

NEWS FOR AND BY BARS MEMBERS

This newsletter edition is late because your editor was in New Zealand until February 6th. Since it's pointless, the usual announcement of the program for February is missing.

A Message from the President By Doug Bruce, N1WRN

Greetings, Fellow Members,

I hope that everyone is staying warm during this very cold, but normal New England winter. Snowfall wise, I remember many storms like the one we had last week as a kid in the 1960's and 1970's. It looks like there will be a break in the temps in the next week though.

Ham radio wise, there is a very rare DX entity on right now, Desecho Island, a tiny uninhabited island off the west coast of Puerto Rico. This island was used for military bomb detonation trials during WW2. It is currently the number 14 most wanted DX entity on the DXCC Most Wanted list. I was able to work them recently on 20 meters in the late afternoon.

They are working multi modes and multi bands, so check the live stream section on Clublog to see where they are at any given time. It is well worth the effort to work these guys as an ATNO!!!

On another note, I was happy with the turnout at the February Club meeting last week. The membership said that they wanted to resume in person meetings in February. It was good to see the conversation and ham radio fellowship at that

meeting. We are still offering Zoom meetings as well if you can't make it to the Church.

Starting in March, I want to encourage members to bring flea market items to the meetings. We will have a table in the back of the hall for folks to sell or give away excess items from your shack!

Speaking of your shack, I want to encourage members to send me pictures of your shack so we can include them in our wonderful newsletter. We already have been getting some great QSL card pics from our members, so now I want to be able to show the world your shack pics, so feel free to send them to me, and I will include them in the newsletter going forward.

My Elmer, Ray, NR1R, has designed an RF filter for use in your shack to bring your noise lever down to S 0. Take it from me, this new filter really works and is super easy to install directly to your radio. Feel free to contact me if you are interested in obtaining one for your shack. They are \$75 shipped, and trust me, they are worth every penny if you have a lot of noise in your shack these days. Ray has recently become a member of the Club, so you can talk to him about these filters at our in person Club meetings going forward.

Lastly, I want to thank our Vice President, Dave, KC1TLF, for his tireless work on the Club website, www.w1hh.org. We now offer many state of the art features for your enjoyment, such as BARS TV, which has a catalog of past Club meetings, so you will want to stop by and browse the site!

Until next time, I want to remind everyone that your mike does not key itself! Get On The Air and have some fun with this great hobby!

73 and good DX,
Doug
N1WRN

BARS Billerica Amateur Radio Society

FEBRUARY 2026

From the Editor's Desk

By Marla Wallace, WA1GSF

I was in New Zealand from January 17th until February 6th.. I missed the February meeting. And this edition of the newsletter is late, therefore, due to my trip. Which did not go well. In the words of an old Beach Boys tune, 'This is the worst trip I've ever been on.'

It started at 3PM on the 17th when the limo that was to take me to Logan Airport was side-swiped as it tried to pull into my driveway. It took over an hour to get alternate transportation. If my flight hadn't been delayed by 45 minutes, I would have missed it. And things didn't get much better for the subsequent three weeks.

Despite the cold and snow, I'm happy to be quit of ZL-land.

Announcements

USA 250 Semiquincentennial Special Operating Event

Dear Massachusetts Hams,

I am reaching out to you, would like to be part of the 2026 ARRLCelebration of the USA 250 Semiquincentennial Special Operating Event. This is part of the Year of the Club and the 100th Anniversary of the ARRL Field Organization along with a year-long Worked All States (WAS-250).

I am the state manager for Massachusetts.

For two weeks in 2026, there is the ability for stations located in Massachusetts to operate as W1AW/1. ARRL membership is not required. The weeks are as follows:

- February 11-18
- August 12-21

August 14th & 15th will be an SSB operation from the New England HamXposition in Marlboro. They will have precedence in choosing the band and mode (probably SSB) for a block of time. We are looking for ops that can get on multiple times during this week, from your club, home, mobile or portable stations and work stations that will be hunting you. Your transmitter MUST be in Massachusetts.

Modes that can be operated are:

- SSB
- CW
- Digital
- Satellite

ALL Logging MUST be done with computer logging that can export in ADIF format. The log will be sent to me once your operating has completed.

All volunteers will need to work together and share operating times with the team of ops. There will be an operation guide emailed a few weeks before the operating week to all volunteers.

If you are interested in volunteering for the first Massachusetts operating in February, please contact:

Larry Krainson, W1AST
FunHamRadio@gmail.com

Thanks and 73

--de Jon W McCombie, N1ILZ
 ARRL Eastern Massachusetts Section Manager
n1ilz@arrl.org



Call for Speakers

HamX is the largest amateur radio convention in the Northeast! With close to 1,800 attendees each year, HamX draws radio amateurs from all over and is an ideal venue to present your ideas and experiences.

This is a call for speakers on topics of general interest to the amateur radio community. Some examples include: Operating practices, contesting, DXing, mobile stations, emergency communications, emerging activities, STEM outreach, club improvement, radio history, restoring antique gear, test equipment, kit building, antenna design, AI in amateur radio, VHF/UHF/Microwave/Mesh, EME and more. If you have a story to share, we would like to hear about it.

To submit a talk proposal, please go to the following website and enter the requested information.
<https://registration.hamx.org/speaker/>

If you have any further questions, please reach out to the program chair at the e-mail address listed below.

We look forward to your contribution at HamX 2026!

--de Mark Noe KE1IU
 HamX Program Committee Chairperson
ke1iu@hamx.org

HamSCI is looking for your club's support.



HamSCI Announces Its Ninth Annual Workshop on March 14-15 for Amateur Radio Operators and Science Professionals

HamSCI, the Ham Radio Science Citizen Investigation, is pleased to announce the ninth annual HamSCI Workshop will be held beginning Saturday, March 14, 2026, and concluding the next day. The venue will be the Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) in Newington, CT.

The theme for the conference is “Discovering Science Through Amateur Radio” with registration now open. The conference venue offers easy access from Bradley International Airport, and a variety of nearby lodging options are available.

The annual HamSCI meeting will provide an opportunity for both the amateur radio and professional research communities to collaborate and share ideas. HamSCI workshops act as forums that are both interesting and accessible to the amateur radio and professional communities. This year’s meeting will take place on Saturday and Sunday, allowing both professionals and amateurs to attend at least one day (in person or virtually). The Workshop will feature a number of invited tutorials given by both amateurs and practicing scientists.

HamSCI is partnering with ARRL, The National Association for Amateur Radio, with its nearby headquarters providing an exclusive opportunity to tour facilities, behind-the-scenes access to the ARRL Laboratory, the W1HQ Radio Laboratory and the W1AW Hiram P. Maxim Memorial Station, which licensed hams may operate.

The workshop is a must for amateur radio operators and citizen scientists, professional researchers and engineers, faculty and educators, and undergraduate and graduate students.

HamSCI's chief area of interest is the use of amateur radio techniques for the characterization and study of ionospheric phenomena such as traveling ionospheric disturbances, sporadic E, response to solar flares, geomagnetic storms, and other space weather events. To facilitate this science, there will be discussions concerning continued development of the HamSCI Personal Space Weather Station, integration of amateur radio into the collegiate curriculum, and related topics. The workshop agenda will offer presentations relating to amateur radio and science, particularly space and atmospheric science, space weather, and radio astronomy.

For registration details and updates, visit www.hamsci.org/hamsci2026. The 2026 HamSCI workshop is supported by grants from the National Science Foundation and Amateur Radio Digital Communications (ARDC), and the organizing committee including representatives from CCSU partner institutions such as the University of Scranton, New Jersey Institute of Technology and ARRL. For those unable to attend in-person, a virtual attendance option will be announced closer to the workshop.

HamSCI serves as a means for fostering collaboration between professional researchers and amateur radio operators. It assists in developing and maintaining standards and agreements between all people and organizations involved. Its goals are to advance scientific research and understanding through amateur radio activities, encourage the development of modern technologies to support this research and provide educational opportunities for the amateur community and the public.

For more information about HamSCI, and to join our mailing list and receive our newsletter, please visit our website at www.hamsci.org.

Strays

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.

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 \(pdf\)](http://ARRL Affiliated Club Membership Application (pdf)). Then forward it to W1LUS@hotmail.com

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).



-- de Tom Walsh, K1TW

Another recurring event:

Straight Key Century Club (SKCC) Weekend Sprintathon – the Saturday following the 6th of every month at 1200 UTC http://www.skccgroup.com/operating_activities/weekend_sprintathon

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 the 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 through the process. An Elmer could have Zoom on their cell phone and show a new ham how their shack was set up. Use your imagination and see how you might use this tool. If you would like to use Zoom for this, contact Bruce, W1LUS@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 in using Zoom to Elmer someone.

--de Bruce Anderson, W1LUS

BARS Membership

Our current combined membership is 142, with 66 that haven't renewed their membership for 2026.

Anyone with a question about their renewal status can email me at W1LUS@hotmail.com to get your current membership status.

from Bruce Anderson, W1LUS, Treasurer

There was no General Meeting for January due to the Holiday Party. Here is the Secretary's Report for February 2026

There was no secretary present to take the minutes. Therefore, we are treated to what the AI that snooped on our Zoom session thought went on, to wit:

Quick recap

- The meeting featured a presentation by Kristen McIntyre, K6WX.

Next steps

- David: Send email to Kristen McIntyre regarding technician HF privileges expansion and DXCC award status.
- David: Send notice to Kristen about the two topics discussed (technician expansion and DXCC award).
- All members: Email David if interested in presenting at future meetings (either via Zoom or in person).
- Director Bonner: Schedule/hold meeting soon for the committee on assisting hams in restricted environments (condos/apartments).
- IT Director: Complete permissions setup to publish the restricted environments content on ARRL.org

Summary

- Amateur Radio and Flea Market
- The meeting began with Steve discussing his technical setup and sharing personal anecdotes, including his vinyl collection and experiences with long-path VK contacts. David inquired about Steve's location and shared his own experiences with snow and amateur radio contacts. The conversation ended with an announcement from Brendan about an upcoming mini flea market at the next meeting, where attendees can bring items to sell.
- Ham Radio Club Meeting Updates
- The meeting began with David encouraging members to bring cameras to the next meeting and discussing the popularity of FT8. He shared a positive email exchange with an Australian ham radio enthusiast who advised him to interact more with the community. David also highlighted the club's focus on getting on the air and emphasized the hobby's vitality, citing the large number of licensed operators and events like NearFest. Dave provided updates on the website, including a new member map feature and improvements to audio quality with new microphones. He also mentioned plans to add a large speaker for better audio in future meetings. The group discussed the use of Ham.Live for net logging and managing check-ins during nets. Steve shared

updates on his recent activities, including fixing and returning rigs to their owners, and mentioned the challenges of troubleshooting radio equipment. The conversation ended with introductions of new and existing members.

As you can see, an AI is easily confused. But better than not having a report, I guess. Sorry.

There was no Board of Directors Meeting in January

Treasurers Report for February 2026

Reminder: 2026 Dues are due starting January 1, 2026. BARS Dues are from January 1 to December 31. Dues for 2026 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,
- with credit card by using the Join/Renewal membership form on the W1HH.org website,
- or with cash or check by mailing \$15 to Billerica ARS, 16 Regis Road, Tewksbury, MA 01876

In January we had fifteen new/renewals for \$225 income. Our expenses were W1HH.ORG Hosting \$136.28, Zoom \$18.05, PayPal \$11.00. We now have \$941.17 in the bank and \$1026.72 in our PayPal account for a total of \$1983.59.

Bruce Anderson, W1LUS

BARS Does breakfast every Saturday.

On Saturday mornings at 8:15AM, we meet for a casual, social breakfast at Stelio's restaurant in Billerica.

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

February Get-on-the-Air Suggestions from Andy Wallace, KA1GTT

KA1GTT Andy Wallace here. I am offering my input for this month's Get on the Air column. These are contests which can be on HF or VHF/UHF, and may be SSB (voice), CW (Morse code) or digital (FT8, etc.) modes. If you are a beginner, contests can still be a lot of fun. Most of the time the rules expect you to submit electronic logs of your activity, but I know hams who simply want to exchange QSLs for confirmation.

Contests can be frantic - rapid exchanges (what info the stations pass back and forth) and careful rules of engagement. But others are more casual. It always helps to tune in stations and listen to the exchange and get a feel for the methods.

One of the best resources for finding out what contests are upcoming is the WA7BNM website and his 8-day contest calendar at:

<https://www.contestcalendar.com/weeklycont.php>

This gives a snapshot of the next 8 days, and you can instantly see what contests are longer term (like across weekends) and thus more popular.

The 12-month calendar is excellent for getting a snapshot of an entire month in advance. Surprisingly, I find it has more contests listed than the "Perpetual" site view. The 12 month is what I used to compile this month's hot contests.

<https://www.contestcalendar.com/contestcal.php>

Of note: contests are listed in UTC (Coordinated Universal Time or Greenwich Mean Time or Zulu) day and date. This is the time going through the 0° meridian (Greenwich, U.K.). If you are new to ham radio, you need to know hams historically use UTC to align with hams around the world in a way that being on the air at a certain time is simple. We're in Eastern Standard Time right now, so that means UTC is 5 hours ahead of us. 0000Z being midnight Zulu/UTC/GMT translates to 7:00 PM EST. So, for a typical contest, the start of the contest is 00:01UTC November 7 (Saturday). Subtract five hours and you better have your rig ready at 7:01PM EST Friday evening.

Here is KA1GTT's list of top contests for this month - and please remember these are best guesses on my part.

1. Vermont QSO Party
<http://www.ranv.org/vtqso.html>
0000Z, Feb 7 to 2400Z, Feb 8, 2026
Exchange: non-VT W/VE: RS(T) + (state/province)
2. 10-10 Int. Winter Contest, SSB
<https://www.ten-ten.org/qso-party-rules/>
0001Z, Feb 7 to 2359Z, Feb 8, 2026
Exchange: 10-10 Member: Name + 10-10 number + (state/province/country); Non-Member: Name + 0 + (state/province/country)
3. Minnesota QSO Party
<https://www.w0aa.org/mnqp-rules/>
1400Z-2400Z, Feb 7, 2026
Exchange: W/VE: Name + (state/province)
4. British Columbia QSO Party
https://www.orcadxcc.org/bcqp_rules.html
1600Z, Feb 7 to 0359Z, Feb 8 and 1600Z-2359Z, Feb 8, 2026
Exchange: non-BC: RS(T) + (state/province/"DX")

5. North American Sprint, CW **
<https://ncjweb.com/Sprint-Rules.pdf>
0000Z-0359Z, Feb 8, 2026
Exchange: [other station's call] + [your call] + [serial no.] + [your name] + [your state/province/country]
6. ARRL School Club Roundup **
<https://www.arrl.org/school-club-roundup>
1300Z, Feb 9 to 2359Z, Feb 13, 2026
Exchange: RS(T) + Class (I/C/S) + (state/province/country)
7. CQ WW RTTY WPX Contest **
<https://www.cqwpxrty.com/rules.htm>
0000Z, Feb 14 to 2359Z, Feb 15, 2026
Exchange: RST + Serial No.
8. OMISS QSO Party
<http://www.omiss.net/Facelift/qsotheory.php>
1500Z, Feb 8 to 1500Z, Feb 9, 2025
Exchange: RS + (state/province/DX) + (OMISS No. if member)
9. ARRL Inter. DX Contest, CW **
<https://www.arrl.org/arrl-dx>
0000Z, Feb 21 to 2400Z, Feb 22, 2026
Exchange: W/VE: RST + (state/province)
10. Classic Exchange, Phone
<http://www.classicexchange.org/>
1400Z, Feb 22 to 0800Z, Feb 23 and 1400Z, Feb 24 to 0800Z, Feb 25, 2026
Exchange: Name + RS + (state/province/country) + rcvr/xmtr manuf/model
11. South Carolina QSO Party
<http://scqso.com/>
1500Z, Feb 28 to 0159Z, Mar 1, 2026
Exchange: non-SC: RS(T) + (state/province/"DX")
12. North American QSO Party, RTTY **
<http://www.ncjweb.com/NAQP-Rules.pdf>
1800Z, Feb 28 to 0559Z, Mar 1, 2026
Exchange: NA: Name + (state/DC/province/country)

** Top recommendation for this month

Comments: This month there are two radioteletype contests, a school roundup, and a CW DX contest! Lots of reasons to get on the air. Plus a bunch of state/province QSO parties. The Classic Exchange is also fun – you can get on and work stations running vintage (usually vacuum tube) amateur radio equipment.

Reminder: details on each of these contests 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](https://www.contestcalendar.com/weeklycont.php?mode=custom&week=current)

Final comment: It is a VERY sparse contest calendar for February, but you can still have fun. If you don't do these contests, at least get on and call or answer! If you get on and enjoy operating one of these events, please send an email to the BARS email reflector, bars@w1hh.org.

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 about 1 hour a month. Are you able to pitch in? Contact Doug Bruce, N1WRN.

Wednesday Night Net

Join us on the Billerica 147.120 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:

W1DC
147.12 MHz
+600 kHz (normal) offset
Encode CTCSS 146.2 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

Club meetings are held in person (weather permitting) and via Zoom. A link will be sent via the BARS email reflector to all currently paid-up members who might wish to attend via Zoom.

Club meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM Eastern time.

VE Sessions

Our VE sessions are held in-person at the Chelmsford Bible Church. Pre-registration for our in-person exams is suggested. Contact 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 \(map\)](#)

VE Session Report for February 2026

We had five people show up for the January 8 VE exam session. Results were three new Technicians, one new General and one Extra upgrade the new hams are Daniel KC1YUS, Alyssa KC1YUW, Joseph KC1YUT, and Elena KC1YUZ, be sure to say hello if you hear them on the air. Our next exam session will be on February 12 at 7:00 PM. At the Chelmsford Bible Church. Thanks to Doug N1WRN, Peter N1ALO, Gary W1GFF, Shawn N1CVO, and Bill, WZ1L for their help conducting this exam session.

While walk-ins are still welcome it speeds the process up if you pre-register for your BARS VE exam session at [HamStudy.org](#).

--de Bruce Anderson, W1LUS

Future Meetings

The next BARS General Meeting will be held via Zoom and at the Chelmsford Bible Church on March 4th at 7:00 PM. For those who prefer, a Zoom link will be sent in the club email feed prior to the meeting.

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.

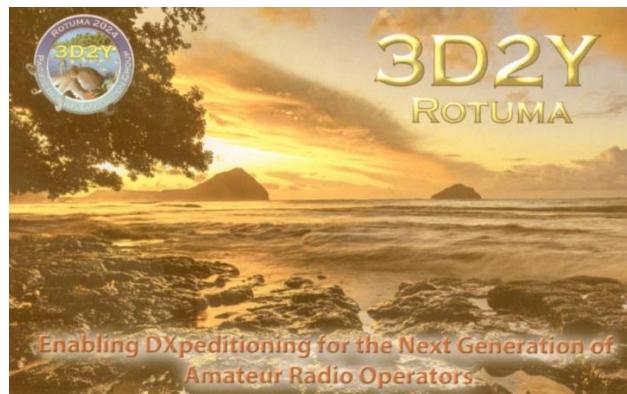
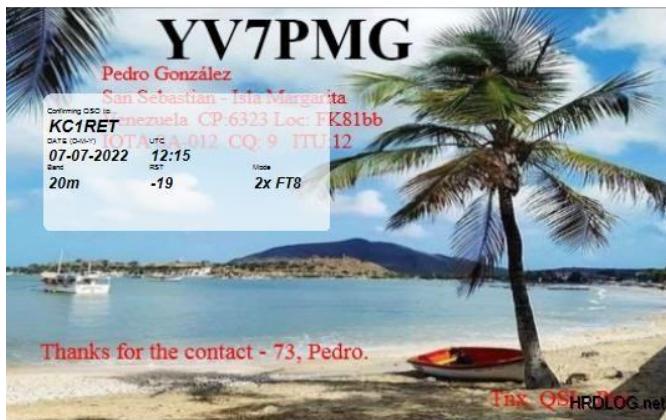
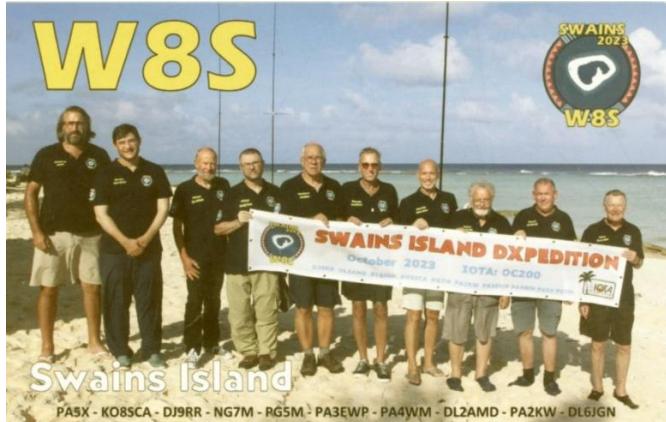
Reply to that message from the list server and you are then subscribed.

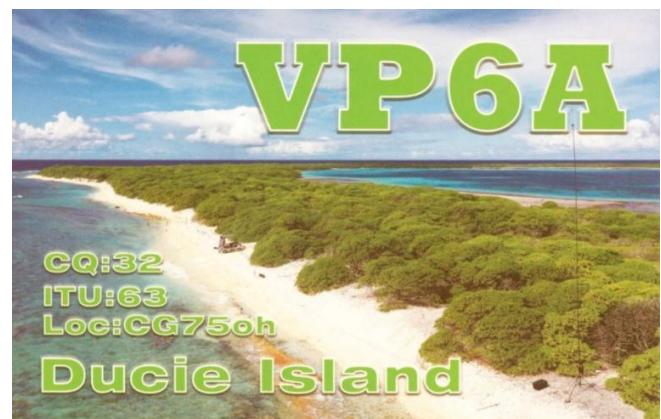
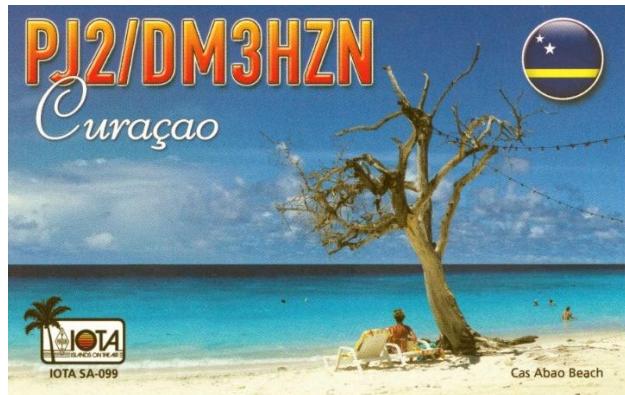
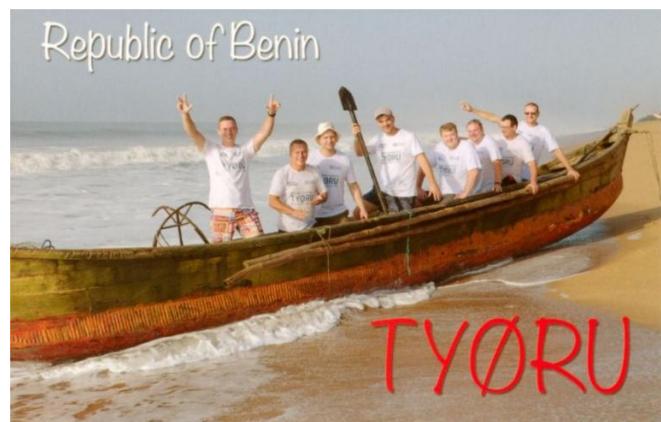
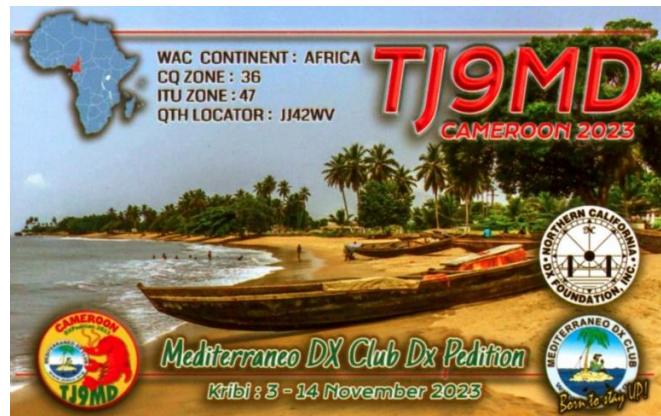
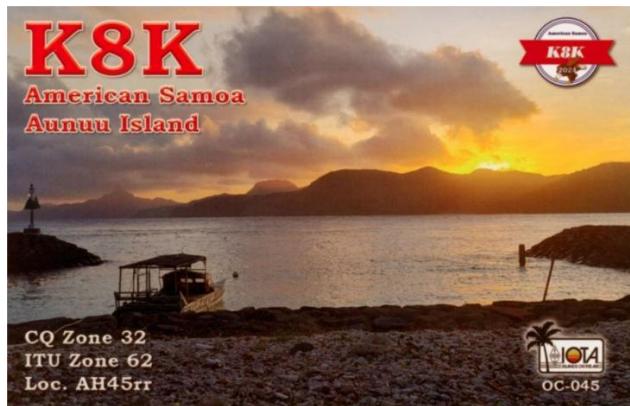
To post to the list, address your email to bars@w1hh.org

Photo Feature: From the Mailbag

Looking out the window this month and seeing 2 feet of snow on the ground it is difficult to imagine Summer. Fear not dear reader! Unsurprisingly (and quite frankly lacking imagination/inspiration) this month's theme is beaches.

Many of these cards are from DXpeditions to far off islands while others are from folks lucky enough to live in such idyllic places. Enjoy while you dream of umbrella drinks and your toes in the soul-warming sand...





Show Me Your Cards! I would like to highlight cards from our club members. Send me a scan of your card or just mail one to me. Or bring one to the next club meeting and I'll collect them. Thanks!

As always, if you have received any interesting cards, hand-drawn or not, please send them along to
k1dc.radio@gmail.com
 and I'll share them with the group!

73, Tim/K1DC

BARS Leadership Team

OFFICERS:

President:	Doug Bruce, N1WRN
Vice President:	David Marcucci, KC1TLF
Treasurer:	Bruce Anderson, W1LUS
Secretary:	Marla Wallace, WA1GSF
BoD:	Bill Poulin, WZ1L
BoD:	Steve Wedge, W1ES/4
Ex Officio:	Gary Frascarelli, W1GFF

VOLUNTEERS:

Net Coordinator:	Doug Bruce, N1WRN
Newsletter Editor:	Marla Wallace, WA1GSF
New Member Outreach:	Doug Bruce, N1WRN
Field Day Chair:	Tim Carter, K1DC
Webmaster:	David Marcucci, KC1TLF