



(c) 1994 Creators Syndicate, Inc.

BARA

Facts

Newsletter of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association

January 2004

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

New Year — New Location

Don't fail to remember that the January 21st General Meeting will be conducted at our new meeting location — The Town of Binghamton Town Hall at 279 Park Avenue in Binghamton.

The Hall is easy to find. Park Avenue is off the Easterly end of Vestal Avenue in Binghamton (near Washington Street) and can be reached directly or by following the signs to the Ross Park Zoo and continuing up Park Avenue past the zoo. A map is appended to this issue and here are detailed Driving Directions:

From the West: Take the Vestal Parkway East to the Pennsylvania Ave exit. EXIT and go straight through the traffic signal. Pass the CVS/GIANT. At the STOP sign turn LEFT for a short block. At the STOP sign turn RIGHT. You are now on PARK Avenue. Proceed straight ahead about 1/2 mile up a very steep hill (and into the Town of Binghamton). The Town Hall (a former single story school) is on your LEFT.

From the East and North: Find your way to CONKLIN AVE (Park Diner, Crowley Dairy, etc). Proceed West (toward Vestal). At the BLINKER light bear LEFT up the incline past the car wash. (This will be Pennsylvania Avenue.) Go straight through the traffic signal, passing the CVS/GIANT. At the STOP sign turn LEFT for a short block. At the STOP sign turn RIGHT. You are now on PARK Ave. Proceed straight ahead about 1/2 mile up a very steep hill (and into the Town of Binghamton). The Town Hall (a former single story school) is on your LEFT.

However, I do think that it is important that we remember that Amateur Radio is not defined simply by the requirements that we fulfil or the tests that we pass.

From the South: Find your way to the HAWLEYTON Turnpike and head North. At the FIRE STATION bear RIGHT up the hill. (You are now on PARK AVE.) Proceed straight about 3 miles passing another Fire Station. Drive up and down on the roller-coaster road. When you pass CARMEN RD on the right (Radio tower visible on right), slow down because the Town Hall will be on the RIGHT a short distance ahead.

In the event that anyone has trouble finding the Hall, there will be a Talk-In on the 147.39 (Positive Offset, PL 100 Hz) BARA Repeater the night of January 21st. Remember, 279 Park Avenue — it's not just an address, it's the new BARA Meeting Location!

Revolutions and Resolutions

As 2003 wound to a close several important petitions and proposals were gaining momentum in Amateur Radio circles. Some have been noted in these pages already, all are covered in some form or another in the various Amateur Publications, but they all concern Morse Code and Licensing Requirements in one form or another. Since few issues are so certain to raise the overall blood pressure of our ranks it is well to pause for a moment and reflect on what makes this Hobby so special.

First, your editor freely admits to having his own opinions in these matters. If it matters at all, I am in favor of retaining at least a minimal proficiency in Morse and requiring technical knowledge for all levels of Amateur License. But that is my own opinion and there are many others of equal validity.

In my view, this Great Hobby of Ours is defined by the camaraderie and the esprit-de-corps of its many and diverse practitioners. What make us Amateur Radio

Operators is a shared love for the magic technology called Wireless in one form or another. And what sets the “true” Ham apart from the “ham-lite” is a willingness to share knowledge and enthusiasm for a Hobby that can be a very real life-saver.

Across a town, across a state, across the world; Hams are there establishing communications for fun in our day-to-day activities and in deadly earnest when emergencies arise. At such times differences of opinion are of far less importance than matters of skill and resourcefulness and these things are honed by membership in a fraternity that is second to none.

So, as the winds of change shake our ranks, let us resolve to remember that while there have always been disagreements in our ranks about what the “technical” skills that make a Real Ham might be, our ranks have never been populated by individuals working in isolation. We are a community; we are communicators. To Elmer the beginner, to assist a comrade, to share what we know and what we have learned. These are the marks that set us apart and these are the marks that will endure whatever the “Rules & Regs” say!

2003 Christmas Party

Thanks again to Hedy, AA2MU, for organizing another fine Christmas Party. Over fifty of the Gang turned out at Russell’s and filled at least half-a-dozen large tables to capacity. The food was tasty to say the least and conversation and good-natured harassment filled the air.

The fun was only interrupted by the timely arrival of the food and jocularity gave way to serious attacks on a most delicious meal.

The ceremonies afterwards were top-notch as well beginning with a general raffle of door prizes conducted by Hedy and Blake, KC2GQX. A drawing for a hand-caned stool (courtesy of Malcolm, KC2EOV) followed with Anita, N2VXB, the happy winner. The festivities closed with the traditional Fifty-Fifty drawing.

All in all it was a great evening and if you did not make it in 2003, you should stop by in 2004 because BARA does know how to have a good time!

Changes on ‘39

Users of the BARA Repeater on 147.390 MHz have noticed a general degradation of coverage over the last few months and ocular analysis made a conclusive determination that the Radial System for the Repeater Antenna had been damaged by wind and weather and

The registration fee for EC-009 is \$65 for

was effectively non-existent. In late December a new Antenna was installed to replace the existing radiator. The new Antenna is identical with the old and should restore the former radiation pattern.

In the process of installing the new Antenna and verifying that the SWR was acceptable an error seemed to be introduced into the Repeater Feedline connections and for a period of two weeks (or so) the performance of the Repeater was severely degraded. This situation has been rectified and the 147.390 MHz Machine is now running well and providing much improved coverage for the valley.

As always, the Offset for 147.390 is Positive and the Repeater has a PL/CTSS of 100 Hz.

Why Not Be a BRAT

With the situation on the BARA 147.390 MHz Machine much improved we encourage all BARA members (and any interested non-members) to join the Binghamton Radio Amateurs Technical Net (BRAT Net) every Sunday evening at 2000 hours Local Time. N2NCB (our faithful moderator) and the Net Regulars would welcome the company.

The BRAT Net is an informal forum for announcements connected with Amateur Radio and general technical communication. Join us with questions, share your knowledge, or just stop by to say “hello”.

New ARRL Antenna Design Course

If there's one thing that all radio amateurs have in common it's the need for an antenna so the ARRL Certification and Continuing Education (C-CE) program has announced a new on-line course — *Antenna Design and Construction (EC-009)*. Authored by Ward Silver, N0AX, *Antenna Design and Construction* joins *Antenna Modeling (EC-004)* becoming the second antenna-related course in the C-CE program. The text will be the ARRL publication *Simple and Fun Antennas for Hams* by Chuck Hutchinson, K8CH, and Dean Straw, N6BV. Students are required to have a copy before starting this class.

It is estimated that students will require 20 to 25 hours to complete the new course and an Amateur Radio license is required to complete some of the course’s practical activities. Topics will include antenna design and construction techniques with optional antenna construction projects. Experiments involving HF and VHF/UHF antennas of various types are available for the more adventuresome.

ARRL members and \$95 for nonmembers, exclusive of

textbooks and materials. To learn more, visit the ARRL Certification and Continuing Education (C-CE) Web Page at <<<http://www.arrl.org/cce>>> and click on EC-009. For additional information, contact the Certification and Continuing Education Program staff (cce@arrl.org). — *From the ARRL Letter for 19 December 2003.*

Broome County ARES Net Ends

Bill, KB2SIN, announces with regret that the Broome County ARES Net has ceased operations. Bill had requested (via the W2OW Reflector) a commitment from additional Net Control Stations as well as ideas and suggestions for Training Sessions. Since only one response was received the unavoidable conclusion was that there is not a sufficient level of commitment to justify continued operations.

We thank Bill for keeping the effort going this past year and we hope that at some point in the future there will be sufficient interest to reactivate the Net.

Empire State Games 2004

One way to counter the cold days of winter is to think about the summer and the games that we play. Better yet, we should begin thinking about the New York Empire State Games (ESG) 2004. You do know that the Binghamton area will host the games, don't you? Mark your calendar now because the last couple days in July and the first couple days in August are reserved for the largest amateur radio public service event in New York State. We'll have to work especially hard this year to beat the HAM participation that was exhibited during the Binghamton ESG 2000! At that time there were 120 hams involved in the operation at 41 venues in Broome, Cortland, Tioga and Tompkins counties. A special challenge for this year's Empire State Games will be handling the venues located in the Cortland (swimming) and the Ithaca (sailing) areas.

What do the HAMS do? We are identified by specific attire (i.e. green T-Shirt and Hat) and identification card which allows access to the assigned venue. Each HAM is assigned to "shadow" a key ESG official at each venue. Various administration, weather related and emergency communications are forwarded to a net control point for action. This effort involves massive planning, site preparation, and HAM assignment control effort. Every HAM in the Greater Binghamton area — and beyond — will be needed to make the 2004 ESG a success. It may be work, but it's a lot of fun also.

To help get us started in the right direction Bob

Brackett, KD2IM, the amateur radio communication coordinator for ESG 2004 will be present at the January BARA meeting to give us a more precise overview of the scope of this years games and the degree of HAM participation. See you there! — Jack, WB2GHH

Morse Update

The 2003 World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-03) may have eliminated the treaty requirement for prospective amateurs to demonstrate Morse Code proficiency to gain HF access, but the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) hasn't forgotten Morse Code altogether. In Geneva on 5 December, the ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) Study Group 8 agreed on the wording of a Draft New Recommendation *ITU-R M.[MORSE]* that specifies the international Morse code character set and transmission procedures. It also includes a new Morse code character to cover the "@" symbol used in e-mail addresses.

To keep up with the times, the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) proposed adding a new character for "*Commercial At*" — the familiar "@" symbol used in e-Mail Addresses. The draft new recommendation proposes using the letters "A" and "C" run together (*di-dah-dah-di-dah-dit*) to represent the @ symbol. — *From the ARRL Letter for 12 December 2003*

Important Dates for 2004

OWEGO HAMFEST: The tentative date for the 2004 BARA Hamfest at Marvin Park in Owego is May First.

BARA BOARD MEETINGS: First Wednesday of each month, 7:00 PM, Office of Emergency Services.

SVARA MEETINGS: Second Wednesday of each month, 7:30 PM, Office of Emergency Services.

ENDICOTT VE SESSION: Second Saturday of each month, 1:30 PM, Endicott Fire Station, Main Street Endicott

BARA GENERAL MEETINGS: Third Wednesday of each month, 7:30 PM, Town of Binghamton Town Hall.

VESTAL VE SESSION: Last Monday of each month (or previous Monday if the last Monday is a legal holiday, but no session in July), 7:00 PM, Vestal Public Library.

STAR NET: Every evening, 6:30 PM, 146.730 MHz Repeater.

BRAT NET: Every Sunday Evening, 8:00 PM, 147.390 MHz BARA Repeater.