



The SPARC

Amateur Radio - Communicating Worldwide for A Century

Newsletter of the Boston Amateur Radio Club

Serving Hams in the Greater Boston Area

September 2020 - VOLUME 32, NUMBER 9

www.barc.org - w1bos@arrl.net



Message from the Editor – Doc Kinne, KE1ML



Any club is a group activity. While everyone has different strengths and interests, in order for a club to function well, each member must contribute something to the whole. In a well run organization, in my mind, people should want to do this. It's the whole reason a club exists - to share a common activity or interest with others that share it.

The most high profile way of contributing, perhaps, is as an officer, of course, but there are many ways. Somehow my mind tends to think of Joe, W1JJE, who has helmed the Monday BARC nets for some time. That net, especially in the last few months during our current situation, has been an important club

mainstay.

Another important club mainstay has been the SPARC, of course, and here is where I want to suggest an important and easy way to contribute to BARC. Write.

Now, yes, I know a good portion of you are saying, "I'm not a writer!" That's OK! I'm certainly not asking for a bunch of Stephen Kings or Tom Clancys (in fact, having people like that would make our newsletter 50 pages per month!). What we need are people doing what they like - sharing why they are in amateur radio. I would suggest that while looking at writing an article before you start may be daunting, once you get into it, it's not that bad. You don't need a degree in writing. You don't need to have anything else published. As Stephen very nicely proved to us last month, you don't even need an amateur radio license!

Your SPARC needs you! Your club needs you! Tell us what you've done, how you've done it, and why you've done it. It's the Ham Radio equivalent of "Sharing is Caring!"

In this Issue of The SPARC

- Call for Agenda Items
- Look, Ma, No Hands!
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Repeaters: 145.230 (-) CTCSS 88.5 in/100.0 out

Simplex: 147.420

449.175 (-) DMR CC1

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BARC General Meeting, Thursday, September 17, 7:30 pm

BARC will be holding a General Meeting on Thursday, September 17, at 7:30 p.m. on the Zoom teleconferencing platform. This will be a general/business meeting.

Call for Agenda Items – *Morgan Johnstone, KB1ZFP*

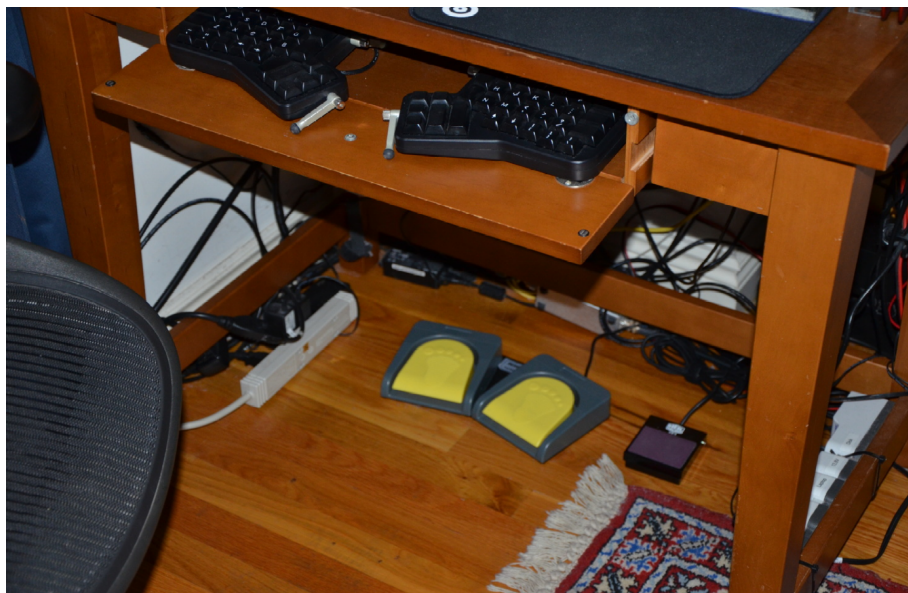
This month is our third quarter business meeting and we are looking for items for the agenda. If you have anything you'd like to discuss relating to the club please send an email to me at kb1zfp@arrl.net no later than noon on Wednesday September 16th.

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>.

Look, Ma, No Hands! – *Joe Chapman, NV1W*



As an organist, I share with rock climbers, surfers, and dancers some higher-precision applications for feet than walking and stubbing one's toes. Years ago I went looking for some foot pedals that I could use to supplement computer keyboards, but gave up looking. Then I saw an article by Steve Appleyard, G3PND, in this September's *QST*. Steve has ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) and uses foot pedals for emulating mouse buttons. I ordered a pair from Amazon and was unpacking them two days later.

The pedals connect, of course, with USB; you can download a

configuration program with them that's Windows-only, but once they're configured you can use them with any system. My everyday computer keyboards have open-source firmware, so I am used to being able to configure keyboards to an extreme level; the pedals are much more elementary—for example, you can't set them up to send a third character if you press both pedals simultaneously. The application is a little flaky but usable.

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Everybody's favorite contest program, N1MM, has a studly little feature called "Enter Sends Message," where hitting the Enter key just does the next thing you want to do, so apart from entering the other station's call and the exchange, you can pretty much just sit there and hit return, so I mapped the right pedal to return. So I can sit at my desk, slightly zonked out more often than not, just stomping on a pedal when sitting in a pileup. I mapped the left pedal to Page Down, which in N1MM reduces the CW speed by 2 wpm, so if someone comes back with NV1? I can quickly drop the speed down a notch and try again; a useful technique given my mighty five watts.

One might, with an Arduino and a little programming, set them up as a pair of iambic paddles so you could reply "yes" to QLF? (are you sending with your left foot?). They unfortunately don't look amenable to disassembly—if one hopes to then reassemble them, that is—should one wish to reprogram them more directly.

So far, no complaints. I was worried about the pedals' durability—these days, assuming everything is flimsy junk is my default stance—but the fact that G3PND was using them constantly was reassuring. The pedals now have a pride of place next to the purple PTT switch for my headset on the floor under my desk.

iKKEGOL USB Double 2 Foot Switch Control Pedal / available from www.amazon.com. \$39.99

Member News – Doc Kinne, KE1ML

Send your contributions for this column to Doc Kinne, KE1ML, at ke1ml@arrl.net.

What Did You Miss at the August 2020 General Meeting? – Doc Kinne, KE1ML

A Meeting of the Boston Amateur Radio Club was held on Thursday, July 16, on the Zoom teleconferencing platform. Many thanks to Phil Temples, K9HI, for facilitating that!

Bruce Blain, K1BG, gave a presentation on Amateur Radio licensing. He went through how US ham radio licensing evolved and changed over the decades, concentrating specifically on how licensing was changed to try to grow the service and how that both succeeded or failed at times, and why. Putting it like that, in my mind, it sounds dry, but try telling that to the 22+ people that spent over **two hours** in discussions on this topic! It certainly was a great meeting and a great presentation!

Radio Around the World...Graphically! – Doc Kinne, KE1ML

I got started in radio by DXing AM radio station in Rochester, NY and Philadelphia, PA to listen to the last of the American radio drama broadcasts in the late '70s. My mother would come into a darkened bedroom and ask what I was doing.

"Listening to the radio, Mom!" I would say.

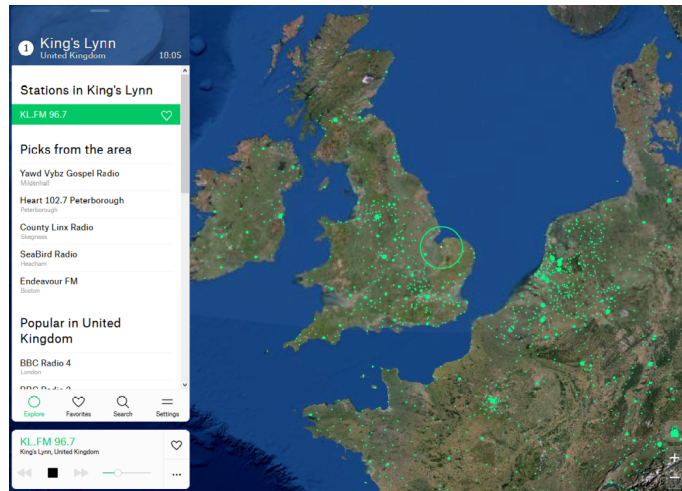
"You're listening to static!" she would declare. I didn't know it then, but I was practicing for attending HF radio traffic nets several years in the future.

Today it is no secret that the computer has completely transformed radio of all types. A few of these transformations have been good for those of us who like to listen to far radio stations.

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If you're one of those, I recently discovered a fascinating radio website called Radio Garden at <http://radio.garden>. The site presents you with a globe of the earth which you can spin. Liberally dotting the globe are tiny light green dots. Each of those dots are radio stations you can use this website to listen to as simply as clicking on the dot. Not only can you spin the globe, but you can zoom in on specific geographic areas.

As I write this, I'm listening to "Retro FM 89.5" in Reykjavik, Iceland. The songs are familiar songs in English. The announcer, though, speaks Icelandic! I've used this site to listen to radio stations both where I've lived in central NY (including WRVO, the station that inspired me to go to college in Oswego), where my friends live around the world, and in some cases, where I wish I could live as well.



Give the radio world a spin!

General Radio News From Around the Net – Doc Kinne, KE1ML

- The FCC has proposed a \$50 fee for each amateur radio license application. This would include new licenses, renewals, upgrades, and vanity call signs. You could change your address for free! This proposal is contained in the FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Docket 20-270. The docket is already open for comments. The deadline for comments has not been set yet.
- The Flea at MIT has officially been canceled for the remainder of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The ARRL has proposed a new HF band plan that would allow for greater bandwidth for automated digital stations such as WinLink and would also give new data and phone privileges to Technicians. The plan's draft is at <http://www.arrl.org/files/file/ODV/Second%20Board%20Meeting%20July%202020/Doc%2025A%20Band%20Plan%20Final-1b.pdf>. It is very important to realize that this is just a proposal and that no operating privileges have been changed by the FCC!
- The Radio Society of Great Britain's 2020 Convention will take place online this year on 10 October and they are welcoming everyone! The event will be streamed live. You can get more details at <https://rsgb.org/main/about-us/rsgb-convention/>

BARC Meeting Calendar for 2020

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

General Meetings (* Business/General Meetings)

September 17*	2020	Thu	7:30 pm via Zoom.
October 15	2020	Thu	7:30 pm
November 19	2020	Thu	7:30 pm

VE Sessions

October 12	2020	Mon	7:30 pm
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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.

I See the Future

12-14 September	ARRL September VHF Contest
17 September	BARC General Meeting, 7:30 pm, Zoom teleconferencing platform ▲
19-20 September	ARRL 10GHZ & Up Contest
19-20 September	New Hampshire QSO Party
26-27 September	Maine QSO Party
4 October	SPARC Article Deadline
10-11 October	ARRL EME Contest
15 October	BARC General Meeting, 7:30PM
19-23 October	ARRL School Roundup

▲ Note change from usual date and/or location

Before going to any event over the next few months, please confirm that the event will take place and what the hours are.

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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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 Doc Kinne, KE1ML, at 617.297.2718 or kinnerc@gmail.com.

Two Ways to 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, Doc, KE1ML, at kinnerc@gmail.com. Articles for the September issue must be received by September 6.

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 Doc Kinne, KE1ML, kinnerc@gmail.com.

BARC Volunteer Exam Sessions

The Boston Amateur Radio Club usually offers license exams quarterly. **Due to uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the next test session is yet to be announced.** Test 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 CSCEs 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.

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

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NEW ENGLAND SCI-TECH

New England Sci-Tech Inc is a new 501(c)(3) STEM education center, amateur radio training center, and maker space located at 16 Tech Circle, Natick. It is home to New England Amateur Radio Inc (NE1AR) and the youth radio club Sci-Tech Amateur Radio Society (STARS). NE Sci-Tech welcomes memberships and donations via www.NESciTech.org or www.NE1AR.org.



BARC Officers and Staff

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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 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 5 pm	MA RI Phone Net (NTS)	3.978
Tue 8 pm	Sci-Tech Amateur Radio Society (STARS) 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 Newslane)	145.470 (PL 136.5)
Sun 9 pm	CAARAnet	145.130 (PL 107.2)

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