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BARA Facts

Newsletter of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association

July 2009

Website: <http://w2ow.org> OR <http://www.wtsn.binghamton.edu/bara>

The President's Corner

Last month I rambled on about all manner of topics, and concluded my column by demonstrating how the various themes I raised could all be tied to amateur radio through the concept of "expanding our horizons." Now, some folks might be put off by this idea; perhaps it sounds like too much effort is involved, or maybe they're happy with the current state of their pursuits, and have no desire to change what already appears to be a good thing. But are there any hams out there who have failed to notice that our club (and indeed, ham radio itself) is experiencing a serious decline in the number of participants? The reasons (advent of the Internet, popularity of cell phones, and decrease in the do-it-yourself electronics hobby, among other things) have been mentioned many times – but is there anything we can do to help offset this loss?

There are certainly several things we can do. One is simply to adapt. Darwin was the first to make clear that evolution requires that life either adapts to its surroundings or else perishes – and I'd hate to see our club perish! Amateur radio operators cannot practice their craft all alone in a vacuum – communication, the heart of the hobby, is inherently a group activity. But adapting to the reality of the 21st century means expanding our horizons beyond the narrow confines of the traditional purview of amateur radio. There are several topics that are closely aligned to ham radio – including computers, robotics, and the proliferation of wireless devices. We will need to reach out to those who are interested in such fields, and convince them of their commonalities with ham radio, in order to ensure the survival of our hobby. As usual, I'm throwing some vague ideas out here, and hoping some of y'all who either have community contacts with such groups, or else are more creative thinkers than I, will come up with

some more concrete ideas. John Carrington (WB2SGS), for example, suggested recently that we team up with computer hobbyists and invite them to vend and display their wares at our next Hamfest – an excellent suggestion in my view!

Another activity that our club needs to increase is publicity. You and I are well aware of the community services we provide (and the potential to be lifesavers if ever disaster were to strike), but most folks are woefully unaware of the importance of amateur radio nationwide. I have appointed Bill Jaker (WB8RAE) as our Publicity chair (given his experience as a familiar radio personality on our local public broadcast station), but would invite anyone with ideas as to how to get the word out to let me know so that we can implement them. Let's do presentations in the local schools. Let's make sure the press knows about all our activities (Field Day, providing communications for local events, etc.). Anything to bring in another couple of members each year.

Got ideas? Let me know! — *73 de allen lutins*
KC2KLC — KC2KLC@LUTINS.ORG

VE Testing in the Triple Cities

By way of Bob Soltis, WA2VCS, we are informed that Amateur Radio Exams continue to be available in our area. Once again Bob and his team have been able to get the Monday dates for the Year 2010 VE Testing sessions held at 7:00PM at the Vestal, NY Public Library.

The plan is to have an Exam Session on the last Monday of each month except for May, July, and December. In May the Exam Session is on the Monday

before Memorial Day; there is NO TESTING scheduled in July; and in December the Exam Session will be on the Monday before December 24th (Christmas Eve).

Unless otherwise posted, the sessions are conducted in the Small Conference Room in the Library.

For reference, the dates for 2010 are: 25 January, 22 February, 29 March, 26 April, 24 May, 28 June, 30 August, 27 September, 25 October, 29 November, and 20 December.

The REMAINING Exam Dates for 2009 (Conference Room or the Lecture Room across the hall) are: 31 August, 28 September, 26 October, 30 November, and 21 December.

If there is a need for an exam other than at these scheduled times, Bob notes that his team includes three Amateur Extra Class W5YI-VEC Accredited VEs and exam can be arranged on short notice if a suitable location is available. Please contact Bob at (607) 754-7940 or (607) 754-7941 or e-mail wa2vcs@gmail.com to schedule a test.

The Testing Fee for 2010 has not yet been announced by the VECs. The fee for 2009 is \$14.00.

As usual, candidates should bring a valid picture ID such as a Company Badge or Driver's License/Sheriff's ID card. Children should be accompanied by their parent(s) or guardian(s) with the aforementioned ID's of the parent or guardian plus a suitable general ID for the child such as a Birth Certificate or School ID card.

Test Candidates who do not currently hold a valid ham radio license, or an expired license within the two year grace period, are encouraged to apply for a Federal Registration Number (FRN) to avoid having to use their Social Security number on the NCVEC Form 605 test application. If a candidate already has an FRN assigned to them for some other licensing activity with the FCC, then that FRN should be used on the NCVEC Form 605. See the FCC web site at www.fcc.gov to apply for an FRN using the CORES system. You will need your Social Security Number and other pertinent information.

Licensed amateur radio operators who are candidates for upgrade to General or Amateur Extra Class MUST bring a Signed copy of their ham radio license that is not expired or within the two year grace period if it is expired to get credit for previous testing elements passed. The CSCE form should only be needed if you have very recently passed an exam element and have not yet received your new license/privilege, and you are testing for a license upgrade.

As always, interested candidates who have passed the Amateur Extra Class requirements and live near the testing site are encouraged to seek accreditation as a W5YI-VEC volunteer examiner provided they are 18 years of age and have a good record as a licensee with the FCC.

Changes at the *BARA Facts*

Well, Friends, your Editor is posting notice that he will soon be laying down the pen and settling back in his easy chair. I've been putting together the *BARA Facts* since October 2001 and I'm thinking that it's time to pass the job on to someone else. Bill, KB2SIN, has kindly volunteered to take over and as soon as I can convert the templates and materials from Corel to MicroSoft Word and gather my scattered notes and materials into something someone else can use, I will pass the torch.

This isn't "goodbye" just yet, but it is the beginning of "so long". I have enjoyed putting together the *Facts* and the challenges of editing this little paper. I'm grateful to those who have contributed over the years and provided variety and interest to these pages. In particular, I'd like to recognize Jack, WB2GHH, who has so many times provided one, two, or more bits for an issue. I have very much appreciated his help and not having to fill in those columns myself.

So, you have been warned.... — *Eddie the Editor, KB2SCF*

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

First Class

| Club Officers and Committees | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|--------|----------|
| President | allen lutins | kc2klc | 729-4817 |
| Vice President | James Lawson | KC2JED | |
| Secretary | Tom Siglin | WA2LTD | |
| Treasurer | Paul Slocum | N2NCB | 687-2057 |
| Directors | John Carrington | WB2SGS | 648-8364 |
| | Warren Marks | KC2NGR | 648-6840 |
| | Bill Jaker | WB8RAE | 785-5361 |
| | John Rudy | WB2FQZ | 669-4308 |
| W2OW Trustee | Mel Snitchler | WE2K | 723-9612 |
| Newsletter | Ed Plesnar | KB2SCF | 754-3810 |

Next General Meeting

7:30 PM, Wednesday, July 15th
Town of Binghamton Town Hall, 279 Park Avenue, South of the
Ross Park Entrance

Board Meeting

7:00 PM, Wednesday August 5th
Conference Room, WSKG Studios, 501 Gates Road, Vestal

Exam Session

No July Testing Session

BARA Dues

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

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**

e-Mail Address: w2ow@arrrl.net



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