



The Link

Official Journal of the Buffalo Amateur Radio Repeater Association, Inc.

April 1999

April's Program: Amateur Radio and Ballooning

This month we will welcome Roger Garbacz, WA2CXW, who will tell us about his amateur radio balloon expeditions. Perhaps some of you have witnessed Roger's earlier balloon adventures at venues like the Batavia Hamfest, where a small balloon is launched with an amateur radio payload containing such goodies as ATV transmitters, data telemetry, and now Roger's newest payload addition: GPS.

Roger's work with balloons is a fascinating aspect of ham radio that few of us have ever encountered, so be sure to join us on Monday, April 19. See you there!

Special May Tour: Telephone Pioneers Museum

Mark your calendars now! BARRA is having a special May gathering, a field trip tour! May 17 is the date.

Through the efforts of BARRA board treasurer and retired Bell Atlantic employee Ed Swan, KD2JW, BARRA will be able to tour the Telephone Pioneers Museum located on the ground floor of the Bell Atlantic building at 65 Franklin Street in downtown Buffalo. We are told that there are a number of interesting pieces of early telephone history in the museum, as well as a gift shop.



Ed is in talks with the Bell Atlantic people to see if we can also tour that evening part of the telephone switching facility located in the same building. As of this writing, nothing has yet been arranged, but it is a possibility that is being worked on. Watch the BARRA e-mail list server for last-minute updates.

The museum tour will begin at 7 PM on Monday, May 17. The Bell Atlantic building is located directly across Franklin Street from Buffalo Police Headquarters and St. Joseph's Old Cathedral. Parking will be where-you-can-find it on the street or in nearby ramps. Consider carpooling with other BARRA friends! See you there!

The BARRA E-Mail Listserver

To join, send an empty e-mail message to:
barra-subscribe@perdix.acsu.buffalo.edu
To send a message to the list subscribers, address your e-mail to:
barra@perdix.acsu.buffalo.edu

Annual Auction a Success

After a rocky start to the evening with a mix-up in keyholder instructions for the church personnel, the Annual BARRA Auction held on February 15 was a great success for BARRA and St. Bartholomew's Church. As is widely known, the proceeds from the BARRA Auction are used to help pay for the use of our meeting space at the church.

About 90 people attended this year's event, and we also had the unexpected benefit of some door prizes donated by Nelson Oldfield, WA2ZSC and Crest Electronics.

The annual BARRA raffle was pulled at the end of the evening's activities and the winners were as follows:

First Prize, \$100	Ed Swan, KD2JW
Second Prize, \$50	KC2EBB
Third Prize, \$25	Ernie Dawson, W2DTF

The door prizes were drawn as consolation prizes from the raffle tickets. Winners of the door prizes had to be present. We thank Nelson for his generous donation, which included tickets to Buffalo Bisons games.

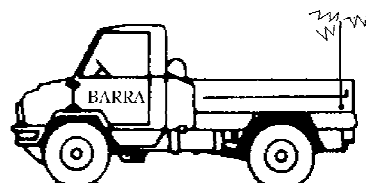
The auction share that BARRA retains was a bit larger this year, largely due to a pile of equipment brought in by Ben Bass, N2YDM, from an estate. The entire proceeds from the sale of those items went to BARRA.

Many thanks to all who attended, brought items to sell, and/or helped with chairs. Let's make next year's Auction even better!

Public Service Event Assistance Needed

I have a request from the Western New York Mountain Biking Association for Ham Radio assistance in providing communications during a bike race in Allegheny State Park (near Salamanca, on the ski trails) on Sunday, June 27, 1999 approx. 10 am to 2 pm. I can be reached by e-mail at EASwan@compuserve.com or at 877-0417.

Tnx es 73,
Ed Swan, KD2JW



Buffalo Amateur Radio Repeater Association, Inc.

Club Officers & Directors

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Erie County Emer. Coord.	Karl Weir N2NJH	

Voice Repeaters

WB2JQK	29.68 -	Buffalo
K2ISO	145.17 -	Wethersfield
K2GUG	146.73 -	Grand Island
W2EUP	146.91 -	Boston
W2OXB	147.00 +	Kenmore
W2EUP	224.82 -	Boston
WR2AHL	442.00 +	Wethersfield
WA2HKS	444.00 +	Buffalo
WB2DSS	444.75 +	Kenmore

Digital Repeaters

W2EUP-1	145.59	Niagara Falls
N2GH-1	145.59	Wethersfield, NY
K2IMF-1	145.01	Marilla, NY

RACES Net

Stop by Sunday evenings at 7:00 pm and join the Erie County ARES/RACES net which meets on the 146.91 and 444.00 repeaters. N2NJH is net control.

BARRA Packet BBS

BARRA has a bulletin board area on the IPBUFF (N2NJH) Packet/Internet gateway system. Connect through any local node that shows IPBUFF in its node list. IPBUFF is available to 1200 baud users directly on 145.63 MHz.

BARRA Home Page

<http://hamgate1.sunyerie.edu/barra.htm>

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The *Link* is published eight times a year by BARRA, the Buffalo Amateur Radio Repeater Association, Inc. The opinions expressed herein, however, are not necessarily those of the Board of Directors, nor of BARRA. Letters to the editor are solicited and must be signed. Names and addresses will be withheld if requested. Material for the *Link* should be sent to the Editor:

Buffalo Amateur Radio Repeater Ass'n
 P.O. Box 507
 N. Tonawanda, NY 14120-0507

or may be submitted electronically to the editor's CompuServe address: 73323,672. If submitting through the Internet, the full address is 73323.672@compuserve.com. The editor may be reached by telephone in the evenings at (716) 833-8375.

ARTICLES

Articles for the *Link* on any subject, technical or general interest, are always welcome and encouraged. When submitting material to the *Link*, please type it or submit it electronically, if possible. Remember that the editor reserves the right to make necessary changes including reformatting and condensing for space and that Full Membership may be obtained by writing articles.

LINK DEADLINES

All material must be submitted to the Editor by the end of the month previous to the issue (e.g. December 31st for the January issue). Of course, if the material is received earlier than that date, you will have a better chance of getting your article in the next issue. All advertising is subject to the same deadline.

ADVERTISING

Want-Ads are free to BARRA members and are published in the next available issue. Ads from other hams are accepted free on a space-available basis. Ads appearing in other club newsletters with which BARRA has an exchange agreement are reprinted on a space-available basis.

Display advertising is available at the prevailing rates. Business card size is currently \$2.00/mo; full page is \$16.00/mo. Contact the editor for rates for other sizes.

DUES

Basic membership rate	\$20.00
Family member in the same household as first member	3.00
Discounts from basic rate	
Senior Citizen (65+)	-5.00
Disabled	-5.00
Voting member	-5.00
Full-time student with ID	-5.00
Each new member recommended	-1.00

Note: A voting member is a member who has performed a service for BARRA (e.g. helped out at an activity, written a *Link* article, etc.).

Get Well, N2OBW!

We are sorry to report that BARRA board member, Gene Kremzier, N2OBW, has spent some time in the hospital recently. Our best wishes go out to Gene for a speedy recovery.

New Member

BARRA welcomes:
 Scott Olitsky, AC3A Williamsville

Welcome aboard, Scott!

More Public Service Help Needed

Hi,
 I am the organizer of the Zoar Valley/Gowanda Adventure Race (May 22) and the Buffalo Triathlon (July 3). I have worked with you in the past on the Buffalo Marathon, and was wondering if you could possibly help us with the two races we have planned this year, the adventure race and triathlon. The adventure race is an all day event, from sunrise to sunset (like the eco-challenge) and the triathlon is from 07:30 - 10:30 am. Please let me know at your earliest convenience.

Best regards,
 Andre Smaic
 716-835-8674
 email: andrijan@pce.net

From the WNY Ham Club Leadership Meeting

Wednesday, March 31 saw the latest gathering of the WNY Ham Club Leadership group, comprised of the officers and public relations people from the ham clubs of the Western New York state area. The group exists to help pool resources among the clubs and to work together to promote amateur radio. A couple of key items from the meeting:

Erie County Fair Ham Radio Display - No longer the singular domain of any one radio club, all hams from WNY are encouraged and are indeed needed to help staff this display throughout the length of the Fair. Greg Young, KE2VW, is the contact for this event and he has over 100 4-hour shifts that need to be filled over the ten-day run of the Fair. You can contact Greg on email at: geyoung@acsu.buffalo.edu
Summer WNY Ham Picnic - A committee has been formed for the second installment of this fun event. Tentative date is Saturday, July 17, and will take place at Chestnut Ridge Park.

Also discussed at the meeting was the possibility of an all-WNY display of ham radio. This would take the form of each radio club presenting a ham radio display at a mall local to that club, and all clubs would have their displays on the same weekend. The possibility of communication among the displays would then be possible and could show off such modes as ATV, 2 meter FM, as well as the digital modes. If you would be interested in participating in such a display for BARRA, contact Mark Lienert, KG2DE.

News from the ARRL Letter ... Our thanks to Ben, N2YDM, who forwards same to the editor for possible Link material.

Swatch Insists "Beatnik" Messages "Not Advertising"

The CEO of the Swatch Group Ltd says messages to be transmitted on 2 meters by the soon-to-be-launched Sputnik-99 satellite are "not advertising" but part of the watchmaker's campaign to institute the "Swatch beat" as an international unit of time measurement. Replying to the League's suggestion to scrap the launch, Swatch Group CEO Nicolas E. Hayek said if anyone profits from the so-called "Beatnik mission" satellite, it will be the Amateur Radio community "who will gain much more recognition worldwide for their important work."

On April 7, League Executive Vice President David Sumner, K1ZZ, suggested that Swatch cancel the launch of the so-called "Beatnik" satellite and use a commercial satellite for its project instead. "The Amateur Radio community must stand against the 'Beatnik' satellite because it represents such an undesirable precedent," Sumner said. He cited international regulations defining the Amateur Service as one engaged in by "duly authorized persons interested in radio technique solely with a personal aim and without pecuniary interest."

In his faxed reply April 8, Hayek indicated the company planned to go ahead with the mission, despite the League's entreaty and numerous complaints from within the amateur community. He said the more than 400 messages programmed into the mini-Sputnik are not to advertise the company's products but to promote the company's concept to "improve time coordination in a separate and new way between all parts on Earth" -- something, he said, that should interest hams.

An increasing number of voices within the amateur community have been raised in protest against plans for the "Beatnik mission." Rob Carlson, KC2AEI, has opened a "Swatch Protest and Boycott" site on the Internet at <http://wmbc.umbc.edu/rob/swatch-protest/> to collect opinions and as a clearing house for information on the topic.

Acknowledging "negative reactions from a few radio amateurs regarding the Swatch beatnik satellite project," Hayek said Swatch has received many more positive ones from "other interested users." Some of the e-mail messages are posted on the company's Web site, <http://www.swatch.com/beatnik/frameset.html>. Swatch also has opened an e-mail comment box on its Web site to gather opinions on "Should we send your messages into space?"

Swatch solicited more than 5000 messages via its Web site, including voice and text files, for possible transmission on the new satellite. Messages selected for use were supposed to include a reference to the "beat" theme.

Hayek said he planned to again review with Swatch management "what can be possibly done without jeopardizing the aims of the mission" while also not offending amateurs, and invited continuing dialogue with the League. Sumner expressed disappointment that Swatch has not yet decided to

change course, but he welcomed the opportunity for further dialogue.

AMSAT-France, which contracted with AMSAT-Russia to build the electronics for the soon-to-be-launched mini-Sputnik, has since distanced itself from the project and apologized for its involvement. AMSAT-Russia President Eugene Labutin, RA3APR, also has apologized, saying the arrangements with Swatch were made without AMSAT-Russia's knowledge.

The new Sputnik-99 satellite arrived on Mir aboard a Progress rocket April 4 and is tentatively set for launch April 16 during a space walk by the Russian Mir crew. It will carry a 100-mW transmitter and transmit on or about 145.815 MHz. The satellite will have an approximately 30-day life span.

FCC Official Acknowledges OOs Really Are "Official"

The FCC's top amateur enforcer, Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, says that hams who receive notices from ARRL Official Observers should take them seriously or take the consequences. "Failure to take the notices seriously and to take corrective action where possible will not be tolerated by the Commission," Hollingsworth said in an enforcement-related letter to a South Carolina amateur. "The volunteer work of these Official Observers is a critical element of the Commission's enforcement program," he said, adding that failure to act on an OO notice could lead to fines and other sanctions.

Hollingsworth's comments were contained in an April 7 station-inspection follow-up letter to Richard Whiten, WB2OTK, of Easley, South Carolina. Hollingsworth and an FCC engineering team visited Whiten's station on January 22 after what Hollingsworth called "longstanding complaints" about the operation of Whiten's station. Whiten reportedly cooperated in the station inspection. According to the FCC letter, the Commission has received "numerous complaints" about Whiten "regarding profanity, obscenity, broadcasting extreme racial slurs, deliberate interference and failure to properly identify." Hollingsworth also said he'd heard complaints that Whiten had played recordings over the air "for the purpose of harassment or deliberate interference."

Hollingsworth noted that Whiten had "apparently ignored notices from Official Observers," and pointed out that the volunteer OOs work "in accordance with an agreement between the Commission and the ARRL and in accordance with our statutory authority."

"One thing I have really picked up as I travel around to groups is the frustration of the OOs," Hollingsworth told the League this week. "We're going to correct that, pure and simple."

In his letter, he told Whiten that, although the FCC considers hams to be self-policing, "the success of that regulatory approach depends upon the adherence to notices of possible improper operation from other licensed amateurs who

continued on next page

are recognized Official Observers.” The FCC asked Whiten to list all notices from OOs he has received since the start of his license term on September 27, 1994, and any corrective actions taken in response.

The FCC also set aside a February 10, 1999, grant of the vanity call sign W2OTK to Whiten and said his license expiration date remains October 15, 2001.

Hollingsworth also took advantage of the opportunity provided by his letter to Whiten to spell out the FCC’s position on obscene and indecent Amateur Radio transmissions. “Obscene speech is not protected by the First Amendment and cannot be broadcast at any time,” he advised. Indecent speech also is not protected between 6 AM and 10 PM, in accordance with the so-called “safe harbor” policy the FCC uses with commercial broadcasters.

Hollingsworth said that while FCC personnel did not notice any technical violations during their January inspection, they did have “serious concerns” about a linear amplifier under construction that was capable of greater than legal output. Hollingsworth asked Whiten to provide details of the amplifier and how it’s been used.

Hollingsworth also told Whiten he would be forwarding, under separate cover, tape recordings made of Whiten’s transmissions last November on 20 meters. “You will be requested to provide a full explanation for those radio transmissions,” he wrote.

“No decisions have been made yet in this case,” Hollingsworth told the League. “We’re still seeking information.”

FCC Issues Strengthened Scanner Receiver Rules

The FCC has amended its rules to strengthen existing prohibitions on scanning receivers that can receive cellular telephone transmissions. While the new rules contain specific exemptions for the Amateur Service, they will have important ramifications for the manufacture of new Amateur Radio equipment that scans frequencies outside the ham bands.

The new rules -- released March 31 in a Report and Order -- broaden the definition of a scanning receiver to include receivers that automatically switch among two or more frequencies between 30 and 960 MHz that can stop at and receive a detected signal. Still exempted are receivers designed solely for operation as a part of a licensed station. In response to an ARRL request, the FCC clarified that the rules do not apply to Amateur Service receivers unless they cover frequencies outside the ham bands.

The FCC also widened its definition of “test equipment” exempted from the cellular reception restriction. The adopted definition defines test equipment by function, rather than by end user as proposed, thus permitting sale to the general public.

Receivers that allow reception of cellular frequencies because of their poor image response would be illegal under the new rules. As it proposed, the Commission adopted a 38

dB rejection standard for signals in the cellular bands “for any frequency to which the receiver can be tuned.”

The FCC abandoned a proposal to require manufacturers to limit reception of cellular service frequencies by “direct pickup” through the cabinet. The FCC also backed away from a proposal that could have required epoxy potting and nonremovable components to prevent scanner modification. The League had argued that this could raise the cost of buying and repairing equipment and could preclude ham gear modification for CAP and MARS or for experimental purposes.

The FCC adopted a more generalized requirement that receivers be designed so that tuning, control circuits, and filtering be inaccessible, and that any attempted modifications render the receiver inoperative.

The new FCC rules also prohibit modification of scanning receivers as a business or on an ongoing basis “regardless of the date of manufacture or number of units modified.” The Commission also said modification of any scanning receiver is prohibited and invalidates the equipment authorization. New, permanent labels on scanning receivers also will be required.

Kits for scanning receivers would be treated the same as assembled equipment. The League plans to look closely at this provision to make sure it will not prevent amateur manufacturers from producing legitimate transverting equipment.

The new rules become effective due 30 days after their publication in The Federal Register, but the FCC said it will include “transitional provisions” in its rules. A copy of the Report and Order is available on the ARRL Web site at <http://www2.arrl.org/announce/et98-RandO.html>

AES Founder Terry J. Stermann, W9DIA, SK

Terry Stermann, W9DIA, the man who founded Amateur Electronic Supply as a teenager in the 1950s, has died. He was 60 and had been in ill health for several years. Press reports say Stermann, who lived alone, died March 30 following a fire in his Northwest Milwaukee home.

First licensed in 1953, Stermann got into the Amateur Radio business as a teenager working in his father’s TV and electronics parts store, Harris Radio Corporation, in his home town of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. He went on to have a substantial impact on the ham radio marketplace. He founded Amateur Electronic Supply in 1957, when he was just 18 and still attending Milwaukee School of Engineering and commuting weekends to work at his father’s store.

Stermann had suffered from serious health problems since 1988, according to his long-time friend and associate Ray Grenier, K9KHW, who had worked with Stermann at AES from the early years. AES changed hands January 1, 1998. The new owner is Amateur Electronic Supply LLC, headed by Phil Majerus, a prominent Wisconsin businessman.

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Calendar of Events

GENERAL MEETINGS

General meetings are held at St. Bartholomews Episcopal Church, Brighton & Fries Roads, Tonawanda, across from Kenmore East HS. Doors open at 7:00 pm for rag chew, business meeting at 7:30, with program following.

Monday, April 19, 1999 - Amateur Radio Ballooning with Roger Garbacz, WA2CXW.

Monday, May 17, 1999 - NOTE SPECIAL MEETING DATE. Tour of Telephone Pioneers Museum at the Bell Atlantic Building, 65 Franklin St, Buffalo. Tour begins at 7:00 PM.

Monday, June 21, 1999 - Meeting topic TBA.

Monday, July 19, 1999 - Annual Mobile Clinic and Picnic. Mark the date now!

**NO GENERAL MEETINGS IN
MARCH, MAY, AUGUST OR NOVEMBER**
The *Link* is not published in those months

BOARD MEETINGS

Board Meetings are held the second Monday of every month at GLB Electronics, 151 North America Drive (formerly Commerce Pkwy), West Seneca. The meetings begin at 7:30 pm and members are always welcome to sit in on a meeting or bring concerns to the board.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The Technical Committee has work parties every Wednesday evening, 8:00 pm, at GLB Electronics. Stop by and give a hand to a repeater or other BARRA project.

The Technical Committee has formal meetings the first Friday of each month around 7:30 pm at GLB. Come on out to BARRA's own CCITT (Coffee & Crumpets Interrupted by Technical Talk), where progress of current projects is evaluated and new projects are planned. The meetings usually conclude with munchies at a nearby restaurant.