

# The Link

April 2012



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

## This Month's Meeting Program: Movie Night!

This month's general membership meeting will have us viewing some archival films courtesy of Ben, N2YDM. In the past Ben has provided us with some interesting historical films, often electronic or industrial in nature and in the tradition of the movie experience of days gone by it all starts with a cartoon!

We look forward to what Ben has for us this time, it is always interesting and often educational. See you there!

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## Hobby Highlights

*Richard Sellers, KG2OR*

Bursting onto the scene of telecommunications in the 1970s was the Internet. I learned about it at the RAWNY "Movie Night" in 2010. Networking and protocol has become nearly automatic for the user of personal computers. We do not have to write our own machine language to initiate functions. It is as easy as entering a www URL and presto, we are instantly looking at a web site.

I recently found <http://www.ahamradioauction.com>. This site is great. Along with many manufacturers and brand names for sale, you can search by key words and retrieve files of equipment. It also has an easy to understand "Solar Data" bank with explanations for rank numbers, including the A and K index, and solar flux.

I searched for my Swan 350, and I thought it was worth more money, but I was surprised to see it for sale for \$71.00. I still have the power supply, and I couldn't find one for sale by searching. Mine is not for sale! This site also has buttons for popular ham equipment, call sign listings, CQ magazine zones, ham photos, and most interestingly a You Tube video, "How to Make a Fox Hole Radio." Please view this film. Get your toilet paper roll ready, some magnet coil wire, razor blade, paper clips and a lead pencil. You will not need a battery for this receiver; it runs on RF energy.

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### *Eyeball QSO* continued from Page 3

VE3WIZ, for spending their Easter Sunday hosting my visit to the Canal. I'm sure they had better things to do but they decided to take me all around and make my visit a memorable one. I hope they enjoyed the day as much as I did.

And a big thanks to Master Yuri Bodrov and his crew for their hospitality. And also to the Canal Pilot who guided this massive ship through the locks with great precision. It was an experience that very few will ever have.

Yuri is headed down the seaway and should be traveling through new water grids on the way to San Juan PR. He is due there on 4/20. He will stay on until at least the end of May. He does not know where he will go after San Juan. He has truly made operating the birds exciting. QSL to his manager UX0FY (on qrz.com). He has ordered 5000 more qsl cards which should arrive shortly.

## Cole Road Work Party April 14th

*Dave Halik, W2ZZA*

This Saturday, April 14th, there will be a BARRA spring cleaning/meeting at the Cole Road repeater site. Site cleaning and general repairs will take place.

Work will begin on ceiling removal in the Operations (aka Chet's) Shack and pre-Field Day preparations will get underway.

Please bring a plastic trash bag for trash removal as well as a hammer and crowbar if you plan on helping with the ceiling removal. A broom and shovel would be helpful too. There are rumors of coffee and doughnuts being available!

Let's make this a productive and fun outing. Many hands will make for light work so plan on coming out and bring a friend. Please car pool if possible. We hope to make this a 9:00AM 'til Noon work party. We may run longer if the need arises.

Remember, participation in this BARRA work party will earn you voting status in the club.

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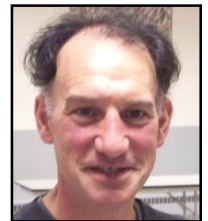
## More Hobby Highlights

*Richard Sellers, KG2OR*

This Hobby Highlights arrives to you after thinking about my line of thought, and I remembered a CBS hit show called "What's My Line." John Charles Daly was the host. For more than a couple of decades the show entertained TV audiences. Its premise: can a panel of celebrity judges guess who is answering their questions while being blind folded. After this thought I searched for a ham radio operator with a good line of work, and I found Owen Duffy, VK1OD from Australia. He has a website, <http://www.VK1OD.net> His ability to write ham radio related articles is tremendous; almost every article is like reading an encyclopedia.

He organizes his writings around categories and themes. Antennas, propagation, and any conceivable amateur idea is waiting for you to read, and he simply writes about hard to understand concepts in a clear and concise manner. I was extremely impressed with his FM and PM article about frequency and phase modulation; at <http://www.VK1OD.net/FM/FM.htm>.

I find it amazing in the way any researcher can string together some words and enter them into a search engine, and retrieve so many helpful answers from the web. Like the old west, with cow towns and cowboys who worked endlessly to make the market with cattle, or other forms of technology induced civilization to new heights, for example: railroads, telegraphy and the US mail, cyber space has created a form of artificial intelligence and a super library system which connects the world into a virtual information market. VK1OD has proven the point



## Buffalo Amateur Radio Repeater Association, Inc.

### Club Officers & Directors

President	Nelson Oldfield WA2ZSJ '12	634-6394
Vice President	Doug Alderdice KA2WFT '12	834-2664
Secretary	Bruce Johnson N2TFG '14	
Treasurer	Ed Swan W2EAS '13	836-0417
Director	Damon Edwards, AB2UK '12	847-2140

### Committees & Chairs

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Erie County RACES Officer	Gene Kremzier N2OBW

### Voice Repeaters

W2EUP	PL 107.2	29.68-	Boston
K2ISO		145.17-	Wethersfield
K2ILH	PL 107.2	146.73-	N. Tonawanda
W2EUP		146.91-	Boston
N2YDM	PL 107.2	147.00+	Kenmore
W2EUP		224.82-	Boston
WR2AHL	PL 110.9	442.00+	Wethersfield
WA2HKS		444.00+	Buffalo
WB2DSS	PL 151.4	444.75+	Kenmore

### APRS Digi-peater

K2ILH-2	144.39	Amherst
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### 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.

CBS-Scanners-Ham-Marine-Business Radios-Radar Detectors

## HIRSCH'S

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*WA2OLW (Leprechaun Graphics, 675-3764) still has BARRA jackets and T-shirts available.*

## Don't Forget to Get Your BARRA Mug!



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

**Only \$5.00 Each!**

Available at all club meetings

### The BARRA E-Mail List Serves

To join, send look up the group "barrabflo" on

<http://groups.yahoo.com>

The Tech Committee also has an email group, BARRA-Tech, on Yahoo Groups. Or, email the editor to receive an invite to join either or both groups.

## An Incredible Eyeball QSO

John Papay, K8YSE

From the AMSAT email list, reprinted with permission of the author; photos by the author

Yuri, UT1FG/MM, left Thunder Bay, Ontario on Lake Superior a few days ago with a cargo of oats and wheat destined for San Juan, Puerto Rico. He had gone through the Welland Canal which connects Lake Ontario to Lake Erie on the way to Thunder Bay and would come back through on his way out. The Welland Canal is very long, has eight locks and takes the boat from a water elevation of 572 ft in Lake Erie to 246 ft in Lake Ontario. On the way it took him about eight hours to go through.

My thought was to drive up there and watch him go through and hope we could get within shouting distance of one another. But where you do go to get close and how do you find your way around in unfamiliar territory? You may have heard VE3RCN on the birds, sometimes from different grids and sometimes on the warship *Haida*. Kevin is in the Royal Canadian Navy (hence the callsign) and makes his home in Welland! After some email exchanges and some research on Kevin's part he offered to host my time in the area. That took all of the stress out of the situation. He knew everything about the canal.

Yuri sailed out of the Detroit River on Saturday night and into Lake Erie. I was able to contact him on 144.200 sideband where we chatted for almost an hour, much different than the quick grid square exchange on the birds. He estimated being at Lock 8 in the Welland Canal around 8 AM. After four hours of sleep and a quick shower I was on the road at 3:15 AM. After a few questions by Canadian Customs (they know what to ask to determine if you are telling the truth), I was in Canada. About 15 minutes out of Port Colborne, the entrance to the canal, Yuri called on 146.52 to say he was about 15 miles out. Fifteen miles later I was at Tim Horton's where I was to meet Kevin, VE3RCN/VA3OR. He arrived there shortly after me and we were off to the Lake Erie shore to catch a glimpse of the *MV Barnacle*. And there she was off in the distance. It was all coming together. The lake was calm, the sun was shining, it was about 32 degrees but there was no wind. The fish were jumping.



View from the wheelhouse of *MV Barnacle* in a Welland lock.

After the ship started moving closer to the channel we got into position to watch it come in. As it rounded the bend and we could see the bridge, Yuri spotted us immediately and was waving. He seemed as excited as we were. As he got closer we were able to shout back and forth. At Lock 8, the first lock, we were able to talk back and forth; we were very close.

There are places on the canal where you can stand on the bank and put your hand on the ship going by. The clearance may only be six inches.

After that we went to get some breakfast; then we lost track of where Yuri was. Kevin made a quick call to his XYL Donna, VE3WIZ, and she was able to relay his position so we could catch up with him again. We waited for him to pass over the highway at Thorold. The road actually goes under the canal! Next stop, Lock 7.

We were waiting for Yuri at Lock 7 where the canal pilot changes. We were standing at the fence when things started to come together. The invitation to come on board was given and before I knew it I was ushered



Captain Yuri Bodrov, UT1FG/MM

over the lock to the other side of the ship and boarded as the ship lowered to the dock level. A minute later I was on the bridge with Captain Yuri, UT1FG. Finally I was able to meet a guy that I've been working on the satellites in hundreds of water grids since April 2009! At that point Kevin went back home to get Donna and they then followed us down the canal, waving and watching us at every highway crossing and vantage point.

An experienced canal pilot takes command of the ship through the locks. He stands on the port or starboard side of the bridge so he can see the ship's hull with respect to the edge of the canal. There may be only inches to spare so it is

a tedious effort. The pilot calls out the commands (Starboard 20, port 10, slow ahead, etc.) and the first officer carries out the orders. Yuri is usually with the pilot and helps relay the commands. There is very little time for anything else except when you are actually stopped in the lock. It's one thing to see the ship going through the locks from land but quite another to experience the change of level from inside the lock itself. It truly was an experience of a lifetime.

Yuri took me to his cabin one level below the bridge. His quarters are quite nice and private. This is where he operates with his IC706, manually tuning the radio and doing a great job at that! The power supply from HP1CQ sat on the table in the corner and a computer running Orbitron is on the other side. Yuri now has an ELK antenna installed (thanks to the efforts of Rick, WA4NVM). It is mounted on a manually rotatable mast that goes up from the bridge, starboard side, directly above his cabin. The ELK is tilted up at 15 degrees and was just installed on the way back from Thunder Bay. The CJU antenna is mounted on the crossboom next to the ELK. A vertical for 2 meters is on a separate mast above those antennas. Until this season Yuri only used the 2 meter vertical for transmit and receive. It is amazing that he was able to make any contacts with just that antenna. The CJU improved things greatly and the ELK takes it to a new level. He worked PV8DX right at his horizon on FO-29 with it. Yuri has SatPC32 but has not installed it yet due to time constraints. When he is out in the ocean again, he will install it and get his radio interfaced. This will make it much easier for him to stay on frequency and focus on operating. Yuri also has a 6 meter rotatable dipole and an end fed long wire that goes from the bridge to the top of the first two cranes.

The *MV Barnacle* is a sister ship to the *Mottler*, the ship that he captained last season. It was also built in 2009 and is owned by a Canadian company based in Montreal. The engine room boasts a 10,000 horsepower plant and is controlled by state of the art electronics. I was able to experience an excellent meal on the ship in addition to touring the ship with the chief engineer.

Time passes quickly and soon we were at Lock 2 where it was decided I should depart. Kevin and Donna were waiting there for me; we were 30 miles away from where my car was parked. We stopped at McDonald's to demonstrate my remote control setup but the WiFi failed so we couldn't do that. After a nice drive and some good conversation we were back at Tim Horton's in Port Colborne. At the US border crossing the agent questioned me as to why I would drive all that way on Easter Sunday just to see a ship go through the canal. After I explained that the captain was a ham radio operator that I had talked with around the world but never met he handed back my passport and said "GO!"

I want to thank Kevin VA3OR/VE3RCN and his wife Donna,

*continued on Page 1*

## Buffalo Amateur Radio Repeater Ass'n

Post Office Box 507

N. Tonawanda, NY 14120-0507



### FIRST CLASS MAIL

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## Calendar of Events

### GENERAL MEETINGS

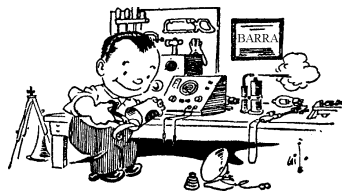
General meetings are held at St. Bartholomew's Anglican Church, 2368 Eggert Road, Tonawanda, near Sheridan Drive. Doors open at 7:00 pm for rag chew, business meeting at 7:30, with program following.

**Monday, April 16, 2012** -- BARRA Movie Night! Enjoy some archival electronics industry films courtesy of Ben, N2YDM.

**June 18, 2012** -- Meeting program TBA.

**June 23-24, 2012** -- Annual BARRA entry in the ARRL Field Day contest.

**Monday, July 16, 2012** -- Annual BARRA Mobile Clinic and Picnic at the Cole Road repeater site! Save the date!



**NO GENERAL MEETINGS IN JANUARY, MARCH, MAY, AUGUST OR NOVEMBER**

The *Link* is not published in March, May, August and November.

### BOARD MEETINGS

Board Meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month at the **Athens Family Restaurant**, 2801 Harlem Rd, Cheektowaga, between Genesee Street and George Urban Blvd. The meetings begin at 7:00 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.



**Field Day is Coming Soon!**

**Save the weekend of  
June 23-24, 2012**