



The SPARC

Amateur Radio - Communicating Worldwide for A Century
Newsletter of the Boston Amateur Radio Club

Serving Hams in the Greater Boston Area

April 2025 - VOLUME 37, NUMBER 4

www.barc.org - w1bos@arrl.net



Message From the President – Brendan Baldonado, NW1S



As Robert Frost once said; If you don't like the weather in New England, wait a minute. We are finally catching some glimpses of nice weather and what Summer time might bring. I have been looking in the forecast to host our first Club POTA of the year. So, keep an eye out for that. We also are going to continue to have speakers and learning sessions geared towards Ham Radio Basics. Last month we had a great session about multi meters. I also have some fun other ideas for fun activities to get people on the air! Also let's not forget, the New England QSO party, NEAR Fest, and Field Day are all coming up quickly! This is going to be a fun year for BARC and we're looking forward to sharing it with you the membership!

In this Issue of The SPARC

- Don't TX till you see the whites of their antennas!
- March Meeting Minutes
- W1BOS DMR Talk Group Updates
- 2025 Event Calendar
- 2025 Public Service Events



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

The next BARC General Meeting will be held on Thursday, April 17, 2025, at 7:30 pm, at Artisans Asylum in Allston and on the Zoom teleconferencing platform. As always, the meeting will be preceded with a half hour of social time beginning at 7:00.

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

Simplex: 147.420

449.175 (-) DMR CC1

The SPARC

Don't TX till you see the whites of their antennas! – Brendan Baldonado, NW1S

My experience doing a Parks on the Air activation as Technician.

Editor's note: This article originally ran in the December 2020 SPARC. We re-print it now as it is especially relevant to the many newly licensed Technician members that have joined the club's ranks recently.

There I was, on that tall hill in Charlestown, it was cold and drizzly as I began to drag my equipment up the steps of the hollow grounds of Breeds Hill. Slowly and methodically I begin to assemble all of the equipment I'll need to prepare for today's activities. The park is quiet and still, COVID has closed the Museum and the large obelisk to tourist traffic but the park remains busy in the late afternoons with the stroller mafia and dog walkers. I had scoped out a spot for my Parks on the Air activation, over in the corner hopefully far enough from the path to prevent rogue dogs or children from getting close to the equipment. As I begin to set up, I keep looking around for a Park Ranger, it is common courtesy to introduce yourself and explain the program and provide pamphlets, there are none around. As a fastidious over planner and wanna-be boy scout I came prepared, I pull out my checklist and make sure nothing is left behind; Table...Check, HT...Check, Coax....Check. I continue until all equipment is accounted for. I'm readyI hope. I set up my position with today's armament, a Yaesu 897, a metal table, and began to secure a tripod and automobile jack stand in their places. I bring over my make-shit antenna, a 10 ft PVC pipe with 25.5 feet of Wireman #532 spiralled up the pipe and 10 feet hanging back down from the top, it's fed via a Nelson Antennas 9 to 1 Unun. I sheepishly begin to erect it and look around waiting for push back, it's clear I've begun to fortify this hill. I then set up my 2m antenna, a homebrew ¼ Ground plane on 6ft of PVC, inserted into a jack stand. I connect everything up, check the time, organize the table, pull up POTA.us and get ready to activate. The clock ticks down, my nerves shake. 1755z I power up the radio, and Tune the End Fed Antenna. The Tuner clicks and clacks, I'm hoping my license limitations are improved by my high ground advanced position. 1800z... CLICK the FT-897 TX light turns Red.. "KC1NEF calling CQ POTA, CQ POTA, CQ POTA, static and silence... I try again. Static, silence. "How long do people sit and just call?," I think to myself. 30 minutes goes by, I decide to switch bands. The magic band isn't so magic today, I go to 2 meters. I can see a large part of the city from where I am, VHF should work. CQ POTA CQ POTA CQ POTA.... A friendly and familiar voice comes back to me.. "November Victor One Whisky." It's Joe, my first Elmer, and now my first entry for the Parks on the Air activation. The battle has begun. We chat for a bit, he wishes me well on my endeavor, and I am beholden to his guidance and help as a sigh of relief, that most hams can relate to, comes across me, the equipment is working, at least partly.

2000z. 3 hours on that hill, that sacred ground where over a thousand lost their lives, I have 8 contacts of the 10 needed. They are coming in waves, just like that fateful July 17. The sun has come out but the air has chilled, like Colonel Prescott's men I am weary but I am holding steadfast. My "long range" methods are not working, each call on 6 and 10 meters fall to cosmic static and are lost and absorbed into the atmosphere. I get two close calls, a Ham in Lynn Spots me on the POTA website. My signal is weak and barely readable, he writes. Second, "Whisky One Juliet Juliet Fox" booms through the speaker and then fades out, I call back. Nothing, emptiness, static. I switch back to two Meters, I give 146.52 another try, after all, it's working. Most of my confirmed contacts have come from 2 meters FM, and on the Calling Frequency. I am so close, I can almost taste it. I check the clock, it's nearly 5 pm local. Hopeful I can catch the 9 to 5 crowd driving home and mobile. I call again, the speaker crackles back, KC1- "YES!" I shout, another one, then another. My first mini-pile up! The second callsign is another familiar voice, I leave them as second to answer back. KC1NDB, number 9 in the log. Then it's KC1HHO, Peter from Quincy, one of my Elmers helping me on the 2 Meter Traffic Net, he is number 10. I had done it. I am ecstatic. I had started this journey fed up with studying for the General and Extra exams, I was sick of reading about Ham radio, I wanted to do Ham radio. As a Tech with limited HF privileges I came up with a plan, tell everyone of my idea, then get on a tall enough hill and transmit to our fair city.

145.230 (-) CTCSS 88.5/100.0

Simplex: 147.420

449.175 (-) DMR CC1

The SPARC

The Ham community didn't let me down. I was encouraged and supported by this great group of people and they showed up for me. I was hoping for more HF contacts, I had not even originally planned to bring a 2 meter antenna, after all I had my HT. In the end I was so grateful that at the last minute I chose to bring my ¼ wave ground plane. Without it, it's likely to have been a failure. I made 11 Contacts that Wednesday afternoon, all VHF FM on 2 meters. I plan to do more POTA activations, after all there are plenty more Parks in the city of Boston.

BARC Meeting Calendar for 2025

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings and VE sessions will take place at Artisans Asylum.

General Meetings

16 January	2025	Thu	7:30 pm
20 February	2025	Thu	7:30 pm
20 March	2025	Thu	7:30 pm
17 April	2025	Thu	7:30 pm
15 May	2025	Thu	7:30 pm
19 June	2025	Thu	7:30 pm
18 September	2025	Thu	7:30 pm
16 October	2025	Thu	7:30 pm
20 November	2025	Thu	7:30 pm
18 December	2025	Thu	7:30 pm

VE Sessions

13 January	2025	Mon	7:30pm
14 April	2025	Mon	7:30pm
14 July	2025	Mon	7:30pm
13 October	2025	Mon	7:30 pm

Minutes of the March, 2025, General Meeting – Joe Chapman, NV1W

A General Meeting of the Boston Amateur Radio Club was held on Thursday, March 20, 2025, at the Artisans Asylum in Allston and simultaneously on the Zoom teleconferencing platform. Members attending: KB1EKN, KB1TOY, KC1PWO, KC1VJH, KC2PSC, KE1L, N1DXN, N1QD, NV1W, NW1S, W1PAC, W1TJF, Guests: KC1LQY, W4RD, Alex, Fabian. The meeting was called to order by President Brendan Baldonado, NW1S, at 7:33 p.m.

Officer reports:

- President (NW1S): We have an ongoing Ed Fong J-Pole antenna build series at Artisans Asylum which had some challenges at its first session on March 19. We are asking members what topics they'd like to see discussed at meetings or other activities.
- Vice President (N1QD): No updates on the repeaters. We do have the new antenna for the VHF repeater staged and are waiting to see when it can be installed. We also have a new VHF repeater that was donated but we intend to upgrade one thing at a time.
- Secretary (NV1W): We have 104 members renewed or newly joined for 2025. Following up with 26 potential renewals that remain. The grace period for memberships ends March 31.

145.230 (-) CTCSS 88.5/100.0

Simplex: 147.420

449.175 (-) DMR CC1

The SPARC

- Treasurer (KB1EKN): The general account has \$6259, the repeater account has \$1925, and the A2 account has \$13,452. Total is \$21,636. The A2 account does not reflect payments for May/June. We also have a \$1962.29 balance with PayPal.

Old business:

- Brendan, NW1S, reported that an Elecraft KX3 has been donated to the club. We will take pictures and do an inventory.
- A committee to deal with antennas at the Artisans Asylum has been created, consisting of KE1L (chair), KB1EKN, N1DXN, KD1MU, and W1ZQL. The committee is charged with being the liaison with Harvard, Artisans Asylum, and BURG (the other amateur radio group at A2), representing BARC's interests and reporting back to the club.
- Shirley, KE1L, reported that we have approval for two HF antenna stands on the roof. We have antennas but need a better quote for the installation.

New business:

- Shirley, KE1L, asked whether the club wants to participate again in the NewEngland QSO Party on May 3–4. It was decided that we will discuss this via the bostonARC@groups.io mailing list.
- Brendan, NW1S, mentioned that New England Sci-Tech in Natick has invited BARC to join them for a meeting on May 6.

Program:

- A presentation by Brendan, NW1S, on multimeters followed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

— *Respectfully submitted, Joseph Chapman NV1W, Secretary.*

2025 Boston-area Public Service Event Calendar

The following events will be looking for ham radio volunteers. For additional details, please contact Ethan KC1OIP, BARC's public service event coordinator.

- Boston 5K - Saturday April 19th
- Boston Marathon - Monday April 21st
- Run of the Charles - Sunday April 27th
- Boston 10K - Sunday June 22nd
- Head of the Charles - October 17th - 19th

145.230 (-) CTCSS 88.5/100.0

Simplex: 147.420

449.175 (-) DMR CC1

The SPARC

- Cycle For Shelter - Sunday, September 14
- Boston Half Marathon - Date TBD

BARC's Online Discussion Group – Joe Harris, N1QD

BARC has an online forum at Groups.io. The 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: <https://groups.io/g/BostonARC>. You can join, if you're not already there, by sending an email to BostonARC+subscribe@groups.io.

New Course from HamRadioPrep – Joe Chapman, NV1W

Our friends at HamRadioPrep have just announced a new course: *HF Masterclass*. Unlike their licensing courses, this one aims to lead someone with a General or an Amateur Extra license from the first steps of buying a radio and assembling a station through becoming a competent operator on the HF bands. You can read more about it at <https://hamradioprep.com/hf-masterclass/>.

As with all of HamRadioPrep's courses, you can use the coupon code **bostonarc** to receive a 20% discount. BARC also receives a commission for every sale that uses our coupon code, so you help the club as well.

New Talk Group Layout on the W1BOS DMR Repeater – Joe Harris, N1QD

To eliminate some little-used talk groups and to allow easier ways for out-of-state New Englanders to call back home, the New England Digital Emergency Communications Network (NEDECN) has updated the talk group schema used on their affiliated repeaters. Now, all other New England statewide talk groups are available as PTT-activated on Time Slot 1. Worldwide English, Region North, UA113, and UA123 have been removed. The W1BOS 449.175 DMR repeater's talk groups now have this layout:

Time Slot #1 – Group Call 759 = SKYWARN
Time Slot #1 – Group Call 9998 = Parrot*
Time Slot #1 – Group Call 9999 = Audio Watch*
Time Slot #1 – Group Call 1 = World Wide*
Time Slot #1 – Group Call 3 = North America*
Time Slot #1 – Group Call 3172 = Northeast
Time Slot #1 – Group Call 3123 = ME SW*
Time Slot #1 – Group Call 3133 = NH SW*
Time Slot #1 – Group Call 3109 = CT SW*
Time Slot #1 – Group Call 3144 = RI SW*
Time Slot #1 – Group Call 3150 = VT SW*
Time Slot #1 – Group Call 310 = TAC310*
Time Slot #1 – Group Call 311 = TAC311*
Time Slot #1 – Group Call 8801 = NETAC1*
Time Slot #1 – Group Call 8804 = CAPENET*

Time Slot #2 – Group Call 3181 = New England (Mon. 8 PM Net)
Time Slot #2 – Group Call 3125 = MA SW
Time Slot #2 – Group Call 9 = Local Site
Time Slot #2 – Group Call 8802 = NETAC2*

* = PTT Activated

145.230 (-) CTCSS 88.5/100.0

Simplex: 147.420

449.175 (-) DMR CC1

The SPARC

Member News – Joe Harris, N1QD

This space is reserved for your news! Send it to N1QD at n1qd@n1qd.org.

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

17 April	BARC General Meeting, Artisans Asylum, Allston, and Zoom, 7:30 pm
20 April	Flea at MIT
21 April	The 129 th Boston Marathon (Rp)
26 April	Great Hill Gang “Day of Radio”
27 April	Run of the Charles
2- 3 May	NEAR-Fest (New Boston, NH)
15 May	BARC General Meeting, Artisans Asylum, Allston, and Zoom, 7:30 pm
16 – 18 May	Dayton Hamvention
18 May	Flea at MIT

▲ *Note change from usual date and/or location
(Rp) = BARC Repeaters will be used for these events*

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>.

145.230 (-) CTCSS 88.5/100.0

Simplex: 147.420

449.175 (-) DMR CC1

The SPARC

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@arrl.net.

Two Ways to See Yourself in Print! (well, PDF) – Joe Harris, N1QD

We are always looking for articles for the newsletter. I have reserved this space for your articles, reviews, tips, how-tos, hints ‘n’ 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, N1QD, at n1qd@n1qd.org. Articles for the May issue must be received by May 3.

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, N1QD, at n1qd@n1qd.org.

BARC Volunteer Exam Sessions

The Boston Amateur Radio Club offers license exams quarterly. The next session will be held on Monday, April 14, at 7:30 pm. Test sessions are held at Artisans Asylum, 96 Holton St., Boston, MA 02135.

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.

To reserve a seat or for further information, contact: Jim Clogher, N1ICN, n1icn@arrl.net, or Joe Chapman, NV1W, nv1w@arrl.net.

The SPARC



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

President: Brendan Baldonado, NW1S

brendan.baldonado@gmail.com

Vice President: Joe Harris, N1QD

n1qd@n1qd.org

Secretary: Joe Chapman, NV1W

nv1w@arrl.net

Treasurer: Mark Duff, KB1EKN,

emgmt@comcast.net

Newsletter Editor *locum tenens*: Joe Harris, N1QD

n1qd@n1qd.org

Volunteer Exams:

Jim Clogher, N1ICN, n1icn@arrl.net

Joe Chapman, NV1W, nv1w@arrl.net

Public Service Coordinator: Ethan Hansen, KC1OIP

ethan.kc1oip@gmail.com

Public Information Officer: Geri Duff, KB1ISG

geriduff52@juno.com

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.

The SPARC is published monthly by the Boston Amateur Radio Club. The design and content are Copyright 2024, all rights reserved. Permission is hereby granted to reprint or distribute by electronic or other means any material herein, provided this publication and the issue date are credited. Such permission is limited to use for non-commercial purposes for the benefit of the Amateur Radio community. Permission for other purposes must be obtained in writing.

145.230 (-) CTCSS 88.5/100.0

Simplex: 147.420

449.175 (-) DMR CC1

The SPARC

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
Sun–Fri 9:45 pm, Sat 10 pm	Heavy Hitters Traffic Net (NTS)	MMRA-linked repeaters: 146.610, 146.670, 146.715, 146.820, and all 222 and 440 repeaters
First Mon 8:30 pm	EMA Section ARES Net	146.610 and all MMRA links
Mon 7 pm	Two Meter SSB Net	144.244 USB
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)
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 Newslines)	145.470 (PL 136.5)
Sun 9 pm	CAARAnet	145.130 (PL 107.2)



**Hands-Only™
CPR**

1



Call 911

2



**Push hard and fast in
the center of the chest.**

Learn more at handsonlycpr.org



**American Heart
Association**
Learn and Live

145.230 (-) CTCSS 88.5/100.0

Simplex: 147.420

449.175 (-) DMR CC1