



BARA Facts

Newsletter of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association

November 2006

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

The President's Corner

The mid-term elections are in a couple days — ~~history by the time you read this.~~ The club's elections are coming up on November 15th. It is not too late to add yourself to the ballot, just give me a call or drop me an Email (see the contact list on the last page of the newsletter).

In addition to elections, we have a terrific program for the November general meeting. Tom Siglin, WA2LTD, will be bringing in his brand new Yaesu FT-2000 transceiver. This rig is the top end Yaesu radio for mere mortals — there is one more model but it's more for the Bill Gates crowd. We hope to have an antenna in place so we can all hear the rig in action.

The Fall contest season is here. I'm writing this while giving my ears a break from the ARRL November CW Sweepstakes. The SSB Sweepstakes session is the weekend of November 18. There will likely be an effort up at the Milks Road shack on the SSB weekend, you should stop by and check it out.

Hope to see everyone at the meeting on the 15th — 73, Bill N2BC

BARA HAMFEST 2007

Now is the time to start getting ready for the BARA Hamfest 2007 and the club needs a couple of people to get this event started. Why you ask? After several years Bill N2BC is retiring and for me — being on the hamfest committee since 1994 — it is time for a vacation. Pulling things together to make this event happen is not difficult, but it does take some planning and making sure certain items happen in a timely fashion. Over the years a 'Things to do list' has been developed to make this event happen. If you would like to take this event on and help out the club either

call me at 687-2057 or e-mail me at n2ncb@stny.rr.com and we can get together and discuss over coffee. Paul N2NCB

Election News and Views

Herewith follows the official notice of our Elections and the position of the *BARA Facts* on the Offices and Candidates.

All members are advised that the annual Election of Officers and Directors for the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association (BARA) will be conducted during the General Meeting held on Wednesday, 15 November 2006. Noting that the Slate of Candidates is still being developed, we defer publication and advise all members that the slate remains open to formal nominations and that nominations from the floor will be accepted.

That's the official part. Now your Editor would like to take a moment to tell give you an "insider's view" of how Nominations and Elections work. Since I served as President in the past, I can claim some intimate knowledge of the process and — from experience in other organizations — I know that the reality is pretty widespread. It breaks down into three distinct stages:

First, the Nominating Committee begins by looking for "new blood" asking the "regulars" who attend meetings and participate. Sometimes they get lucky and people agree to serve, more likely than not, though, there's a long list of reasons why one person or another can't serve. Many of these reasons are real and legitimate, but *always*? The committee gets discouraged.

Widening the scope, the committee solicits active members who don't get to meetings very often are asked. Maybe some agree, but most have good reasons for declining the nomination. The elections

are getting closer so step three follows:

The committee buttonholes the people who served in the past and begs them to serve again. At the same time, the committee pleads with the current officers and hopes that they will server for another year. Delicate negotiations may follow as jobs and appointments are traded and the nominating committee calls in favors and promises future favors to the “willing”.

Friends, that’s the reality of how this process works and that’s why many clubs see the same old faces on the boards and committees year after year. Once you get into stage two the process becomes fatiguing and discouraging for everyone concerned and although you eventually end up with a slate of candidates, nobody enjoys the process.

PLEASE, as members of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association, I ask each of you to consider nominating yourself to a position. If you care about your Club, you have the necessary qualification to serve. As a member, I can assure you that many talented and willing people will stand behind you and work with you.

It would be wonderful if we had several candidates for each position — think of the message that this would send to the entire Club: It might well inspire even more active participation in our activities!

I’ll also point out that these remarks apply with equal force to the “unelected” positions within BARA; chief among these is the job of Hamfest Chairman to which N2NCB has alluded. It’s an important job, it’s a well-defined job, and it’s a job supported by many willing assistants, but — like all jobs — it should be shared — *Eddie the Editor*

‘Tis the Season

WHAT SEASON IS IT: This time of year is more than just doughnuts and cider. It’s CONTEST SEASON. The CW fanatics had their fun over the November 4th weekend. *DitDahDitDahDit*.

Coming up the weekend of November 18 there is the PHONE SWEEPSTAKES. Lots of fun. Some of you say, “Heck I can’t operate on those bands”. Not so! Get up to the W2OW hilltop and slide in next to the “appropriate licensed” operator. I’m certain he or she will be delighted to let you make as many contacts as you like (while he/she “controls” the station.) CAUTION: Once you

do it you may be bitten by the bug and be hooked on contest stuff. If you leave the hilltop feeling that you would like to try something like that again. Don’t despair. The weekend of December 2nd will be another opportunity to have a slightly different bit of radio amateur fun. SKYWARN Recognition Day (SRD) starting on 12/2 (Friday evening at 1900 local). No HF gear? You don’t have the required license? Want to see and use another excellent HF/VHF/UHF station? No problemo. Find your way up to Mt. Ettrick, Link Field, the National Weather Service office. Why? A contest? No, not exactly. A laid back atmosphere (pun) to contact and or be contacted by other participating NWS stations and individual operators. Only local and stateside contacts? No. Two years ago, a station responded to the WX2BGM CQ. The response was almost ignored. It turned out to be a station in Antarctica. So get up to the top of Broome County (almost) and make some contacts. See the WX guys and gals do their thing. Ford, AB2HS, SKYWARN coordinator would like to hear from you (22/82) if your planning to go to NWS in order that he can arrange your access to this secured facility.

Just so I don’t get in trouble with a few of you I must mention that this same weekend is the *longgggggggg waveeeeeeee* 160 meter contest.

To finish off the year there is the 10 meter contest on the weekend of December 1-3. Lots of fun, especially if the band cooperates.

Talk up any and or all of these radioactive activities. Your inquiry to another ham may just kindle or rekindle an interest during these dark ages of winter. Bad for driving but great for radio. Enjoy.

Hope to CU on the radio. — *DE WB2GHH*

Hams Assist in Space

When Russian flight controllers encountered difficulties during a recent International Space Station cargo rocket docking, NASA called on a special — although little-known — Amateur Radio team to stand by if needed. Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) Ops Team *ISS Ham Contingency Network* volunteers around the world immediately swung into action. Within 15 minutes of receiving the call from Johnson Space Center, Kenneth Ransom, N5VHO, reported the ISS Ham Contingency Network was ready to provide any necessary communication support.

“The ARISS teamwork was very effective,” ARISS Secretary-Treasurer Rosalie White, K1STO said. “Its members learned a great deal, and they

During the October 26 Progress docking, NASA says, Russian flight controllers were unable to confirm whether an automated antenna on the rocket had retracted as commanded. If still extended, the antenna could have interfered with the final latching of the supply ship to the ISS. To avoid disturbing the softly docked cargo ship and to aid the crew with docking maneuvers, the ISS orientation was allowed to drift freely. During free-drift mode, however, the Tracking and Data Relay Satellite System (TDRSS) — which handles communication between the crew and Mission Control in Houston — can be lost. That’s because the station’s solar arrays

may not directly face the sun, causing a drop in onboard power.

Awakened at 2 AM, ARISS Australian team member Tony Hutchison, VK5ZAI, put out a blind call on VHF to the ISS crew, although no answer was needed at that point. Others available to cover later passes included Gerald Klatzko, ZS6BTD, in South Africa; Gaston Bertels, ON4WF, at ON4ISS in Belgium; Dick Flagg, AH6NM, and Nancy Rocheleau, WH6PN, at Sacred Hearts Academy in Honolulu; and Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, and Mark Steiner, K3MS, at the Goddard Space Flight Center’s WA3NAN. Each of these Earth stations has a track record of being able to sustain reliable communication with the ISS.

The call-up marked the first time that NASA had asked for such Amateur Radio assistance since the initial crew came aboard the ISS in November 2000. Ransom says that by remaining available to ensure solid communication while Mission Control staff dealt with the docking issue, the ISS Ham Contingency Network provided Mission Control with an additional layer of security.

Once the antenna retraction problem was resolved, the contingency network stood down, but NASA’s request and the ensuing ham radio activity did serve as a valuable drill, ARISS said.

NASA says Expedition 14 Commander Mike Lopez-Alegria, KE5GTK, and flight engineers Mikhail Tyurin, RZ3FT, and Thomas Reiter, DF4TR, opened the hatch to the supply ship October 27 to

impressed NASA with how quickly the system was brought up.”

unload supplies. — *From the ARRL Letter for 3 November*

K2OC Still Radio Active

A slip of the fingers inadvertently sent the “work party” message to K2OC which prompted this reply from Charlie:

Jack, et al,

It is really great news (even out here in Sierra Vista, AZ) to hear that the BARA site is back up and running on Milk’s Road. Congrats to all that made that possible. Retired out here for five years now, hard to believe! Still operate Field Day every year from central Wisconsin farm house. Usually using brother Fred’s call, K9SO

73, de, K2OC

Hell, just like Charlie. I bet he’ll use his present location as an excuse for missing the work session. —
DE WB2GHH

SOS Did You Celebrate?

On November 3, 1906, during the second International Radiotelegraphic Convention, the distress signal SOS was adopted. A similar signal SOE had been in use as a call for assistance by German operators. In its original format, the SOS was sent in a continuous series without any character spacing. The various verbiage Save Our Ship, etc came about later. A number of variants were developed. Many believe that they were merely a way to remember SOS not what SOS really meant. The British had been using CQD as their distress call.

The Titanic sent out a number of CQD (CQ = General Call; D = Danger) calls followed by the ship identifier MGY followed by the Latitude and Longitude. Any book or movie indicating the Titanic sent out an SOS is technically incorrect. The Antique Wireless Association (AWA) recorded a simulation of the Titanic spark gap distress signal some time ago using the big Rotary Gap up at the AWA Museum and copies are floating around the Internet. You can also hear it in the PBS Show *Empire of the Air*.

Whatever, the SOS call was approved for international use 100 years ago — *DE WB2GHH (with*

Heads Up for December

Remember, the December Meeting Date is our traditional Holiday Party. Informed (and reliable) sources advise us that we are scheduled for Russell's on the 20th of December and that a Menu will soon be provided. Mark your calender now and please plan to attend for an evening of Fun and Festivity with the best bunch of Hams that ever tapped a key or keyed a mike!

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

7:30 PM, Wednesday, November 15th

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

Board Meeting

7:00 PM, Wednesday December 6th

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

Exam Session

7:00 PM Monday, November 27th

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