



NEWS FOR AND BY BARS MEMBERS

BARS Billerica Amateur Radio Society

JUNE 2019

From the President's Desk

from the President of BARS, Andy Wallace, KA1GTT

Folks, as we head into June we all should be looking forward to Field Day on the 22/23 weekend. I am ecstatic to have Ken Caruso, WO1N, holding the reins as Field Day Chair. Last month I mentioned the wealth of publicity we got in 2017 through the assistance of our Vice President, Kayla Creamer, W2IRY. Kayla will be working together with Kevin Fallon (KB1KTR) about publicity for FD19. Because of the nature of our site (Billerica town owned) it is likely that we will be more low-key and will not have banners and news reporters at our disposal. To me, the benefit of having a GREAT site outweighs the lack of attracting the public nearby.

This made me think about how we act within our hobby and toward the strangers who know little about it. I've commented before that it is rare to see tall ham towers in people's backyards anymore. Even VHF whips on cars are not as common as ten years ago. We're like unicorns. How can we find each other? How can we "make more of us"?

Answer: PREACH! Make it known you are a ham. Wear your callsign hat or some other ham-bling. T-shirts abound on eBay. Carry your HT when out for a walk. When in public, be friendly about your hobby. Find an excuse or common thread that can start up a conversation – geography, electronics, communication, emergency management, D-I-Y, any of these topics could be a cue to (politely and gently) introduce a stranger to what we enjoy.

Likewise, spreading the word about how existing hams can have MORE fun is also worth doing. If you are a CW nut and believe more people should discover the fun of CW, you're not going to create more CW operators by ... OPERATING CW! You need to get on the SSB and FM portions and chat up the fun you're having. If you're on the FM repeater during drivetime, find out if the person you're talking to has ever done HF – and if not, say what is fun about it. Talk up nets you enjoy, frequencies you enjoy hanging out on, and of course what you do outside ham radio too. It's not all about the gear. I've joined roundtables that

doubled in size because someone started talking about how they like railroads or brought up a favorite hiking trail or restaurant. This is why I've enjoyed our BARS net every Wednesday, because we try to make it conversational and not just a roll call.

So – I hope all of you consider what you enjoy about our common hobby and become more vocal in publicizing it!

Thanks, everyone. Andy KA1GTT

What is Hamvention?

from Tom Walsh, K1TW

Hamvention, for our newer BARS members, is the annual Ham Radio convention held every May in Xenia, Ohio. It is the biggest amateur radio gathering in the world and spans 3 days. This year represents the third year at the Greene County Fairgrounds in Xenia. For decades, Hamvention was held at the Hara Arena, now thankfully retired, in Dayton. You often also hear this gathering referred to simply as "Dayton".

The new venue in Xenia is a very pleasant place with multiple inside buildings filled with "stuff" from big and small vendors. There is a reasonably large outdoor flea market which circles a horse racing track. There are extensive food offerings and very clean facilities. Among many excellent food choices to be had are the usual offerings of fries, burgers, hot dogs but also excellent Chinese, Mexican, cheese steaks and numerous other hot sandwiches, corn dogs, kettle corn and ice cream! You won't go hungry in Xenia, that is for sure!

Xenia, a city of more than 25,000, is very supportive of Hamvention. The Mayor of Xenia spoke at the opening ceremony, and Friday was a school holiday in Xenia because of Hamvention. Xenia opened the High School parking lots and other locations with convenient free parking. Then the town school bus fleet brought visitors quickly to and from the fair grounds (also free). There is also free parking at the Fair Grounds itself!

How to get there

I guess the two most popular ways to travel there from New England are (1) by car (or carpool) and (2) flying.

If you drive, be prepared for at least 15-18 hours in the car depending on construction and travel. Often folks carpool and share the driving. It's about 825 miles each way with a choice of routes and tolls including:

- (I-90/NY Thruway to I-70),
- I-80/I-70 (mostly rural), and
- further south via the Pennsylvania Turnpike and I-70.

Flying is certainly a great way if the weather stays good on your travel day. Otherwise, you might end up overnighing somewhere else. There is the risk of diverting or having your flights cancelled due to frequent May thunderstorms anywhere east of the Rockies. My worst trip saw me stranded in Dallas on the way home one time. Stay calm whether you drive or fly and just make the best of it. Once you get there you will find its all been worth it.

Where to stay

Where to stay is often determined by whether you are attending alone, with a group, or want to attend one of the many extra activities not part of Hamvention itself. For example, Contesters, DXers, QRPers, AMSAT, TAPR, Top Band (160) advocates and others all plan extra activities usually focused on a specific hotel. Now that Hamvention has moved to the east of Dayton, many hotels close to Xenia have gone up quite in bit in price compared to years ago when the venue was back in Dayton. If you are thinking of going next year, start travel and accommodation planning early so you can get decent prices.

New stuff is often seen first at Hamvention

Often Hamvention is used to introduce new radio gear to the amateur radio world and this year was no exception. One of the new introductions was the Elecraft K4! ARRL describes the K4 as providing "all the same features of the K3 with a new touchscreen interface". ARRL plans a new at Hamvention product article in the August QST.

How big is Hamvention?

Hamvention usually draws between 25-30 thousand attendees, compared to the approximately 1500- 2000 attendance at our annual September New England Division Convention. This large crowd is very comfortably accommodated in Xenia and means you should experience an awesome ham radio adventure because of the large flea market, number of vendors, presentations, activities, and clubs all present. Hamvention is the world's largest amateur radio convention.

Activities everywhere it seems

Lots of club and groups hold pre-convention gatherings on Thursday with Hamvention then occupying Friday through Sunday. Friday and Saturday evenings often feature special Banquets for Contesters, DXers, QRPers, AMSAT, TAPR, 160 Top Band, etc.

What to see and do?

Well, there is just about everything at Hamvention so I can't possibly cover it here. Be guided by your own interests if you attend next time. Look at the Forum list and Vendor list and extra activities. Visit the website at www.hamvention.org

I love the presentations, especially about operating and technical topics. This year I found the activities of "HAM-SCI", Ham Radio Science Citizen Investigation, and how they are utilizing Ham Radio in their scientific studies to be the most exciting stuff I have seen in years. Visit their web site for details at <http://hamsci.org/>

Other Conventions to consider:

If you can't get to Hamvention, you might also want to know about:

"Northeast HamXposition @ Boxboro MA",
September 6-8, 2019 in Boxborough MA
<https://hamxposition.org/>

"Hamcation" in Orlando FL
February 7-9, 2020
<https://www.hamcation.com/>

"HAM RADIO Friedrichshafen" in Germany
June 21-23, 2019
<https://www.hamradio-friedrichshafen.com/>
<http://www.arrl.org/news/ham-radio-2019-set-for-june-21-23-in-friedrichshafen-germany>

New Name for our New England ARRL Convention

Northeast HamXposition is the new name for what most of us will recognize as our local ARRL Division Convention that has been held for more than 60 years in various locations such as Boston, Swampscott, Cape Code and now for 30 years Boxborough.

Enjoy Radio and 73,

Tom K1TW

This newsletter is edited by Paula Crock, KC1EDA. If you have comments or contributions, please contact her at cognosco@fastmail.fm

BARS Field Day 2019

from Field Day Coordinator Ken Caruso, WO1N

Do you know what is the most important first step in a personally rewarding Field Day? If you plan to participate you should have all blocked out Saturday and Sunday, June 22 and June 23 on the family calendar. The family sees it on the calendar, the significant other gets over the shock, the kids know you won't be around. Mission Accomplished!

A lot of discussions (read arm twisting) has happened in the background. Kayla, W2IRY, has stepped up to fill a few roles around publicity and cinematography. I've got commitments for the VHF station co-band captains, Paul, K1VK, otherwise known as Mr. 6 Meters and Peter, N1ALO. I'll be HF 1 band captain. We still need an HF 2 Band Captain.

Jim, N1HTS has stepped up to be IT manager and we have already tested a subset of the interconnecting N1MM+ network using the \$40 laptops. Thus what used to be hard is now made very easy with the world class N1MM+ contest logger. Jim also has everything pulled together for the 2M talk-in station.

I've participated in a site walk-through with Kevin, KB1KTR, who I've declared the Facilities Chair, since, well, he is in charge of the facility. What he says is the rule with regards to the site.

Speaking of the site, there are many advantages and a few challenges as was outlined in the FD plan, distributed last week. Since the first release of the plan I played around with Google Earth (which used to be fun and useful, now seems to be less so with the "new and improved" latest release). I was looking to confirm that all important WSW direction using the tool. Turns out it is easy to resolve – the back of the building we will be operating from is facing almost exactly WSW.

At this point I've read through the Field Day rules a few times. Class 2F looks to be a good fit for the operation this year. One tidbit revealed by actually reading the rules is we don't have to run on generator power for the entire event. We only need to demonstrate the capability. Once demonstrated we will most likely switch to mains power to avoid the noise and fumes.

We again will review the status during the regular meeting. We are still looking for volunteers for committee roles including the all important "people support" manager. Then there are roles which help us gather bonus points, like taking on message handling, alternate power demonstration (e.g. solar powered rig), Satellite contacts and Educational activity. These aren't full committee roles but helps us with some of the bonus points available per the FD rules.

The last big challenge I will discuss here is gathering equipment. We have a crack team scouring the area looking for the Cushcraft A3S Tribander. HF 1, HF 2 and VHF equipment lists need a bit of refinement. We will estimate coax needs in the next few weeks and I will put a call out.

So, to wrap up, please ensure the tools in your tool kit are marked. Many of us use unique color codes implemented with colored electrical tape. Also, ensure the same marking is on any coax you bring to the site. Finally, did I mention you should mark your calendar? June 22 -23, 2019. See you there!

Ken – WO1N

The Story Behind W1HH

from Andy Wallace, KA1GTT

It's time for the June issue of the BARS Newsletter and I thought it would be fitting to sketch a picture of what our former President, Bob Wallace, W1HH was all about. His birthday was in June, which is why I am writing this now. For those of you who weren't aware of how BARS got the W1HH callsign, this will help you understand why it is fitting for our organization to possess it. Many of our members were friends of Bob throughout the years and I do hope this kindles warm memories.

Bob was born in 1920 and therefore he lived through the Great Depression. This colored his attitude towards work and the things that work allowed him to purchase. It also built his skills in learning to scrounge and make-do, and search for bargains at all times. He could not pinpoint the exact point he got interested in radio but he did tell me the first family radio was an RCA Radiola III. This set was a 1920s two-tube battery set. If you search the Web you can find examples of it as well as ones for sale on Ebay almost any week of the year. In those days, radios were primitive and not user friendly. They used wet cell batteries – two were needed, one for the filaments (1V-6V) and one for the high voltage for the plates of the tubes (22/45/90V).

In the 1930s, A/C powered sets came into the fore and radios became more complex. Components and tubes could fail and it was not a matter the average person could solve. Radio repair shops sprung up. As Bob learned about electronics, he became skilled at fixing them and eventually landed a job in 1940 repairing radios at Sears at \$25/wk plus car expenses! However, Sears went through a decline and laid off some of the repair staff. Bob then found a job at Ray's Radio Shack. I believe this was a private name and not affiliated with the RS we know today. This was run by Ray Mulno of Lowell, W1COX.

Ray had been licensed quite a while and convinced Bob to get his ticket. Bob admitted to me he pirated the call W1JKZ on 80CW before he got his ticket and therefore already had his CW speed up. W1JKZ - Hector French of Wakefield MA - was in the 1939 Radio Amateur Call Book Magazine. Here is a photo of Bob operating CW with a bug and note the W1JKZ callsign – perhaps Hector was his friend.



Anyway, he became W1MQV in May of 1940. He also got his First Class Phone and Second Class CW licenses before the outbreak of WWII.

June of 1942 saw Bob drafted into the Army. Because of his radio and CW skills he wound up as a radio operator posted to station WVO on Castle Island in Boston Harbor. Here his duties included maintaining some 10kW HF transmitters, a 1kW



longwave transmitter, check the antennas once a week, answer the telephone – and keep the gardens weeded! There were also racks of Hammarlund Super Pro receivers and what I think might be a Scott RCH. I am lucky to have some official Signal Corps 8x10s which were taken in 1943 showing my dad at the controls.



Later in the War he was promoted to Technical Sergeant and through a strange series of events Bob flunked the officer school physical when the Army wanted to make him a Lt. (because of his vision) and found himself transferred to Houlton Army Air Force base in Maine. He preferred Boston and eventually got transferred back to Castle Island.



After the Battle of the Bulge, he wrote the following poem, quite poignant. His brother, Glenn Wallace, eventually became WB1GGE in the 1970s after years of "resisting" Bob's pressure by enjoying CB instead.

"Just A Radio Operator"

This poem was written in 1944, during the Battle of the Bulge, by Robert A. Wallace

*Oh, I'm winning the war with a telegraph key,
Thought I as I finished a "stack".
I hope this is not all the action I see
Just wearing my pants out in back.
I idly shuffle the blanks in my hand
And glance at the five letter groups.*

*I think of my brother in far foreign land
Fighting up front with the troops.
I check with my watch - where the heck's my R.J.?
I'm getting as hungry as sin.
An eight hour trick is enough for the day,
And I'm practically deaf from the din.*

*The "trick chief" gets up from the teletype chair
And says that he has one for me.
"Get your key oiled up, get that rig on the air,
Here's a honey - a long one O.P."
My relief gets a curse on his unknowing head
For his tardiness costs me my chow.
And this is a hell of a time for a sked,
The net's QJZ about now.*

*But I slip on the cans and I rattle the key
And the rig is again on the air.
I give with the dits and the dahs just to see
If the station I'm calling is there.
A couple of calls and he sends "QRU?"
So I tell him I have an "O.P."
He sends me a "K" and I start a tattoo -
Pounding brass on my telegraph key!*

*I pass the first fifty, then wait for an sec,
While he starts the next block on the sheet.
I've found if you don't make an op break his neck
You get fewer requests to repeat.
A hundred, and fifty, and then fifty more.
She's long, I've a thousand to go.
My head's getting tired, my wrist's getting sore.
Can't use "bug" for this guy is too slow.*

*I'm passing a thousand, my fist is near beat,
Do I want an R.J. from T.C.?
Not a chance, Chief, you know once my sign's on the sheet
No one's sending that message but me.
We finally clear and I send him "AR"
And get one from him with his "ack".
The look that I give my relief leaves a scar
As I grab for my hat on the rack.*

Later:

*I read how a shipment of arms saved a corps
Because it arrived there in time.
The corps that it saved was my brother's. What's more,
The message that sent it was mine!
Oh, I'm fighting the war with a telegraph key
But as long as they want me I'll stay.
It may not be combat but now I can see
How a message can help save the day.*

Copyright © 2006 Robert Alexander Wallace W1MQV / W1HH.

A guide to shorthand used above:

Ack = acknowledgement	R.J. = relief operator
AR = end of transmission	QJZ = on stand by
Bug = semiautomatic telegraph key	T.C. = trick chief
O.P. = Operational Priority	QRU = Have you traffic for me?

After the War dad married my mother and settled down. He got a job at National Radio Company in Malden, MA. National had been in business for many years and Bob was quite familiar with their (and James Millen's) products.

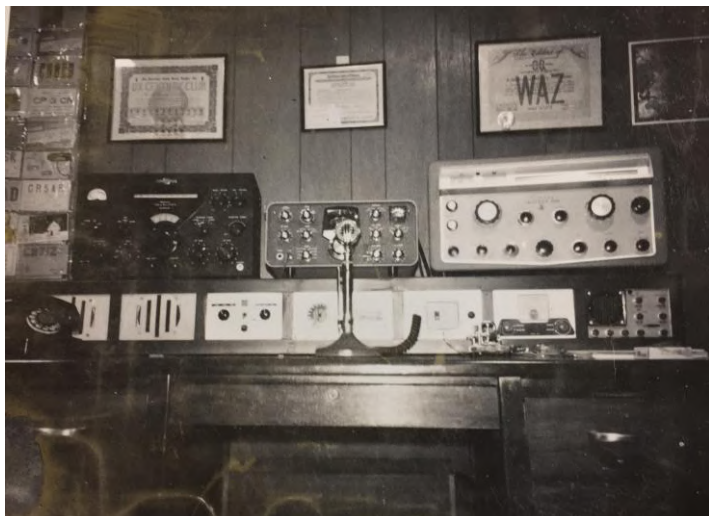


At Bob's first house, his ham station included a National NC-2-40D receiver (possibly bought on employee discount?) and a Heathkit DX-100 AM/CW transmitter.

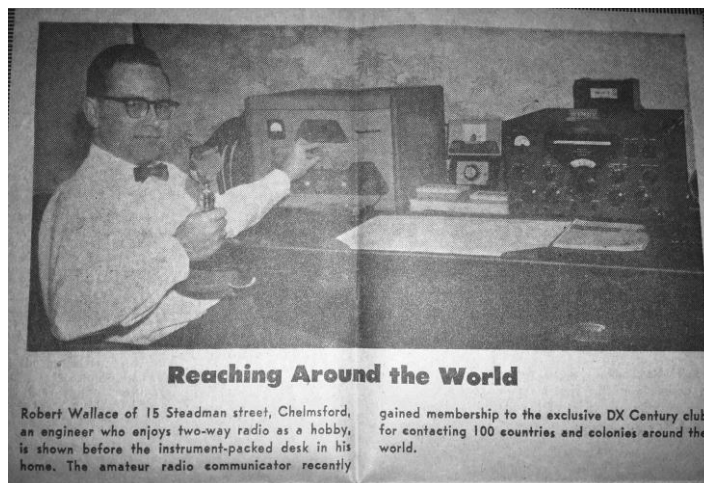


Note the station is contained in the dining room hutch! Yes, my mother was a saint. Bob had a telephone pole sunk in the ground and for a long time operated a cubical quad antenna atop it. His career moved to Raytheon, and then Honeywell. Hamming was his prime hobby, but he also managed to raise three children (two of them became hams, WA1GSF and KA1GTT - how could we avoid it?).

Bob got his Extra in June of 1965 and that is when W1HH came into being. He had a dedicated radio shack in the house (out of the dining room!) and enjoyed building Heathkit equipment. As a woodworker, he also built a console to house the small accessories for the station which included a Collins 75A-4 receiver, a Heathkit SB-100 transceiver, and a Johnson Invader 2000 SSB/CW transmitter.



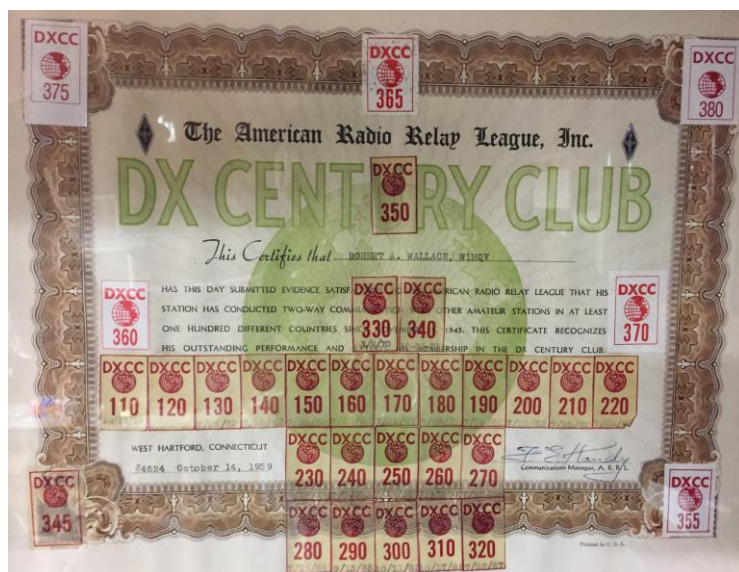
He was active in the Chelmsford ham club, and then BARS when it came into existence, and the 1200 Radio Club at Honeywell. Bob got his picture in the Lowell Sun and Chelmsford Independent and enjoyed promoting his hobby.



In the early 1980s he began collecting the same 1920s battery radios that got him started in the path of radio. The Westford Flea Market was one of his haunts and I went with him often. He would buy up radios and easily fix them, the circuitry was so simple. However sometimes the mechanics were not. My mother was horrified when he put an Atwater Kent radio with potted "coil catacombs" in her oven to melt out the hard potting baked into the cans. The smell lasted a long time! And there were frequent soldering iron burns on the kitchen table. But he built the collection bit by bit and eventually had a few show-winning pieces. In the late 1990s Bob realized it was time to thin his collection and he sold most of his antique radios. He was happy to enjoy the money they brought, and he kept his station going.

By then, Heathkit as we knew it was gone, but kits were still alive in the form of Elecraft, a brand I had just discovered. I gifted him a K1 CW QRP kit and he was overjoyed to have something well thought out to build again. And the manual was even better than Heathkit! Bob had discovered QRP at Dayton one year and had some fun with the challenge of 5W or less, but most of the time he still ran his linear. The Elecraft brought him a lot of pleasure and I felt reconnected to my father during that time as well. By the way, we made it a point to work each other for fun on Straight Key Night so I am happy to have a few of my dad's QSLs made out to me.

W1HH was heard during almost any DX pileup. Bob had a tribander at 60' and inverted vees for 80 and 40. He was a fast CW op who could smoke a cigarette, send 40WPM with a Vibroplex, and chat with people in the shack all at the same time. Bob Wallace passed away in October of 2006 and his ham and Masonic friends all mourned deeply. Some months later, I was able to write to the DXCC committee with the final QSL cards my dad received, and got his final DXCC endorsement sticker for three hundred and eighty countries worked.



WA1GSF and I discussed whether to take Dad's call. I was the more active ham but I was a CW QRP guy and – that was WAY TOO MANY DOTS for me. Hi hi. Dad always complained about how many times people would come back to W1SS etc. in the pileup so we decided we should let the Billerica Amateur Radio Society have his great 1x2. I am touched to hear “whiskey one hotel hotel” on the air during Field Day. Dad loved hamming and he certainly loved BARS. I hope this tribute has been a pleasure for all you folks who knew Bob, or might not have, but see a little bit of him in me.

Andy Wallace – KA1GTT

Silent Key News

from Mike Raisbeck, K1TWF

BARS lost a good friend last month. Al Prudhomme, W1DUW, of Chelmsford passed away suddenly on May 18, 2019. Born in Worcester, MA; he would have been 82 years old this month. He is known to many of us as a dedicated ham and member of the Boxboro convention committee, but there were many other aspects to his life, including his long and distinguished Navy career and his love of history and old jazz recordings. I know I will miss him very much. A fuller obituary can be found at:

<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/bostonglobe/obituary.aspx?n=alfred-ray-prudhomme&pid=193031551&fhid=4277>

There will be a memorial service June 30 in Burlington.

Get-on-the-air Events

Date (2019)	Event	URL
1400Z, June 1 - 0200Z, Jun 2.	Kentucky QSO Party	http://www.kyqsoparty.org/rules/
1200Z, Jun 8 - 1200Z, Jun 9.	Portugal Day Contest	http://www.rep.pt/portugal_day_contest/
1800Z, Jun 8 - 0259Z, Jun 10.	ARRL June VHF	http://www.arrl.org/june-vhf
1600Z, Jun 15 - 0400Z, Jun 16.	West Virginia QSO Party	http://www.qsl.net/wvsarc/wvqp/wvqp.html
1800Z, Jun 22 - 2100Z, Jun 23.	ARRL Field Day	http://www.arrl.org/field-day
0000Z-2359Z, July 1.	RAC Canada DAY	http://wp.rac.ca/rac-canada-day-contest-rules/
July 1-7	13 Colonies Special Event	http://www.13colonies.net

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=custom&week=current>

BARS Membership

We had one new member join in May.

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

We had one new member \$15 and \$24 donated at the May meeting. We now have \$326.33 in our PayPal account and \$466.38 in the local Bank.

Bruce Anderson W1LUS, Treasurer

VE Report

At the May 9 BARS VE exam session nine three people for testing. Three passed the Technician exam. Their callsigns are KC1LLS, KCLLT and KC1LLR. Two new hams passed their Tech and General tests. Their callsigns are KC1LLU AND KC1LLW. Be sure to say hello if you hear

them on the air. Four upgraded to General KC1IUK, W1CEP, KC1LOK AND KA1TUE.

The VE's at the session were Gary W1GFF, Frank KC1KSW, Geffory W1GCF, Peter N1ALO, Donald KA1MAP and Andy KA1GTT. The next VE session will be on June 13.

Deerfield VE Exams: While they are not a BARS sponsored exam BARS VEs are very involved in them. At the Spring Deerfield exam session there were three new Technicians and two general upgrades and three Extra upgrades. And three people that should have studied a little more.

Bruce Anderson W1LUS

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 \(map\)](#)

June Meeting Speaker

Our June 5 meeting will feature Ken Caruso, WO1N, BARS FD Chair who will speak about Field Day and use the time to plan it.

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