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# BARA

## Facts

Newsletter of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association

April 2007

Visit the club website: [www.w2ow.org](http://www.w2ow.org)

### The President's Corner

In April when the snows of March give way.... According to our good friends at the National Weather Service we may have a winter extension. But though there may be a chill in the air, our meetings are always warm and friendly gatherings.

Our March General Meeting was enlivened by K2KLC and his presentation on "Numbers Stations". Those of you who missed it missed an interesting and entertaining time and we hope to have all return with more news from the world of "Utilities" at some date in the future. After Allen's talk, Tom, WA2LTD, enlivened the meeting with an old Hallicrafters receiver he brought to show and the story that went along with it. More than one member approached to spin knobs and to inquire as to the restoration work. If you have not stopped in for the General Meeting lately, please give it a thought: The business is as short as possible and we do try to allow plenty of time for socializing and refreshment.

Our Shack is much on my mind and I am wondering how we recapture the enthusiasm and spirit to move forward at the Shack. Key to this are Vision, Leadership, and Direction. But Leadership comes first and I need to start beating the bushes to flush out a Shack Chairman. Jack, WB2GHH, will help to get the ball rolling, but we need someone who wants to make Shack Operations happen to step forward....

Likewise, Field Day Approaches. Yes, it is in June, but June will be here before we know it and if we want to mount a real effort we need to begin planning now and to plan we need a leader. Who is up to the challenge?

Busy times are ahead for BARA — I'll save the details for other articles, but I will mention that our Hamfest is coming and there are plenty of irons ready to warm in the fire. Ready, I say, because we need hands that are willing and members with vision. We are at a

point where BARA can make a mark on the landscape of Amateur Radio or watch while others show the way. The changes to our licensing structure are in effect and have already started to bear fruit with new Generals (and others). We can lead, Elmer, and guide an new generation of Hams and we can also be the spark that excites new Hams to join our Ranks.

And that, my friends, is no April Fool! — *DE Eddie, KB2SCF*

### Hamfest News!

On Saturday the 5<sup>th</sup> of May we will hold our annual Hamfest at Marvin Park/Tioga County Fairgrounds in Owego. This event is BARA's primary fundraiser for the year and it's success is critical to the future of Our Club. We need each and every member to get behind this effort and to work to make it a success!

How?

**Talk it Up.** Let all your friends (including non-Ham friends) know about the Hamfest. Encourage them to come and help us to get the word out.

**Help us to pull off the Hamfest.** Volunteer for a job, sign up for a task at the April General Meeting. Turn out around noon/1300 on Friday the 4<sup>th</sup> for setup and help out with execution and clean-up on the 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Come on the 5<sup>th</sup> and show your support.** A Hamfest isn't a success without Vendors or Buyers. Bring your ~~junk~~ fantastic treasures to ~~unload~~ sell and come along to buy some fantastic bargains!

**Talk it up some more!** As we come up on the 5<sup>th</sup>, remind the people that you chat with on the air that a Hamfest is happening. Spread the Word!

### SVARA\BARA General Class

The SVARA\BARA General Classes held throughout the month of March have wrapped up and were a general success.

The Saturday sessions were held at the East Maine Road Fire Station with a VE Testing session on

the last Saturday of March. Murphy's Monkey Wrench in the form of a snow storm on the 17<sup>th</sup> failed to faze the group and that class was conducted on the 146.82 repeater.

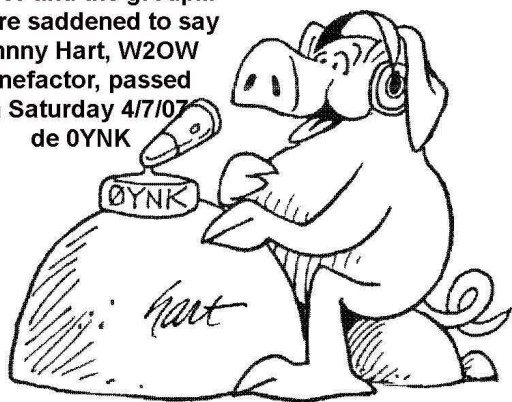
A total of sixteen people (including Hams from as far away as Greene and Newark Valley) attended and there were no drop outs!

First and foremost, a Big "Thank You" to Ford, AB2HS, who had the idea of running a class to coincide with local interest in upgrading, especially in the light of recent FCC Rules Changes. Ford got the ball rolling and organized the classes, making sure of success by lining up a team of qualified and entertaining instructors. Thank you also to the teachers who volunteered and took the time to spend Saturday at the Hall: Steve, K2CDJ; Tom, WA2LTD; Rick, N3VKM; Bob, KC2DSS; and Ford, AB2HS. Special thanks to the VE Team: Bob, WA2VCS; Duane, K2DLT; Curt, N2NFS; Duane, WB2RLI; and Rick, N3VKM, who got up early on a Saturday morning to take the time to administer the test. Finally, let's not forget to thank Sharon, N2WGM, who supplied the water, soda, and snacks and John, WB2FQZ, who fortified each class with donuts. Your reporter also suspects that nobody minded him making the coffee. — *DE Paul, N2NCB*

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## Johnny Hart, RIP

W2OW and the group...  
we are saddened to say  
Johnny Hart, W2OW  
benefactor, passed  
on Saturday 4/7/07  
de 0YNK



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— *Thanks to John, WB2SGS*

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## SKYWARN Training This Month

On Wednesday, April 18<sup>th</sup> the National Weather Service in Binghamton will conduct a Skywarn Training Session during the BARA General Meeting. This annual session is always informative and is often updated with materials from Severe Weather in our area from the preceding year.

Members, guests, and others are welcome. Besides being a great opportunity to introduce people to the Public Service Hams provide through Skywarn, the National Weather Service also welcomes non-Ham Skywarn reporters. This is also an excellent opportunity to pick up information on weather and how it is reported and the slides and materials would be useful for kids from the Middle School level up through High School. Bring the kids along, it might help them to get a better grade in Science Class!

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## News of the '82 Machine

By way of Ford, AB2HS, we learn that continuing noise and dropout problems on the 146.82 SVARA Repeater are being attacked. The suspicion is that the many changes to commercial antenna structures and frequencies in the area are contributing to general RF Havoc and Ford and his team are working to eliminate the problems one-at-a-time.

During this period, it may be necessary for SVARA to take the 146.82 machine off the air for adjustment and overhall. Ford recommends that regular '82 users program 146.865 MHz (negative offset, optional CTSS Tone of 146.2) into their radios and that they use that alternate frequency in the event that 146.82 is "off the air".

More news here as it becomes available. Please be patient and "bear with it" as Ford and his Team work on these issues.

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## Amateur Radio Shutdown in Iraqi

Iraq Amateur Radio Society (IARS) President Diya Sayah, YI1DZ, says there's no end in sight to a ham radio blackout in his country. As part of the new security plan for Baghdad, the Iraqi Ministry of Defense requested in March that radio amateurs remain off the air until security improves.

Because of a mis-communication, however, word failed to reach the Iraqi Communications and Media Commission, which was still issuing licenses. Sayah chalks up the open-ended ham radio blackout to a misunderstanding of Amateur Radio on the part of Iraq's defense minister. Working through the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research, the IARS has attempted — so far without success — to explain Amateur Radio to the Ministry of Defense. "Because it's between ministries, this will take time also," Sayah told ARRL, adding that he was not optimistic about getting an opportunity to discuss the issue anytime soon with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

"Now anyone on the air is a pirate, as everyone

is obliged not to use their radios at the present time,” he added. He said IARS members continue making contacts using Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) modes such as IRLP, EchoLink and others.

The Ministry of Defense had asked the IARS to store all licensees’ ham radio equipment during the shutdown, but Sayah says that’s not happening because of the dangerous situation that persists within the capital.

The ham radio shutdown affects members of the military and contractors holding YI9-prefix call signs. It does *not* apply to Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) operations, which use military frequencies. — *From the ARRL Letter for 6 April*

### **Remembering the *Titanic***

This month marks the 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sinking of the *RMS Titanic*. While on her maiden voyage (from Liverpool to New York) the *Titanic*, in the early hours of April 15<sup>th</sup> 1912 the struck an Iceberg in the North Atlantic. On that fateful evening more than 1,500 souls perished in the frigid waters and a new technology — Wireless — flashed to the world word of the tragedy.

By no means was the *Titanic* the first ship to sink, nor was she the first to carry Marconi’s wonderful invention, but her loss was reported as it happened and a combination of human errors and “might have beens” assured that the world of Marine Safety and Communications would never be the same.

Throughout the early morning hours Marconi Operators Jack Phillips (who would perish in the waters) and Harold Bride tapped out distress messages prefixed with the Marconi *CQD* and the new, international, *SOS* in attempt to summon aid. The oscillating spark of the transmitter was copied along the North American Eastern Seaboard and relayed to other stations, news outlets, and cableheads. The world waited in anxious expectation as nearby ships, including the *RMS Carpathia* (under the command of Arthur Rostron) fought through the waters.

In the end 700 were saved (including Harold Bride) and investigations and regulations assured that in the future all Ships above a certain class would carry sufficient Lifeboats and Wireless Equipment. Further, a continuous Wireless Watch would be maintained and protocols for handling distress traffic were established.

May those who perished rest peacefully in the watery deep and thanks be given for Phillips, Bride, and the legion of “Sparks” who stood (and stand) to their posts from that era and through today to get the message through. We, as Amateur Radio Operators, as

heirs of this proud tradition. Our tradition of Public Service and our willingness to serve in time of emergency is something to be proud of, cultivated, and passed on to the next generation of operators. Harold Bride and Jack Phillips did not know how significant their role would be when they stepped aboard the *Titanic*. Nor do we know how significant our role might be, yesterday, today, or tomorrow....

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### **Postal Fees and BARA *Facts***

To the inevitable “death” and “taxes” it seems we must add “increased postal rates”. The cost of First Class Postage increases in May and that will lead to an increase in the cost of distributing the *BARA Facts*. This matter has come up occasionally in the past and at several meetings this year. At issue is the fact that postage, insurance, and rent are our three main budget items. Insurance and rent we cannot avoid, but several members have suggested BARA investigate ways of decreasing our postal expenditures.

Of the alternatives suggested, distribution of the *Facts* via e-Mail holds some promise and will be given careful consideration. There are several significant points to be respected, however:

First, e-Mail Distribution should be an option chosen by a member. It should not be “assumed” that all members want to receive the *Facts* electronically.

Second, Since the *Facts* is our primary means of maintaining cohesiveness as a Club, how do we avoid diluting that if our Newsletter is distributed electronically?

Third, How do we handle “membership renewal notices” (currently highlighted on your address labels) if there is no address label?

Three things to think about and if you have ideas or suggestions, please bring them to a meeting. In particular, we would be glad to hear from any member who has experience in Bulk Mailing and who can offer advice or insight in that area.

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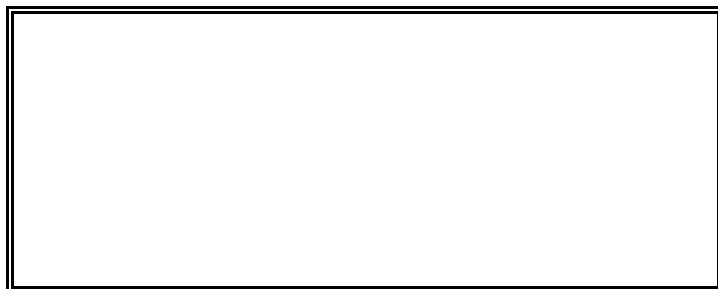
### **Interest and Commitment**

“What is the difference between being interested in something and committed to it,” asks the *young scamp*?

Replies the *old timer*: “Think of the ham & eggs you ate for breakfast. There was a chicken who had an interest in your meal, but that there pig — he was committed to it!”

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

**First Class**



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

**Next General Meeting**

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

**Board Meeting**

7:00 PM, Wednesday May 2nd  
 Broome Community College Campus, Office of Emergency Services (West Side of Campus)

**Exam Session**

7:00 PM Monday, April 30th  
 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**

**e-Mail Address: w2ow@arrl.net**



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