

THE ANTENNA

BRANDON AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY



Spring Edition

March—May 2024

News Highlights!

Hillsborough ARES/RACES Training and Information Net each Thursday at 7:30 pm

Hillsborough County ARES/RACES provides emergency communications in the Tampa Bay area during a critical event. Please join us for our weekly Hillsborough ARES/RACES Information and Training Net on Thursday evenings at 7:30 pm on the N1CDO repeater in Tampa. Receive: 440.100 MHz, Transmit: 445.100 MHz, +5 MHz offset, PL tone 162.2. We feature info on ARES activities and upcoming EdVantage training classes. All check-ins are welcome!

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Dayton/Xenia Hamvention

By Janet Watts.

Once again Ken WA4NSV and I packed up the car and headed to the Dayton Hamvention. We stopped in Thomasville GA and stayed a few days with his long time friend Ralph WA2OGN and his wife Cheryl. They took us to the Tallahassee Automobile Museum, which not only had all kinds of really cool old cars (including a TV Batmobile), but also motorcycles (one used in a Batman movie), old farm equipment, toys, knives, stamps, coins, etc.



We got to our hotel in Ohio and heard the weather report – rain on Friday morning. We were wondering if that would mean a smaller crowd, but no, the fairgrounds were packed, everyone was inside the buildings and not at the flea market. We made the rounds to see all the new equipment – big companies, little companies, - you name it – it was there. Then we stood in a short line to get free Yaesu hats. We went to a forum on tornado forecasting led by two meteorologists and a SkyWarn ham.

On Saturday we went to a forum about Ham Nation and YouTube. It seems like there is a lot of interest in this among hams of all ages. We also went to ARISS : Celebrating 40 years of amateur radio on human spaceflight missions. This was the day we met up with three other members of BARS – Bill N4NOA, Dave N4DLW, and Dick AA5NT. Dick's son-in-law Brian was there to take our group picture at the Dayton Hamvention banner.

We roamed around the exhibits some more and ventured a bit to the outside tables since that area had a lot of grass, but not in the track. Despite some mud, the track was full of tables and canopies, but we weren't looking for anything in particular, so we skipped it.



Sunday had a much smaller crowd, so you could talk to the vendors about your rig, any problems you're having, and ask questions about their products. It's a more relaxed day. Then everyone waits to see if they've won any prizes. Unfortunately, no one from our club won anything but we still had fun and it was exciting to see so many people interested in ham radio. They estimated that over 30,000 attended.



We took our time going home. We spent Monday at Carillon Park in Dayton, a museum of historic buildings moved to the park and Tuesday morning we went to the Ark Encounter in Kentucky. We got home on Thursday and immediately went to pick up our dog – Ken missed her the whole time!

Our recommendation is that if you get the chance, go to Dayton!

Janet KB4PUM



BARS Summer Field Day 2024

Here's the latest update for the 2024 ARRL Summer Field Day. We have confirmed the location will be Davis Park on 612 N. Parson Ave in Brandon. This is the same location used in 2019 for Field Day.

We will have Pavilion #4 reserved for use and also for the planned cookout. Also we have Pavilion #5 available which has bathrooms for use.

There are a number of BARS members that are setting up and operating radio stations so please come out to support them by getting on the air, enjoying the planned cookout or operating from home.

We have the following operators signed up to operate in Davis Park:

Rodney Clark KC4MMR GOTA Station

Fred Hendershot N3BUL

Bill Johnson N4NOA HF/CW

Richard Jones KW4MB GOTA

Dave Welty N4DLW Station unknown, (possible floater)

Ken and Janet Watts WA4NSV/KB4PUM HF Station

Wayne Thorn KM4VRZ and Danny Phillips - KQ4NCJ 10 Meter station

Hopefully others will come out and set up their rigs or offer to support the various stations. If you have radio equipment and antennas and are looking for help in testing them out in the field this would be a great time to do this.

We are also advertising this event to the public and the Brandon/Valrico Osprey will send a reporter out to do a write-up about Field Day.

For the cookout 12 pm, BARS will be providing the main dishes and **we are looking for members to bring side dishes if possible.** The menu will be similar to last year with the following:

Hamburgers with Buns

Hot Dogs with Buns

Condiments

Pulled BBQ Pork, Pulled BBQ chicken, Pulled BBQ beef

BBQ baked beans

bottled water and sodas

We are looking for side dishes such as: Potato Salad, Cole Slaw, chips, and desserts.

So come on out and meet your fellow members. Further updates will be provided by email and at the June BARS meeting on 18 June 2024.

73, Jim Stocks, KK4CWO

Davis Park Field Day, June 2019

The last Field Day held at Davis Park was pre-COVID on 22 June 2019. Here are some of the highlights from that day.



BARS Repeater move

The repeater move went well and the repeater is now on the air

I would like to thank everyone for their help, it was GREATLY APPRECIATED!!!!

Ron (K4FZU), Dave (N4DLW) Mike (KF4CIG) and myself removed the equipment from the County site on Tuesday May 08, 2024.

Some of the equipment will not be used at the temporary site and will be stored at my place for use in the future.

The repeater was installed this morning at the BCI communications office near the intersection of highway 301 and MLK this morning. It is working as I am writing this note. The signal will be weaker to folks in the eastern part of Brandon but the folks on the west end will see good signals.

A special thanks to John (K0LUX) for the use of his office as a temporary site.

This is one of the many times that John has stepped in to help the BARS club.

He has been a staunch supporter for several decades.

I would also like to thank Tim, who works at BCI, for his help in this project. He was a great help in scheduling the move and was there during the installation to provide guidance and support.

Tony Stone

W4TAS

VE Testing

Karen Jacoby

During the months of February through May we had a total of 19 candidates take and pass testing for their license. The new Extra license pool of questions will become effective July 1, 2024.

New BARS members: During the last quarter BARS welcomed in the following new members:

Al Bowers (KR4H)

Mike Sweeney (KQ4RUD)

Roger Smith (KQ4PJD)

Brandon July 4th Parade

Fred Hendershot will be sending out email out asking for volunteers. Jim Moorehead (WF4AC) is developing the July 4th Parade Communications Plan. We will be testing a temporary repeater as a solution. If this does not work, we will be using Jim's mobile 2m radio, hand-held radios, and simplex communications. All volunteers will be asked to meet and test their hand-held radios soon.

The area at Woodview Drive and Lumsden Road will be the test site. Also new t-shirts will be ordered for this years parade. Please contact Jim Moorehead (WF4AC) with your shirt size.

Antenna disassembly

30 March 2024

A antenna disassembly party was while at Jim Smith (K4PPK) home on 30 March 2024. The mounted UHF and VHF antennas were removed along with the HF antenna by Allen Boatman. Tower was disassembled by Allen using a climbing rig and a gin-pole which made the removal of the elements possible. The tower and HF antenna went with Allen Boatman after removal. Allen also participated in the original installation of this tower 20 years earlier.

Attending were:

Jim Stocks KK4CWO

Jim Smith K4PPK

Jim Moorehead WF4AC

Donny Tomlinson KI4DT

Rod Clark KC4MMR

Allen Boatman W4TJW, Eventual owner of the removed antenna



Antenna disassembly - cont.

During the takedown of this antenna we had a knowledgeable group of antenna experts overseeing the operations. Of course in the name of safety supervision was done in the relaxed position.



WHO WAS WB4BIM?

As everyone in the BARS knows, WB4BIM is the callsign used by our club's repeaters. However, long-time member Herb, KJ4H, noted most members of the club knew nothing about the original holder of this callsign. To acquaint everyone with the story of WB4BIM, Herb asked the membership to write a short paper explaining who WB4BIM was and how the BARS came to possess this callsign. Herb sought the help of several other long-time members to serve as judges to determine which of the submitted stories was the closest to the truth. The winning author was to receive a \$5.00 gift certificate put up by Herb.

Herb received two very different responses, both of which are printed below. The truest story, unfortunately a very tragic one, was submitted by Fred, N3BUL. Scott, AB2V, having absolutely no idea of who WB4BIM really was, chose to submit a very well-crafted humorous story. After hearing of the real story, Scott was concerned some of the members might be offended and expressed concern about publishing his version. Both stories were read aloud at the last BARS club meeting and everyone there seemed to accept both stories in the spirit in which they were intended. So here goes, the very tragic true story, and a very funny purely fictional one.

AI, WD4A

Ralph Bond, WB4BIM, was 27 or 28 in 1974 and Vice President of the BARS club. He worked at a local electronics firm and was also a volunteer fireman. The local fire department had obtained a new 160' tower and wanted to replace their 80' tower. Ralph volunteered himself and the radio club to install the new tower for the fire department. In the process of taking down the 80 foot tower, Ralph and a Fireman were at the top of the tower with a jenn pole and had removed the section with the top guy wires attached. They radioed down for the ground team to cut the top guy wires free so they could lower the section. A fireman assisting on the ground cut below the triple joint which freed all the wires on that side and the tower fell over killing both men. The fireman was arrested and charged with involuntary manslaughter, but the charges were later dropped. A tragic case of insufficient directions and knowledge of the job at hand.

The BARS club did not yet have a repeater, but used Ralph's call as the club call on Field Day and then later on

the new repeater.

This information was given to me by Wayne Tope, WB4TUP, who was club Secretary at the time. Wayne was part of the radio team helping that day, and the first to reach Ralph who had died instantly under the tower. Wayne obtained his Doctors degree from seminary school and now resides in Sarasota, but is no longer active in HAM radio.

FRED/ N3BUL

The Real Story of WB4BIM

Allegedly Written By Scott Havens, AB2V ("A Bit 2 Verbose")

Once upon a time, there lived in the village of Brandon a little old man named Red. Now Red was very well liked in the community, and was very active in community affairs, as we shall see shortly. He made his living as a short order cook, but was also well-versed in herb lore and folk medicine. Thus, he was known as both a cook and a healer.

Little was known of Red's early life, but it was rumored that he came from a far-off land in the Frozen North. It was said that that was why his car was so badly eaten away by rust. Indeed, so bad were the ravages of salt and ice, that some parts of the vehicle were nearly destroyed. Red earned enough to get by from his job as a cook, and also used his healing skills to help the people of the village when he could. However, he never charged very much for his services, which may explain why he could never afford a new car. The common sight of Red driving along in his rusty old sedan caused him to be known among his friends as "Red Fender-shot" (and that's no bull!).

Red was an untiring supporter of civic organizations and causes. For example, he was instrumental in organizing the town's collection of things-that-nobody-knew-what-to-do-with. To get into the collection, an object had to be something people would look at and say, "What the heck is that?" If someone had an answer, the thing would be taken out and put to its intended use. If not, it stayed in the collection. This conglomeration of bizarre artifacts eventually became so large that it needed its own building, which was called the Museum of Strange Items, or MOSI for short. Red volunteered countless hours to help make MOSI a success.

Another of Red's passions was the Great Outdoors. He was an avid fisherman and worked in various conservation groups. One of his favorite pasttimes involved taking tour groups out on lengthy field trips, so they could stare at weeds in an open field. He did this in support of an organization that was near and dear to his heart: the See the Sawgrass Committee.

Now one year, a great tribulation fell upon the village of Brandon. The people were grievously afflicted by the dreaded Intestinal Malaise (I-M for short). This disease laid low the entire population and caused terrible hardships for the Brandonites. You may recall from your history books that this was the time of the great Outhouse Wars, when brother turned against brother, and sister against sister, in an all-out battle for the available facilities. Indeed, the entire village would have been doomed if it hadn't been for the determination and skillfulness of Old Red.

Red knew when he entered his kitchen/pharmacy that he would have to use all the skill at his command, if he was ever to overcome the ravages of I-M. So he set to work, scouring his cookbooks and herb compendiums for anything that might reverse the effects of the disease. After hours and hours of experimentation, he finally hit on a formula that could do the trick. It was a combination of his famous beans and franks (which he called "Weenie-Beanies") and several exotic herbs and spices. (Editor's Note: Red was the first to think up this catchy name, but failed to trademark it, so a large food company later took it over for one of its own products.) Over the next couple of days, he tried his recipe on a few of his very sick neighbors, and the results were astounding. After just a few doses of the Weenie-Beanies, they all recovered. Victory was at hand!

As news of Red's cure spread through the village, there was great demand for his concoction. Red spent the next several days in the kitchen, making batch after batch of Weenie-Beanies. As each batch was finished, he carefully spooned it into little bottles and prepared labels for the bottles. The information on every bottle was exactly the same: "Weenie-Beanies- For Beating Intestinal Malaise."

Now Red had been studying for an amateur radio license before the I-M epidemic broke out, but things were

temporarily put on hold while he helped the people of Brandon. He feverishly worked at his recipe, putting the finished product in bottles and labeling them before they went out to the villagers. After a while, he had to resort to abbreviations, and used carbon paper to cut down on his fatigue. Eventually, the instructions were shortened to simply say, "W-B (4BIM)." Apparently his Form 610 got under the carbon paper at one point, because the space for "Preferred Callsign Assignment" ended up with a faint scrawl that appeared to say "WB 4BIM."

Historical documents indicate that the FCC's Head Cheese, Mr. R. A. Rubberstamper, personally reviewed the application and solemnly pronounced, "Good choice. So shall it be written! So shall it be done!" A few weeks later, after the epidemic was over, Red got his long-awaited ham ticket-with a call of WB4BIM.

The people of Brandon never forgot what Old Red Fendershot had done for them. In fact, they instituted an annual festival in his honor, known as the "Greater Brandon RF Days." Ham radio also saw an influx of new operators as a result of Red's influence and popularity. During the early days, the local radio club, known as the Brandon Amateur Radio Federation (BARF), hosted an annual competition in connection with RF Days. The winner was the person who could create the strongest electromagnetic field, as measured in the middle of the picnic pavilion.

The festival was a smashing success, and after a few years people started to commemorate Red's great accomplishment by wearing little hats with a hot dog on top. (You guessed it: "Weenie Beanies.") It is said that some of the wags in the ham community used to load up their wieners and use them as rubber duckies on 2 Meters. (Ed. Note: This has never been confirmed or disproved. However, there have been documented cases of fried brains among the local hams.)

Many changes have occurred since Red's time, and RF Days is no longer observed as an annual festival in Brandon. But the radio operators still remember Red's contributions and have used his callsign for their repeater for as long as anyone can remember. So next time you hear that familiar CW identifier, take a moment to remember Old Red Fendershot, and the original meaning of WB4BIM.

BARS Social Events

Thursday Bagels

Come ONE, Come ALL!

We have reactivated the BARS THURSDAY MORNING BAGELS event on Thursdays at 9:00 am! We're meeting at the same location as in the past:

Einstein Brothers Bagels



660 West
Brandon Blvd

(North East
Corner of
Kings and 60)

JOIN US!

BARS members also get together each Saturday at 8am at the Recipe Box on Bloomingdale Rd in Brandon.



President's Desk—The final word

I'd first like to say thank you to everyone who continues to support this great organization. That comes in many forms, such as paying the membership dues, volunteering your time, stepping up to coordinate events, etc. BARS would not be the same without you, in fact, BARS would not exist without you! So, thank you.

Along with that, Field Day 2024 is almost upon us, and right after that is the July 4th parade. Both of these events are important to the organization as they both involve showcasing to the public who we are, what we do, and how Amateur Radio can support the community. If you can volunteer for either of these events, please contact their respective coordinators.

By now, everyone has probably heard about the ARRL's CyberSecurity incident. I have not seen a definite cause of the incident, but most of these types of incidents are related to easy passwords or email phishing campaigns. Please be extra vigilant with your passwords, use a password keeper like KeeperSecurity or Keepass (there are others out there) and randomize your online passwords. You only need to remember one password, and that is to unlock your keeper vault, and make that a decently strong password too. All of your other online passwords can be completely randomized and stored securely. Do not give your passwords out to anyone, and be really careful about clicking links in emails. Just my two cents.

73,

Steve, NS4M