



NEWS FOR AND BY BARS MEMBERS

# BARS Billerica Amateur Radio Society

FEBRUARY 2023

## **BARS physical meetings are on hiatus until further notice.**

The decision to resume in-person club meetings will be made entirely by the Board based on the outlook of the COVID-19 medical emergency.

Meanwhile, virtual club meetings using Zoom have proved an enjoyable substitute. Please ignore the section, below which gives directions and schedule for in-person meetings. It is hoped that we can resume in-person meetings by the new year.

**The Board has decided to resume in-person Saturday morning breakfasts at Stelio's Restaurant.** However, virtual breakfast meetings using Zoom will continue to provide an enjoyable substitute for those who wish to avoid physical presence.

**The VE License Exam Sessions, have gone back to in-person exams – see the VE section near the end of the newsletter for details.**

The safety and well-being of our membership is important to us.

--BARS Management.

## **A Message from the President By Doug Bruce, N1WRN**

Greetings Fellow Members,

I want to thank everyone who came to the Holiday Party at The Great Wall restaurant on 1/11. We had a wonderful time with great ham radio talk and fellowship. We have a great membership in the Club, and I look to keep the momentum going.

I don't know about the rest of you, but I have become obsessed with following the progress of a significant happening in the ham radio world, the 3Y0J Bouvet Island DXpedition. The crew is on a 100 foot yacht packed with ham radio gear, traveling to the most remote island on the face of the Earth. As of this writing they are approximately 1000 miles away from Bouvet. The last two times a DXpedition tried to go there, they could not get on the island, and had to turn around and go back, so hopefully the third time will be a charm.

Bouvet Island is the #2 most desirable DX entity on the Club Log list, so it will be well worth trying to make a contact with Bouvet Island! Here is the link to the website to check out what they are up to and more information regarding the project.  
<https://www.3y0j.no/>

They have a website of great merchandise as well to support the effort. I will be purchasing a t shirt and a mug to support the cause.

I would also like to mention that the Club will be organizing a trip to the ARRL Headquarters and station W1AW on a Friday in late February. I will be emailing out details in the next week or so, so stay tuned! This will be a great opportunity to visit the "mecca" of ham radio in the United States.

Additionally, now and for the next 3-4 years, sunspot cycle 25 will be at the best we have seen in a long time, so get out there and get on the air! Your equipment is designed to transmit and receive, not just sit on the table as decoration, so key up that microphone!

I would also like to add that we will be resuming in person meetings in April at the Church. The meeting will be an in person and virtual hybrid meeting. Gary Frascarelli W1GFF, will be assisting with setting up the technology for the virtual part of the meeting. It will be great to get back to in person meetings again. Looking forward to seeing everyone!

In closing, I would like to welcome all of our new members and thank all of the short, medium, and long term members for their support over the years. We depend on each and every member to make the Billerica Amateur Radio Society a great Club! Ham radio is all about the people after all!

73,  
Doug  
N1WRN

## Next BARS Zoom Meeting: February 1 at 7:00 PM - Program: "CW Basics"

### Presenter: Bruce Blain, K1BG

We will be having Bruce Blain, K1BG as our Guest Speaker for the February 1, 2023 Club Meeting. Bruce will give an informative talk about the basics of CW for us.

Bruce was first introduced to amateur radio by his neighbor Jim Payne, W1GPN, when he was 4 years old. He was first licensed as WN1KBG in 1968 (Canton, MA) and upgraded to WA1KBG. He earned a BSEE from Northeastern University in 1976, and became K1BG in 1977.

Bruce is past president of the Norwood Amateur Radio Club, and is a founding member and past Vice President of the Nashoba Valley Amateur Radio Club where he currently serves as a member of the board. He is also a member of the First Operators Club, CW Ops, the Yankee Clipper Contest Club, and the Radio Club of America. Bruce has been a member of the ARRL for over 50 years.

He has been "advising" CW Academy classes for the past 4 years, where he is currently a "youth academy" advisor. Attracting and mentoring young people and supporting local radio clubs are areas that Bruce is passionate about.



BARS 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](mailto: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.

We are looking forward to "seeing" many of you on Wednesday 2/1 here at 1900.

Doug, N1WRN

## From the Editor's Desk

### By Marla Wallace, WA1GSF

In a moment of insanity, your editor ordered an Icom 7300 and all the trimmings. It's only money ☺. So I'm setting up an actual HF station for the first time in my 50+ years as a licensed amateur radio operator. Having never operated the HF bands, except for a couple of QRP kit rigs I built and made about one contact on each, I've got a lot to learn.

But first, I have to get an antenna up. That will now have to wait for "ice out". My lot is not very deep, which pretty much precludes a tower more than about 25' high because in my QTH, the town says any tower you erect has to land entirely on your property if it comes down. And since I had nearly all the trees on my lot removed when I took up astronomy in 2000, finding "organic" supports will be a challenge. Anyway, I will have a few months yet to figure this out.

The new transceiver is smarter than I am. If there's anything it won't do, I have yet to find it. I took my new equipment to my brother Andy, KA1GTT's QTH and we played around with it for a couple of hours, making sure everything was copacetic. Andy demonstrated most of the features; now I'm wading through the inch-thick 8-1/2x11" (printed double-sided) instruction manual so I can internalize what I saw him do.

(I learn better by reading printed material than I do watching a demo or a YouTube video.)

Anyway, here's what my HF station will consist of:

Antenna:	G5RV
Tuner:	MFJ 939i
Tranceiver:	Icom IC7300
Power Supply:	Alinco DM330MV
Software:	RT-Systems WCS-7300-USB

While we had it set up at Andy's, we saved the factory default settings to a SD card I had brought and also saved a clone of the settings Andy's rig uses. It's a matter of a few seconds to swap

configurations between these two settings. The RT-Systems software should make it easier to set some configuration parameters than by pushing buttons on the rig,

Still to do: I want to dedicate a Windows laptop to the station and load it with logging and digital modes software. Expect to hear more about my adventures in future issues.

## A Few Words from the VP By Mark Nelson, KA1INE

This is my first adventure of becoming the Vice President of BARS and I hope to have an exciting year with the group. I would like to thank Tom Walsh for nominating me and his ongoing encouragement to step up to the position. A little about me, I have an electrical engineering background and have been a ham since 1985. I've always loved building projects since my early days of scrapping old televisions for components and tubes to build transmitters. The semiconductor revolution brought a whole new world to ham radio enabling us to have the compact transceivers of today. The microprocessor was another big step forward allowing us to combine radio with computers to automate many of the features we now enjoy.

I want to focus on bringing new hams into the hobby and working on projects as a group. I have a few ideas and would like input from the group on what the members are interested in doing.

Some items that came to mind:

- Fox hunts
- Demonstration of Amateur television
- Remote Telemetry
- Balloon launch with ATV, beacon, repeater
- Mentor / internship of new members with more advanced hams to bring them up to speed
- In person meetings
- Presentations of various modes such as FT8, RTTY, ATV, SSTV, echolink, winlink, satellite work

I would like to send out a survey so everyone can show their interest level in many of these activities so we can get as many people as possible involved. If you have other ideas to add to the list of activities, please send me an email at [KA1INE@ARRL.net](mailto:KA1INE@ARRL.net). I look forward to a fun and productive year!

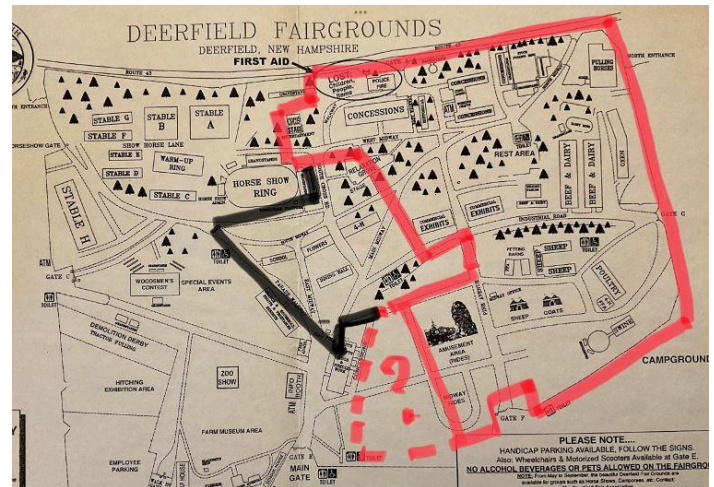
## Strays

### New Date for NEAR-FestXXXIII

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEAR-FestXXXIII will be held on April 28th and 29th 2023 and not on its traditional date which always has been the first weekend in May every year since 2007. NEAR-Fest XXXIV scheduled for October 13th and 14th 2023 is NOT affected.

Last month the Deerfield Fair Association informed me that they booked two events, the NH Farm, Forest and Garden Show and the NH Arabian Horse Ass'n Show at the Fairgrounds for May 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 2023 which is the weekend before Mothers Day. We were told we were welcome to hold the NEAR-Fest at the same time with the two other shows but there would be a "few small changes" to the parts of the Fairgrounds that we would be allowed to use.



Regretfully I decided the best course of action is to take a chance on the weather one week earlier and change the date. My team agrees with me. It's the best way to deal with it. We have full use of the grounds with no stinking and noisy horses and outsiders to bother us. I resisted it at first but changed my mind after discussing it with my colleagues who run the fester with me.

Is this a one-time thing or is it permanent? Depends on if the horse show comes back next spring. We could co-exist with the Farm Show but it is the horse show that causes us the problems because we use part of the grounds adjacent to the Horse Show ring and bleachers.

I still don't like it but I know it is the right choice. We apologize for any inconvenience that this may cause anyone.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year my friends.

Mister Mike, W1RC <[w1rc@near-fest.com](mailto:w1rc@near-fest.com)>

### Becoming an ARRL member or is your membership up for renewal?

One of the benefits of being an ARRL Affiliated Club is a commission for recruiting new ARRL members and securing timely ARRL member renewals.

Each new ARRL member earns the club a \$15.00 commission. New members are defined as never having been a member or a returning member that has not been a member for two years.

Each renewal earns the club a \$5.00 commission. There is no limit to the amount a club can earn in this program.

Multiyear memberships earn only one commission. Life, Family, International, Blind, and Student memberships are not eligible for a commission. The member will not be eligible to receive a gift or incentive if the club collects a commission on the membership.

Currently at least 82 BARS members are also ARRL members. If we all renewed through the club we could potentially receive \$410 per year from the ARRL.

If you are interested in renewing your ARRL membership through the club fill out the following form [ARRL Affiliated Club Membership Application \(pdf\)](#). Then forward it to [WILUS@hotmail.com](mailto:WILUS@hotmail.com)

### Is your Email address on the FCC site up to date?

#### § 97.23 Mailing and email addresses.

*Each license grant must show the grantee's correct name, mailing address, and email address. The email address must be an address where the grantee can receive electronic correspondence. Revocation of the station license or suspension of the operator license may result when correspondence from the FCC is returned as undeliverable because the grantee failed to provide the correct email address.*

[85 FR 85533, Dec. 29, 2020]

I recommend that you log on to the your FCC Registration at <https://apps.fcc.gov/coresWeb/updateRegistrationPre.do> to make sure that your email address is up to date. Also in the future should you change your home address or your email address be sure to remember to update it on the FCC site.

*[The \$35 FCC application fee applies to new, renewal, rule waiver, and modification applications that request a new vanity call sign. The fee will be per application.]*

*Administrative updates, such as a change of name, mailing or email address, and modification applications to upgrade an amateur radio licensee's operator class or to request a sequentially issued call sign, are exempt from fees. – ed.]*

--de Bruce, W1LUS

### Upgrading Your License? Here's a Resource

If you are thinking of upgrading your license using one of the Online exam sites. I recommend that you take some free practice exams on HamStudy.org. I recommend it because the software used to generate practice exams on HamStudy.org is the same software that is used to create exams for online tests. By doing that when you take an online upgrade exam the test question format will be familiar. With HamStudy.org practice tests you

should use the keyboard to select the answer, A,B,C, or D and not your mouse as that is way online exams are run.

--de Bruce Anderson, W1LUS

### Making ZOOM available to Elmers

In this time of social distancing we have been using Zoom for our monthly club meetings. I have been thinking that Elmers could also be using Zoom to coach new hams instead of actually going to visit with them. Elmers could perhaps help with programming a new radio with the new ham sharing their computer screen and the Elmer helping to walk them thru the process. An Elmer could have Zoom on their cell phone and show a new ham how their shack was setup. Use your imagination and see how you might use this tool. If you would like to use Zoom for this, contact Bruce, [WILUS@hotmail.com](mailto:WILUS@hotmail.com), with a date and a time and a meeting will be setup for you. You may also contact Bruce if you would like training on using Zoom to Elmer someone.


--de Bruce Anderson, W1LUS

### Friday and Sunday Night CW Slow Speed Contest

Every Friday and Sunday night, there is a weekly slow-speed CW contest run by the local K1USN guys. This is a good way to polish up your CW skills. See <http://www.k1usn.com/sst.html> for details. Currently, the schedule is:

Fridays 20:00-21:00 UTC (3-4pm EST) and

Mondays 00:00-01:00 UTC (7-8pm EST Sunday).



The image is a promotional graphic for the K1USN SST contest. At the top, the call sign 'K1USN' is written in large, bold, yellow letters. Below it, a yellow sign with black text reads 'SLOW SPEED LIMIT 20 WPM'. To the right, a black and white photograph shows a man in a suit operating a vintage radio. In the bottom right corner of the photo, the text 'BRAINTREE, MA' is visible. Below the photo, the text 'K1USN SST' is written in large, bold, black letters. Underneath that, 'Weekly CW Slow Speed [Con]Test' is written in a smaller, bold, black font. At the very bottom, there are several horizontal lines of varying lengths, resembling a Morse code sequence.

-- de Tom Walsh, K1TW

## NEW HAM JUMPSTART PROGRAM

After giving away thousands of free handheld radios to new hams, the QRZ Jumpstart program is back with an exciting new deal!

QRZ, RT Systems and GigaParts are teaming up to offer a more sustainable program that will run at least through the end of this year and will be expanded to include hams who have been licensed for 6 months or less. The new program offers a coupon code to the new ham that gives them a QRZ-1 radio, programming cable, RT Systems programming software, New Ham Welcome Kit, and a QRZ membership for only \$21.99.

This program is available to amateur radio operators licensed in the USA and expires March 31, 2023, or while supplies last. To sign up, new hams should complete the application process at [www.qrz.com/jumpstart](http://www.qrz.com/jumpstart)

Jumpstart packages will begin shipping immediately.

What's Included:

- Explorer QRZ-1 Handheld radio
- Programming cable
- RT Systems Programming Software
- Premium QRZ Subscription

How it works:

1. Apply at [www.qrz.com/jumpstart](http://www.qrz.com/jumpstart)
2. Receive your unique discount code from QRZ via email
3. Add a QRZ-1 to your cart
4. Add any accessories you may want to purchase
5. At checkout, enter your unique discount code

73,  
--de Bill Poulin, WZ1L

## Secretary's Reports

from Marla Wallace, WA1GSF, Secretary

**There were no BARS meetings in January because we had our Holiday Party instead.**

## BARS Membership

Our current combined membership is 123. To date 53 members have renewed their 2023 membership. 42 members from 2022 did not renew their membership and were dropped. Anyone with a question about their renewal status can email me at [W1LUS@hotmail.com](mailto:W1LUS@hotmail.com) to get your current status.

from Bruce Anderson, W1LUS, Treasurer

## 2023 BARS Member Dues

A \$15 annual BARS membership now runs from January 1<sup>st</sup> and expires on December 31<sup>st</sup>. Any renewal or new membership made after September 1 will be valid until December 31<sup>st</sup> 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 February 2023

It is the start of a new year and your DUES are DUE. For 2023 dues will remain at \$15.

Dues can be paid several ways:

- Via bank to bank transfer with Zelle, Venmo, PayPal, etc. by sending \$15 to [bars.dues@outlook.com](mailto:bars.dues@outlook.com).
- With credit card by using the Join/Renewal membership form on the W1HH.org website.
- With cash or check by mailing \$15 to Billerica ARS, 16 Regis Road, Tewksbury, MA 01876

In January our expenses Zoom \$15.93, Internet domain name \$16.88, PayPal \$18.18. We had 25 new/renewals for an income of \$375 and a donation of \$15. We now have \$801.68 in the Bank and \$1483.23 in our PayPal account for a total of \$2284.91. We are accepting renewals for 2023. For 2023 dues will remain at \$15.

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 Doug, N1WRN.

Also, the club needs volunteers for light tasks of ~ 1 hour a month. Are you able to pitch in? Contact Tom Walsh, K1TW.

## Wednesday Night Net

Join us on the Westford 146.955 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). *Note: Thanks to the Westford Police Amateur Radio Team (PART) for their generous act of making their repeater available to us.*

Repeater info:  
 WB1GOF  
 146.955 MHz  
 -600 kHz (normal) offset  
 Encode CTCSS 74.4 Hz

Reminder: “kerchunking” the repeater is not only impolite, it’s illegal. It constitutes an unidentified transmission. If you need to check that you’re making the repeater, say something like “This is <your call> standing by on the frequency.” Thanks for your courtesy.

## Club Meetings

Because of the continuing COVID health crisis, in-person club meetings are on hiatus. Club meetings are being held “virtually” using Zoom. We hope to resume in-person meetings in the fall.

Club meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month.

## VE Sessions

Our VE sessions are again being held in-person at the Chelmsford Bible Church. Pre-registration for our in-person exams is suggested. Contact [w1lus@hotmail.com](mailto:w1lus@hotmail.com) for registration information.

VE sessions are held 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 \(map\)](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Chelmsford+Bible+Church+Hall,+128+Gorham+St,+Rear+Door,+Chelmsford+MA+01824-3220/@42.565,-71.222,15z)

### January VE Session Report

On January 12, one person showed up for an upgrade to General and went home happy.

Our next exam session will be on February 9 at 7:00 PM.

Thanks to Gary W1GFF, Don W1DM, Peter N1ALO and Bill W1ZL for their help in running the session.

--de Bruce Anderson, W1LUS

## Club Breakfast every Saturday

On Saturday mornings around 8:30AM, have a virtual Zoom breakfast session (link provided in email if you subscribe).

We also meet in-person weekly at 8:15AM for a casual, social breakfast at Stelio’s restaurant.

[Stelio’s Family Restaurant, Billerica, MA](#)

## Future Meetings

The 3/1 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](mailto: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](mailto:bars@w1hh.org)

## February Get-on-the-Air Suggestions from Scott Ginsburg, K10A

BARS is a “get-on-the-air” (GOTA) club. We encourage members to participate in the varied events on HF and VHF.

Here are the popular suggestions for this month:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
Feb 4-5	Vermont QSO Party <a href="http://www.ranv.org/vtqso.html">http://www.ranv.org/vtqso.html</a>
Feb 4-5 10-10	International Winter Contest, SSB <a href="http://www.ten-ten.org/index.php/activity/2013-07-22-20-26-48/qso-party-rules">http://www.ten-ten.org/index.php/activity/2013-07-22-20-26-48/qso-party-rules</a>
Feb 13-17	ARRL School Club Roundup <a href="http://www.arrl.org/school-club-roundup">http://www.arrl.org/school-club-roundup</a>
Feb 18-19	ARRL International DX Contest, CW ** <a href="http://www.arrl.org/arrl-dx">http://www.arrl.org/arrl-dx</a>
Feb 24-26	CQ 160 Meter Contest, SSB <a href="http://www.cq160.com/rules.htm">http://www.cq160.com/rules.htm</a>

### \*\* Top recommendations for this month

Recurring Events – visit webpage for exact times and dates:

K1USN Slow Speed Test - Every Friday 20:00 UTC / Every Monday 00:00 UTC <http://www.k1usn.com/sst.html>

Straight Key Century Club (SKCC) Weekend Sprintathon – the Saturday following the 6<sup>th</sup> of every month at 1200 UTC  
[http://www.skccgroup.com/operating\\_activities/weekend\\_sprintathon](http://www.skccgroup.com/operating_activities/weekend_sprintathon)

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

### **OFFICERS:**

President: Doug Bruce, N1WRN

Vice President: Mark Nelson, KA1INE

Treasurer: Bruce Anderson, W1LUS

Secretary: Marla Wallace, WA1GSF

BoD: Don Melanson, W1DM

BoD: Bill Poulin, WZ1L

Ex Officio: Gary Frascarelli, W1GFF

### **VOLUNTEERS:**

Net Coordinator: Doug Bruce, N1WRN

Newsletter Editor: Marla Wallace, WA1GSF

New Member Outreach: John Fisher, KC1FTJ

Field Day Chair: Mark Nelson, KA1INE