



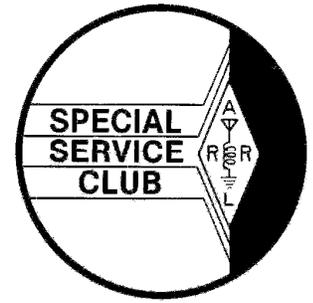
# **The SPARC**

Newsletter of the Boston Amateur Radio Club

Volume XXI, Number 3; March 2009

<http://www.barc.org>

[w1bos@arrl.net](mailto:w1bos@arrl.net)



## **A New Racing Event Planned for Boston**

-- Bob Salow, WA1IDA

For many years, on the day before the Boston Marathon, there was an informal run on the streets of Boston. That all changed last year when Boston was awarded the US Olympic Women's Marathon Trials. BARC responded with communication support for the 26.2 mile event run in Boston and Cambridge.

This year, to keep the date and advance the running sport, the Boston Athletic Association (BAA) will hold a sanctioned 5K (3.1 miles) race followed by a series of 1 mile races for the state's best high school runners. All races will start near and finish at the Boston Marathon Finish line.

We have been asked to provide ham communications for these events. The date is **Sunday, 19 April**, with hams assembling at 0700 near the Boston Public Library (more details later). All events are expected to be over by 1100.

Note that there will be no interference with preparations for the Boston Marathon the next day. If you can assist or have any questions, contact me at [w1ida@arrl.net](mailto:w1ida@arrl.net) or 508.650.9440.

## **US ARDF National Championships Come to Boston**

-- Joe Moell, K0OV

The Amateur Radio Direction Finding (ARDF) National Championships will be held in the Blue Hill Reservation on the weekend of 5 - 7 June. Registration is now open, check [www.bostonardf.org/](http://www.bostonardf.org/) for details. Radio-orienteerers of all skill levels will gather for a practice day, followed by two days of intense competition - first on 2 meters and then on 80 meters. This year's USA Championships will be combined with the IARU Region 2 championships. The events are open to everyone, with or without a ham license. To encourage first-timers and foreign visitors, the competition fee will be waived for persons who have never participated in the USA ARDF Championships, and for competitors coming from outside North America. You can learn more about ARDF at [www.homingin.com/](http://www.homingin.com/).

## **BARC Special Service Club Status Renewed**

We have been notified by Bo Budinger, WA1QYM, the ARRL Eastern Massachusetts Section Affiliated Club Coordinator, that our SSC designation has been renewed. He also complimented us "on this fine achievement."

## **What Is 902 MHz All About and How to Get On**

There is a growing interest in the 33 cm band due in part to the military PavePaws oppression of the 70cm repeater band, and in part to the inexpensive equipment. Our speaker at the March General meeting, John Frye, N1OTY, will guide us from beginning concepts to equipment to use. He will show specific equipment for use and ham adaptation for the 902 MHz band. The Meeting will be held on March 19.

Our General meetings start at 7:00 pm on the third Thursday of each month at the Salvation Army third floor auditorium. The address is 147 Berkeley St, but the entrance is on Columbus Ave. The nearest **T** stations are Back Bay on the Orange line or Commuter Rail (exit the rear of the station), and Arlington on the Green line. Free parking is available in the adjacent lot. The entrance to the parking lot is from Columbus Ave. (across the street from the firehouse). A map appears on page 5 of this newsletter.

We usually take the first 30 to 45 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.

## **Future BARC Meeting Dates**

(Third Thursdays at 7:00 pm)

19 March 2009 - General Meeting

16 April 2009 - General Meeting

21 May 2009 - General Meeting

4 June 2009 - Business Meeting

18 June 2009 - General Meeting

*(no General Meetings in July and August)*

## **BARC Badges - Get 'em While They're Hot**

New club badges have been made for all licensed members. Get yours by coming to any BARC meeting; the badges and clips will be ready.

A courtesy exception will be made for members who cannot get to meetings. As time and effort permits, some badges will be inserted in the newsletter, but without the badge clip.

## Winter vs. Meetings

Don't doubt it – there is still more winter to come regardless of how many dances you do. This raises the possibility of meeting cancellations due to fierce winter conditions.

Our early warning system: Official announcements will be made – at least by 1700 before scheduled meetings – on the Boston repeater (145.230 MHz) and by a message on barc-list. Someone will be designated to monitor the repeater for inquiries. If the weather threatens, please stay safe by checking before starting out to a meeting.

## Have Breakfast With BARC

**NOTE: The breakfast date has been changed to the *third* Sunday of each month.**

BARC holds 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 1030 (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. The #70 T 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!

## Orange Caps for Emergency and Public Service Events

BARC has a supply of the bright orange caps for use at emergency or public service events. They are adjustable to fit all but the very largest heads, and proclaim, "Emergency Communications."

The price is \$5.00, and they are available at club meetings, or contact Jim, N1ICN, or Bob, WA1IDA.



**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**

If you never try anything new, you'll miss out on many of life's great disappointments.

Repeaters: 145.23 (-) PL 88.5 447.175 (-) PL 110.9

## BARC Growth

It's a rare month when we fail to add a few new 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.

Ev Curry	W6ABM
Bob DiLibero	K1OP (Upgrade to Extra – was K1UQM)
Bob Walthall	(no call)

Please welcome the 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: [walida@arrl.net](mailto:walida@arrl.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 – and 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.

Most of these events are open to hams who are new to helping at such events as well as experienced hams. For 2009, we have already been tasked with several events, and more are expected. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Bob Salow, WA1IDA, at [walida@arrl.net](mailto:walida@arrl.net) or 508.650.9440; or Tom Bertolino, KB1OKP, at [kb1okp@arrl.net](mailto:kb1okp@arrl.net) or 781.395.5538.

- *Multiple Sclerosis Journey of Hope* – **4 April 2009** – (Newton)
- *Multiple Sclerosis Boston Walk* – **5 April 2009** – (Boston and Cambridge)
- *BAA Boston 5K Race & 1 Mile Races* – **19 April 2009** – (Boston)
- *Run of the Charles Canoe Race* – **26 April 2009** – (Charles River: Needham to Boston)
- *Bikes Not Bombs Bike Rides* – **7 June 2009** – Boston and southern suburbs
- *BAA Half Marathon* – **11 October 2009** - Boston

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.

**BE UNDERSTOOD:  
USE ONLY OFFICIAL ICAO  
PHONETICS**

Simplex: 147.420

## Hams Needed – Two Multiple Sclerosis Walks

-- Rick Savage, KB1LYJ

The Multiple Sclerosis Society has again organized two local events this year, but no longer on the same day. The "Boston MS Walk" will be on Sunday, 4 April, organized as it has been for the past several years. The "MS Journey of Hope," will start and finish in Newton on Saturday, 5 April.

We have been asked to support communications for both. The "Boston MS Walk" will start and finish at the Harvard athletic facility on North Harvard St near Soldiers Field Rd in Brighton. The route of the walk will be on both sides of the river in Cambridge and Boston.

The "MS Journey of Hope" starts and finishes at Newton South High School with a 7.5 mile course. There will be several checkpoints, vehicles and medical coverage for us to support.

Each will be managed by a Net Control station, using both VHF and UHF repeaters. Your help is vital for these worthy causes. If you can lend a hand, contact Rick, KB1LYJ, at [rpsavage@comcast.net](mailto:rpsavage@comcast.net) or 781.289.7364.

## Hams Needed For the Run of the Charles

-- Tom Bertolino, KB1OKP

Ham radio has been part of the Run of the Charles canoe races for more than 26 years. BARC has coordinated the hams for most of that time. This is a well run event which provides wetness for the participants and excitement for the hams (who stay dry). We are looking for more hams to help on **Sunday, 26 April**.

Our duties include reporting from hazardous portages around the many dams on the Charles River from Needham to Brighton. Various assignments start between 0700 and 1200, with assignment completions from 1230 to 1630. This is an excellent way for those new to public service to get your feet wet (figuratively only) and learn how hams can support the community.

It's an outdoor event, yet safe for hams. Because of the terrain along the river bank, a hand held radio with an antenna better than a "rubber duck" and a full 5 watts is necessary.

If you can help, contact me, Tom Bertolino, at [kb1okp@arrl.net](mailto:kb1okp@arrl.net) or 781.395.5538.

**WORLDWIDE DISTRIBUTION**



**HAM  
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## I See the Future

- 14 Mar CAARA Flea (Rockport)
- 15 Mar BARC Breakfast
- 19 Mar BARC Monthly General Meeting
- 29 Mar FARA Flea (Framingham)
- 29 Mar CVRC Flea (Henniker NH)
- 4 Apr MS Journey of Hope **(Rp)**
- 5 Apr MS Boston Walk **(Rp)**
- 13 Apr BARC VE Exams
- 16 Apr BARC Monthly General Meeting
- 18 Apr NE Antique RC (Manchester NH)
- 19 Apr Boston 5K Race, Mile Races **(Rp)**
- 19 Apr BARC Breakfast
- 19 Apr MIT Flea (Cambridge)
- 26 Apr Run of the Charles **(Rp)**
- 1-2 May NEAR Fest (Deerfield NH)
- 11 May BARC VE Exams
- 17 May BARC Breakfast
- 17 May MIT Flea (Cambridge)
- 21 May BARC General Meeting
- 4 Jun BARC Business Meeting
- 5-7 Jun ARDF National Championships
- 7 Jun Bikes Not Bombs Rides **(Rp)**
- 8 Jun BARC VE Exams
- 18 Jun BARC General Meeting
- 21 Jun BARC Breakfast
- 21 Jun MIT Flea (Cambridge)
- 27-28 Jun Field Day

**(Rp)** = BARC repeater(s) may 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 New England and some of New York, the "Ham - Electronic Flea Market" and the "PSLIST" lists tell the story. They are posted by e-mail to barc-list and on PBBSs regularly. If needed, contact any club member who has access to these.

## Art Review: Cindy Bernard: *Silent Key and Postcards From The Edge*

-- Eric Falkof, K1NUN

Two days before it closed, I visited the Boston Center for the Arts (BCA) where this artistic display was exhibited. In short, this was the life of the man over time, but reflecting the changing world as proved by his ham radio contacts' QSL cards. The focus was on what we refer to as deleted entities.

The main display consisted of what must have been about six dozen cards, showing the fronts and backs. These were from places such as Nazi Germany, the USSR, Belgian Congo, etc. Call sign prefixes that have not been on the air for decades were proven to have existed on the air. Some cards proclaimed national pride; others proclaimed a mission of conversion to one god. I recognized a few call signs and names: Gus, the prolific DXer who circled the globe to put rare countries on the air and give

contacts to “the deserving.” Stu Meyer (head of Hammarlund)

went through Africa, handing out contacts from safaris. There was a card from a ham station at an ARAMCO office - we remember that company as a major supporter of the Shah of Iran, oil deals, and other political affairs. The Collins S-Line showed prominently on this card, whereas other cards simply stated the final tube lineup.

The cards were arranged in several dimensions. On the one hand, they were arranged from left to right chronologically and from bottom to top geographically. Aside from the physical arrangements, I also noticed a difference of the cards in the following way: the early cards were simple postcards, some being hand-printed. Over time, the cards became pre-printed and then with photographs, showing an advancement in the socio-economic status of the sender. I noticed also that instead of a tube lineup, commercially manufactured equipment began to be mentioned. Some were expensive radios; others were of lower prices

Later cards were commercially printed by organizations, like the ARAMCO card or missionary groups, proclaiming their purpose or goal. A few cards showed scenery of exotic landscapes or beaches, or local activity showing unique aspects of life in the city or country. (A few cards, set aside in a separate section, would not pass US Postal regulations today, because they showed female nudity which may have been acceptable in the country of origin, but would not pass muster in prudish America.)

I spoke with the docent, a pleasant young lady, who knew a bit about ham radio as her dad was a ham in the 80s. But she really did not know too much. Now, you know me - I can't let a good story go untold, so I described DXpeditions and the preparations hams go through today. I told her stories I read about DXpeditions of days gone by. Now, those were *real* expeditions, with bearers and portages around mountains and broken-down trucks! We (I, that is) talked about the gradations of the equipment and how that showed a bit more about the person at the key or mike. Even the type of card showed a bit of the personality. I neglected to tell her that some countries' governments used to print or subsidize the cards, and ham radio is the only way private citizens of any country can talk, uncensored, to nationals of another country.

The docent was most attentive. She even wrote down the title of a book I told her about (*Hello World: A Life in Ham Radio*) that had a similar focus as this exhibit, recounting a man's life through the QSL cards of stations he worked. But this one was not a simple chronology. The highlighted ham's granddaughter demonstrated a sincere respect for and perspective of the time that no longer can be counted, the signals no longer heard, the nations that rose and fell, and the keys silenced by time.

## Let me tell you an HF story...

-- Eric Falkof, K1NUN

A few weeks ago, I was home on vacation and could not find my HF station under a pile of papers and unfolded laundry. (Don't ask!) So what is a ham to do? I dug up another HF transceiver from the stack of boxes under the window, grabbed a jump-start

battery and a portable style antenna that was in my other go-kit, and headed upstairs.

Well, the battery was somewhat drained, so I took a screwdriver to open the radio's case and flipped the switch from the 100 watt setting to the 50 watt setting. I set up the antenna in a corner of my living room, stretched out the one 20 meter band counterpoise radial, and began to listen. Fortunately for all that effort, the band was open.

Foolishly, I joined a pile-up and tried to break some Central American station on 20 meter sideband that was running US stations. The panel lamp dimmed with each syllable as the battery strained to deliver some juice. And what do you know? -- My smoke alarm went off!!

I jumped up and unplugged it from its socket and removed the backup battery. It silenced with a declining whimper. Plugged it back in. Back to the radio. The DX station was still racking them up.

I called again. Again the alarm sounded. I unplugged it again, replugged it, and returned.

I called again. And now what do you know? The Costa Rican station heard me and gave me a gratuitous 59 report. Now, tell me, with my low power, dying battery-operated radio, indoor shortened vertical antenna, and shrieking smoke alarm in the background, do you think I deserved a 59? On merit and effort, maybe. But in reality? Hah, never! The wind must have shifted the ionosphere a few degrees in my direction and everyone else in the world must have gone to the kitchen just as I called. Wow!

So, as an ardent QRPer, I know that you can't work them if you don't get on the air.

A few weeks later, I decided to get on the air again. Last year was not a good year for me to operate (Don't ask) and the urge was nudging me strong. My main HF rig was still under even more papers as I prepare my income taxes and I couldn't find that other HF rig that must have been under a new pile of things left behind by my daughter as she moved out of the house. So I grabbed my QRP radio from the bookcase, the FT-817, and that same shortened vertical.

I went upstairs to the living room and perched the radio on the arm of the sofa, and set up the antenna in that same corner. This time, I attached my trusty little ScQRPions CW paddle (s/n 190 - search the list and verify this) and a set of headphones I received on some airplane flight (when they used to give them away). Running two watts with the self-contained batteries that were last charged five weeks ago, I answered a 20 meter CW CQ. The guy in Iowa heard me! But he said, "QSB no cpy 73," He gave his call and that was that.

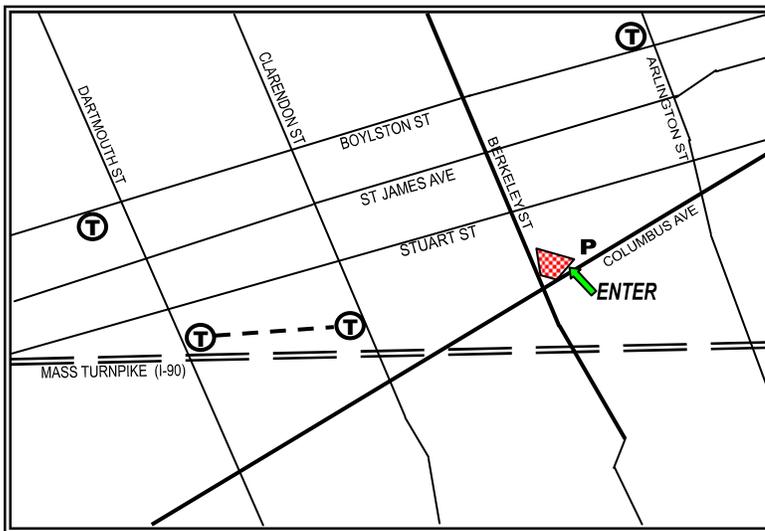
Well, I guess it goes to show, if you don't make any calls, you don't get results. I'm going to go to bed shortly, but I left the radio on the sofa arm, ready to try again tomorrow.

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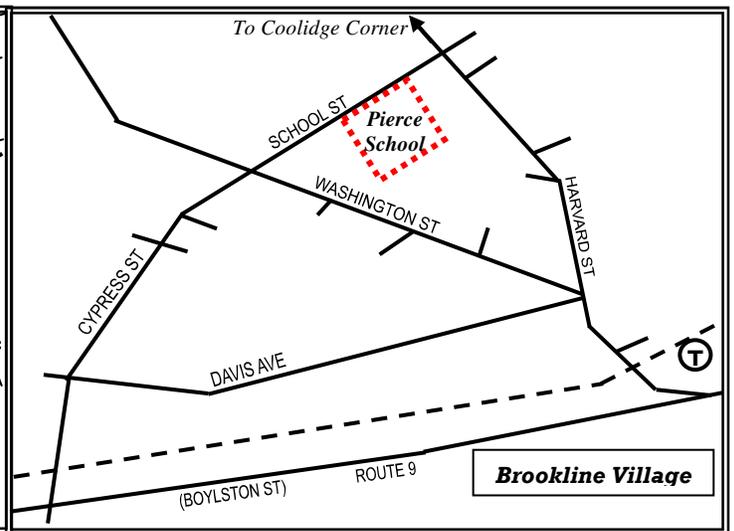
Why do doctors leave the room while you change? They're going to see you naked anyway.

**Repeaters: 145.23 (-) PL 88.5 447.175 (-) PL 110.9**

**Simplex: 147.420**



General Meeting – Boston Salvation Army  
Corner of Berkeley St. and Columbus Ave.



VE Session – Pierce School  
50 School Street, Brookline, Room 110 next to the cafeteria

### BARC Officers and Staff

President	(Vacant)		
Acting President	Bob Salow, WA1IDA	508.650.9440	walida@arrl.net
Vice President	Tom Bertolino, KB1OKP	781.395.5538	kb1okp@arrl.net
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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 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 a participant in Partnerships Advancing Technical Hobbies Which Attract Youth to Science (PATHWAYS). The Club is also an associate member of the Courage Handi-Hams system.

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### Greater Boston Net Directory

Daily 5:30 pm	Eastern Mass/Rhode Island Phone Net (NTS)	3.915
Daily 7 and 10 pm	Eastern Mass/Rhode Island CW Net (NTS)	3.658
Daily 8 pm	Eastern Mass 2M Traffic Net (NTS)	145.230 (PL 88.5)
Daily 8 pm	Slow Speed CW Net	28.160
Daily 10:00 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 9 pm	BARC Club Net	145.230 (PL 88.5)
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	HHTN Swap Net	146.640
Thu 8:30 pm	AMSAT Net	146.640
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 Newsline)	145.470

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