



The SPARC

Amateur Radio - Communicating Worldwide for A Century

Newsletter of the Boston Amateur Radio Club

Serving Hams in the Greater Boston Area

February 2018 - VOLUME 30, NUMBER 2

www.barc.org - w1bos@arrl.net



President's Message – Joe Harris, N1QD



When I was first licensed in 2002, I joined the ARRL as many new hams do. In the first issues of QST I read, there was an ad in the back from a company I had never heard of called Elecraft. They were advertising something called the K2, an HF radio kit. "I can't believe it's a kit!" proclaimed the ad. It promised big performance from a rig that you built yourself. Well, I was in my early 20s, and had no confidence in my soldering ability. So, when I upgraded to General a few months later, I opted for a factory-built Icom IC-706MKIIG. Still, I always lusted after that kit.

Fast-forward fifteen years, when I received word that an unbuilt K2 was available from an SK estate sale. The kit, as well as some accessories, was from the 2002 era. The original owner had purchased and never assembled them. I jumped on the opportunity to finally try my hand at building a full-on HF radio (I had built several kits before, but none anywhere near as complex as this one). A few days later, a box arrived and I inventoried my winter project. A few minor parts were missing, which Elecraft kindly replaced free of charge. It really impressed me that they would offer such support on a product they sold 15 years ago! Once all the pieces had arrived (as well as some additional add-ons I ordered), I began to build.

The base kit took my somewhere around 30–35 hours to put together. There are three boards that need to be stuffed, a control board, the front panel board, and the main RF board. Of these, the RF board is by far the largest. The manual was incredibly well-written, with many tests along the way. It was only at the final stage of assembly (during transmitter alignment) that I ran into some trouble that stymied me for a week or so. After much debugging, I found two issues with toroids whose magnet wire hadn't been totally stripped, which led to an open. It was with great relief and a sense of pride that I finished the build and made a call on 40! I now have a working 10-watt CW radio that covers 80–10 meters!

I'll be revisiting this project as I build additional add-ons, including the SSB adapter, noise blanker, ATU, and 100 watt PA. This has been a wonderful project to keep my interest in ham radio going during the long winter. I hope you all can find ways to keep busy while the snow keeps falling, and I'll be showing my new rig off at our show & tell at the February general meeting!

Joe Harris, N1QD

[See photos of N1QD's K2 build throughout this issue of *The SPARC* — Ed.]

BARC General Meeting • Thursday, February 15, 7:30 p.m.

The next BARC General Meeting will be held on Thursday, February 15, at 7:30 p.m. at Eastern Bank in Jamaica Plain. The topic will be "Show and Tell." A map to this location can be found later in this issue of *The SPARC*.

Repeaters: 145.230 (-) CTCSS 88.5 in/100.0 out

Simplex: 147.420

449.175 (-) DMR CC1

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BARC's Online Discussion Group – Joe Harris, N1QD



BARC has an online forum at Yahoo groups. The Yahoo group serves as a sounding board for members to post their suggestions and comments, and is intended to foster discussion. The group can also be used to share photographs from club events! Come visit us at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/bostonARC>.

CW is Fun! – Harris Pitnof, WA1GXC

Morse Code (CW) is alive and well on the “short waves” (HF). Due to changes in FCC licensing and cultural shifts in operating modes and styles over the past 20 years, many new hams do not go through the apprenticeship ‘rite of passage’ of the old Novice class radio ticket. Thus, newcomers are thrown into the chaotic mix with scant guidance and this, of course, causes nervousness and hesitancy to go CW on-the-air.

You're all good radio operators, or you wouldn't have been attracted to the hobby. So the following advice is prefaced with: EXPERIENCED code operators...

1. Get on the air and have fun. Proficiency is built best with frequent sessions, just like learning a language (which CW is).
2. Find a like-minded group of hams who enjoy CW and are building their knowledge. Stay away from the low-edge of the bands where hot-shots with big signals and fast, bad code will be setting a bad example and bad expectations. Go on the Web and read about SKCC (<http://www.skccgroup.com>), CW Ops (<https://www.cwops.org>), and FISTS (<http://www.fistsna.org>)—all guys and gals who love CW and want to learn and improve. They typically congregate around frequencies higher up on the bands.
3. Everyone is nervous when starting out. When you make an error, you correct it and move on. Every error you make, recognize, and correct is an effective learning experience.
4. There are lots of bad operators out there. The institutional knowledge that was around 20, 30, 40 years ago has to a large extent died out. See number 5 below.
5. Strive for accuracy and precision. Slow down and send properly. Experienced operators you work will be glad to slow down and will respect you for your efforts to do it right.
6. Use the many resources out there on-line, in print, and on the radio. W1AW sends code practice at least 3 times per day, Monday through Friday. There's no better way to learn radio than to use your radio.
7. Cut yourself some slack. Be patient. You wouldn't expect to master Russian or Japanese in four weeks. Keep at it, and you will be proud of the small incremental progress you make.

Member News – Joe Chapman, NV1W

It's been cold enough to keep your editor off his roof deck/urban antenna farm location, so he hasn't made a single QSO yet this year. Send your (preferably happier) news for this column to Joe, NV1W, at nv1w@arrl.net.

March General Meeting: Field Trip! – Blake Haskell, K1BTH

Topic: The Current State of Public Safety Radio Interoperability and a Tour of the Massachusetts Port Authority (“MassPort”) Fire Department.

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The March 2018 meeting of the Boston Amateur Radio Club will be held at MassPort Fire Rescue Headquarters, 261 Harborside Drive, East Boston, Massachusetts on Thursday March 15, 2018. There is a slight change in the meeting time. A tour of MassPort Fire Department apparatus will commence at 6:45 p.m. followed by Santarpio's pizza at 7:15 p.m. followed by the General Meeting at 8:00 p.m. Attendance for this event is limited to 25 BARC members.

We will have two speakers at this meeting. They are: Steve Staffier, K1SMS, Communications and Interoperability Manager for Massport and MassPort Fire Rescue Deputy Chief Robert Barnes. Steve will talk about Communications Interoperability and Deputy Barnes has an interesting presentation about MassPort Fire Rescue that he will give.

There is parking available at MassPort Fire Headquarters, 261 Harborside Drive, East Boston, Massachusetts. The Fire Department is located past the Hyatt Hotel. Please park in the marked spaces.

Since we're literally in the neighborhood, we will have Santarpio's Pizza for dinner. A suggested donation of \$7.50 per person is requested.

There is a space limitation at the facility. We will only be able to accommodate 25 members. If you're interested in attending this meeting, you will have to send an email to k1bth@arrl.net no later than March 7, 2018 indicating your interest in attending. Management reserves the right to cancel the evening if not enough people sign up by the 7th.

This should be an interesting meeting and we hope to see you there.

February General Meeting – Joe Harris, N1QD

The February General Meeting will be held on Thursday, February 15, at 7:30 p.m. at Eastern Bank in Jamaica Plain. A map for this meeting location, which will replace Brookline Police Headquarters in the months that facility is unavailable, can be found in this issue of The SPARC.

The topic of the February meeting is Show and Tell, so bring in that project you've been working on and share it with the club!

20 Years Ago in *The SPARC* – Joe Chapman, NV1W

The February, 1998, general meeting featured a presentation on APRS by Tom Kinahan, N1CPE — President Mike Ardai, N1IST, announced a search for an alternate meeting location to replace the Volpe Center in Cambridge — Public service announcements included the MS Walk, the Walk for Hunger, the Assistive Technology Conference, and the Boston Marathon — BARC's Emergency Response Team ran an article describing what it was up to — Another article described the 145.230 Boston repeater and there was a tutorial on operating FM simplex on 2 meters — *And elsewhere, Washington National Airport was renamed for Ronald Reagan and Elton John was knighted.*

Membership Renewals for 2018 – Joe Chapman, NV1W

BARC memberships work on a calendar year basis, so most people will need to renew on January 1 for the coming year. The grace period for renewals ends on March 31, 2018. The regular tariff is \$25.00, \$12.50 for seniors 65 and over, and \$12.50 for additional family members living in the same house. Additional donations for the Repeater Fund are welcome and greatly appreciated.

Renewals may be made using PayPal on the club website, <http://www.barc.org>, via postal mail to Boston Amateur Radio Club, P. O. Box 15585, Boston, MA 02215, or by giving a check to any club officer.

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BARC Meeting Calendar for 2018

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings will take place at the Brookline Police Headquarters.

General Meetings

February 15	2018	Thu	7:30 pm — <i>At Eastern Bank, Jamaica Plain —Show & tell</i>
March 15	2018	Thu	7:30 pm — <i>Field trip to Massport</i>
April 19	2018	Thu	7:30 pm — <i>At Clay Center Observatory, Brookline</i>
May 17	2018	Thu	7:30 pm
June 21	2018	Thu	7:30 pm
September 20	2018	Thu	7:30 pm
October 18	2018	Thu	7:30 pm
November 15	2018	Thu	7:30 pm

Business Meetings

March 1	2018	Thu	7:30 pm — <i>At Eastern Bank, Jamaica Plain</i>
June 7	2018	Thu	7:30 pm
September 6	2018	Thu	7:30 pm
December 6	2018	Thu	7:30 pm

VE Sessions

April 9	2018	Mon	7:30 pm
July 9	2018	Mon	7:30 pm
October 8	2018	Mon	7:30 pm

Quarterly Business Meetings – Bob Salow, WA1IDA

As the Bylaws require, BARC has Business meetings quarterly. Unless circumstances warrant, BARC Business meetings will be held on the first Thursdays of December, March, June, and September. The next such meeting will be on **March 1, 2018** at Brookline Police Headquarters in Brookline. All members are urged to attend and participate in club affairs. This is where club functions are discussed and decided, and your help is needed to guide us.

A short opening period of each General meeting will continue to be used to bring any immediate business matters to everyone's attention.

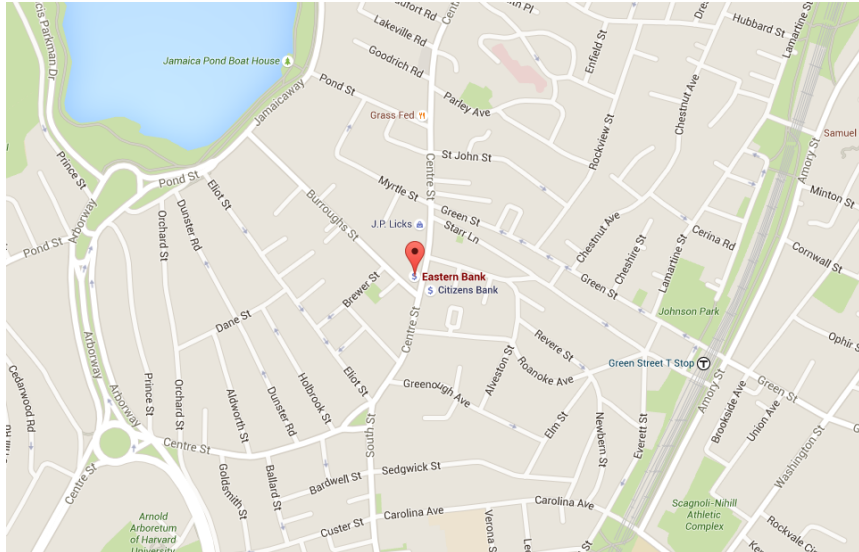
To provide continuity of club business between meetings we also have a virtual business meeting via an email list. Any member interested in the affairs of the club can ask to be on this virtual meeting list—just give your name, call and your email address to President Joe Harris, N1QD.

See Yourself in Print! (well, PDF) – Joe Chapman, NV1W

We are always looking for articles for the newsletter. I have reserved this space for your articles, reviews, tips, how-tos, hints, kinks, photos, schematics, or other ham related information. Photos of you operating or your shack are especially welcome. Send your submissions to the Editor, Joe, NV1W, at nv1w@arrl.net. Articles for the March issue must be received by March 3.

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Area Map for Eastern Bank, 687 Centre St., Jamaica Plain



BARC Net Preamble

The control operator for the BARC Net is Joe, W1JJF. He rarely misses a net, but when he does any ham can take up the position and run the net. To assist you in opening and closing the net The BARC Net Preamble is printed below. Do not be afraid to step up and take the challenge.

Is there any further business for the repeater before we begin the Boston Amateur Radio Club Net? This is «YOUR CALL». Calling the Boston Amateur Radio Club Net. This is «YOUR CALL», my name is «YOUR NAME» and I am located in «YOUR TOWN». This net meets each Monday evening at 9 pm Eastern Time on the 145.230 Boston repeater, PL 88.5. This net is an informal round table discussion concerning matters of interest to the members of the Boston Amateur Radio Club and the Boston Amateur Radio community in general. When checking into the net, please say, "this is" and drop your carrier to check on doubling. Then give your call sign, name and location. All amateurs are welcome to join the net. Any check-in's for the Boston Amateur Radio Club Net please call now.

[Compile the list of the check-ins and proceed with the net.]

Is there any further business for the net before I close? Hearing nothing, this is «YOUR CALL» closing tonight's session of the Boston Amateur Radio Club Net. I would like to thank everyone who participated in the net and those who stood by while I ran the net. The Boston Amateur Radio Club Net will return next Monday evening at 9 pm Eastern Time. This is «YOUR CALL» returning the repeater to general amateur use. 73.

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I See the Future

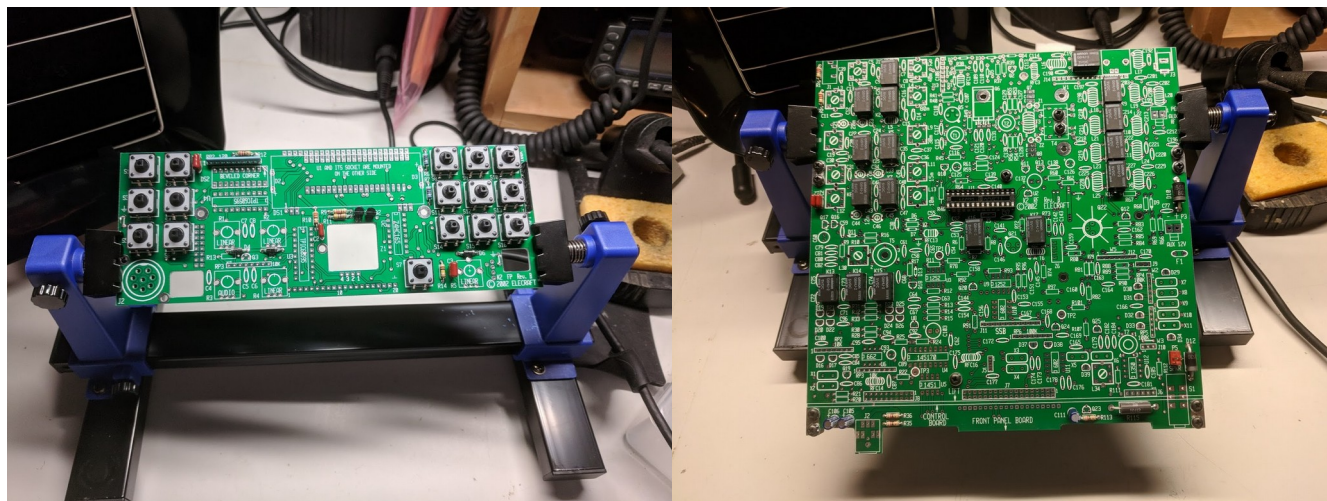
12–16 February	ARRL School Club Roundup
15 February	BARC General Meeting, Eastern Bank, Jamaica Plain, 7:30 p.m. ▲
17–18 February	ARRL International DX Contest, CW
24–25 February	North American QSO Party, RTTY
1 March	BARC Business Meeting, Eastern Bank, Jamaica Plain, 7:30 p.m. ▲
3 March	Deadline for articles for the March SPARC
3–4 March	ARRL International DX Contest, Phone
7 March	Deadline to sign up for the March General Meeting/Field Trip
11 March	North American Sprint, RTTY
15 March	BARC General Meeting/Field Trip, MassPort, East Boston, 6:45 p.m. ▲
24–25 March	CQ WW WPX Contest, SSB
31 March	End of the grace period for 2018 renewals

▲ Note change from usual date and/or location

(Rp) = BARC Repeater likely to be used

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 much of the Northeast, 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.

For an up-to-date calendar of events, including web links, visit <http://www.barc.org/calendar>.



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**1**

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**2**

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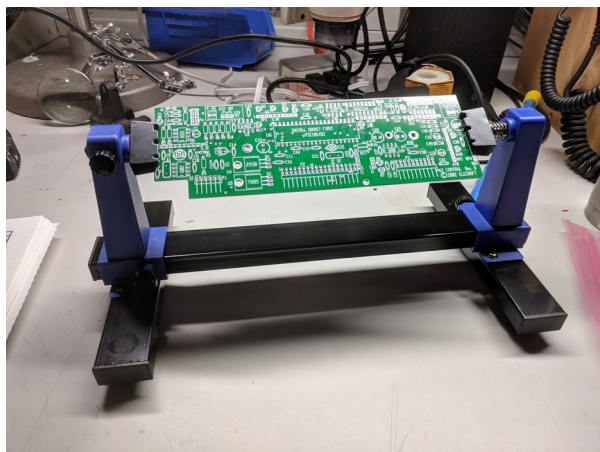
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The Clay Center Observatory
Welcomes BARC members
www.claycenter.org

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



Businesses Can Advertise Here

The SPARC accepts commercial advertisements. BARC encourages monthly promotion of your products and services which would be of interest to hundreds of our members and others interested in the Amateur Radio Service.

The rates for display advertising are:

1 col × 2 in. (business card)	\$15 per issue
1 col × 2 in. (business card)	\$75 per 6 consecutive months
1 col × 2 in. (business card)	\$125 per 12 consecutive months
1 col × 4 in. (½ column)	\$30 per issue
1 col × 9.5 in. (full column)	\$60 per issue

Originals of ads must be presented to the Editor in MS Word or .jpg format to print 1:1. Other composition will be at extra cost. We will be glad to quote other ad sizes and durations. Members are urged to seek prospective advertisers who are appropriate to our readers. For additional information, contact Joe Chapman, NV1W, at 617.267.6349 or nv1w@arrrl.net.

BARC Volunteer Exam Sessions

The Boston Amateur Radio Club schedule has been revised to suit the needs and interests of the applicants and examiners. **The next exam session will be on Monday, April 9, 2018.** Generally, sessions are held at Brookline Police Headquarters, 350 Washington St. in the Community Room (across from the information desk).

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

- Your current license and a photocopy for the ARRL, if you are upgrading
- Any CSEs you are claiming, and a photocopy of them
- Valid picture ID or two valid non-picture IDs
- A pen and a calculator (if you want to)
- **\$15.00** (good for all the tests you take at that session, except for retests)

Note: Written tests can be taken sequentially at the same session for the same \$15 fee. The needed FCC forms will be provided.

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To reserve a seat or for further information, contact: Jim Clogher, N1ICN, n1icn@arrl.net, or Linda Blair, NA1I, na1i@arrl.net.

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 Joe Chapman, NV1W, nv1w@arrl.net.

BARC Officers and Staff

President: Joe Harris, N1QD

781.844.8684; n1qd@n1qd.org

Vice President: Mark Duff, KB1EKN

781.749.7664; emgmt@comcast.net

Secretary: Joe Chapman, NV1W

617.267.6349; nv1w@arrl.net

Treasurer: Jim Clogher, N1ICN,

781.901.3545; n1icn@arrl.net

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Linda Blair, NA1I, na1i@arrl.net

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859.466.5915; ab1rl@arrl.net

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617.500.4406; na1i@arrl.net

Newsletter Editor: Joe Chapman, NV1W

617.267.6349; nv1w@arrl.net

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 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 HandiHams system.

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Greater Boston Net Directory

Daily 7 pm	MARI (Mass/Rhode Island CW Net) (NTS)	3.565
Daily 8 pm	Eastern Mass 2M Traffic Net (NTS)	145.230 (PL 88.5 in/100.0 out)
Daily 8 pm	Slow Speed CW Net	28.160
First Mon 8:30 pm	EMA Section ARES Net	146.610 and all MMRA links
Mon 8 pm	New England DMR Net	DMR New England Talk Group (TG 3181)
Mon 9 pm	BARC Club Net	145.230 (PL 88.5 in/100.0 out)
Sun Mon Wed Fri 10 pm	Heavy Hitters Traffic Net (NTS)	MMRA-linked repeaters: 146.610, 146.670, 146.715, 146.820, and all 222 and 440 repeaters
Tue Thu Sat 6 pm	MA RI Phone Net (NTS)	3.978
Tue 7:30 pm	Clay Center ARC Net	446.325 (PL 146.2)
Tue 8 pm	MMRA Club Net	146.610 and all MMRA links
Wed 8 pm	Wellesley Amateur Radio Society Net	147.030; 444.600 (PL 88.5)
Wed 9 pm	Waltham Wranglers Swap Net	146.640 (PL 136.5)
Sat 9 am	Northeast SATERN Net	7.265
Sun 9:30 am	Yankee SSB Net	50.275
Sun 8 pm	Algonquin Amateur Radio Club Net	446.675 (PL 88.5)
Sun 8:30 pm	NSRA Net (with Newline)	145.470 (PL 136.5)
Sun 9 pm	CAARAnet	145.130 (PL 107.2)



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