The SPARC

Amateur Radio - Communicating Worldwide for A Century

Newsletter of the Boston Amateur Radio Club

Serving Hams in the Greater Boston Area

November 2026 - VOLUME 38, NUMBER 11

www.barc.org - w1bos@arrl.net

Message From the President – *Brendan Baldonado, NW1S*



It's shaping up to be a good November for New England. Relatively mild weather so far and weather on Halloween is a good sign. Coming up we will be having online discussions about Winter Field Day and looking for a location and figuring out logistics. We are also going to be announcing our holiday party soon as soon as we figure out if we want to do it in December or January. Looking forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting at the next few events.

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BARC General Meeting, Thursday, November 19, 7:30 pm

"Mesh Networking for Hams" with WB2MNF

The next BARC General Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 19, 2026, at 7:30 pm, at Artisans Asylum in Allston and on the Zoom teleconferencing platform. Jon Pearce, WB2MNF will present "Mesh Networking for Hams," an overview of LoRa mesh networking: what it is, why it's useful, and how Meshtastic and Meshcore differ, including why Meshcore behaves more like a ham repeater network. Jon will share lessons from Philly Mesh's move to Meshcore and practical tips for getting nodes working reliably. Zoom information will be available on www.barc.org.

Repeaters: 145.230 (-) CTCSS 88.5 in/100.0 out **Simplex: 147.420** **449.175 (-) DMR CC1**

Minutes of the October, 2026, General Meeting – *Joe Chapman, NV1W*

A General Meeting of the Boston Amateur Radio Club was held on Thursday, October 15, 2026, at the Artisans Asylum in Allston and simultaneously on the Zoom teleconferencing platform. Members attending: AC1JL, K1SU, KB1EKN, KB1ISG, KC1YPD, KC2PSE, KE1L, N1QD, N1ZOR, N9TEK, NV1W, NW1S, W1PAC, W1VEG, W4RD, Paulo Omar Gonçalves. Guests: KD1ADX, Ivan Zalkind. The meeting was called to order by President Brendan Baldonado, NW1S, at 7:30 p.m.

Officer reports:

- President (NW1S): no report.
- Vice President (N1QD): nothing major to report. Had a great time at NEARFest and saw several BARC members.
- Secretary (NV1W): the BARC VE team had a successful session this week and has converted to an on-line testing and reporting system. This is saving a great deal of time; the test session was over by 8 pm and submitting the test materials to the League took a few minutes instead of more than an hour.
- Treasurer (KB1EKN): The repeater fund has $2925, checking account $10,650, and the A2 account has $11,128. We have a balance of $1765.00 in PayPal for a total of $26,468.00. We are having difficulties with accounting at A2: they claim we have a larger outstanding balance than our records show, and we have received confusing invoices and had checks lost or cashed only after a long delay.

Old business:

- Mark, KB1EKN, reports that he is having difficulty reaching his contact at Boston Police about the repeater antenna installation at the Federal Reserve. We may want to consider hiring an outside contractor to do the work, though it will be expensive.
- We need to select a date for the holiday party soon. Shirley, KE1L, will explore dates and coordinate.
- We need to start thinking about Winter Field Day. Mark, KB1EKN, noted that WFD happens during the worst weather of the year. He is concerned that after losing $400 on last year's event due to the AMC camp closure, it would be irresponsible to lose another $400 this year. Shirley, KE1L, said that she considers camping a major part of the appeal of the event, and that we should continue to use a campground, but noted that most local campgrounds are closed for the winter.

New business:

- No new business**.**

Two presentations followed. Mike, W1VEG, introduced the new New England Digital Voice Traffic Net. More information can be found at https://www.nedvtn.net.

Brendan, NW1S, described QSO One, a new multi–digital mode software application for Android and Windows.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

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

Membership Report for 2026 *– Joe Chapman, NV1W*

Since November 1 marks the beginning of the renewal period for 2027, here are some statistics on the membership of the club for the year just past.

At the end of the fiscal year 2026, the club had 132 members, compared with 124 in 2025. 26 members joined for the first time this year, compared with 36 in 2025. Sadly, we do not have data for join dates going back to the beginning of the club, but Jim Walsh, N1DDU, now has the lowest membership number (3). The club has had 1068 members in total over the years.

84 people were Regular Members (64%), 42 were Senior Members (32%), 5 were Advanced Members (4%), and one was a Family Member (< 1%). 96 renewing members took advantage of the early renewal discount; this accounts for almost all renewals. 38 members included a donation to the repeater fund in addition to their membership dues. 34 members renewed via the postal service in response to the membership renewal mailing, though postal replies account for almost all donations.

We have 32 Technician class licensees (24%), 38 General (29%), 1 Advanced (< 1%), and 56 Amateur Extra (42%). 5 members are not yet licensed (4%). This is interesting to compare with the overall numbers in the US, which are approximately 51% Technician, 23% General, 19% Amateur Extra, and 5% Advanced.

Churn (the number of people who joined in 2025 but did not renew for 2026) was 14. I have been unable to discern any trends in this number over the past several years.

Through the October General Meeting, we had an average of 18 attendees at each meeting. The September meeting was the winner at 27 participants.

Going by postal address, 124 of our members live in Massachusetts. Mathematica tells me that, excluding geographical outliers, the centroid of our members' addresses is at 42.354°N, 71.1066°W, in the MIT Development Office at the west end of the campus near the Hyatt Regency Cambridge. Artisans Asylum is just about one mile too far to the west-northwest to be equally inconvenient for everyone.

The Volunteer Exam team had 3 test sessions serving 4 candidates. We gave out 2 Technician tickets and 1 upgrade to General.

Needless to say, these are excellent numbers compared with a few years ago, and our dues increase last year appears to have had no negative effect. Thanks to everyone in advance for your 2027 renewal!

BARC's New Discord Server! – *Patrick Mannion, W1PAC*

Hello All! 👋

🤷 Guess what! 🤷‍♂️

🎙️BARC has its own Discord server!

📡What is Discord you might ask? It's a chat program that allows instant messaging, voice and video calls. The server is broken up in various chat rooms and we have a lot, however, the general chatroom is called #general and after that it branches off into various other chat rooms for more specialized content such as ones for POTA, ARES and various digital modes.

If you want to join, you can use it right in your favorite browser or use the Discord software, it's available for desktop on all 3 major operating systems such as Windows, Mac and various Linux distributions. It's also available for iOS and Android phones.

Just go to https://discord.com/download and download it.

To get to our server you'll need an invite link which is: https://discord.gg/F6hqmgFMjW

We've set it to never expire, but if it accidentally does, just let us know in the groups.io and we'll generate a new one.

Hope to see you on there!

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.

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

19 November	**BARC General Meeting, Artisans Asylum, Allston, and Zoom, 7:30 pm**
21 – 23 November	ARRL Sweepstakes, SSB
28 – 29 November	CQ WW CW DX Contest
4 – 6 December	ARRL 160 Contest
5 December	SKYWARN Recognition Day
12 – 13 December	ARRL 10 Meter Contest
20 December	ARRL Rookie Roundup, CW
31 December	ARRL Straight Key Night
2 – 3 January	ARRL RTTY Roundup
11 January	**BARC VE Session, Artissans Asylum, Allston, 7:30 pm**
16 – 17 January	North American QSO Party, SSB
16 – 18 January	ARRL January VHF Contest
23 – 24 January	**Winter Field Day**

▲ 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.

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 must be received by the Saturday following the first Thursday of the month.

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. Exams ar typically held on the sedond Monday in January, April, July and October at 7:30p.m. Check with exam coordinators for confirmed dates. 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 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 Joe Chapman, NV1W, nv1w@arrl.net.



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
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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
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)
Mon Wed Fri 6 pm	The 6 O'clock Net	145.130 (PL 107.2)
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	50.272
Sun 8 pm	Algonquin Amateur Radio Club Net	446.675 (PL 88.5)
Sun 8:30 pm	NSRA Net (with Newsline)	145.470 (PL 136.5)
Sun 7 pm	CAARAnet	145.130 (PL 107.2)

