



# The SPARC

**Amateur Radio - Communicating Worldwide for A Century**

Newsletter of the Boston Amateur Radio Club

**FEBRUARY 2010 - VOLUME 22, NUMBER 2**

<http://www.barc.org> - [w1bos@arrl.net](mailto:w1bos@arrl.net)



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## The SPARC

### Message from the President

**- Tom Bertolino, KB1P, President**

BARC has a place to hold its meetings. Thanks to Bob J DiLibero, K1OP, who recommended the Brookline Community Room and gave us a point of contact at the Brookline Police Department. Our new meeting place is the Community Room in Brookline Police Headquarters, 350 Washington Street, Brookline, MA 02445. The next General Meeting is 7:00 pm on Wednesday 17 February. There is a map and an article with meeting dates in this SPARC.

Now that we have a place to meet, it is time to concentrate on the upcoming year. This year's calendar has BARC supporting a number of public service events. We will participate in Field Day, and consider the possibly of operating a Special Event station. We may also set-up a HF station during the New England QSO party.

April is the start of BARC's support of Public Service events and a very busy month. There are three Public Service events for which BARC provides Ham support in April. They are: the MS Boston Walk (Apr 11), the BAA Boston 5K & 1 Mile Races (18 Apr) and The Run of the Charles (25 Apr). That's right three events in a row. This will put a strain on the Hams who normally volunteer for these events. That is why BARC needs to recruit more Hams from within the club and around the Boston Area and, why BARC will dedicate a General Meeting open to all Boston Area Hams on the importance of being a Public Service volunteer. The class, scheduled for March, will cover: the significance of Amateur Radio in Public Service events; the equipment a Ham needs to support an event; and radio procedures used during Public Service events. If you are new to Ham Radio or have never volunteered for a Public Service event but always wanted to do so, this is the class to attend. If you are an experienced Public Service volunteer please come. We could use your expertise during the class.

This year's Field Day will again be held at the Bare Cove Fire Museum in Hingham. BARC will operate two days Saturday June 26th and Sunday June 27th. If there is sufficient interest in doing so we may also operate over night on Saturday. We are still in the planning stage. So, if you have any suggestions or concerns about Field Day now is the time let us know?

In an effort to increase interest in HF in our club, BARC is considering sponsoring events that will give our members the opportunity to get on HF in a non-competitive way. During last year's Field Day we offered club members who do not normally operate an HF station, and

members with licenses that do not allow HF operation, to get on HF. The GOTA station was a success. However, some Hams seemed intimidated with the competitive nature of the Field Day's HF operation and only wanted to make one contact. The opinion of experienced HF'ers at Field Day was that the first timer HF'er was very interested in HF operations, and maybe we should offer a non-competitive opportunity to our members to get on HF in the future. So, BARC is looking into two possibilities to encourage members to get on HF in a non-competitive environment. They are: first, a Special Event Station which would be set-up at Blue Hill Observatory, honoring their 125th anniversary; and second, setting-up HF station with the Northeastern University Radio Club during the New England QSO Party (May 1-2). If you are interested in participating in either or both of these events, please let me know. The decision to offer these events will be made at the March Business Meeting.

I hope to see you at the next General Meeting Wednesday 17th of February, 2010. Tom KB1P

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## I See the Future

13 Feb AARC Flea (Marlboro)

17 Feb (Wednesday) at 7:00 – 9:30 pm General Meeting **(BPD)** (Note temporary change of day)

21 Feb BARC Breakfast

27 Feb HAM-CON (Colchester VT)

3 Mar (Wednesday) at Business Meeting **(BPD)**

6 Mar MtARA Flea (Feeding Hills)

8 Mar 7:00 – 9:00 pm BARC VE Testing **(BPD)**

12-13 Mar Mass QRP Convention (Westford)

18 Mar 7:00 – 9:00 pm General Meeting **(BPD)**

21 Mar BARC Breakfast

11 Apr MS Boston Walk **(Rp)**

11 Apr FARA Flea (Framingham)

12 Apr 7:00 – 9:00 pm BARC VE Testing **(BPD)**

14 Apr (Wednesday) at 7:00 – 9:30 pm General Meeting **(BPD)**

18 Apr BAA Boston 5K & 1 Mile Races **(Rp)**

18 Apr BARC Breakfast

18 Apr MIT Flea (Cambridge)

19 Apr Boston Marathon

25 Apr Run of the Charles **(Rp)**

30 Apr-1 May NEAR-Fest (Deerfield NH)

16 May BARC Breakfast

16 May MIT Flea (Cambridge)

22 May MS Journey of Hope Walk **(Rp)**

27-29 Aug NE Div Convention (Boxboro)

**(Rp)** = Repeater(s) may be used **-(BPD)** Brookline Police Department.

As you might expect, there are many more events (public service, hamfests, flea markets, etc.) taking place - some only peripheral to ham radio. For information on these, covering New England and some of New York, the "Ham - Electronic Flea Market" and the "PSLIST" lists tell the story. Of course, if you know of an event that would be of interest to the readers, please let the Editor know.



**The Boston Amateur Radio Club** is a non-commercial association of persons interested in the Amateur Radio Service. The Club is organized for the promotion of interest in Amateur Radio communication and education, for the establishment of emergency communications in the event of disasters or other emergencies, for the advancement of the radio art and the public welfare, for the representation of the radio amateur in legislative and regulatory matters, and for the maintenance of collegiality and a high standard of conduct.

The Club is open to all persons interested in Amateur Radio without regard to race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, disability, or sexual preference. Our General and Business meeting locations are handicap accessible. Other meeting and activity locations may be handicap accessible by arrangement.

The Club is an ARRL-affiliated Special Service Club, and is a member of the Council of Eastern Massachusetts Amateur Radio Clubs (CEMARC) and the New England Spectrum Management Council (NESMC). The Club is also an associate member of the Courage Handi-Hams system.

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## Improving Our Communications Efforts

-- Linda M. Blair, NA1I

It happens to us all sooner or later. We listen to the radio for hours on end and slowly but surely, the call signs get more difficult to recognize and the speech becomes harder to understand. Add to this the various kinds of interference and static noise that we all strain to listen through in order to get what we can from that treasured contact and we have a problem that is very difficult to resolve.

The more we strain to hear, it seems hearing becomes more difficult. The truth is that it really does become more difficult to hear. As we age hearing normally deteriorates. Constantly straining to hear through the speaker or headphones accelerates the deterioration. This is a problem that has plagued pilots since soon after radios began being used in aircraft. And hams are not exempt. While we're not likely to crash an airplane because we didn't get the communication right, there are other possible repercussions. Certainly not the least of these are hindrances during emergency procedures and not getting full enjoyment from the radio hobby.

So, what is it that causes these difficulties that we encounter in listening? The answer lies in several places, but most notably in two distinct areas. The first area is that of diction. It seems that the past few decades have seen a serious decline in the use of good diction. The second distinct area is that of operating procedures. All too often call signs are given and other words are spoken that are very very difficult to understand through background noise, static, and other QRM.

But what can we do to eliminate, or at least reduce, some of the problems encountered in making a good QSO? Again, we have two distinct things that can be done, first and foremost, in order to improve our communication efforts. The first one is to make an effort to speak as clearly as we can. This does take practice, but it can be done. The second is to make good use of the phonetic alphabet. The current phonetic alphabet as approved by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), See Table 1. Reference <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/forms/fsd220.html>.

So, by speaking clearly and using the phonetic alphabet, we can offset some of the ravages of QRM, static, and hearing loss. Our communication efforts will then become more accurate and enjoyable.

## Your Personal Ad Could Have Been Here

Are you a depressed BARC member because you have a treasure you must turn to cash? Cheer up, Bunky! The SPARC will run your (non-business) ad for free. Of course, a 10% donation if you sell it will be cheerfully accepted. Just send your ad to Tom Bertolino, KB1P, at <kb1p@arrrl.net>.

Table 1

Standard ITU Phonetics			
A	Alfa	N	November
B	Bravo	O	Oscar
C	Charlie	P	Papa
D	Delta	Q	Quebec
E	Echo	R	Romeo
F	Foxtrot	S	Sierra
G	Golf	T	Tango
H	Hotel	U	Uniform
I	India	V	Victor
J	Juliet	W	Whiskey
K	Kilo	X	X-ray
L	Lima	Y	Yankee
M	Mike	Z	Zulu

## BARC Volunteer Exam Sessions

The Boston Amateur Radio Club holds monthly VE sessions on the second Monday of each month. Sessions are held at 7:00 pm at Brookline Police Headquarters, 350 Washington St in Community Room across from information desk.

There is a municipal parking lot across the street behind the City Hall on Holden Street. Parking is free after 6:00 pm. For those who take the "T", the nearest bus stop is about 1 block away at Washington St & Harvard St (on the 65 bus "Brighton Ctr. via Washington St" out bound from Kenmore Station). Talk in on 145.230 MHz (-), PL 88.5 Hz. There is a map on the last page.

We give all exams (Technician, General, and Extra). Testing is by appointment only. Please bring the following with you:

- Your current license and a photocopy for the ARRL, if you are upgrading
  - Any CSCEs you are claiming, and a photocopy of them
  - Valid ID (picture ID preferred)
  - A pen and a calculator (if you want to)
  - **\$15.00** (good for all the tests you take at that session, except for retests)
  - Written tests can be taken sequentially at the same session for the same \$15 fee.
- The needed FCC forms will be provided.

For further information, contact:  
Jim Clogher, N1ICN, 617.364.4658 [n1icn@arrrl.net](mailto:n1icn@arrrl.net)  
Tom Bertolino, KB1P, 781.395.5538 [kb1p@arrrl.net](mailto:kb1p@arrrl.net)

## Looking Ahead At Public Service

- Bob Salow, WA1IDA

When hams engage in public service as mandated by the FCC Rules, the benefits go well beyond just following the rules. We can enjoy our hobby - have fun! We protect the health and safety of event participants. We support worthy charities. We learn to work within an organized effort. We experience the technical aspects of operating under adverse conditions. We practice communicating under emergency conditions. We can demonstrate these qualities to the communities we serve and thus promote our service for their acceptance.

Throughout the year BARC coordinates numerous public service events. Most of these are open to hams who are new to helping at such events as well as experienced hams. For 2010, we have already been tasked with several events, and more are expected. Feel free to contact Tom Bertolino, KB1P, at 781.608.6186 or <kb1p@arrl.net>.

- **Multiple Sclerosis Boston Walk – 11 April 2010**  
(Boston and Cambridge)
- **BAA Boston 5K Race & 1 Mile Races – 18 April 2010**  
(Boston)
- **Run of the Charles – 25 April 2010**  
(Charles River – Needham to Boston)
- **Multiple Sclerosis Journey of Hope – 22 May 2010**  
(Natick)
- **Bikes-Not-Bombs Bike-A-Thon – 6 June 2010**  
(Boston and suburbs)

Other events may jump in on short notice. Among our skills is the ability to apply our technical, organizational and staffing quickly and proficiently. Join our team and join in the fun and learning.



## Minutes of the Boston Amateur Radio Club Business Meeting: January 16, 2010

*Submitted by: Jim Bradley, KB1JKJ*

Attendee Count: 11

Present were:

Tom Bertolino KB1P President	Joe Harris N1QD
Jim Bradley KB1JKJ Secretary	Bob Nemmers KB1RDJ
Mark Duff KB1EKN Vice President	Linda Blair NA1I
Hank Buccigross K1QK, Executive Officer	Geri Duff KB1ISG
Jim Clogher N1ICN, Treasurer	Bob Mahoney KB1FBA
Arthur Ashley N1NHZ, Executive Officer	

9:16 AM Meeting was brought to order by Tom, KB1P.

**Treasurer's Report:** Jim, N1ICN, Treasurer reported that the club bank balance was \$ 3161.19. Tom also, gave Jim a number of membership renewal forms and checks.

**Repeater Report:** Mike, N1IST, was not in attendance, so Tom KB1P, commented that the 2 meter repeater, 145.230, seems to be working okay. He stated that there have not been any complaints from the Monday Night Net. On the 444.050 side, Tom KB1P reported that the receiver still has significant saturation and is not usable.

**Public Service:** Our first public service event this year is the MS Boston Walk on Sunday April 11. This will be followed by BAA Boston 5K & 1 Mile Race Walk on Sunday April 18 and the Run of the Charles on Sunday April 25. Jim KB1JKJ and Rick KB1LYJ will be the contacts for the MS Walk. Tom KB1P will be the contact for the BAA races and Run of the Charles.

### Old Business:

**BARC's Future Business & General Meetings:** Tom KB1P reported that he had contacted the Brookline Police Department about using their Community Room at Police Headquarters for the BARC meetings and VE exams. The request was approved by the Brookline Police Department on Wednesday January 13. A motion was made and approved to hold future meetings in the Community Room at Brookline Police Headquarters, for the dates shown below. Note day change for three meetings due to a conflict with events already booked for the Community Room.

*See Back Cover for Meeting Dates and  
Map to the Brookline Police Department*

A special thanks to Robert J DiLibero, K1OP, who recommended the Brookline Community Room and gave us a point of contact in the Brookline PD.

**New England QSO Party 1-2 May 10:** No decision was made about setting up a GOTA station for the New England QSO Party. Discussion was about the timing of the event and the number of Public Service Events in April. Joe will look into the possibility of co-hosting the NE

## ***The SPARC***

QSO Party with the North Eastern the club at NU's radio shack. There was talk about of holding a Get on the Air event instead at the Blue Hill Observatory, during their annual open house week-end/ 125 Anniversary Event at the end of May. Mark KB1EKN will follow up on this.

**SPARC:** Mailing vs. e-mail and the number of newsletters mailed to non-members was discussed. The average number of newsletters mailed is 100-125 per month with a postage cost of about \$50.00 per month. A motion was made and passed to send a Business Letter to all non-members describing our interest in "going green" and asking if e-mail delivery would be acceptable. Tom KB1P and Jim KB1JKJ will work on the letter and putting together a list of non-members.

There was addition conversion about The SPARC's content and format. The proposed format change was approved with the following changes to content:

- Drop 444.050 Repeater until it is fixed.
- Delete Reference to PATHWAYS in club information.

A discussion on the wisdom of continuing the BARC Breakfast was identified as a subject future meeting.

### **New Business:**

**Field Day 26-27 June 10:** This year's Field Day will be held at the Bare Cove Fire Museum. We will operate on both Saturday and Sunday with a possibility to operating over night. There was a discussion about feeding the masses, scout tours, and other family activities such as a tour of the Train Museum or a Ranger Walk. No decisions were made as we still have time before the event.

**Summary of ARRL's Cabinet Meeting:** Tom KB1P reported of the topics of this month's ARRL's Cabinet Meeting. Topics include new member packets, increase in Amateur licenses issued in 2009, Club recruiting and the FCC Public Notice DA 09-2259, Entitled Amateur Service Communications During Government Disaster Drills.

### **Other Business:**

Mark KB1EKN suggested that we look at the By-Laws and consider revising the requirement to have 9 Meetings per years. This was discussed and table for a future meeting.

Hank K1QK suggested purchasing another Powerpole Crimping tool. A motion was made and approved to purchase another tool and an assortment of connectors (15, 30, & 45 amp) and a toolbox to store all of the above items. It was also suggested that we contact Eric and see if we could buy back one of the donated crimpers he purchased from the club.

Mark KB1EKN suggested the club start recruiting a VP to run in next year's election, reminding us the he will not be running again in next year's election.

Hank K1QK made a motion that was approved to donate \$50 to the Bare Cove Fire Museum for the use of their space and to cover the cost of oil to heat the building.

With no other business Arthur N1NHZ made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:28 AM.

## **It's Membership Renewal Time**

**-- Bob Salow, WA1IDA**

The BARC fiscal year is the calendar year, so our membership renewal process begins again. If you have not yet renewed for 2010, the Membership Information form for 2010 is included with this issue of the newsletter. We need your support to help you get the most out of ham radio. Our club is one of the strongest and best around; your help is needed to keep it growing.

Please help the Treasurer by renewing promptly. Also, please consider receiving the newsletter electronically to save BARC significant money on postage. You can complete the form online (at our website) and use PayPal or your mailed check. Or you can fill out the enclosed hard copy and mail it with your check to the address shown, or bring it to the club meeting. Of course, we would love to see you at the meeting(s)

## **Have Breakfast with BARC**

We hold a social breakfast on the third Sunday of each month at the Old Country Buffet in the Watertown Mall. Breakfast is served from 0800 to 1130 (although we rarely stay beyond 1000). We just get together, socialize and eat, without any formal club events or business. Family and friends are welcome. The extensive buffet breakfast is very good. The cost is reasonable (seniors get a discount).

The Old Country Buffet is in the Watertown Mall, 550 Arsenal St. in Watertown. There is plenty of parking. From Memorial Dr, continue on Greenough Blvd to the Watertown exit, turn right on Arsenal St. By T, the #70 bus from Central Square Cambridge to Watertown Square to Waltham stops right at the Watertown Mall. We hope to see all of you there – and bring your appetite!



## Winter Projects

-- Jim Bradley, KB1JKJ

We still have a few months of cold weather and Old Man Winter. Here is another project to keep you busy.

This project is a To-Go-Box for your mobile radio and power supply, for use at public service events and ARES deployment. This project starts with a Task Force 6" x 13" Classic Tool Case (Item #: 24981), I got mine from Lowe's for about \$25. (18" x 13" x 6")



The picture above shows the finished project. It has a RJ45 connector for the microphone, this way there are no cables coming out of the box that could be damaged if the lid were to be closed during operation.

The SO-239 connector was originally located where the AC Power Socket is located. This was moved to the current location next to the handle to better protect the connector during transportation.

The AC Power Socket was recycled from an old PC this allows using a standard PC power cable to power the unit and keeps the cable from being damaged if the lid is closed during operation.

Inside the Tool Case is an Alinco DM-330MV power supply. An Icom 2720 with remote mounted head and an MFJ-281 speaker are mounted in the top of the case. Also in the lid is a clip board, for holding paperwork, and a pen holder.

To support all this equipment I added 16-1/2" x 11-1/2" x 1/4" thick plywood backer boards to the inside of the top and bottom of the case. To allow


for future modifications, I used #8 Tee-Nuts with prongs in the plywood rather than using wood screws to attach the backer boards to the case and mount the equipment.



To mount the power supply I used 2 pieces of extruded aluminum angle 1/2" x 1/2" x 5" long. These were attached to the plywood using the Tee-Nuts and #8 screws. I drilled two 1/4" holes in the vertical part of the extruded angle, which I ran tie wrap thorough to secure the power supply in place.

To allow the use of different radios in the To-Go-Box, I mounted the radio to a daughter board. For the daughter board I used a 6" x 8-1/2" x 1/4" thick piece of Lexan plastic. I made extras to mount other radios. I mounted the mobile mounting bracket and ICOM radio to the Lexan daughter boards. On the backer board I installed two 1-1/4" #8 screws from the backside of the plywood, creating a 1" studs.

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## Winter Projects (continued)

The daughter board mounts over the studs and is held in place using two wing nuts. This allows the radio to be quickly removed and exchanged for another radio, mounted on one of the extra daughter boards.

To bring in AC power for the Power Supply I used an AC power socket from an old PC. To this I soldered a 1-1/2 foot piece of 3-conductor wire which was from an old PC power cable. To protect the solder joints I used shrink wrap over each of the 3 wires and one larger piece of shrink wrap over the three wires. On the other end of the cable is a female 3 Wire Rubber Plug, which the Power Supply is plugged into.

To power the radio and other accessories, three 2 wire DC power cables with Powerpole connectors are connected to the output terminals on the back of the power supply. One cable is fused with 15 amp fuses on both leads. The other 2 cables are installed in a Powerpole Chassis Mount for powering accessories.

The ICOM 2720 head is installed in the lid of the Tool Case along with an external speaker.




**Clipboard A**



**Clipboard B**

Also in the Lid is the clip from a clipboard for holding papers. Originally I used the clip from clipboard A but found that it did not hold the papers very well. I replace it with the clip from clipboard B, this one works much better. 2 small eye screws were installed about 5" below the clip, space about 12" a part. This allow a rubber band to be stretched across to the two eye bolts and holds papers in place.

That is the basics of my To-Go-Box; let me know if you have any suggestions to improve on this. Do you have a different concept for a To-Go-Box and want to share it with us, e-mail a picture and we will include in a future *The SPARC*. Send Comments or Pictures to james.bradley4@comcast.net.



**The Clay Center Observatory  
Welcomes BARC members**

[www.claycenter.org](http://www.claycenter.org)

Public Astronomy Nights, Astronomy Day Events,  
Amateur Radio Classes, Amateur Radio Youth Club,  
Community and Adult Education, Weather Festival,  
Science Lecture Series, Educational Outreach

*20 Newton St., Brookline, near Larz Anderson Park*

## February's General meeting

Our February General meeting (the first at our new meeting place) will be held on Wednesday, 17 February at 7:00 pm in the Community Room at Brookline Police Headquarters. The address is 350 Washington Street. There is a municipal parking lot across the street behind the City Hall on Holden Street. Parking is free after 6:00 pm. For those who take the "T", the nearest bus stop is about 1 block away at Washington St & Harvard St (on the 65 bus "Brighton Center via Washington St" out bound from Kenmore Station). There is a map on the last page.

The General meeting will be an open meeting with coffee and donuts supplied by the club.

The club's officers are planning the up-coming year, and would like to ask our members for their in-put on Field Day, the BARC's Breakfast, and on how best to interest our member in HF operations. We will also try to answer all Ham related questions to include questions on programming HT's.

We usually take the first few minutes for any pending business, followed by the main topic of the month. Both portions of the meeting are important. If you have any ideas about topics that you would like to see presented at future meetings, please feel free to contact one of your officers. Remember – this is your club and we are here to help you have fun and get the most out of ham radio.

## BARC Growth

It's a rare month when we fail to add or upgrade a few members. Periodically we publish their names so that you can give them a special welcome. There may also be some upgrades and long lost members who rejoin, so greet them, too.

Mike Simonds    N25H

Please welcome new BARC members and congratulate the new upgrades. Make it a point to introduce yourself when you see them at a meeting. In addition, we would like to note here all call sign changes. If you fit any of these categories, please promptly notify the Keeper of the Database, Bob Salow, WA1IDA at: 508.650.9440 or email: wa1ida@arrl.net.

Boston Amateur Radio Club  
PO Box 15585  
Boston MA 02215-0011  
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First Class Mail  
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**Hands-Only™  
CPR**

**1**  


**Call 911**

**2**  


**Push hard and fast in  
the center of the chest.**  
Learn more at [handsonlycpr.org](http://handsonlycpr.org)

**American Heart  
Association**  
*Learn and Live*

BARC now has a meeting place. Thanks to Bob J DiLibero, K1OP, who recommended the Brookline Community Room and gave us a point of contact at the Brookline Police Department.

This January I submitted a request to the Brookline Police Department to use their Community Room at Police Headquarters for BARC's meetings and Testing. The list of approved dates is listed below. Except where noted general meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of each month, VE Testing is held on the 2nd Monday of each month, and Business meetings are held on the 1st Thursday of the month.

February 17 (Wednesday) General Meeting  
March 3 (Wednesday) Business Meeting  
March 8 BARC VE Testing  
March 18 General Meeting  
April 12 BARC VE Testing  
April 14 (Wednesday) General Meeting  
May 10 BARC VE Testing  
May 20 General Meeting

June 3 Business Meeting  
June 14 BARC VE Testing  
June 17 General Meeting  
September 2 at 7:00 -- 9:30 pm Business Meeting  
September 13 at 7:00 - 9:00 pm BARC VE Testing  
September 16 at 7:00 - 9:30 pm General Meeting  
October 21 at 7:00 -- 9:30 pm General Meeting  
November 8 at 7:00 -- 9:00 pm BARC VE Testing  
November 18 at 7:00 -- 9:30 pm General Meeting

