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BARA

Facts

Newsletter of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association
February 2007

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

The President's Corner

Well, it has been a very busy month!

Our January General Meeting was interesting and animated. Paul, N2NCB, presented the budget which is by no means extravagant, but it does require us to draw on our reserves. Everyone understands that thus is not a viable long-term strategy and a number of options and fund-raising ideas were suggested. Several things are certain, however:

COSTS — especially Insurance Costs continue to increase. These costs are not optional and must be covered.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES (like the Picnic and Christmas Party) are a pleasant outlet and a chance to relax as a Club. They are not a huge cost to the Club and we think they should continue.

DUES cover only a small portion of our expenses and raising dues is not a viable way of dealing with our expenses. This means that our Hamfest is vital to BARA's continued existence. It also means that we need the help of each Member to promote the Hamfest and to make it a success.

MEMBERSHIP. Although new members come into our Club, our Club Population is not growing. Keys go silent, Members move, and some people just "drop out". We need to work on increasing our numbers for several reasons. New members bring new ideas; more members helps to spread the workload for projects and activities; and BARA is one of the great Radio Clubs in our area.

All-in-all it was a very good meeting and I appreciated the turnout.

Our February Board Meeting was animated and one Big Project is in the works. Ford, AB2HS, has taken the bull by the horns and gotten the ball rolling on a **General Upgrade Class** to be run on Saturdays in

March. Those of you who were planning to upgrade "someday" or "when they drop the code" will now have the opportunity to upgrade (fairly) easily and (almost) painlessly under the guidance of some of the finest Elmers in the world of Amateur Radio! For details, see below.

Hamfest News

At present, the Hamfest Letters have been sent to the appropriate authorities. Once confirmation is received, planning and activities will kick into gear. Please, our Club depends on the Hamfest Profit and we encourage all members to help with this work!

So You Want to be a General Class to be Offered in March

BARA and SVARA are offering a General License Class to be conducted on the Saturdays of March. The sessions will be held in Endicott at the new Schaefer Bus Facility (on the corner of North and Waldo/Bridge Streets) from 9:00 AM until Noon. A VE Team will be present at the last Session to administer the exams.

Class content will concentrate on the Technical Material in the General Syllabus. Regulatory Issues will be touched (and specific questions will certainly be answered), but the emphasis will be on helping everyone to master the Technical Material required for a General License.

The text will be The ARRL General Class License Manual (ISBN 0-87259-920-5) available for \$19.95 from Unicorn Electronics.

This will be a combination self-study/classroom presentation course. Students are expected to prepare for each session. No cost has been set, but students will be expected to purchase the text on their own and to cover any VE fees and possibly the cost of any materials passed out in class.

If You Would Like to Attend: Please contact Paul, N2NCB, (n2ncb@stny.rr.com) of Ford, AB2HS, (754-1214/ab2hs@stny.rr.com). Deadline for signing up

is Saturday, 24 February.

If You Would Like to Teach: Please contact Paul or Ford. We have several teachers lined up, but more are needed. A Schedule of Topics will be prepared soon.

Many thanks to Ford, AH2HS, for getting the ball rolling here. Ford first floated the idea and after finding that there was enough interest to begin, he brought the idea to the BARA Board, which supports it enthusiastically. Thanks also to Dean, K2DLB, who arranged for the facility.

W2OW Operates VHF Contest

The hilltop came alive Sunday afternoon January 21st when W2OW was fired up for the VHF contest. Ray, K1OW, made the trip and accomplished at least 60 contacts. A guy named Murphy was there also and he assured that the necessary rotor control box for the highly directional antennas was left at Lafayette, NY. Ah, a little ingenuity resulted in an Armstrong rotor coming to life. What a deal. Repeated good exercise yanking the ropes to turn the “a-ray”; fresh air; and a hearing test as “Armstrong Control” used the open shack window to sense the desired station’s audio peak as the antenna direction changed. The word must have gotten out that Ray was having too much fun for one person so Norm, N3YKF, dropped by to share in the action. Not a clean sweep like the last contest but W2OW was once again frying the ether! -- *Jack, WB2GHH*

Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES)

Those of us who have been around a while may know how to navigate the alphabet soup of RACES, ARES, and other agencies, but it can be a bit intimidating for newer Hams (and those of faulty memory). Jack, WB2GHH, the “keeper of the flame” provides some needed background....

What is it? How does it differ from the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES)? Questions that I have been asked by both new as well as more tenured HAMS. The Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES), is a public service provided by Amateur Radio (Ham Radio) Operators. It is administered by each county in New York State under the auspices of the State Emergency Management Office (SEMO). SEMO in turn receives input and suggestions from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as well as the Department of Homeland Security.

As a part of the Amateur Radio Service, RACES originally (1950) provided radiocommunications for wartime use only. In 1978 the emphasis shifted from just wartime Civil Defense support to a more all hazards preparedness activities posture. Likewise the term Civil Defense has in many cases been replaced by the term Civil Preparedness. Now, natural disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires, power outages, floods, air crashes, and many others can be responded to as requested by the local RACES authority.

While operating in a declared RACES capacity, RACES stations and amateurs registered in the local RACES organization may not, under present restrictions, communicate with amateurs who are not operating in a RACES capacity. Of course, such restrictions do not apply when such stations are operating in a non-RACES situation such as a ARES communication event. Only civil-preparedness communications can be transmitted during a declared RACES operation. RACES tests and drills are permitted but only for a maximum of one hour per week. Also, all test and drill messages must be clearly identified as such. Locally, the Broome County Emergency Amateur Communications Organization (BCEACO) club call WB2MIS (not a government entity) was established in order that amateur communicators interested in emergency communications would be able to participate in training exercises that might extend beyond the one hour weekly limit applicable to RACES drills.

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES), an organization within the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), consists of licensed amateurs who have volunteered to provide communications during periods of emergency situations and during public service events. Usually, each county has an ARES Emergency Coordinator (EC) (not a government entity) who is the focal point of the local ARES organization. The ARES may conduct drills and training exercises as often and as long as they deem necessary. Public service events are ideal training circumstances for honing emergency communication skills. Every licensed amateur, regardless of membership in ARRL or any other local or national organization, is eligible for membership in the ARES. The only qualification, other than possession of an Amateur Radio license, is a sincere desire to serve. Because ARES is an amateur service, only amateurs are eligible for membership. The possession of

emergency-powered equipment is desirable, but is not a requirement for membership.

Although RACES and ARES are separate entities, the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) advocates dual membership and cooperative efforts between both groups whenever possible. That being the case, one plausible situation might be when a local small event being addressed by ARES becomes a much larger situation and local government activates RACES.

The ARES members who are also RACES members are already in place and can immediately provide communications and information as may be requested by a government agency. Basically think of ARES as an organization which addresses public service communication needs utilizing self established criteria while RACES is an organization that addresses governmental communication and information requests in accordance with a number of federal, state and local criteria. — *Jack Connors, WB2GHH Radio Officer Broome County RACES. Elements of this article were extracted from the ARRL/ARES & NYS SEMO and RACES. net web pages.*

Who was Fred Porterfield, W2OW? (Part 1)

An inquiry to Jack, WB2GHH, on Fred Porterfield and the origins of the W2OW Callsign elicited some fragments of information. Jack mentioned the query to Bill Thompson, W2MTA, and the following article was the result. We'll run it in two parts because we have so much material this month. Many thanks to Bill for taking the time to share his memories.

In July of 1956 there was an article in QST that led all of us hams into the 1957 International Geophysical Year, then later the Sputnik launch and later 1958 Alpha. A senior in college, and physics major, I took on a project describing the Mark II Minitrack system, based on the interferometer principle; I presented the concept of tracking orbiting satellites to my fellow physicists at Hartwick. Little did any of us know what would be transpiring within the following year when no one, no one had yet even talked about really going to the moon.

In early '57, I joined the IBM flight test department, on the Vestal Parkway, and subsequently in mid '58 moved to new lab space at IBM Owego to help build the son of DINABOC, forerunner of the SAC B-70 BNS; later to fly it out at Broome Airport's big hangar. I remember that October '57 day when Sputnik launched and beep-beeped in our 20 MHz receivers

I became an active member of the IBM Endicott Radio Club (callsign K2ERQ). One of the club's many members, all of whom greatly impressed this young junior engineer, was this rather portly gent Fred Porterfield, W2OW, who labored in the IBM Glendale labs in west Endicott. Fred's visage today can be seen in the QCWA photo album, working on a generator at a hilltop Field Day site with his cronies Ted, W2SFW, and John, W2TMW. The Club was into many projects, but in the Spring of 1958, the big excitement was the spaceshot events with Eisenhower encouraging the U.S. to get going with Vanguard and Werner Von Braun's several projects. (Little did we know that Mercury, Gemini and Apollo were on the horizon.) We decided that IBM should get into the Space Age and that the IBM K2ERQ Club would sponsor and erect a satellite tracking station.... *(To be continued next month.)*

Our New Printer Unicorn Electronics

Newsletter Printing Costs were one of the line items noted during our January Budget Discussions. One of the suggestions offered was to find a "Corporate Sponsor" for the printing. Tom Sigilin, WA2LTD, was kind enough to approach Unicorn Electronics and he received a favorable response.

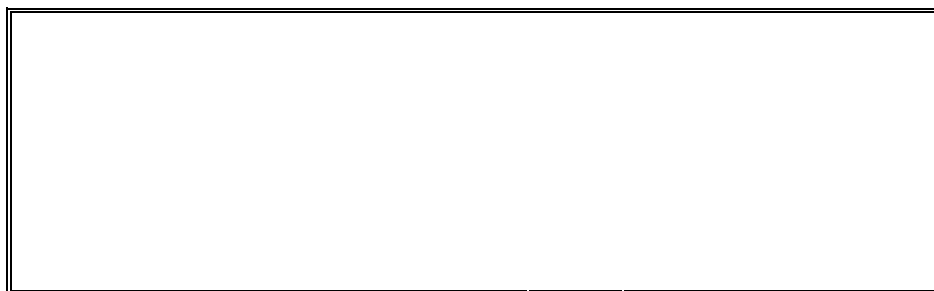
We thank Unicorn Electronics for their generosity and we appreciate their help. Unicorn (located at Valley Plaza in Johnson City) is a full-line walk-in and Internet retailer of Electronic Components. They also have a fine line of Tools, Computer Parts and Equipment, and Sound Systems. Please thank the good people at Unicorn the next time you stop in.

February Program: Numbers Stations

Our program for February will look at "Numbers Stations" those mysterious Shortwave Broadcasts of strings of numbers and/or letters that come on the air and then vanish. What might they be for? Who might be responsible? What is this stuff? For speculations on these and other interesting matters, come to the February General Meeting to hear what allen, KC2LKC, has to offer!

Binghamton Amateur Radio Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 853
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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	WA3EFE	669-4188
W2OW Trustee	Mel Snitchler	WE2K	723-9612
Newsletter	Ed Plesnar	KB2SCF	754-3810

Printing Sponsor: Unicorn Electronics,
 Valley Plaza Drive, Johnson City, NY



BARA, The Binghamton Amateur Radio Association is an ARRL Affiliated Club
 e-Mail Address: w2ow@arrl.net

Next General Meeting

7:30 PM, Wednesday, February 21st
 Town of Binghamton Town Hall, 279 Park Avenue, South of the
 Ross Park Entrance

Board Meeting

7:00 PM, Wednesday March 7th
 Broome Community College Campus, Office of Emergency
 Services (West Side of Campus)

Exam Session

7:00 PM Monday, March 26th
 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