an Era

Radio Amateur Callbook — in publication since 1920 — is throwing in the towel and will cease publication of its CD-ROM *Callbook* effective with the winter 2003 edition (expected to come out in November). Publisher Bob Hughes recently announced that "Due to accessibility to the FCC database via the Internet, sales have declined to levels that make it unprofitable to publish future editions." The print edition of the *Callbook* was discontinued with the 75th (1997) edition in favor of the CD-ROM version. — *from the ARRL Letter for 9 August 2002*

Review

Simple and Fun Antennas for Hams

This latest Antenna Book from the ARRL is intended to bridge the gap for the beginner who would like to begin to learn the Art, Science & Mystery of Antennas, but is intimidated by the *Antenna Handbook*. At \$22.95 the book is somewhat cheaper than the *Antenna Handbook* and at somewhat over 200 pages much thinner. Still, it provides a practical overview of basic theory along with hints & kinks that many of us learn from an Elmer or in the difficult school of experience. There are also plenty of tried and proven designs for antennas of different types and there is enough material to make this a useful guide for the beginner or even for the experienced Ham who would like a handy "Idea Book".

Simple and Fun Antennas for Hams (ISBN 0-87259-862-4) is published by the American Radio Relay League.

Operating and Other Events

18 SEPTEMBER: BARA GENERAL MEETING, 7:30 PM.
28 SEPTEMBER: ELMIRA HAMFEST. County Fairgrounds

in Horseheads, NY.

9 OCTOBER: SVARA MEETING, 7:30 PM. Broome County Office of Emergency Services.

19 OCTOBER: JOTA, JAMBOREE ON THE AIR. See the note in this issue of the BARA Facts for more information.

Club Officers and Committees			
President	George Allen	K2CM	760-2775
Vice President	Bob McCabe	KC2DSS	748-9808
Secretary	Ed Krymowski	NE2W	723-2634
Treasurer	Paul Slocum	N2NCB	687-2057
Directors	Bob Handel	K2FU	693-4310
	Ed Plesnar	KB2SCF	754-3810
	Ron Regan	N2RWK	722-6790
	Mel Snitchler	WE2K	723-9612
W2OW Trustee	Frank Scoblick	N2HR	729-4249
Newsletter	Ed Plesnar	KB2SCF	754-3810

BARA, The Binghamton Amateur Radio Association is



an ARRL Affiliated Club

Next General Meeting

7:30 PM, Wednesday, September 18th Unitarian Universalist Church Riverside Drive, Binghamton, Next to Lourdes Hospital

Board Meeting

7:00 PM, Wednesday October 2nd
Broome Community College Campus, Office of Emergency Services (West Side of Campus)

Exam Session

7:00 PM Monday, September 30th
Vestal Public Library, Route 434 Vestal
1:30 PM, Saturday October 12th
Endicott Fire Station, Across from UE High School

BARA Dues

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

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York

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