



BARA Facts

Newsletter of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association

July 2007

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

The President's Corner

Our July Board Meeting was quite animated and the main topic of discussion was our Club Hamfest. We reviewed the day and discussed a number of concerns.

First, the Hamfest was a success overall and helped to replenish our operating funds. We appreciate the help of all the members who contributed to the day and we especially note that many stepped in at the "last minute" when it looked as if we might not have a Hamfest. Without detracting from this work, we need to make some constructive changes.

Timing. We were late in getting Hamfest Activities started in 2007. Most of this delay was due to the need for a Chairman, but since we cannot advertise until our "date" is locked in with the authorities who oversee Marvin Park, we are sending the appropriate letters and reserving the date now.

Publicity. We have to do a better job publicizing the Hamfest. With the date reserved, we can begin to roll the "publicity mill". **Wanted: One or more members to draft fliers and otherwise spread the word for 2008.**

Vendors. No two ways about it, all of the "commercials" fell through this year and commercial attendance at other fests is down as well. We may be able to secure commitments from dealers if we work at it, but. **Wanted: A committee to solicit vendors.**

Logistics and Site Planning. It has been pointed out by more than one person that our Hamfest is very "spread out". We all realize this, but we need someone to lay out a site plan for the day of the fest and volunteers to enforce it. With only two guys at the gate taking tickets, we can't make people locate where we want them. **Wanted: A Planning and Logistics Team.**

Leadership: It almost sunk us this year, we need a leader. If people step forward to cover the major jobs listed above, the overall leadership is not nearly so difficult. **Wanted: We need a Hamfest Chairman!**

We discussed other items as well and many are still open to discussion, but if we begin to plan now and if members step forward with a commitment to make our 2008 Hamfest a success we have more than a fighting chance, we will succeed.

On the other hand, if everyone waits to see who will step forward first and if everyone assumes that somebody else will do the job, we will continue to decline and someday the Hamfest will be no more.

I hate to sound like "one note Charlie", but involvement and commitment are what keeps a Club (or business) going. Take a look around and ask who does the "work" in BARA. If our Club or if any group assumes that a small number of dedicated members will be doing all the work, things will begin to die as those members burn out or move on.

Think about it....

Field Day at W2OW

Thanks to Jack, WB2GHH, W2OW was on the air for Field Day. Herewith (with some additions) is his report:

W2OW made a Field Day appearance on 40 and 20 meters.

This year we initiated Field Day in the usual "lash up" style via a dipole consisting of two opposing hamsticks at about 10 feet and W2OW was quietly heard in WI, MI, NY, EPA, VA, and other points. About 20 contacts were completed before we felt it necessary to "blow the dust" out of the Shack...

Switch to the shack and its "inside" rig, we diligently studied and read the specs for the amplifier. The technical experts on the team examined the alleged inoperative exciter and determined that the drive was full clockwise. After adjustment we measured exciter output as about 70 watts on 80 and about 50 watts on 20 (when working into a dummy load).

Ah, fire up the amp and check things out. Wow; an easy 500 watts of pure QSO juice. Any contact

attempted was successful and there were a number of unsolicited positive comments on the audio. What a difference compared to my squeaky 757GX on 40 meters and with nary a bead of sweat breaking my brow we matched our previous (hours-old) record with another twenty (or so) contacts primarily in the mid-west and west coast.

Logs have been retained by me (WB2GHH) and will be forwarded as appropriate.

Attendance otherwise was somewhat thin. Besides myself, Al Pierce, N4VC, made his usual field day appearance and made most all the 20 meter contacts. Visitors included Rick Melton, N3VKN; Jeff Kerr from Montrose; and our own Bill Jaker, WB8RAE.

Another year with a beautiful day a fantastic site — we could have used some more operators, but we did have one visitor come and operate and two others enjoyed and supported the activity. The W2OW call was sent into the ether and we maintained our tradition of being on the air for Field Day — a record maintained since the late 1940s — *Jack WB2GHH*

Hamfest Helpers

The list of Hamfest Helpers was crowded out of your editor's inbox in June and we reproduce it here with thanks and in the hope that we did not miss anyone. We work off the sign-in sheets for workers and sometimes we do not notice that a name was not recorded.

For Friday Setup, we saw Shep, W2BSB; Peter, K2LTS; Phil, N2BEE; Ed, KB2SCF; Lee, W3EFE; Rick, WN3VKM; John, N2YZI; Jim, KC2JED; Paul, K2ABX; Bob Mess, WS2U; Vic, N2LZM; Ford, AB2HS; Brian K2DKB.

On Saturday, the gate was covered by John Roys, N2YZI; Rick Melton, N3VKM; Ray (KC2GIL) and Red (KC2HKB) Heath (Seems as if Malcolm, KC2EOV, might have been there as well). At the "Club Table" inside: Ed Plesnar, KB2SCF; Warren Marks, KC2NGR; Ford Drake, AB2HS; and Brian Adeo, K2DLB. During tear-down, Jerry Heller, KA2WQR, helped put the Picnic tables away.

It goes without saying that Jim Lawton, JC2JED, and Bob McCabe, KC2DSS, our Hamfest Chairs pulled more than their weight and covered all that needed covering. Paul, N2NCB, who had other duties this year was present in spirit and made himself felt in the thousand-and-one organizational details he had documented and the valuable advice and support he gave.

If anyone was missed, I'm sorry. Any omissions are neither intentional nor deliberate. Thanks to all who helped to make our 2007 Hamfest a success.

I'm Bored

Summer is upon us and by now many of us may have heard the dreaded "I'm bored, there's nothing to do!" Well, here are some ideas and thoughts:

Road Trip! There are lots of interesting things to see and do within driving distance of our area. The Discovery Center in Binghamton, the Science Center in Ithaca, and the Museum of Science and Technology in Syracuse are fine places to kill some time. Elmira hosts the Warplane Museum as well as the Glider Museum. Steamtown and the Trolley Museum in Scranton are also "near" possibilities.

Build Something: A few dollars for hammer, nails, saw, and other basic tools plus a pile of odd boards, lath, and scrap equal hours of creative fun — just sweep the driveway and garage for nails! With more supervision, many of the kits found at Unicorn combine lessons in soldering and manual dexterity with instructions in reading schematics and electronic skills. Wire, buzzers, batteries and such stuff supplemented with a couple handfuls of junkbox controls can provide fun, entertainment, and perhaps a science fair project for the upcoming year.

Get Outside! An old tent — or better still a tarp or blanket — can be headquarters for all sorts of outdoor adventures. Take some time to lay on the ground at night and look at the stars. Feel the wonders of nature as seen by your child, grandchild, niece, nephew, or whomever. Build a campfire (safely and in accord with local regulations, of course) and roast hotdogs and marshmallows after sunset.

Tell a Story, Your Story! You will be surprised at how the most trivial experiences from your past can excite a kid and grab his or her interest. Kids take for granted so many things today that the thought of life without iPods and Cell Phones is as fantastic as the stories in [Lord of the Rings](#)!

Take the Time. Time is the most precious gift we have to offer and we will lose it no matter how closely we hoard it or carefully we manage it. Spend it freely and generously and do not regret giving it....

Solar News

Solar Flux to Bottom Out in July as Cycle 24 Gets Closer: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Space Environment Center (SEC) released their monthly forecasts of sunspot

number and 10.7 cm radio flux, including high and low bounds to their forecasts. The SEC forecasts that the smoothed sunspot number reached its low value of 1.7 in March 2007, and predicts that the solar flux will reach its low of 75.4 this month. This is the fourth month in a row that the SEC predicts the solar flux will bottom out in July. Based on the SEC predictions, this is probably at the bottom of Cycle 23 and extremely close to the beginning of Cycle 24. Two events will mark the beginning of the next sunspot cycle: The observation of the first opposite magnetic polarity sunspots compared to Cycle 23 sunspot polarity, and the observation high solar latitude sunspots -- the Cycle 23 sunspots are now very near the solar equator. The SEC predictions table <<http://www.sec.noaa.gov/ftpdir/weekly/Predict.txt>> and sunspot number and solar flux prediction graphs <<http://www.sec.noaa.gov/SolarCycle/>> are available on the SEC's Web site. —
From the ARRL Letter for 6 July

Review — The Dangerous Book for Boys

Although the connection to radio is slight (Navajo Code Talkers and Morse Code), The Dangerous Book for Boys by Gonn & Hal Iggulden is well worth considering as a gift for any boy (or girl) whom you know. In fact, you might want to consider a copy for yourself.

In two hundred sixty-seven pages the brothers Iggulden build a very nice compilation of Popular Mechanics, the Boy Scout Handbook, and a General Compendium of Useful Information. You will find instructions on building a tree house, first aid, making a flash light, skinning a rabbit and many other useful things. Scattered throughout the “Useful stuff” are histories of famous battles, inspiring stories of courage and endurance, poems & phrases to learn by heart. Pages 109-110 are worth noting for their eight brief, practical, and clear rules for dealing with “girls”.

It's a fine book and it has been getting a lot of press lately. Some may object to the word “boys” in the title, but most persons of sense will realize that there are plenty of girls who will know *exactly* that word implies and that they want *their* very own copy!

On balance, there is very little that is outright dangerous in the book. Killing, skinning, and cooking a rabbit might best be supervised and bows & arrows can be dangerous, but there is a lot to be said for giving direction in a clear and responsible way. It can be said that the book is tame in comparison to some of the “books for boys” published fifty or more years ago, but

it is head and shoulders above many of the other offerings available today.

If you want to encourage a youngster to create & do, if you want a slight antidote to summertime boredom, or if you just want to read and dream: The Dangerous Book for Boys is well worth considering — for yourself or for someone else!

The Dangerous Book for Boys (ISBN 978-0-06-124358-5) by Gonn Iggulden and Hal Iggulden is available in many stores and has even penetrated the shelves of Target and Wegmans!

Correction of Fact

In the June issue of the BARA Facts we managed to mangle the credit for mapping the MS Walk.

Glen Weber, W2GTW, was responsible for mapping the course and designating the operator assignments and other significant points on the map.

Brian, K2DLB, who had incorrectly been given credit for the maps quickly brought the matter to our attention. We apologize to Glen for the error and we are glad to correct it here.

August Picnic

A reminder that our August General Meeting will be our annual picnic. Details will be in the August Facts, but please plan to be at Otsiningo Park (Off Bevier St. at Front St. in Binghamton) on Wednesday, August 15th.

We'll begin the festivities around 5:00 PM and we have the use of the Pavilion near the Garden Plots.

This is the same location as last year (it's near the large rest rooms, no steps to traverse, and parking is available within 50 feet of the pavilion). There is plenty of room; there is cover from the sun; and the charcoal has already been purchased.

As is tradition, bring your treasures to swap, trade, sell, and barter. If anyone wants to load up a wire, that's OK as well. The Summer Picnic is about Food, Fellowship, and Fun!

Board Meeting Note

As announced during several June STAR Nets and documented on the W2OW Reflector, the July Board meeting was moved to the last Wednesday in June to avoid conflict with the July Fourth Holiday and with other Ham Radio meetings in the month of July. Future BARA Board Meetings will continue on the usual schedule (7:00 PM on the first Wednesday of the month at the Office of Emergency Services). All members and those who have business with the Club are welcome.

Binghamton Amateur Radio Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 853
Binghamton, New York 13902

First Class

Club Officers and Committees			
President	Ed Plesnar	KB2SCF	754-3810
Vice President	Jim Lawson	KC2JED	797-1583
Secretary	Blake McCabe	KC2GQX	748-9808
Treasurer	Paul Slocum	N2NCB	687-2057
Directors	Jack Connors	WB2GHH	724-8822
	Warren Marks	KC2NGR	648-6840
	Bob McCabe	KC2DSS	748-9808
	Lee Savidge	W3EFE	669-4188
W2OW Trustee	Mel Snitchler	WE2K	723-9612
Newsletter	Ed Plesnar	KB2SCF	754-3810

Next General Meeting

7:30 PM, Wednesday, July 18th
Town of Binghamton Town Hall, 279 Park Avenue, South of the
Ross Park Entrance

Board Meeting

7:00 PM, Wednesday August 1st
Broome Community College Campus, Office of Emergency
Services (West Side of Campus)

Exam Session

No Exam Session for July. Sessions resume in September
at the 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



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

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