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BARA Facts

Newsletter of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association

August 2006

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

The President's Corner

Our Editor will attest that this month's article is late. I thought retirement meant MORE time to do fun things— wrong! At least our nasty hot and humid weather has left us for a while, sure makes the outdoor chores a bit more pleasant.

The club's annual August picnic is upon us. This year we are going to be at Otsiningo Park. WB2GHH tells me there is only one covered pavilion, it is brand new, and it will be easy to find. K2FU is signed up for as our Fire Starter again, I will have an extinguisher handy. Thanks to GHH for setting things up with the Park and to Hedy, AA2MU, for pulling together the food and supplies. The fun will be starting around 5:00 P.M., normal meeting night August 16th. Bring the whole family, bring some friends, bring a dish to pass!

The next major event on the horizon is the election of officers in November. It is imperative that the club has a slate of willing people to steer us in the up-coming year. The club has had over 90 anniversaries, marching toward the big 100. The leadership team is important to keeping the club vital.

Bob Handel, K2FU, is in charge of collecting candidate names. The team is comprised of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and four Directors. We are Incorporated and we have Not-for-Profit status, both of these set requirements for the "management" structure of the club.

By now you have all received my letter regarding pledges toward the purchase of an operating site. It is important that you return the pledge sheet marked with your pledge of support or just "No Thanks". I also ask that you take a moment to fill out the comments section of the form. The Officers of the club feel that it is important to press

on toward owning an operating site, I personally think this is going to be key to the future of the club.

Hope to see many of you at the picnic. — *Best 73, Bill N2BC*

2006 BARA Picnic

New Location — Old Friends

It's that time of year again; Mark your calendars NOW for the 2006 BARA Summer Bash. The Binghamton Amateur Radio Association Picnic will be the third Wednesday in August (the 16th) at Otsiningo Park (Off Bevier St. at Front St. in Binghamton). We'll begin 'round about 5:00 PM and we have the use of the Pavilion near the Garden Plots (it's also near the large rest rooms)! It's a very nice place to meet for a party. There are no steps to traverse and parking is available within 50 feet of the pavilion.

Good people, fine food (or vice versa) and all you need to bring is yourself and a friend or two. HAM or NON-HAM, club member or non club member. You might consider bringing along a dish (food item) or desert to pass, but as is our tradition meats, soda and utensils are provided by the club.

No alcoholic beverages or amplified music are permitted, but we can probably string an antenna without being noticed. You don't need to worry about the weather since the picnic is under cover. You got some electronic stuff you want to bargain away? Pack it in the car and be part of a parking lot TRUNK SALE (or give away).

What more can you ask for? Food and drink, good conversation, an opportunity to get rid of (or acquire) some stuff at the 2006 BARA Picnic in Otsiningo Park; Wednesday August 16th from 5:00 PM until Dark.

To assist us in our planning it would be helpful for you to give notice of your planned attendance and the number of guests in order that appropriate provisions can be arranged. Whatever, come one and come all. We hope to see you and many others at the BARA Picnic! — With Thanks to Jack Connors, WB2GHH, our Faithful Director of BARA, Inc. (wb2ghh@arrl.net; 607-724-8822)

Black Bear Brush Off

I had a pretty good start to the day on Saturday, August 5, 2006. Up at 0545, walked out for the paper and saw the balloons rise from Ostiningo Park. From my elevation of 1,300 feet it was pretty cool seeing about a dozen balloons pop up through the low valley fog bank. By 0715 I was off, not toward the hamfest, but (unfortunately) towards Parsons, Pa for the funeral of a family friend.

Up Felters Road through some fog. When I rounded the corner at the top of the hill I foolishly commented that “on a day like this you have to watch out for the deer and the bears”. Of course my addition of the “bears” was to tease my [*long suffering and saintly*] XYL who dislikes the idea of black bears having become more common in the Town of Binghamton area over the last three years. Within a half mile of making my witty remark and about 100 yards from W2PT’s QTH, I glimpsed out of the corner of my left eye something on the left side of the car. For a half of a split second I thought a big black dog had jumped out, but when I glanced in the rear view mirror I yelped for my XYL to look. There loping up the road was a black bear. Not a cub. Not a full grown bear. I figure it was a bit bigger than a full grown Newfoundland long haired dog. My XYL did get a glimpse of the bear in her side view mirror, but although we turned around went back up the hill hoping to spot the bear, it was long gone.

How close was it? Well later in the day after the trip, I happened to notice two smudge marks on the driver side lower door panel. It looked like someone had bounced a basketball on the side of the car. No scratches or bumps just two spots about the size of small grapefruits where the dust and dirt was removed. I’m not certain who was luckier, the bear or me. If I were a half second later I more than likely would have hit the bear with the front left side of the car resulting in major damage to the bear. Maybe not killing him. Good for him but bad for me. I wouldn’t want to venture out of the car to

exchange license information with a pissed off black bear — regardless of size. I’m certain my expert driving skills coupled with my usual moderate speed and brand new brakes (about 15 miles old) would have kept the car on the road, but even so, the car would have sustained moderate damage.

Ah, just another paragraph in the WB2GHH family book. Maybe this is a good example of “watch what you ask for.” My witty remark may well have been misinterpreted as a wish or a prayer.
— DE Jack, WB2GHH

Vanity Call Sign Fee to Drop

The regulatory fee to obtain or renew an Amateur Radio vanity call sign will drop slightly for applications received by the FCC on or after Wednesday, September 6. The new fee will be \$20.80 for the 10-year license term. Applications received by the FCC before September 6 must include the current fee of \$21.90.

Amateur Radio licensees may file renewal applications no sooner than 90 days of their license expiration date. While the regulatory fee payment is required from licensees wishing to keep their current vanity call signs after renewal, vanity holders can opt to get a sequential call sign and avoid paying any fee when they renew.

ARRL VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM, says the FCC has been handling vanity call sign license renewals from June without any delay or problems. She recommends that Amateurs use one of the automated methods of filing, such as via the ARRL or the FCC Universal Licensing System (ULS). She notes that. “paper filings to the FCC can be confusing and difficult.” The FCC renewed nearly 3000 vanity call sign licenses during June and July.

Amateur Radio licensees holding vanity call signs granted prior to 1996 are not required to pay a regulatory fee when renewing. Additionally, such licensees are not specifically tagged as vanity call sign holders in the ULS.

The ARRL VEC will process license renewals for vanity call sign holders for a modest fee. The service is available to ARRL members and nonmembers, although League members pay less. Routine, non-vanity renewals continue to be free for ARRL members. Trustees of club stations with vanity call signs may renew either via the ULS or through a Club Station Call Sign Administrator, such as ARRL VEC.

Somma says the ARRL’s new license

renewal/modification Web pages
<<http://www.arrl.org/fcc/memberlicenseinstructions.html>> contain
complete information on license-filing procedures,

Irish Radio Amateurs

Seek 500 kHz Allocation

According to the Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB), the Irish Radio Transmitters Society has applied to Irish communications regulator ComReg for a small allocation in the region of 500 kHz for Amateur Radio experimentation. The move follows a similar proposal made by the RSGB to UK regulator Ofcom in 2004. Ofcom has not yet made a decision on the RSGB proposal, but the society is hopeful of an allocation between 501 and 504 kHz. There is also a possibility that Ofcom might designate the spot frequency of 500 kHz as a maritime memorial frequency. In recent years, there has been little traffic on the band 415 to 526.6 kHz, after most countries stopped using it as a Morse emergency maritime frequency in the 1990s. — *From the ARRL Letter for 4 August*

WB2OHF, SK

We record with sadness that Arnold K. Dietrich, WB2OHF, became a Silent Key on August 5, 2006. Arnold was a member of BARA and enjoyed participating in Field Day activities over many years. Years ago, when his illness required him to relocate, Arnold donated his tower, beam and rotor from his Bennett St. QTH to the club. — Jack Connors, WB2GHH

On Capitol Hill

A bill to enhance emergency communication at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) includes Amateur Radio operators as part of an overall effort to provide interoperability among responders. *The 21st Century Emergency Communications Act of 2006 (HR 5852)*, an amendment to the *Homeland Security Act of 2002*, passed the US House this week on a 414-2 vote and has gone to the Senate. Its sponsor, Rep David G. Reichert (R-WA) — who chairs the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Science and Technology — says his legislation is designed “to improve the ability of emergency responders to communicate with each other” — interoperability.

“Until the events of September 11, 2001, many people in this nation believed and assumed that first responders from different disciplines and

including step-by-step instructions on how to renew or update a license using the ULS. — *From the ARRL Letter for 4 August*

jurisdictions could actually talk to each other,” Reichert — a former police officer — told the House in support of his bill. “It wasn’t happening. It is still not happening today. Unfortunately, that was not the case then, and, as demonstrated by the inadequate responses to Hurricane Katrina, that is not the case today.”

Reichert told his colleagues that the inability of first responders to communicate with each another effectively led to the loss of many lives along the US Gulf Coast last year. “This is simply unacceptable,” he said.

His measure also would require the DHS to strengthen its efforts to improve emergency communications. HR 5852 calls for Amateur Radio operators to be part of a “Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group” (RECC Working Group) that would be attached to each regional Department of Homeland Security office. The RECC Working Groups would advise federal and state homeland security officials.

In addition to radio amateurs, membership in the RECC Working Groups would include state and local officials; law enforcement, first responders such as fire departments; 911 centers; hospitals; ambulance services; communications equipment vendors, telephone, wireless satellite, broadband and cable service providers; public utilities; broadcasters; emergency evacuation transit services; state emergency managers, homeland security directors or representatives of state administrative agencies; local emergency managers or homeland security directors, and “other emergency response providers or emergency support providers as deemed appropriate.”

Federal government representatives to the RECC Working Groups would include representatives from the DHS “and other federal departments and agencies with responsibility for coordinating interoperable emergency communications” with state, local, and tribal governments.

According to the bill, the RECC Working Groups would function to assess the survivability, sustainability, and interoperability of local emergency communications systems to meet the goals of the National Emergency Communications Report. That

report would recommend how the US could “accelerate the deployment of interoperable emergency communications nationwide.”

The RECC Working Groups also would be tasked with ensuring a process to coordinate the establishment of “effective multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency emergency communications networks” that could be brought into play following acts of terrorism, natural disasters and other emergencies.

HR 5852 has been referred to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. — *From the ARRL Letter for 28 July*

Binghamton Amateur Radio Association, Inc.

P. O. Box 853

Binghamton, New York 13902

First Class

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Club Officers and Committees			
President	Bill Coleman	N2BC	748-5232
Vice President	Bob Handel	K2FU	693-4310
Secretary	Bob McCabe	KC2DSS	748-9808
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

5:00 PM, Wednesday, August 16th

Picnic at Otsiningo Park — Brevier Street

(Note Change of TIME and PLACE for this month)

Board Meeting

7:00 PM, Wednesday September 6th

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

Exam Session

7:00 PM Monday, August 28th

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) Every

Evening at 6:30 PM Local Time

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