

The Link

April 2006



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

This Month's Meeting: Vote on Dues Increase

This month's general membership meeting will feature the formal vote on the proposed dues increase mentioned in earlier *Link* newsletters and the January general membership meeting. As outlined in those earlier forums, the club has not had a dues increase in over 25 years and our financial situation can no longer support the legacy dues we are collecting. The proposal is to raise dues beginning 2006-07 to \$25 with the \$5 discount for voting membership.

The board is also amending the proposed dues increase to include a change in policy over delivery of *The Link* newsletter: Those members desiring paper delivery of the newsletter will be assessed a \$4/yr surcharge. Email delivery will of course continue to be free.

Be sure to attend the meeting on Monday, April 17th to participate in this important discussion and vote.

Club Seeking Storage Space

BARRA is in need of storage space for items and equipment that it is holding in reserve. The relationship with our current storage facility has changed and we are faced with relocating our belongings. While some of it needs to be and will be discarded, there will still be a need to retain a portion of it. There is too much stuff for it to be stored in our buildings at Cole Road.

If anyone has space, or has contacts with someone who has space, the board and/or Technical Committee will be interested in hearing from you. Contact any board member if you can help out.

Field Day Preparations Begin



Continuing a recently resurrected tradition, BARRA plans to participate in the 2006 Field Day activity in late June. Dave Halik, W2ZZA, and Greg Miller, K2GTM, are co-chairing the activity. Setup will begin early the morning of June 24th, with the contest beginning in the early afternoon and running through Sunday afternoon. Help is needed not only for setup and tear-down, but it is especially needed for operating -- even through the night!

Bring your tent and your sleeping bag and join in on the fun.

Never operated on HF before? Not a problem! The operators at the site will show you how it's done. Can't come for a long period? Not a problem, either! Spend whatever time you can and help build the club's contact count and thus our score.

The June issue of *The Link* will have more detailed information about the event, but you can contact Dave, W2ZZA, at dave.halik@verizon.net now if you have questions or want to sign up.

BARRA Asked to Conduct Soccer Tournament Comms



BARRA has been again approached by officials from the Amherst International Memorial (AIM) soccer tournament to provide communications at their weekend-long event May 27 and 28. This is a repeat performance for BARRA, having participated in this event last May. We are looking for volunteers to help out.

The event is low-stress and very easy. After each soccer match, the scores of the games are relayed by radio to net control. The scores are tabulated at the HQ location and are used by tournament officials to determine further tournament matches. We simply report the scores and handle any score inquiry traffic from the teams.

Like last year, there are a total of five venues: the North French Soccer Complex (HQ and net control), Maple East Elementary School, Williamsville North High School, ECC North Campus, and Sweet Home Middle School. We will use our 444 MHz and 146.73 MHz repeaters. There is no commercial power at the sites so battery operation is a must.

Optimally we are looking for volunteers to work a two-hour shift, but any time that you can work into your schedule on either or both days will be appreciated. Members who volunteered for this activity last year speak well of a fun event and have been asking your editor whether we were doing it again this year. The request from the AIM folks came late, but we are on again!

To sign up to help, or to ask questions about the activity, contact your editor at ka2wft@arrl.net or 834-2664 evenings.

June Meeting Will Be a Field Trip!

Our June meeting will not take place at the church, rather it will be a field trip. Our club secretary, Greg Miller, K2GTM, has arranged for us to have a tour of the WKBW-TV transmitter site in Colden, NY. This should be an exciting and interesting tour for the club.

Because of the arrangement made with the station, we must restrict the tour participants to club members only, and due to the station's insurance requirements, only members that are 18+, please. If someone is not currently a member, we can sign them up that night and they can do the tour!

The next issue of *The Link* will have a map and directions to the transmitter site. Meanwhile, mark the date on your calendar as a don't miss event!

Buffalo Amateur Radio Repeater Association, Inc.

Club Officers & Directors

President	Nelson Oldfield WA2ZSJ '06 634-6394
Vice President	Doug Alderdice KA2WFT '06 834-2664
Secretary	Greg Miller K2GTM '08 565-1807
Treasurer	Ed Swan W2EAS '07 836-0417
Director	Dave Halik W2ZZA '08 825-4417

Committees & Chairs

Technical	<vacant>
Link Editor	Doug Alderdice KA2WFT
Associate Link Editor	Dave Sewhuk N2GH
WNYSORC Representative Chair	Ben Bass N2YDM
Membership,	
Roster & Passwords	KA2WFT, W2EAS
Activities List	Ed Swan W2EAS
ID Badges	W2EAS
Erie County Emer. Coord.	Gary Wysocki N2WLS

Voice Repeaters

WB2JQK	PL 107.2	29.68 -	Boston
K2ISO		145.17 -	Wethersfield
K2ILH	PL 107.2	146.73 -	Niagara Falls
W2EUP		146.91 -	Boston
N2YDM	PL 107.2	147.00 +	Kenmore
W2EUP		224.82 -	Boston
WR2AHL	PL 110.9	442.00 +	Wethersfield
WB2DSS	PL 151.4	443.925 +	Niagara Falls
WA2HKS		444.00 +	Buffalo
WB2DSS	PL 151.4	444.75 +	Kenmore

BARRA Tech Net

Join the BARRA Technical crew on the 146.91/444.00 system Wednesdays at 8 PM for answers to your technical questions.

RAWNY Net

Stop by Monday evenings at 7:00 pm and join the RAWNY club's net which meets on our 146.91 and 444.00 repeaters.

BARRA on the Internet

<http://barra.hamgate.net>

Club Calls

BARRA holds club calls W2EUP and K2ISO in honor and memory of two of its founders, Gil Boelke, W2EUP, and Hugh Wilson, K2ISO.

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These great looking, sturdy, quality ceramic mugs sport the BARRA buffalo logo, are dishwasher safe, and let you show your club colors in style!

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The BARRA E-Mail List Serve

To join, send an e-mail message to:

majordomo@hamgate.net

with the message subscribe barra in the main body of the note.

To send a message to the list subscribers, address your e-mail to:

barra@hamgate.net

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 or membership 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 e-mail address: ka2wft@arrl.net. The editor may be reached by telephone in the evenings at (716) 834-2664.

DISTRIBUTION

The Link is available in both print and electronic formats. If you wish to receive *The Link* in the Adobe cross-platform PDF format by e-mail instead of regular mail, please notify the editor at ka2wft@arrl.net.

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 \$2.50/mo; full page is \$20.00/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.).

Hobby Highlights

Rich Sellers, KG2OR

After I saw Joe Cooper, VE3FMQ, present software defined radio at the RAWNY meeting on February 14th, I thought I would do some research. He brought SDR into focus, through a digital continuum, with Tesla, Marconi, and Armstrong, then into the computer age. I recalled some digital applications for amateur radio. Pactor and Winlink, *QST*, 11-2004, pg. 43, "Digital Radio Mondiale," *QST*, 10-2003, pg. 37, one of the first hardware devices for SDR, Flex Radio SDR 1000, a transceiver, not cheap, over \$1000.00, *QST*, 10-2005, pg. 66, or Icom's, IC PCR 1000, a digital receiver, 11-2004, *QST*, pg. 43.



I enjoyed the graphic display for SDR control. If you remember, in analog radio, it takes time for capacitors to charge or discharge. In SDR things like that, or filtering, is software, it makes changing devices easy and flexible. SDR claims to be superior over analog parts. SDR is not manual specific; there are kits, software houses, and researching is vital.

Mike Marcus, N3JMM/7J1AKO, *QST*, 2002, pgs. 33-35, wrote a very informative article about state of the art SDR in 2002. The article is history, and it looks like this home brew science is fun, and it promotes and stimulates production in our hobby. Whatever happens with SDR I think we might be on the verge of a product revolution.

* * * * *

After I read "Rude Repeater Awakening" by K0LSJ, Jerry Turner, in February's *QST*, pg. 24, 2006, I wrote a letter to the editor, N1BKE, Joel Kleinman. I received positive feedback from him and awaited to see the letter published. In April's *QST*, pg. 24, another letter was published. I asked Joel about it, and he said he lost mine. I thought I would share the letter with you since he will not use mine in the future. I will also include his notes.

"I am a little surprised that K0LSJ, Jerry Turner, of Rosemount, MN is not aware that the ARRL publishes a 'Repeater Directory.' It will solve his problem; not knowing repeater codes and frequencies in the United States. In "Rude Repeater Awakening" K0LSJ says he would like to see a universal PL code system, because machines do not sign codes, and hams do not help when asked. I suggest obtaining a copy of the 'Repeater Directory.' Jerry, enjoy your vacation! Among the many facets of repeater operation it has the frequencies and codes for cities in the United States. Best of luck. KG2OR, Richard Sellers. Buffalo, NY."

Thanks for your letter. I'll try to find a spot for it in an upcoming issue. I am ex-Buffalo, by the way. Lived there from 1966-70 (UB) and 74-76 (wife at UB).

I recall our previous correspondence, but I'm not able to find your letter. If you can send me your letter once again I'll be able to respond to your question. Sorry for the inconvenience. Thanks for re-sending the letter. I'm afraid I'm not going to be able to use it. I received several letters on the same subject and will not be able to use all of them.

73, Joel

Joel P. Kleinman, N1BKE



Report of Club's Financial Audit

To Officers and members of the Board of Directors:

I have just concluded an audit of the financial records of BARRA, the Buffalo Amateur Radio Repeater Association, Inc.

Background

It has been some time since the corporation's finances have been examined and this was just a routine audit. I wish to make it clear that at no time was there any suspicion of any financial irregularities.

I wish to thank Mr. Edwin Swan, W2EAS, Treasurer of the corporation, for his cooperation. He willingly provided all requested materials on a timely basis and readily answered any question I had.

BARRA is a not-for-profit corporation as defined by the laws of New York State in which it is incorporated. Since it is a corporation, it is expected that the Treasurer will follow generally accepted accounting practices for this type of corporation.

Findings

Mr. Swan has chosen to utilize Quicken to maintain the financial records of the corporation. Quicken is one of many available programs available to do so and is probably adequate for the needs of the corporation. Quicken is capable of creating the necessary accounts and reports required to comply with applicable laws.

Ideally separate registers are maintained for Accounts Payable (A/P), Accounts Receivable (A/R), and General Ledger (G/L), and each bank account. Mr. Swan has chosen to utilize the checking account register to perform most of these functions. While this is a deviation from generally accepted accounting practices, Mr. Swan has broken down the entries in the checking register into such detail so this is not a major issue. This is not an unusual practice for a small business or this type of corporate entity.

Conclusion and Recommendations

As for the data itself, I was very pleased with the level of detail available in the checking register as well as the other accounts tracking donations and assets. In comparing the written data with the data in the registers, I found no discrepancies.

For now, the corporation is in a sound, but precarious financial position. This has previously been discussed at length at General Membership Meetings, and, I'm sure, at Board Meetings as well. The Board has taken the important, but difficult step of increasing dues. This probably should have been done years ago. The board needs to get creative and examine additional ways to enhance revenue or further cut expenses.

The major expenses are property taxes, insurance, repeater maintenance, the newsletter and utilities. Through Mr. Swan's efforts, our taxes are under control. Our insurance premiums have not increased significantly in many years. Efforts have been made to keep our electricity costs in check but there is one expense I have previously questioned and suggest the board revisit.

The group needs to take a long, hard look the expense for the telephone line at Cole Road. In calendar year 2005, the group spent \$221.86 for the phone line, primarily for the autopatch. It takes the dues of at least 11 members to support this. How many members actually use this service? We have heard arguments about the

necessity to maintain this for emergency use. In my opinion, given the availability of cell phone service and the ability of those monitoring the repeater to make an emergency phone call, the remote possibility of a catastrophic emergency does not justify this continued expense. Other clubs, who do not pay for their telephone line, continue to offer this feature. Unless it can be ascertained that there is significant member use of this feature, and those members are willing to support it financially, I would suggest that there is no justification for this continued expense. We no longer have the luxury of offering this for the few who use it.

Another area worthy of review is the newsletter. The group needs to encourage members to receive "The Link" via email to reduce the expenses of printing and mailing hard copies. We spent \$142.87 on printing and postage in 2005. These expenses will be higher this year with the increase in postage rates. If we could not get the printing done at no cost to us most of the year, this figure could be considerably higher. My recommendation is that the Board determine a worst case scenario; what would the cost be if we had to pay for printing and postage to mail a hard copy of "The Link" to every paid member. Add that amount to the dues and offer a credit of that amount to members who accept the newsletter via email. This carrot and stick approach should encourage more members to avail themselves of email delivery. In any event, those who insist on hard copy delivery would pay the actual costs associated with that service.

Other than the (non)issue of the lack of separate journals and ledgers, I was quite impressed with the records of the corporation and find them to be satisfactory and in order. Mr. Swan is to be commended for the excellent job he has done maintaining the records of the corporation. I would encourage the Board to explore other ways to enhance revenue and control expenses.

Respectfully submitted,
Benjamin Bass, N2YDM

PROS Radio Club Hamfest Saturday, April 22, 2006

8:00AM until?

Sardinia Historical Society

12070 Savage Road
Sardinia, NY

Contacts:

Roy Schwedt, KC2LEE
Cindy Schwedt, KC2MQU
716-676-3903
rschwedt@netscape.com

2006 BARRA Auction!

Some scenes caught by KA2WFT



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K2GTM brought an impressive load of wares.



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Calendar of Events

GENERAL MEETINGS

General meetings are held at St. Bartholomews Episcopal Church, Brighton and 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 17, 2006 -- Vote on proposed dues increase.

Monday, June 19, 2006 -- Field Trip! Tour of WKBW-TV transmitter facility in Colden, NY. Members 18+ only, please.

Saturday/Sunday, June 24-25, 2006 -- Field Day contest. BARRA will set up a station at the Cole Road site. Come and operate!

Monday, July 17, 2006 -- Annual BARRA Mobile Clinic and Picnic at the Cole Road repeater site.



**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 the **Athens Family Restaurant**, 2801 Harlem Rd, Cheektowaga, between Genesee Street and George Urban Blvd. 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 formal meetings the first Friday of every month at 7:00 PM in Room 117 of the BOCES Potter Road Career and Technical Center, 705 Potter Road, West Seneca (Corner of Slade, Potter and Orchard Park Rds). 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.

Spring and summer work parties at the Cole Road repeater site will be starting soon! If you want to help, contact site trustee Dave Halik, W2ZZA at dave.halik@verizon.net or 825-4417.