



NEWS FOR AND BY BARS MEMBERS

BARS Billerica Amateur Radio Society

SEPTEMBER 2020

BARS physical meetings are on hiatus until further notice.

The decision to resume in-person club meetings will be decided wholly by the Board based on the outlook of this medical emergency. The safety and well-being of our membership is important.

Meanwhile, virtual club and breakfast meetings by Zoom have proved an enjoyable substitute. -BARS Management.

From the President's Desk

from the President of BARS, Andy Wallace, KA1GTT



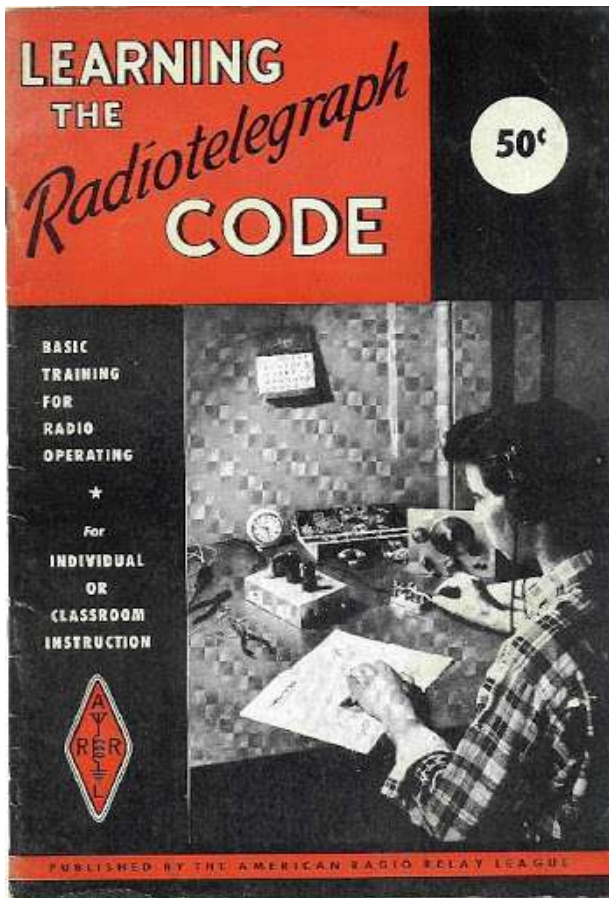
So in 60 or so days, my three year run as BARS President will be ending.

Looking back, there are some things on my mind which I had hoped to turn into growing, living things for the Club. Three times around the sun was not enough time to accomplish them? Gee, I'm surprised too! But our next President, whoever he or she will be, might be able to take these footballs and run with them.

YOUTH INVOLVEMENT: It was satisfying to see WA1VAB's enthusiasm for getting younger folks interested in ham radio, and shocking to hear from K1BG how our behavior with incentive licensing and eliminating the perfect breeding ground for kids and radio – the Novice license – was what may have killed their interest. Your BARS BOD met many times about this question, and in the end we all knew that we had to find a way to get teens involved. But we did not come up with a groundswell effort to do something about it other than bemoan the situation. Other clubs in the area (<https://www.n1fd.org/youth-activities/> and <https://nescitech.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Amateur-Radio-FAQ-for-Parents.pdf> among others) are already trying hard to get kids involved, so if BARS folks can't form our own activities for youth, we can at least point interested kids in their direction.

TECH SERVICES: a couple of years ago we circulated a survey asking what skills folks had. Some were antenna experts, computer experts, etc. The idea was we would have a cadre of go-to hams if people had questions about a subject or needed assistance. How many people have trouble programming their cheap Baofeng and are disappointed with the hobby before they even start? My thought was to be able to assist people just like that – maybe even have a “Chirp Programming Party” at a meeting and fill new Tech radios with all the local repeaters. Wouldn't that be helpful, and fun?

CW CLASSES: I learned CW back in the prehistoric days, with the ARRL LEARNING THE RADIOTELEGRAPH CODE book.



I learned CW probably the most WRONG way, looking at dots and dashes! But I learned it, and practiced with family members with a code practice oscillator, and had a blast tuning in W1AW code practice bulletins on the air. <http://www.arrl.org/w1aw-operating-schedule> As a teen I got my Novice license and since that's all I *could* do, I played in the CW portions and loved it. Our most ardent CW evangelist is WA1VAB and he has us thinking about the idea of doing CW classes in some fashion over Zoom. Great idea!

PROPERTY MASTER: With Near-Fest and HamXpo cancelled due to COVID-19 our outlet for buying and selling is off for this year but many of you don't know BARS does own gear we can use for FD or other Club activities, or even to loan out. This was either paid for or donated to the Club. But where is it, and what is it? For this we really could use a Property Master to keep track of where stuff is and what the condition is. This is not necessarily the same person who probably HAS a lot of the gear in his storage space. I see other clubs listing what gear they have available and it would be great if BARS could get a handle on that.

HOME GROWN SPEAKERS: BARS has several thousand years ☺ of accumulated ham experience in our members. [93 members at ~25 years as a ham, on average, is over 2300 years experience, so it's no joke! –ed.] You KNOW who you are. I see experts on DXing, antenna building, FT8, DMR, vintage AM operating, 6m/2m/70cm contesting, shortwave listening –

wouldn't it be great to get over a little stage fright and speak to your friends about things you know and love doing? I gave a talk on bugs (semiautomatic telegraph keys) to BARS years ago and NVARC later roped me in to doing it for their club. Now that our meetings are via Zoom, why not consider throwing some photos up on your screen and talking?

ARTICLES: we have had some fabulous newsletter content and after my term ends I hope that will continue. Please, keep articles coming. I'd love to hear about antenna projects you are doing. Things which worked, things which failed and you could learn from. New nets you have discovered – I heard KC1MJK talking about Vermont being a fairly rare state to work from here on HF and it turns out there's a VT net that meets on 80 all the time! <http://thevermontnet.w2blc.net/> Even a small tidbit of info can be space filled in our newsletter. I'd love to see articles about: slow scan TV or other unusual modes, how to bring up a vintage tube linear amp which has been sitting, how to ground your station properly, what DMR or D-STAR channels are worth programming into your rig, anecdotes about your toughest DX, most enjoyable QSO, youngest contact, biggest "dog" of a rig, best non-hamming experience with hams, etc. You get the idea.

BARS AUCTIONS: I always thought the auctions at the end of BARS meetings were fun. Yeah, we're up in years, yeah we have too much gear...but it's still fun to bid on something to take home. Perhaps when we resume church meetings we can try this again. Must be ham related items!

ARCHIVES: BARS has a long history and W2IRY has been archiving recent newsletters at W1HH if you haven't noticed: <https://www.w1hh.org/wp-content/uploads/> I would like to see this organized better and WO1N has a huge directory of even older newsletters he edited AND many paper copies which could be scanned in. I was in BARS as a teen then DECADES passed before KITW convinced me to rejoin. I never knew some of the great leaders and members that were here during that time and it'd be great to at least experience things on paper. We should also, with permission of the presenters, archive presentation slides if possible.

KIT BUILDS: We've asked and asked what we should do about this, but nothing has ever germinated. I've built many kits but I am sure many members have never learned to solder. Wouldn't it be great to do a group kit build together? In-person probably can't happen for awhile, which limits how easily the experienced folks can instruct – but it could be done. We've kicked around the idea of a simple CW QRP rig, or a small receiver, or any kind of useful widget in a good budget range. We just need to work out how to hook up those who know with those who want to know!

So there you have it, a handful of idea which I never got to but perhaps the new President might.

Andy, KA1GTT
President, Billerica Amateur Radio Society

Next BARS Zoom meeting: Wednesday September 2 at 7:00 PM “Introducing FT4 and FT8 Digital Modes” By Dom Mallozzi, N1DM

<https://www.w1hh.org/next-bars-zoom-meeting-wednesday-september-2-2020-dom-mallozzi-n1dm-ft4-ft8-intro/>

I am pleased to announce that Dom Mallozzi, N1DM, will give a presentation introducing the FT4 and FT8 digital modes in September! This will cover basic install and operation of the software, and Dom hopes that this will help new users avoid pitfalls. Dom will show actual QSOs as well so you can understand how the exchange works.

Dom has been licensed for 48 years and active on FT8, DMR, CW, construction projects, etc. He's trustee of the Natick RACES repeater on 447.675. Recently, he has planned constructing an antenna system for amateur satellites so he can enjoy that mode again. Retired in 2019 (Electrical Engineer) he stays busy as the radio engineer for the Natick Fire and Police departments as well!

Your President has been scrambling trying to get all his ducks in a row to finally operate FT8 after seeing all the juicy DX go by on the spots lately. I'm almost there! So I will be trying my best to pay attention to Dom's slides – I hope the turnout will be great and even if you are already on FT8 I bet you will learn some optimum settings you did not know. Of course Dom will take time for Q&A! Thanks, Dom!

We will announce the link to join the Zoom meeting before the meeting, but it will be posted to the BARS email list and should not be shared outside our Club. Are you on the email list? If not, please send an email to bars-subscribe@w1hh.org and then simply reply to the robot response from the server and you will be subscribed.

Observing our Zoom meeting requires only a web browser and headphones/speakers. You do not need a webcam or microphone unless you want to speak or be seen.

Before our meeting date, please go to <https://zoom.us/test> and see if it will function for you. If you have problems, we can try to assist – feel free to ask questions on the BARS email list.



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Before our meeting date, please go to <https://zoom.us/test> and see if it will function for you. If you have problems, we can try to assist – feel free to ask questions on the BARS email list.

I am looking forward to “seeing” many of you on Wednesday 9/2 at 1900.

Andy, KA1GTT
President, Billerica Amateur Radio Society

A Message From the Editor

from Marla Wallace, WA1GSF

Is it still ham radio if you need a computer?

The answer probably depends on how old you are. Some of you are probably saying ‘You will pry my straight key from my cold, dead hand!’ Others are saying ‘How else can you make a contact when the signal-to-noise ratio is less than one?’

Is it still ham radio if you need an internet connection?

Here's where your editor has to draw the line. Using a rig to connect to a hotspot which then uses the internet to connect to another hotspot connected to another rig just does not feel to me like ham radio; it feels like Skype using slightly different, clunkier technology.

Yet there are networks of repeaters (MMRA comes to mind) where the repeater functions as a hotspot and uses an internet connection to link to another repeater also functioning as a hotspot and the users think this is very cool. This technology seems to me to be suspiciously like a cellular telephone system by other means.

Ham radio is about communication.

Communication is about information exchanged between people. The means could be anything from smoke signals to Zoom. But if amateur radio technology is involved, we can call it ham radio. A particular mode might not be to everyone's taste, but the hobby is a house with many mansions. Choose the methodology that suits your taste, but get on the air!

Feature Article: Morse Code is not Dead

By Henry Christle, WA1VAB

During the past two years I have happily observed an incredibly positive activity on ham bands, increasing numbers of new licensees learning CW, CW has not been required for ham license for decades. The flip side of this positive activity a potential opposite outcome, that these new CW operators fail to find excitement and enthusiasm in this new endeavor.

As a devoted CW operator for decades, I would like to help these new folks and any folks to want to learn more about CW, which is the purpose of my penning these words to paper.

IT WAS my particularly good fortune to recognize the utility, addiction, and ease of person to person global shortwave RF communications via Morse code and radios in the early '50's, why I say this was good fortune? Because the need, interest and urgency for CW operators never occurred before or after, but here it was in my face in my youth. Because of the urgency, the FCC and ARRL were united in developing programs to establish programs train Morse Code CW operators, and they succeeded hugely, I was a product of this effort in '53.

Now I realize we can at local amateur radio clubs like BARS and others, have the solution in their grasp, and we can make it more convenient using today's technology.

The methodology is "Simulate the Novice experience / environment from the '50 '60s decades" which created thousands of lifetime CW operators.

1. The 50s – 60s were the fastest growth decades for CW operators ever, Global military, news, business comms were passed by CW, by RCA and Government agencies, we ham were small pickings, but a source of youth trained operators.
2. Novice licensing with 5 wpm code, QRP, fixed crystal operations 80, 40 15 meters got us on the air harmlessly with an end fed wire at 15 ft.
3. As a Novice my CQ's were always answered within five minutes because all Novice stations were condensed into a small band segment. The band was wall to wall hams on fixed frequencies looking for contacts. We had 50 kHz on 80 and 40, and 100 kHz on 15m It's a good thing CW uses narrow band width, I could hear 4 stations on the wide receivers, we learned to tune out the others using pitch of the note. I had more QSO's in a single day as a Novice, than I do today, using high tech equipment, I submit this was because the Novices were crowded in a narrow band segment, and could find each other. Today I hear newbie CW Operators spread out 200 kHz of band, and they do not find each other. Yes, we can simulate this experience once again.

Novices learned format for QSO, we all know it today. STATION CALLED, RST, QTH and NAME. So now you know

how to avoid sounding stupid on first QSO, and soon you get very adroit at exchanging this information, and your copy speed increases quickly. When you copy 13, you find out it is hard to write at that speed, so you begin to learn to copy in your head. This is a brain training process, it comes to you suddenly, one day, you realize you think of the word, not the letters.

Learning CW is boring, when I got to 10 wpm, I discovered the NTS CW traffic nets, and the boredom was gone, replaced by the pressure to get it right, the first time, my mind sharply focused on recognizing the character sound immediately, which accelerates the learning.

Tens of thousands of Morse radio operators were needed immediately. The 1952 photo below is typical, and this was Nova Scotia.



Computerized CW logging programs, for QSO's and Contesting eliminate the drudgery of logging with pencil and paper, experienced operators can log contests rate of 500 contacts an hour, and do not have to read or write a character.

My CW speed aid was NTS CW traffic nets, why, they are not boring, and you must pay close attention to every character reaching your ears, this demand of your attention by the peer group is exciting. I learned CW on the NTS and have stayed with them.

Boredom in learning is the enemy, we counter boredom with events.

Events my experience supports the group of learners can and will develop events as part of their CW learning. WE can have scheduled "contests" with protocols for learners, so they learn contesting techniques, we can have sue the NTS traffic net protocols and format and send Radiograms within our group, and to members is other clubs in the same program. You can join scheduled CW Nets and continue.

ZOOM is a platform we could use for scheduled group discussions and basic CW training.

Eager, capable CW promoters are among us who will help anyone who wants to learn or improve CW skills.

There is much more I would like to publish in BARS about the subject of the Morse Code CW if I sense interest in the members. If you are interested in participating in a ZOOM organized CW tutor discussion, kindly express your interest emailing the undersigned

Related links:

<http://www.navy-radio.com/>

<http://jproc.ca/rrp/opin5060.html>

<https://cwops.org/>

Henry Christle WA1VAB email: hgcsenior@gmail.com

Product Review: Yaesu FT-70D HT and Nagoya NA771 Rubber Ducky Antenna

By Andy Wallace, KA1GTT



It's like Christmas here, since I recently took delivery of a Yaesu FT-70D handy talkie which was on sale at \$10 off during the QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo via HRO. (Great rig – review to follow in a future issue, promise!) After programming some channels with it, I wondered if I would “get out” better with an improved antenna compared to the stock rubber duck. My older 2m-only HT has an aftermarket antenna on it which does much better than the stock one. Unfortunately I must have gotten a no-name clone antenna because it had no markings. OK, guess I have to start fresh. My search yielded confusing offerings from Nagoya, Comet, Diamond, and others, and reviews of almost everything were mixed. Gosh, it's like trying to find a good contractor on Angie's List! My intent was to find a longer whip like I had been using which would allow me to enjoy the HT while around the house or out in the yard – mostly just listening – with improved reception on both bands.



Eventually I zeroed in on the Nagoya brand, and picked the NA-771. The Yaesu dual-band whip is 7” long. The Nagoya is 15”! (1/5 wave on 2m I guess.) Consider this when you carry your HT on your belt.

<https://www.nagoya.com.tw/en/product-384799/NA-771.html>
https://www.nagoya.com.tw/v_comm/inc/product_file_download.asp?customer_id=2277&lang=2&id=384799&file_name=p_1603_25_07186.pdf

Be careful when buying aftermarket antennas to get the proper connector and sex to match your radio. In my case, the Yaesu FT-70D needs an SMA male. This means the antenna has female threads with a male pin sticking down. Some radios have SMA female, or even reverse combinations. This antenna is available with BNC, SMA male, and SMA female connectors.

This is made for 2m/70cm and claims 2.15 dBi gain and a VSWR of <1.5:1. Nagoya is Reuex Industrial Co, Ltd. of Taiwan ROC (not the People's Republic of China; great news). eHam reviews alerted me that many of the low ratings come from disappointed customers who received FAKE Nagoya antennas! In fact, the problem is so bad that Nagoya actually published a webpage showing how to spot a fake:

https://www.nagoya.com.tw/style/frame/m9/news_detail.asp?lang=2&customer_id=2277&content_set=color_1&name_id=98129&Directory_ID=0&id=31478

Fake NA-771 print



Genuine NA-771 print



Note especially the logo differences. The real Nagoya ones have a special A with the upside down triangle in the graphic. Also, it looks like the QR code on the bag has upside down spot targets! (My antenna also has a QR code printed around the other side of the logo.) And finally, the real Nagoya antenna comes with a plastic spacer which might be needed on some radios.

So with this in mind I checked prices and sources. I settled on this ebay seller: <https://www.ebay.com/itm/254668810145> \$15.95 plus \$2.95 shipping from a U.S. seller. Because of recent mail delays I had to wait nearly two weeks for it to arrive but once it did, I seem to have received a genuine one. The bag was the correct color, logos were correct, and the spacer was included. Beware of searching ebay and buying a fake one for 1/2 the price, or worse yet a group of five fakes for \$20! There are videos on Youtube showing how the fakes are constructed and this may point out why performance suffers.

After using the antenna for a few days I decided to do an A/B comparison against the Yaesu rubber duck and post results. Here is what I found. This was with the FT-70D fully charged (8.2V), transmitting at high power, and hand-held in the same 2nd floor room and position here in Chelmsford. The FT-70D has 1-9 bars on the LCD for signal strength.

REPEATER	FREQ	STOCK	NA-771
BILLERICA	147.12	7	9
WALTHAM	146.64	7	8
DANVERS	145.47	8	9
LOWELL	442.25	5	7
WESTFORD	146.955	9	9
NASHUA	147.045	X	X
N READING	146.715	8	9
HOLLIS	146.73	7	6
DERRY	146.745	X	X
ANDOVER	146.835	6	7
BURLINGTON	446.775	8	9
NASHUA	444.8	3	7
HOLLIS	443.5	4	8
WALTHAM	449.075	7	9
DERRY	441.3	7	9
PACK MONAD	449.375	4	7
WOBURN	449.825	7	9
CHEL POL	482.5125	9	9

So as you can see, in a lot of cases, the NA-771 did yield improved signal strength on receive and I have received better signal reports on some of these repeaters. Not making Derry and Nashua on transmit does not surprise me, though with someone else on the repeater I can hear their signal. As with any replacement antenna, be aware that changing to something non-stock may damage your radio/void your warranty. I did not measure the SWR with either whip, as an HT antenna is part of a complete system – your hand and body act as the counterpoise and “other half” of the antenna and this may be difficult to replicate and measure. But overall the performance of this antenna does seem an improvement, and receive on the 1.25m band (the Yaesu won't transmit there) is about the same as with the stock whip, as are weather-band and police and fire frequencies. I'm happy with my \$18.90 purchase and will enjoy using it with the rig when I don't need to wear it!

Technical Article: DIY Code Practice Oscillator

By Marla Wallace, WA1GSF

The club has been considering code instruction, so I sat down and designed this little code practice oscillator. It generates a 440 Hz tone loud enough to drive a small speaker, but can also be used with ear buds in case the XYL (or OM, as the case may be) objects to the beep-beeps. And it's powered by a USB wall wart.

The Circuit

The heart of the circuit is a NE555 timer IC configured as a self-retriggering timer with a duty cycle close to 50% (in other words, it generates a nearly symmetrical square wave). R1, R2 and C1 have been chosen to set both the operating frequency and duty cycle.

Pin 4 of the NE555, when grounded, inhibits the oscillator. R3, R4 and Q1 achieve this function when the key is up; closing the

key grounds the base of Q1, turning it off and allowing pin 4 to go to Vcc, letting the oscillator run.

The output of the timer chip, pin 3, drives a potentiometer connected as a variable voltage divider whose output supplies current to the base of Q2. Q2 is connected as an emitter follower (common collector) amplifier which transforms the output impedance of the timer to the lower impedance needed to properly drive a small speaker or ear bud headphones.

Assembly

Constructing this gadget is not much of a challenge for any do-it-yourselfer. Wiring practice need only be the uncritical technique appropriate for audio frequency circuits. Most of the components can be mounted on a small piece of perf-board or wired Manhattan-style on a piece of copper-clad PC board. The rest of the parts can be mounted on the cover of a metal or plastic box.

All resistors are $\frac{1}{4}$ W, 5% or better. C1 can be a disc ceramic or polymer film, it's not critical and should be rated for 10V or more working voltage – again, not critical.

Variations

Changing the value of C1 affects the pitch of the tone without changing the duty cycle of the waveform (a 0.01 uF capacitor yields a 1000 Hz tone; a 0.05 uF capacitor yields a 200 Hz tone).

If you don't need a speaker, or conversely you don't need headphones, J3 or SPK1 can be removed and the emitter of Q2 connected directly to the chosen output device (which is then connected to ground).

Most of us have a USB wall wart, but you can replace that as a power source with a 6V array of AA batteries and an on/off switch to make a completely portable version.

Conclusion

This is an afternoon project for an experienced builder. I didn't cost out the parts, but I'd be surprised if it's over \$50 and a lot cheaper if you have a well-stocked junk box. Have fun and let me know how it went if you decide to make one of these.

W1DC 147.12 Billerica Repeater News:

By Andy Wallace, KA1GTT

Even though our club and the repeater share the same "name" BARS does not own it. The station is on the top floor at 300 Concord Road – the former Honeywell building – and it is owned by Honeywell's 1200 Radio Club. [It's called the 1200 Club because it used to meet at lunchtime, i.e.: 1200. – ed.] Given that the signal from W1DC varies day to day I hear a lot of users concerned about its longevity. The 1200 Club is well aware and is trying to fix things!

The club has only a few remaining members but the key player is Mike Rioux, W1USN, who has been working on getting a new repeater, which was tested earlier this year, moved to Concord Road. COVID-19 has put a kink in most of the plans that were made but Mike was able to get a team together recently and accomplish some work. With Mike's permission, I will update BARS on a few things which were done:

"We visited the repeater site 2 weeks ago, cleaned up and threw out some stuff, moved the new repeater into the cage, inspected the antenna on the roof. We determined that the scratchiness was caused by dissimilar metals on the four guy wires. We will be ordering new parts for the guys to fix that issue. When that is done we will install the new machine and clean up and remove some more junk. The rebuilt backup Stationmaster has a high SWR, so we may buy a new antenna if we wind up replacing the current Stationmaster.

No timeframe yet to return, hopefully before it gets too cold to work on the roof. I did get to operate W1DC as W1DC for a short QSO, first time in a long time.

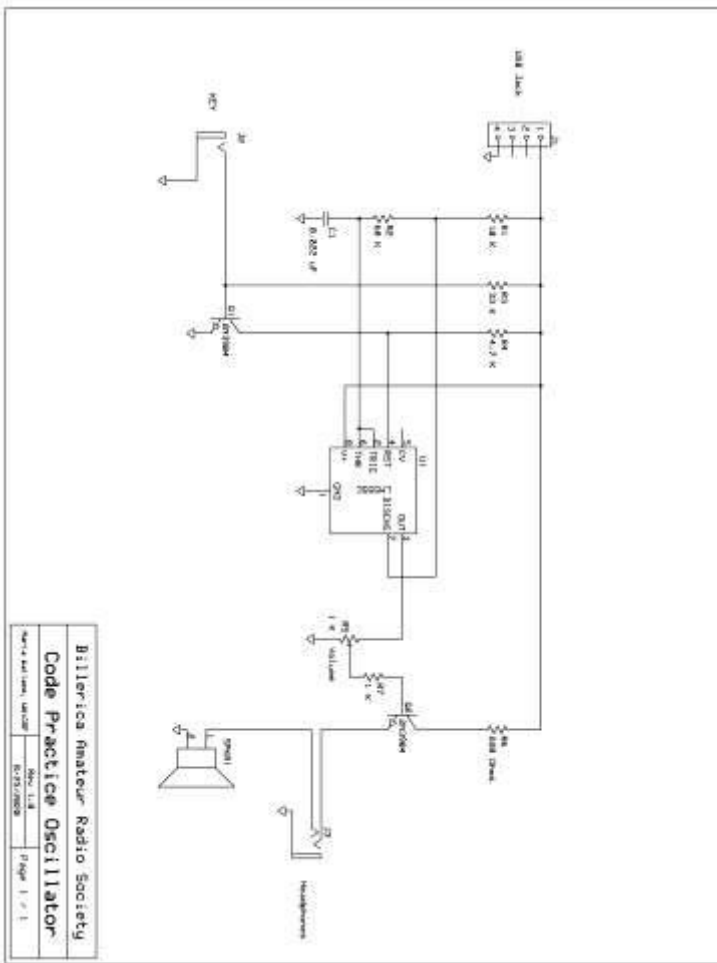


Figure 1: Schematic of the BARS Code Practice Oscillator

(Note: a large version of this diagram is on the W1HH

Website at http://bit.ly/bars_largeposchematic.)

Thanks to Doug NILHP, Bill, KIUTS, Phil Taylor, NINTX for helping with that trip. Also thanks to the CBRE staff at 300 Concord Road who have been very supportive so far.

73, Mike WIUSN”

As far as I know, when the new repeater is installed it will retain the current 147.12, positive offset, 103.5 PL that the aged one has.

Strays

Found on the Web

Last month, I penned a blurb about Python programming. Due to an almost complete lack of popular demand, I'm going to provide links this month that will let you download free Python development applications for Windows (and DOS), OSX, Linux and Android. Oh, and if you have a Raspberry Pi, the Python development application is part of the standard Rasbian build.

The standard Python integrated development environment (IDE) is IDLE, which is bundled with the Python language download. Downloads for Windows and OSX are available at: <https://www.python.org/downloads/windows/> and <https://www.python.org/downloads/mac-osx/>

For Android, a free IDE is downloadable from: <https://www.qpython.com/>

But if you have a Kindle Fire tablet, another IDE is available from the Amazon App Store (also free). Look for PythonJS. And don't forget to also download the Python documentation.

Those of you using iOS should check out Pythonista 3 in the Apple App store. (This app is not free. The App Store price is \$9.99.)

Note: I have only used IDLE for Windows and PythonJS for Kindle Fire. I suspect that IDLE for OS/X will be enjoyable, as it is probably a port of the Windows version. I have no idea what Pythonista 3 or QPython are like. Your mileage may vary.

Grab one (or more) of these and try a little Python programming. It's something completely different!

--de Marla Wallace, WA1GSF

HF Amplitude Modulation Nets

“The “AM Carrier Net” meets every Sunday morning on 3835 KHz at 8 AM local for a couple hours with pre-net around 7:30 (optional early check-in).

The “Lonely Guys” net meets Saturday mornings except July and August at 8 AM on 3875, pre-net also around 7:30. Purpose is “fellowship”.

Nets seem more popular than ever as hamfests are cancelled for the time being.

You don't need a vintage AM rig to participate. A sideband rig in the AM mode will suffice. If you do use an SSB rig you can only run AM at 25% rated PEP. That is, a 100 W output SSB rig can only run 25 W on AM or it will distort. So adjust your power accordingly. And a 500 W PEP output amp is theoretically capable of 125 W AM. Running 100 W with that amp should be safe but use caution as not all amps have the same duty cycle regardless of power rating. Know your equipment specs. The math is left an exercise for the reader or you can research on-line.

--de Art NF1A”

The BARS regular Saturday morning breakfast has been suspended due to the COVID19 emergency, so we are now trying a Saturday morning ZOOM gathering. Details are announced in the BARS mailing list.

--de Bruce Anderson, W1LUS

Secretary's Reports

from Scott Ginsburg, K1OA, Secretary

The BARS General Meeting, August 5, 2020

President Andy Wallace, KA1GTT called the Zoom virtual meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

A motion was made by Bruce, W1LUS to pay the club's liability insurance bill in the amount of \$222.20. The motion was seconded by Art, NF1A. A vote was held and the motion passed.

Scott Ginsburg, K1OA presented “Ham Radio Awards Chasing”.

There were 23 attendees. KA1GTT closed the meeting at 9:10 PM.

BARS Board of Directors Meeting 18-Aug-2020

Board Members present: KA1GTT, W2IRY, W1LUS, WA1VAB, K1TW, K1OA; absent was K1TWF

1. The Board decided to postpone in-person meetings until it feels the environment is safe enough for all members.
2. The Board discussed a proposal by Henry, WA1VAB, for the club to conduct CW classes. It was decided that Henry would take feedback received from the Board and further refine his ideas and these would be discussed in a future Board meeting.

BARS Membership

Bruce, W1LUS, our BARS Treasurer reports that as of August, 2020 we had 98 total members.

2021 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 allow us to

- Pay our bills;
- maintain our great web page;
- fund field day;
- and bring the membership a great variety of informative meetings and speakers.

Treasurers Report for September, 2020

from Bruce Anderson, W1LUS, Treasurer

Starting in September I start accepting payment for 2021 dues. Dues can be paid several ways:

- Via bank to bank transfer with Zelle, Venmo, PayPal, etc. by sending \$15 to bars.dues@outlook.com
- With credit card on the W1HH.org website by using the Join/Renewal membership form.
- By cash or check by mailing \$15 to Billerica ARS, PO BOX 832, Nutting Lake, MA 01856

The annual club insurance of \$222.20 was approved in the August ZOOM Meeting and has been paid.

The only other expenses was Zoom \$15.93. We now have \$201.53 in the Bank and \$550.80 in our PayPal account for a total of \$751.33

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 Chris, KC1IUK. 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

Note: because we will be holding our virtual General Meeting, there will not be a net on September 2nd.

Join us on the Billerica Repeater for the weekly BARS net each Wednesday at 8:00 PM (except on the first Wednesday of the Month which is club meeting night).

Repeater info:

147.12 MHz

+600 kHz (normal) offset

Encode CTCSS 103.5 Hz

Club Meetings

NOTE: Physical Club meetings are replaced by video Zoom meetings until the COVID19 Emergency has passed.

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)

VE Sessions

NOTE: VE Sessions have resumed, but in a completely different format, due to the COVID19 Emergency.

We are conducting VE exams again. The exams are conducted differently than in the past. For now the new procedure will be

- The exams will take place in a parking lot where the examinees remain in their vehicles during the exam.
- Pre-registration will be required. No more “walk in” sessions because we must limit the number of people in order to maintain social distancing.
- To minimize paper handling by the VEs, the 605 form and CSCE form must be filled out and emailed to the VE team along with a copy of existing FCC license, if any, and an ID before the exam session.

We are also considering Saturday morning exams a couple times a month if the demand is there for tests.

For more information about the new exam process and to register for an exam session, contact Bruce, W1LUS, at W1LUS@hotmail.com

Eventually, we hope to resume holding VE sessions as before, every month on the 2nd Thursday 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)

On August 13 we resumed conducting VE Exams the new procedure (see above). Everyone wore a mask when within 6 feet of one another.

Thanks to Guy, AC1BJ, Jim, N1HTS and Gary, W1GFF for their help in running the session.

There was one upgrade to General and one new Technician who is now KC1NQK. If you should hear him on the air be sure to say hello.

If we are not going to be using the church building for the exams any parking lot would be sufficient. I am looking for suggestions for a parking lot that is available in the evening for future exam sessions somewhere in the Billerica area. If you know of any please let me know.

Bruce Anderson, W1LUS

Club Breakfast every Saturday

NOTE: The Club Breakfast is suspended until the COVID19 Emergency has passed. We are currently having a “virtual breakfast” via Zoom (details announced in the BARS mailing list) from 8:00 to about 10:00 on Saturdays.

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)

Future Meetings

NOTE: Club meetings are suspended until the COVID19 Emergency has passed. The 9/2 meeting will be held via Zoom.

Subscribe to the BARS Mailing List

To subscribe to the BARS email list, send a blank email to bars-subscribe@w1hh.org and watch for an automated reply. Note that bars-subscribe is all one word.

Reply to that message from the list server and you are then subscribed.

To post to the list, address your email to bars@w1hh.org

BARS September Suggestions - 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 this month:

Date	Event
Sep 1, 8, 22, 29	Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest** https://wwsac.com/rules.html
Sep 2, 9	VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest http://www.ft8activity.eu/index.php/en/
Sep 12-14	ARRL September VHF Contest http://contest-log-submission.arrl.org
Sep 19	QRP Afield https://www.newenglandqrp.org/qrp-afield-2018/
Sep 26, 27	CQ Worldwide DX Contest, RTTY** http://www.cqwwrtty.com/

PLUS CO, TN, TX, AL, IA, NJ, NH and ME QSO PARTIES, and OH and WI Parks on the Air!

**** Top Recommendations for this month**

Details on each contest above and more events can be found every week on the WA7BNM contest calendar at :

<https://www.contestcalendar.com/weeklycont.php?mode=custom&week=current>

BARS Leadership Team

President: Andy Wallace, KA1GTT
 Vice President: Kayla Creamer, W2IRY
 Treasurer: Bruce Anderson, W1LUS
 Secretary: Scott Ginsburg, K1OA
 Net Coordinator: Chris Lobdell, KC1IUK
 Newsletter Editor: Marla Wallace, WA1GSF
 BoD: Mike Raisbeck, K1TWF
 BoD: Henry Christle, WA1VAB
 Ex Officio: Tom Walsh, K1TW