



NEWS FOR AND BY BARS MEMBERS

BARS Billerica Amateur Radio Society

MARCH 2019

From the President's Desk

from the President of BARS, Andy Wallace, KA1GTT

In the snowy months, it is great to be able to get out and connect with local hams and dream up projects for when the weather is warm. For these projects, you need GEAR! And if you need gear and your only thoughts are about online shopping and Ham Radio Outlet, you are missing out! Get out and try a ham flea market/swap meet or auction.

On February 16, the Algonquin Amateur Radio Club (<https://www.qsl.net/n1em/>) held its annual flea market at the Whitcomb School in Marlborough. I went there with Chris, KC1IUK, and John, KC1FTJ – all of us longtime ham flea aficionados. I love the Marlborough flea market because radios and parts are hauled up from basements and folks come out of the woodwork. You see people and things you don't normally see at other markets, and in general the prices are great too!

I spent a modest sum on small items and enjoyed seeing friends and making new ones. One treasure I found was a 1920s Baldwin single headphone with cord – new in the box – for \$5. You can tell from the picture it was perfect. Check out the patent dates. The destination for this will be a homebrew radio to demonstrate at the BARS meeting someday (spoiler alert).



Another picture I took was of a beautiful Collins ham receiver, the 75A-1. It was introduced about 1947 and has 14 tubes and was originally \$375. The seller had a great asking price for this historic set and I may have bought it if only it had the cabinet. However, all was not lost as a coworker of mine was there and he loves tubes too – so he bought it.



Google the history of the Collins Radio Company and their equipment and you will start to understand how we truly stand on the shoulders of giants when it comes to the ham radio technology we take for granted today. To put this in perspective, the dial of the 75A-1 has a slide rule for coarse tuning but the circular dial underneath has readout to one kHz. It was not very long ago we had dials where the frequencies at the top end were scrunched together. Remember analog car radios? 600 to 700 kHz was an inch but 1200 to 1400 was a millimeter.

Art Collins developed the permeability tuned oscillator to allow high tuning precision. Look at other 1947 receivers from manufacturers like Hallicrafters, National, and Hammarlund, and you will not find precise evenly-divided dials like this. A gem! And note that the A-1 has coverage of 80/40/20/15/11/10. 11m is what is now the 27 MHz CB band but it was originally a ham band.

As I write this, a prototype 75A-1 (serial number zero) just sold on Ebay for \$2055.



Collins 75-A-1 Tube Radio Transmitter Serial # 0. with Warren Bruene Letter

Art Collins personal collection

Anyway, we had fun at Marlboro and if you are yawning at tube technology there was also quite a few modern HF and VHF/UHF rigs for sale there as well as antenna and electronic components.

Some other upcoming fleas are the New England Vintage Electronics Club (<http://www.nearc.net/swapmeetinfo.htm>) "Radio 50" (formerly held at the Westford Regency) on Sunday 3/3/19 at 8AM at the Courtard Marriott in Nashua. Admission is \$10 but becomes free at 11AM. This flea has everything from the 1910s on up and some good ham gear does show up.

And on Sunday 4/7/19 at 9:00AM, the Framingham Amateur Radio Association (<http://www.nearc.net/swapmeetinfo.htm>) is

holding a flea market at the Keefe Technical School in Framingham. You can access a good list of New England ham fleas at: <http://web.mit.edu/w1gsl/Public/ne-fleas>

In other news I am pleased to see a few new memberships have appeared in the past weeks and the Club net at 8PM Wednesdays has been getting more and more check-ins. I hear new and returning callsigns and even better I hear people chatting on the repeater afterwards. Recently a new ham had set up a 10M antenna and wanted to test it – so at 8:30 PM three BARS members gave him some helpful signal reports. Great! Get on the air and have fun!

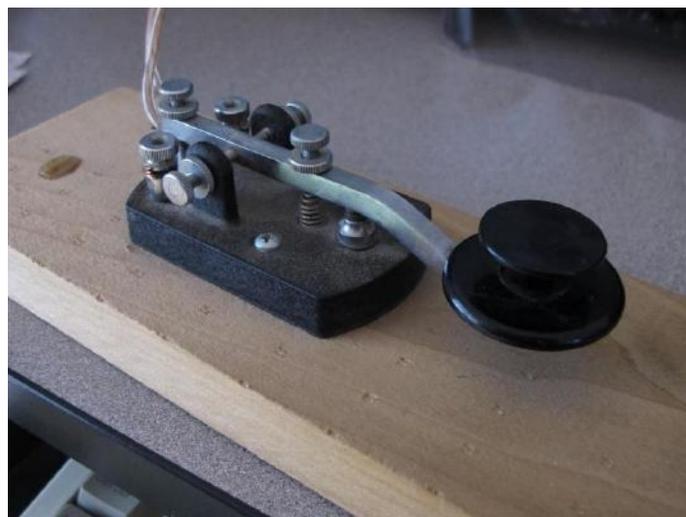
Thanks, everyone. Andy KA1GTT

Straight Key Century Club

from Scott Ginsburg, K1OA

CW is alive and well. Listen any time on 40m between 7050 and 7060 kHz and you're likely to hear stations calling CQ SKCC looking for contacts with other members of the Straight Key Century Club. Formed in 2006 by KC9ECI, the SKCC club was inspired by the ARRL's Straight Key Night (SKN) with the intent of keeping that spirit going throughout the year. It now boasts over 20,000 members.

Membership is free, each member possesses a unique number assigned for life. Members contact each other and exchange numbers. Each operator must use a straight key, bug or side swiper (aka Cootie) only, which tends to keep the code speed around an average of 15 WPM with some contacts occurring at speeds less than 10 WPM. You will find that SKCC members are kind enough to slow down their sending to accommodate slower speed operators. This is a very friendly and inviting bunch of folks.



The author's Speed-X straight key used as a Novice in the 70s

Besides having fun with your straight key or bug and enjoying great conversations using CW, there are incentives for collecting as many SKCC numbers as possible: the Centurion, Tribune and

Senator awards. Once you've worked at least 100 other SKCC members you can submit your log to the club and receive the Centurion award which allows you to add a 'C' to the end of your number, for example 10120C. Endorsements are available for working additional multiples of 100 Centurions, Tribunes or Senators, noted as Cx2, Cx3, etc.

As a Centurion, if you work 50 other Centurions, Tribunes or Senators, you qualify for the Tribune award and can add a 'T' to your number (10120T) signifying you are now a Tribune. Tribune endorsements are available in multiples of 50 by working additional Centurions, Tribunes or Senators, for Tx2 (100 contacts), Tx3 (150 contacts), etc.

As a Tribune, once you achieve the Tx8 level, you are eligible for the highest award, the Senator, by working 200 additional Tribunes and Senators. These contacts can be with any Tribune or Senator, regardless of if you've worked them before. In total, to reach Senator you need 700 contacts as noted by the following table put together by K7MJG called The Path to Senator:

Status	Required		Other		Criteria
	Previous+	# Contacts	Total	Operator	
Centurion (C)		100	100	Any	Unique
Tribune (T)	C+	50	50	C/T/S	Unique since Centurion, could be DUPs of Centurion contacts
Tx2	C+	100	100	C/T/S	Unique since Centurion, could be DUPs of Centurion contacts
Tx3	C+	150	150	C/T/S	Unique since Centurion, could be DUPs of Centurion contacts
Tx4	C+	200	200	C/T/S	Unique since Centurion, could be DUPs of Centurion contacts
Tx5	C+	250	250	C/T/S	Unique since Centurion, could be DUPs of Centurion contacts
Tx6	C+	300	300	C/T/S	Unique since Centurion, could be DUPs of Centurion contacts
Tx7	C+	350	350	C/T/S	Unique since Centurion, could be DUPs of Centurion contacts
Tx8	C+	400	400	C/T/S	Unique since Centurion, could be DUPs of Centurion contacts
Senator (S)	TX8+	200	200	T/S	Unique, could be DUPs of those up to TX8
		700			

The Path to Senator

When you are admitted as a member of the Senate you are eligible to add an 'S' to your number (10120S).



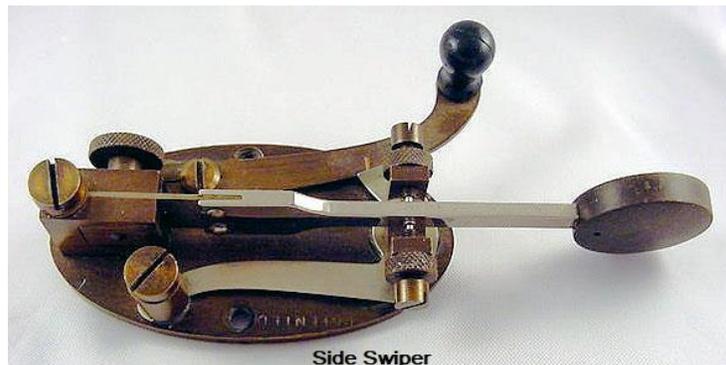
A bug

To encourage SKCC contacts, a number of operating activities are scheduled throughout the year. The most popular is the Weekend Sprint, or WES contest which runs every month on the Saturday following the 6th of the month from 1200 UTC until 2359 UTC on Sunday. During this time you will hear many members calling CQ WES. The Straight Key Sprint is a two hour contest running on the fourth Wednesday of every month

starting at 0000 UTC, with members calling CQ SKS. These are great opportunities to increase your member number counts.

There are free resources available to assist with your numbers chase. The SKCC Logger application is a freely downloadable program running on Windows, MacOS or Linux that you can use to track your contacts and generate electronic applications in the form required for submission to the SKCC awards administrators. It has the capability to import or merge ADIF files from other logging programs so one potential work flow is to log contacts with your main logging program, export your SKCC contacts to an ADIF file, and then merge that export into your SKCC Logger log file.

Another resource is the SKCC Skimmer program which can read an ADIF file containing all of your SKCC contacts, perhaps your SKCC Logger log file, and alert you when a number you need has been spotted by the Reverse Beacon Network (RBN). This is a great way to monitor real-time SKCC activity while you are doing other things in your shack.



A Side Swiper

So how do you join SKCC? Go to www.skccgroup.com and click on Join SKCC where you'll find a Membership Request Form. The administrators of SKCC are very responsive so you'll hear back quickly with your very own SKCC number that will allow you to join the fun and meet some very nice CW operators. The website contains a wealth of information on SKCC including a membership roster, newsletter, a complete list of rules for awards and much more. Enjoy!

73,
Scott Ginsburg K1OA
SKCC 6234T

Report from Warm, Sunny Florida

from Bruce Anderson, W1LUS

Marylou and I are snowbirds down here in sunny Sarasota on the west coast of Florida. We are staying at the Sun n Fun RV resort. One of the reasons I like to stay here is that there is a radio club station here at the resort. The club callsign is W4SNF. We have weekly meetings every Friday. There are about 5 to 15 people at the meetings. At some meetings, a club member will make a

presentation on something they have been doing. Last week's talk was about using a "hotspot" to connect a handheld digital radio to the internet to talk to similarly equipped hams everywhere. It's where the hotspot is your own personal linked repeater. At other meetings, the main discussion is how well, or poorly, the resort management is. The resort provides a room in one of the buildings for the club meetings and station. There are three rigs available in the station. A Kenwood TS-570S, a Kenwood TS-450S and a Yaesu FT 480. For antennas, there is a Mosley tri-band beam on a 50-foot tower for 20-15-10 Meters. A G5RV for all other bands. I haven't done much operating as when I have time to get to the Shack the bands have been dead. In early February I traveled to the HamCation in Orlando with a couple of fellow club members, Hugo, VE3AYR and Gary, VE3GTH. YES, there are a LOT of Canadians here in Florida in the winter. Some of my other activities here are horseshoes, going to the pool, and the gym.

For more hotspot information go to:

<https://qrznow.com/what-is-a-digital-ham-radio-hotspot-dmr-dstar-c4fm-hotspots-explained/>

Bruce Anderson
W1LUS

Another Check-In from Afar

from Steve Wedge, W1ES/4

I moved to NC in 2006 and have tried to remain in touch with at least a few of you. My last meeting that I attended was in October 2007, when I drove from Mebane, NC to the meeting in Billerica in 10.5 hours. Yeah, I had a Saab turbo and only got out for a sandwich, gas and "Necessary" breaks. I went up to Hosstraders after that (now NEAR-Fest).

My heart and soul are still with you guys. Though I have moved 800 miles, I have remained in touch with many folks from BARS. I am so glad to see that so many of you are participating in the weekly net and other activities.

73,
Steve Wedge, W1ES/4

Next BARS meeting: 7:00 PM Wednesday, March 6, 2019

Mike, K1TWF, ARRL New England Division Vice Director / Tom K1TW, ARRL Section Manager

Due to a weather cancelation of the February meeting, our planned February talk will happen this month. Mike is just back from the first meeting of the new ARRL Board meeting. He will have a lot of interesting news to share with our members about the ARRL following the Board meeting. This is an opportunity to ask Mike questions about the ARRL, tell him what you like or want to see changed. The new Board is already making big news by withdrawing the December 18 "Petition for Rulemaking" to

the FCC, which sought to amend the Part 97 Amateur Service rules to incorporate the provisions of the Amateur Radio Parity Act (ARPA). The ARRL Board of Directors decided that the organization needs to "review, re-examine, and reappraise ARRL's regulatory and legislative policy with regard to private land use restrictions". Bring your questions to Mike on this and other pressing interests you have regarding ARRL. <http://www.arrl.org/news/arrl-board-of-directors-issues-statement-on-amateur-radio-parity-act>

Background Note: Every year, about one third of the Director positions stand for election. In total, of the six Directors slots up for election, five new folks will be representing their Divisions after the election. This year, we elected a new Division Director, Fred Hopengarten K1VR to represent the New England ARRL Division. Fred replaces Tom Frenaye, K1KI who has served New England for many years.

But wait there is more.

Tom K1TW, the ARRL section manager for Eastern Massachusetts will also be on hand to update folks on happenings in Eastern Massachusetts. Tom manages a staff of 11 volunteers who in turn guide close to 100 section volunteers involved in activities ranging from emergency communications, traffic handling, nets, technical volunteers, government liaison, and club support. Among the biggest topics in Eastern Massachusetts to discuss is the "Proposed MA Legislation Seeks to Require "Hands-free" Cell Phone Use While Driving". <https://ema.arrl.org/2019/01/23/proposed-ma-legislation-seeks-to-require-hands-free-cell-phone-use-while-driving/>

Your Article Here!

Do you have something you want to share with members of the club? If so, send it to Paula KC1EDA cognosco@fastmail.fm.

Get-on-the-air Events

BARS is a "get-on-the-air" (GOTA) club. We encourage members to participate in the varied events on HF and VHF. Here are some popular suggestions for March. Note:

1. Do not miss this month's two really BIG EVENTS:
 - First up is the ARRL DX Phone contest. In this one the entire world is trying to work the USA. We are the stations being sought.
 - The other is the CQ Magazine World Wide (CQWW) Prefix (WPX) contest. Every prefix, be it W1, K1, G3, KC1, WA1, F6, and so on represents a multiplier to someone. It's fantastic!
2. In between the big ones enjoy some of the more regional events like the Virginia and Idaho QSO parties. These state QSO Parties are great for working towards the ARRL Worked All States award.

Date	Event	URL
0000Z, Mar 2 to 2400Z, Mar 3	ARRL Inter. DX Contest, SSB	http://www.arrl.org/arrl-dx
1200Z, Mar 9 to 2400Z, Mar 10	SKCC Weekend Sprintathon (WES)	https://www.skccgroup.com/operating_activities/weekend_sprintathon/
1400Z Mar 16 to 0400Z Mar 17 And Again at 1200-2400Z Mar 17	Virginia QSO Party	https://www.qsl.net/sterling/VA_QSO_Party/2019_VQP/2019_VQP_Main.html
1900Z Mar 9 to 1900Z Mar 10	Idaho QSO Party	http://idahoarrl.info/qsoparty/rules.htm
0000Z, Mar 30 to 2359Z, Mar 31	CQ WW WPX SSB	https://cqwpw.com/rules.htm

Enjoy and get on the air!

More events can be found every week on the WA7BNM contest calendar at <https://www.contestcalendar.com/weeklycont.php?mode=current&week=current>

BARS Membership

Bruce, W1LUS, our BARS Treasurer reports that as of February 25 2019, we have 76 BARS Members,

2019 BARS Member Dues

The BARS Board has changed the policy on member dues. A \$15 annual BARS membership now runs from January 1 and expires on December 31st. Any renewal or new membership made after September 1 will be valid until December 31 of the next year. Memberships not renewed by January 1st have lapsed. Please renew now for 2019 if you have yet to do so.

Treasurers Report

Bruce, W1LUS, our BARS Treasurer reports that in February we had three new members via PayPal, Dale Good KB1BEE, Robert KC1KVV, and Mark KC1KQC. Be sure to say hello if you hear them on the air. We had one bill for internet hosting of our website \$119.40. We now have \$326.30 in the local bank and \$371.08 in our PayPal account.

VE Report

At the February 14 BARS VE exam session three people passed the Technician exam. Their new callsigns are KC1KZQ, KC1KZS, and KC1KCT. Be sure to say hello if you hear them on the air. The

VEs at the session were Gary W1GFF, Charles AA1VS, and Antonio KB1KDS. The next VE session will be on March 14.

BARS Needs You!!!

We are looking for a few good hams to act as net control on the regularly scheduled Wednesday night nets! All it takes is one night a month; if you are interested contact John KC1FTJ harpman@aol.com. Also, the club needs volunteers for light tasks of ~ 1 hour a month. Are you able to pitch in? Contact Andy, KA1GTT

Wednesday Night Net

Join us on the Billerica Repeater for the weekly BARS net (except on 1st Wednesday of Month which is club meeting night)

Repeater info:

147.12 MHz
+600 kHz (normal) offset
Encode CTCSS 103.5 Hz

Club Meetings

First Wednesday of the month at 7:00PM at Chelmsford Bible Church, 128 Gorham St., Chelmsford MA
Park in back and enter by rear door
[Chelmsford Bible Church Hall, 128 Gorham St, Rear Door, Chelmsford MA 01824-3220 \(map\)](#)

Next Meeting will feature both Mike Raisbeck K1TWF, ARRL New England Division Vice Director and Tom Walsh K1TW, ARRL Section Manager for Eastern Massachusetts. Mike will speak about the ARRL Board meeting held on January 18-19. Tom will speak on ARRL programs and activities taking place in the section.

VE Sessions

VE sessions are held the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM at Chelmsford Bible Church, 128 Gorham St., Chelmsford MA
Park in back and enter by rear door
[Chelmsford Bible Church Hall, 128 Gorham St, Rear Door, Chelmsford MA 01824-3220 \(map\)](#)

Club Breakfast every Saturday

On Saturday mornings around 8:15AM, we also meet weekly for a casual, social breakfast at Stelio's restaurant.
[Stelio's Family Restaurant, Billerica, MA \(map\)](#)

BARS Leadership Team

President: Andy Wallace, KA1GTT
Vice President: Kayla Creamer, W2IRY
Treasurer: Bruce Anderson, W1LUS
Secretary: Paula Crock, KC1EDA
BoD: Mike Raisbeck, K1TWF
BoD: Henry Christle, WA1VAB
Ex Officio: Tom Walsh, K1TW
Net Manager: John Fisher KC1FTJ
VE Manager: Bruce Anderson W1LUS
VE Manager: Gary Frascarelli W1GFF
Website: Kayla Creamer W2IRY