



# **BARA** Facts

*Newsletter of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association*

**April 2005**

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

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## **President's Corner**

Did you miss the March General Meeting? If you did, then you missed a super program given by Bob Handel, K2FU. Bob gave us a presentation on CW, a little history of code, some how-to about CW contesting, and he passed along his insights on the use of CW in ham radio. I think everybody enjoyed the material, especially the part where Bob lapsed into *dah-di-dah's* instead of voice! Thanks Bob!

Lots of activities coming our way.

This month's General Meeting (April 20th) will be our annual Skywarn training. Lots of new material, probably a few stories about our recent flooding too. Pass the word, this session is always interesting and really helps us help out the National Weather Service during severe weather.

This BARA Facts will be the last newsletter before our annual Owego Hamfest on Saturday May 7, 2005. Everything is in place for another successful 'fest - except YOU! More details follow, but — as always we need lots of arms and legs for setup, running the Hamfest on Saturday, and cleanup. There will be a signup sheet at the April 20th General Meeting. If you don't make the meeting, contact either Bob Mess, WS2U or myself and we'll find something for you to do. The success of the Hamfest is key to the future of the club. YOU are key to the success of the Hamfest. You can reach Bob via email ([rmess@binghamton.edu](mailto:rmess@binghamton.edu)), or you can email me at [n2bc@stny.rr.com](mailto:n2bc@stny.rr.com) or give me a call at 748-5232.

Hope to see lots of new faces at the April meeting, and everybody at the Hamfest. — 73, *Bill N2BC*

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## **Hamfest 2005**

The 2005 BARA Hamfest is just a few short weeks away! Mark your calendars for Saturday, 7 May 2005 and plan to be at Marvin Park in Owego (Route 17C,

across from Topps Market, just to the West of the hustle and bustle of busy downtown Owego).

Even better, make it a full day and consider being one of the dedicated, the proud, the willing: The BARA Hamfest Team!

Help is always welcome and there is plenty of work to go around. Bob, WS2U, and Bill, N2BC, our Hamfest Chairs would be glad to hear from you, so please stop by our next meeting and let them know how you can help. If you can't be at the meeting, please give Bob a call at 777-6039, or drop him an e-Mail ([WS2U@binghamton.edu](mailto:WS2U@binghamton.edu))

One popular activity is our Friday setup. You can plan to stop by the 4-H Building between Noon and 1:00 PM on the 6<sup>th</sup> for setup. Bring work gloves and a broom and help get the building ready.

On the day of the fest, there will be plenty of room for helpers. We especially need to make sure that Ticket Sales are well-covered so that we can rotate people through this job and give them a chance to enjoy the fest. We also hope that everyone will consider themselves invited to help out with teardown which should start between noon and 1:00 on Saturday with Dumpster "Picking Rights" going to the first ones in line.

Seriously, the Hamfest is our major BARA activity & fundraiser and it is a lot of fun to help out. Please consider lending a hand. If you can't help out, then stop by and don't neglect to remind your friends that Marvin Park is the place to be on Saturday, the 7<sup>th</sup> of May!

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## **Changes at W2OW**

BARA Members are advised that we have changed Trustee for W2OW. Frank, N2HR, has stepped down from the position of Trustee after many years of service. Mel, WE2K, has stepped up as Trustee.

We thank Frank for his dedication and note the many pleasant hours of W2OW operation which took

place during his watch. Our Club Call has been on the air for many years and we're grateful to Frank for his part in keeping it active and legal. At the same time, we look to the future and thank Mel for taking on this new role.

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### **Regarding Field Days**

Field Days will be 25 & 26 June (the last full weekend in June) and BARA will cover the event from the Town of Binghamton Field House on Coleman Road (go South on Conklin Avenue to Burr Avenue, take a right up Burr Avenue to Murphy Road and then a left onto Coleman Road). The building is about a half mile on the left. All facilities (including toilets!) will be available for use during the event. There is a kitchen that can be used to prepare some hot food as well.

We'd like to make this a real Club Get-Together and we hope that as many members (and their families & other attachments) as possible will participate. Besides operating, there will be room for picnicking, games, horseplay, and all-around fun. Sources close to the BARA Inner Councils indicate that certain monies have been set aside for Food and other Frivolity, so let's plan a party in June!

Mel, WE2K, will be chairing the festivities and we understand that Jack, WB2GHH, and others are helping as well. Anyone interested in attending, helping out, or loaning equipment should see Mel at the next General Meeting or drop a note to w2ow@arrl.net.

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### **Volunteers Needed for MS Walk**

On Saturday, 30 April the annual Broome County MS Walk will be held. Local Amateurs will be providing communications for this event by manning key checkpoints and providing mobile coverage in transport and supply vehicles. If you would like to help out, please contact Ford Drake, AB2HS, by phone or by giving him a call on the 146.82 machine.

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### **Emergency Communicator Response Times Have Changed**

*Over the next few months we hope to see a series of articles addressing the need for Emergency Communicators and encouraging participation in this most important of Amateur Activities. Herewith is the first in the series, penned by Jack, WB2GHH.*

The need for a heightened level of security now includes amateur radio volunteer communications. Why all the fuss? Well, access to a

sensitive area such as a large gathering of people, communication center, weather service facility, telephone company, water works, or other "secure" place by a person who intends to cause additional mayhem or confusion in the guise of an "emergency communicator" could prove disastrous.

In areas where homeland security activities are more apparent, identification cards unique to the emergency situation and/or passage documents are issued at a marshaling point at the time of the actual emergency. Communicators who arrive to help have their identities verified via photographic means or by being personally identified by a previously cleared communicator (or other responder), are allowed access to the marshaling point. They then receive specific instructions as to their assignment and the passage document. Only those persons carrying the passage document (which may identify the specific assignment area and access duration) are allowed into controlled areas. I have had personal experience wearing a short term identification tag. By design, the printed information on the identification tag faded away in less than twenty-four hours thus eliminating the need to assure return of the identification tag to a control point or concern for later unauthorized tag use.

There has always been a requirement for background checks of RACES communicator applicants. It's possible that some future type of unified application review program will apply background checks to ARES and SKYWARN communicators since their communication assignments could be made to areas not previously considered sensitive. Then again, maintaining a communicator type relationship in RACES and ARES and SKYWARN (in addition to observer training) might lessen the administrative and security burden during times of actual deployment.

Whatever the future holds in terms of identification of communicators and access to controlled areas, I hope all able bodied amateur radio operators will continue to offer their communication services to their Emergency Coordinators and to continually test their personal communication capabilities and equipment to assure the effectiveness of communications when they have the chance to serve.

How do you do that? In the Broome County area K2DLB is ARES EC. I myself am the RACES coordinator. Check into the various nets: The Early Bid and the STAR nets (146.73) allow you to check

out the VHF gear. NYSPTEN (daily at 1800) on 3.925 is an informal net that can help get you into the traffic handling mode. Listen up on Sundays (0930 on 3.9935). The RACES message format is the same as the NTS format with an additional “authorization”. This NYS wide net may be a “stiff”, but listen up and check in (the BGM area is in District 4). The Cracker Net (3.921 at 1900); the “7 to 9 er” Net on (3.821 between 1900 and 2100) are great social gatherings and include stations from around the northeast. The above are PHONE Nets, but CW Nets also exist. Try the NYS Slow Speed Net (my kind of net) on 3.590 at 1830. If you feel “too old” for that, then check into the QCWA (Quarter Century Wireless Association) net on 3.917 at 10:30 on Sunday and have a talk with some other “more experienced” hams. Everyone is welcome. — *DE Jack, WB2GHH*

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## **The Pictures are Better on Radio**

The sounds of radio are ever present in my memories and the sounds of WQMR (Quality Music Radio) of Silver Springs, Maryland are etched into my memory.

At 1050 on the AM Dial WQMR was a fixture in the Washington, D.C. area and surround and a favorite of my father whenever he was driving. The music could only be described as *beautiful* and great names like Percy Faith modulated the carrier. I remember in particular the tag line “broadcasting from the top of the *World Building*” and the towering skyscraper and transmitting antenna that the strong and easy tones of the announcer conjured in my young mind. But while the listening was sweet, I especially looked forward to Sunday Afternoon when my family would take a long drive through the rolling landscape of Virginia or Maryland while WQMR broadcast an afternoon of music from the New York stage.

It was magic: An announcer in a box at the theater set the scene and described the action on the stage — almost a play-by-play of the theater — cutting to the house audio whenever the orchestra started to play and the cast joined in. *Oklahoma, Paint Your Wagon, 1776* — I remember hearing them all, and more. To this day, I can picture Ben Franklin declaiming on the rising sun carved on the back of John Hancock’s chair during one of the climactic moments of *1776*.

Ah, the memories. Am I disappointed now to realize that the stage was just an illusion created by an announcer spinning Cast Recordings in the Control

Room and embellishing between songs with his voice and my imagination. And the *World Building*? Well, that was real — all eight stories, plus a penthouse topped by an AM tower (on the top). It was really called the *World Building*. But it was bigger in my mind.

Disappointing? No. It was all real, though it was real only in my mind. And Quality Music Radio may live only in my memory, but it is still real — as real as it once was.

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## **BRAT Net Moves**

All interested parties are advised that with the transfer of the 146.39 Repeater to SVARA our Club Net — the BRAT Net (Binghamton Radio Amateur Technical Net) — has been moved to the 146.82 Repeater. This move should provide wider coverage for the net and it is hoped that check-ins will pick up.

Please consider stopping by at 8:00 PM (local time) on Sunday evenings. Paul, N2NCB, and the other Net Regulars will be glad to hear from you!

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## **SKYWARN Training**

The program for our April General Meeting will be our annual SKYWARN Training Session and will be presented by our Good Friends (and Supporters) from the National Weather Service office at the Binghamton Regional Airport. Please feel free to invite Family, Friends, and Neighbors — Hams and Non-Hams — to this interesting and informative evening. The program will start right after the meeting opens and all regular business will be deferred until after the program.

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## **Free Stuff**

We are informed — via a confidential source — that a number of speakers (electromagnetic, that is; Teeters and others, we hear) will be available free of charge at the April General Meeting. This isn’t an April Fool’s joke (unless the 100% worsted stuff is being pulled over your editor’s eyes).

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## **Volunteers Needed for Endangered Bat Research**

ARRL Amateur Radio Direction Finding Coordinator Joe Moell, K0OV, is asking radio amateurs in the Northeast to assist in a wildlife radio-tracking project from mid-April to early May.

Forty bats will be trapped, tagged and released. Initial tracking will be by aircraft. When breeding locations are determined, the bats' activity will be monitored from the ground. The tiny transmitters are on six spot frequencies between 150 and 151 MHz.

Visit Moell's Homing In Web site <<<http://www.homingin.com/>>> for project updates and additional information on biological radio tags and the best equipment to monitor them. — *From the ARRL Letter for 8 April 2005*

Club Officers and Committees			
President	Bill Coleman	N2BC	748-5232
Vice President	Bob Handel	K2FU	693-4310
Secretary	allen Iutins	KC2KLC	729-4817
Treasurer	Paul Slocum	N2NCB	687-2057
Directors	Steve Orzelek	N2MSB	775-0281
	Mel Snitchler	WE2K	723-9612
	Jack Connors	WB2GHH	724-8822
	Jim Lawson	KC2JED	797-1583
W2OW Trustee	Mel Snitchler	WE2K	723-9612
Newsletter	Ed Plesnar	KB2SCF	754-3810

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



**e-Mail Address: w2ow@arrl.net**

### ***Next General Meeting***

7:30 PM, Wednesday, April 20th

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

### ***Board Meeting***

7:00 PM, Wednesday May 4th

Broome Community College Campus, Office of Emergency Services (West Side of Campus)

### ***Exam Session***

7:00 PM Monday, April 25th

Vestal Public Library, Route 434 Vestal

### ***BARA Dues***

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

### ***DX Cluster***

W2OW on 145.070 MHz with a Data Rate of 1,200 baud; questions to n2bc@stny.rr.com

### ***Local Repeater Nets***

146.73 MHz STAR Net (NTS Feeder) Monday-Friday Evening at 6:30 PM Local Time

146.82 MHz BRAT Net (Informal BARA) Sunday Evening at 8:00 PM Local Time

***Binghamton Amateur Radio Association, Inc.***

***P.O. Box 853***

***Binghamton, New York 13902***

*First Class*

