

## President's Corner

March 2010

Greetings fellow radio-electronics enthusiasts! Allow me tell you about my latest project - and how it will benefit the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association.

Last year, I received word that a gentleman by the name of Dan Gold was looking for a home for a bunch of "boat anchor" and other radio equipment formerly owned by his deceased brother. On the assumption that there might be an item or two of interest to me, I went to check it out. There was a lot of equipment there, but relatively little that interested me at first. Dan informed me that whatever I didn't take would be hauled to the landfill, as no one else had responded, the pressure was on from the XYL to free up the space, and he knew of no other means of conveying the stuff to an interested party.

I had no desire to take on yet another project (those of you who read my column regularly know how busy I am with work & music, electronics projects, etc.) but I couldn't bear to see Hallicrafters, Hammarlund, Collins, and other radio equipment tossed in a dumpster. With an agreement that some of the funds I raised from the sale of this equipment benefit BARA, Dan and I hauled the pick of the lot down three flights of stairs, and filled up my van (I left behind additional equipment that appeared cannabilized, or otherwise lacking in functionality or intrinsic value). When I got home with it, I apologetically explained to my XYL that it would regrettably occupy some space while I worked on selling it off.

Dealing with all this equipment turned out to be a daunting task. First, I had to do some research to find out which of these units was of any desire, and the typical value of working vs. non-working units. Next, I had to seek out manuals for as many of the items as possible, in part to properly evaluate their functionality (and render repairs, if feasible). Next came cleaning them up, plugging them in, and seeing whether or not the magic smoke came out (I plugged them into a Variac so that I could slowly ramp up the voltage, rather than applying the full 120 V in one fell swoop for the first time in half a decade). Some of the units worked completely; some were partially functional; one did let the magic smoke out, and one was completely dead. After that I spent some time repairing the receiver that had smoked on power-up, and performing some diagnostic testing on the dead receiver (I concluded that the power transformer was shot).

Finally, it was time to find buyers. I sold the receiver I'd repaired to a co-worker. A few items I decided to keep (a "cantenna" dummy antenna, a Vibroplex "bug"-type morse code key, and a 1 kW amplifier – still haven't tested it yet). The rest I photographed, then documented on a web page ([www.lutins.org/forsale](http://www.lutins.org/forsale)). I posted a bunch of ads online, then waited.

Slowly but surely, buyers came out of the woodwork for one piece after another. I've yet to sell the fully-functional Collins receiver, but I have faith that it will bring in a fair amount once the right person discovers it.

All in all, I spent **way** more time than I desired on this project, but the benefit has been three-fold: (1) I kept a bunch of classic, working radio equipment from being discarded at the landfill; (2) I wound up with a few nifty items for my shack for free; (3) I made some money to compensate me for my time and effort, and to benefit BARA as well.

I've been bitten by the digital modes bug these past few months (more about that in my next column!), and I'd like to share the experience (and to demonstrate how simple it is). To that end, I plan to purchase the requisite hardware and software required to work digital modes for installation at the BARA shack. I prefer doing something concrete like this for our club, rather than simply paying a

lump-sum into the general treasury. I plan to donate more money to BARA when I finally sell that Collins receiver; if you have ideas on how you'd like to see money spent, please let me know!

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