



THE COMPASS

Official Newsletter of the Great South Bay Amateur Radio Club

April 2016

Volume 44

Issue #4

Upcoming Club Events

Next General Meeting:

Thursday, April 28th,
8 PM at the EOC

There will be a Vote for Amendments to the club's Constitution & By-Laws will take place at April's General Membership Meeting.

Please try to attend!

GSBARC's FREE License Classes Tuesday nights 7-9:30 PM. Currently Running. Extra License Classes

Open Houses on Wednesday nights from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. and also Saturdays from noon to 3 p.m

Visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/gsbarc



News12 reporter Jackie Lukas receives ARRL Bill Leonard, W2SKE Award for outstanding coverage highlighting the enjoyment, importance, and public service value of Amateur Radio.

Inside this issue of The Compass...

- News12's Jackie Lukas receives Bill Leonard, W2SKE Award
- Inside the Squirrel Cage
- Fldigi & Flmsg Software
- KB6NU's Guest Column
- WB2WBH's Guest Column
- Saying goodbye to DX Expeditions

Upcoming Special Events

Suffolk County Council 100th Anniversary Jamboree - April 15-17

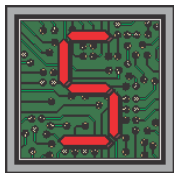
American Air Power Museum Special Event - May 21-22

Field Day - June 25-26

Maggie Fischer Memorial Cross Bay Swim. Friday July 22nd

Fire Island Lighthouse Special Event August 13-14

President's Message



pring? What spring? It sure doesn't feel like any spring I can remember! Hopefully the weather will get back on track in time for some of our upcoming special events.

Most of you probably know that at March's General Membership meeting we presented Jackie Lukas from *News12* with the *ARRL Bill Leonard, W2SKE Award*. The ARRL Bill Leonard Award honors up to three professional journalists each year for outstanding coverage highlighting the enjoyment, importance, and public service value the Amateur Radio Service has to offer. The award is a tribute to the late CBS News President Bill Leonard, W2SKE, an avid Amateur Radio operator and advocate. Each recipient will receive an engraved plaque, and a \$250 contribution will be made in each of their names to the charity of their choice.

Jackie was very happy to see all of us and everyone had a great time, especially when we brought out a cake and Jackie insisted on serving slices to the members.

If you've been down to the EOC lately, you can't help but notice that we've been doing a lot of work to upgrade the operating positions and quality of the classroom experience. Have you had a chance to check out the new Flex 6500, or ICOM radios yet? If you've never worked with the FlexRadio SDR rigs before, or are just new to the 6000 series rigs, Kevin, AB2ZI, will be happy to get you up to speed with the rig and software. Just a warning though, you might find yourself in the market for one of these amazing radios after you've spent some time with it.

We have a few special events coming up this month starting with the Boy Scout's *Suffolk County Council 100th Anniversary Jamboree* running from the 14th through the 16th. Phil, KD2GFO is running this event and is looking for help with setup, takedown and he also needs operators

for the event. If you can help out with this worthy event please email Phil at pfjaco@optonline.net. We are also hosting a SKYWARN training class on the 23rd starting at 2 p.m. upstairs in the main board room. Make sure you sign up if you want to attend, I'm hoping for a big turnout for SKYWARN given all the interest people have been showing in getting certified (or re-certified if you're up for renewal). We are also looking for some volunteers to help out with the class.

Many more projects and committees have been busy doing maintenance, upgrades and service to the membership. Among them: Our repeater crew has been busy with upgrades and radio programming has been in full swing as well. It's also been good to see a big spike in DSTAR activity within our club.

I have quite a few questions from many of the members regarding repairs at my QTH. Things are moving along slowly, but they are moving forward steadily. At this time the upstairs room is just about done and the basement—my shack—is not far from completion. I am hoping to get the shack back up and running in the near future.

To add to the mayhem at home, our new little high energy puppy is keeping us on our toes! Bella is getting big and is quite the character.

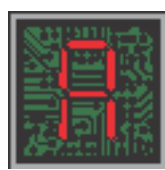
April's General Membership meeting is an important one with some amendments to our Constitution and By-Laws. See details inside this issue of *The Compass*.

John Melfi, W27CB 



Fldigi and Flmsg digital messaging notes

by Bob Myers K2TV



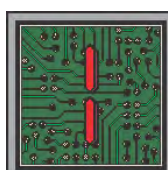
few notes on using FLDIGI and FLMSG on HF for message handling for RACES and ARES. I've noticed a bit of confusion by new operators on the New York State RACES net with receiving and transmitting the State RACES message digitally. After moving to a predetermined 80 meter frequency in the digital part of the band, the message is sent first on MSFK32 and then on OLIVIA 8-500. These notes assume you have already configured Flmsg and Fldigi and your sound card interface.

- When bringing up the programs, load FLMSG first and then FLDIGI second.
- The frequency readout *on your transceiver* should read whatever frequency is given by the net control station. For instance, 3583.5 KHz or 3583 KHz.
- Turn off all signal processing such as compressors or clipping. As with all sound card interface digital signals, watch the ALC level and keep it at minimum when transmitting.
- The transceiver should be set for UPPER side-band on all bands when using FLDIGI. Most rigs will attempt to automatically set the side-band to lower on 160, 80 and 40 meters. UPPER side-band must be used. Set your receive bandwidth to 3 KHz.
- Select the proper mode that will be initially used when transmitting a message.
- The RXTD and TXTD buttons should be green in the upper right hand corner of the FLDIGI screen. If not, press both buttons until they turn green. This will allow you to have the program select the mode automatically on receive.
- The slider on the bottom of the screen is calibrated in Hertz, for example 500, 1000, 1500, 2000 Hz. The leftmost calibration is zero and corresponds to the readout on your transceiver. So, if the transceiver readout is 3583 KHz and the slider is set for

Continued on page 4...

Inside the Squirrel Cage

by Caryn, KD2GUT



was a New York City-based reporter when I first discovered the joy of playing tag with tags. In this case, the tag was the license plate that had been on my car - 626-NYP.

But the accompanying perks, such as parking, that I got around the city for having New York press plates were nothing compared to the thrill one night when I encountered my mirror image heading eastbound on the Long Island Expressway. There, just a few feet ahead of me, heading for an exit ramp, was "NYP-626."

If you're thinking I changed lanes and chased after that car, you're right. But if you're guessing I caught up with him or her, forget that. The car was gone in a New York minute (which, on the LIE, can last a whole lot longer).

But time and the FCC have given me a second chance at the chase. When life began for me nearly 2 years ago as a radio amateur, it marked my rebirth tagged as KD2GUT.

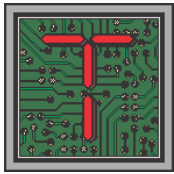
Suddenly, there I was, anointed with a call sign that had definite digestive overtones. I had thought about one day getting rid of my GUT and applying for a vanity call sign instead. I have, after all, other interests that reflect adventures beyond dyspeptic ones. But my GUT has kind of grown and I'm quite fond of it. And I'm not sure if I could stomach such a change now. It's hard to believe that something assigned randomly by a government agency could evolve past being an impersonal set of numbers and letters. But it has. So if I'm going to get any kind of vanity tag at this point, it would be for my car, which has long since traded its press plates for ones that support environmental conservation.

Now, I embrace my GUT. Forget chasing DXCC and WAS, and forget chasing WAC. The big prize I'm after now on HF is WAG -- that's for "Worked All GUTs."

Continued on page 5...

Why You Should Get Your Extra Class License

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU



The Amateur Extra Class license is the highest class of license in the United States, and perhaps the world. Many hams—even hams who live outside the U.S.—aspire to pass the test and be awarded one.

There wasn't always an Amateur Extra Class license. The Extra class license, as we know it today, was created as part of the 1951 license restructuring, that also created the Novice and Technician Class licenses. (In 1951, the Novice license was the “beginner’s license.” To get a Technician Class license, you had to pass the written test that General Class operators had to pass.)

Although it gave an operator no additional privileges, to get an Extra Class license, one had to:

- * Pass a 20 wpm code test (Generals had to pass only a 13 wpm code test).
- * Pass a longer and more difficult written examination than the General Class exam.
- * Have at least two years of experience as a licensed radio amateur.

Today, without the code test and the experience requirement, many hams upgrade to Extra Class as soon as they can. Some even pass the Technician Class, General Class, and the Amateur Extra Class exams in a single test session.

So, what's the attraction? Why should you upgrade to Extra?

One of the reasons that you should upgrade to Extra is that you get use of the entire 80 m, 40 m, 20 m, and 15 m bands. Portions of those bands, such as 3.6 – 3.7 MHz in the 75 m band and 14.150 – 14.175 MHz in the 20 m phone band, are reserved exclusively for Extra Class licensees. Extra Class operators also have exclusive privileges in the CW portions of the 80 m, 40 m, 20 m, and 15 m bands.

These are the frequencies where the DX stations hang out.

Another reason to get your Extra Class license is that only Extra Class licensees can administer General Class and Extra Class license exams. General Class operators can become Volunteer Examiners (VEs), but they are only allowed to administer Technician Class exams.

Another reason you might want to get an Extra Class license is to get a fancy vanity callsign. Only Extra Class operators can apply for 1×2 or 2×1 callsigns, such as W8RP or KT8K. A short, snappy callsign can help you work more DX or improve your contest scores.

Whatever your reason, studying for the Extra Class exam will open your eyes to many aspects of the hobby that you may not be familiar with. And, as you work your way through the material, you'll learn things that make you a better amateur radio operator and enable you to enjoy the hobby more. It's not easy, but in the end, an Extra Class license will help you have more fun with amateur radio. 📡

Dan, KB6NU is the author of the “No Nonsense” line of amateur radio license study guides, a prolific blogger (www.kb6nu.com), and an active CW operator in the Extra Class portion of the HF bands. If you have any comments, questions, compliments, or complaints, email him at cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

Fldigi & Flmsg, cont'd from page 2...

1500 then the actual center frequency of the digital signal is 3584.5 KHz. Note the net control on the New York State RACES net will usually give you the frequency to set the transceiver to and then give you the offset which is normally 1500.

- On an NTS type Radiogram message for ARES or RACES requiring a “by authority of” in the signature of the message, put the signature in the signature box on FLMSG followed by “BAO” and then the authority name. This way both required signatures will appear in the signature box when the message is printed out. An example would be “Myers BAO Hanse.”
- A received message will appear in the FLMSG program and in the case of Windows 10 Microsoft Edge, appear there for easy printing for distribution.

When using FLMSG on VHF / UHF FM, the channels are predetermined and other than the RXTD and TXTD buttons, it should operate perfectly either through a sound card interface or acoustically coupled. 📡

Inside the Squirrel Cage, cont'd from page 2...

Somewhere in Alabama, KD4GUT awaits me on the bands. In Orange County, California, the big prize is KD6GUT. A Washington State YL, General Class like me, uses the number 7 when she struts her GUT. And there's a Big City GUT in Cincinnati, Ohio: He's KD8GUT. My GUT hungers for their QSL cards. I'm salivating at the chance to ragchew, if not face-to-face, at least GUT-to-GUT.

Come to think of it, maybe the time has also come for a GUT Net. Forty meters, anyone?

Already rumors are rumbling, from deep down. So perhaps the time has indeed come: I've got a gut feeling about it. 🐿️

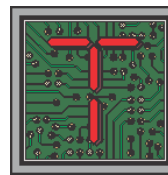
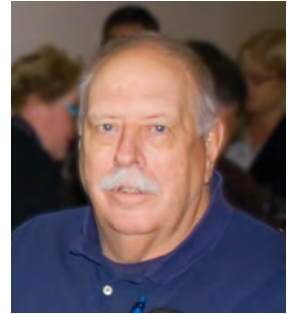


Charter and Honorary member of GSBARC, Judge Lester Kahan K2ENC, honored for his WWII service at Safeco Field in Seattle, Washington during a recent Seattle Mariner's game.

He is shown being congratulated by his wife Phyllis WA2FAQ. Les was once the mayor of Lindenhurst Village and the Lindenhurst Village Traffic Court judge. Les was also instrumental in helping us set up the Great South Bay ARC at its inception.

DX Expeditions Have Gone Home, For Now

by John Smale, K2IZ



he past couple of weeks have seen quite a bit of activity on the radio bands: Expeditions to Heard Island (VK0EK) and Juan De Nova (FT4JA) were on the air and everyone was trying to work them. Well, they're gone now.

Everyone is returning home and the bands are now quieting down.



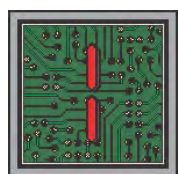
To listen to what was going on was something else. For a while VK was listening up and FT was listening down and many times the up/down covered well more than 15 KHz bandwidth.

Speaking for myself, a licensed ham since 1971, I still found it a learning experience. There's always something to learn -- figuring out propagation charts for MUF times and frequencies, learning a few more things about the spotting cluster, VE7CC, finding out what the TF-SET feature was all about on my TS-590, overcoming years of having the RF gain cranked wide open, and just learning more about all the features that are in the radio.

Continued on page 6...

*Elmering (and Elmering the Elmer)**

Ron Panetta, WB2WGH



In the beginning, well not quite the beginning but circa 1966, were 3 amateur radio operators, Stephen, Alan and Ron (myself). These three hams were constantly mentoring each other and often visiting each other's shacks. Stephen and Ron went to the same high school, lived within walking distance of each other and spent a quite a bit of time at each other's house. Stephen's shack, collocated in his bedroom, had an "On the Air" sign outside the room. When operating, the door was typically closed and the sign lit. Stephen's sister Caryn, 4 and a half years his junior, was into classical piano and creative writing. She became envious of the "hamming" behind closed doors and the mystical "On the Air" sign. She learned the Morse code alphabet. College and careers happen, we all went our separate ways. Time passed, 35 plus years, Caryn was still envious of the mystical "On the Air" sign. Then, sometime during the summer of 2014, I get an e-mail from Caryn, now KD2GUT. In-between copy editing for a major Long Island newspaper, rescuing, rehabilitating rodents (prairie dogs, squirrels and other assorted critters), riding horses and being sufficiently shaken by superstorm Sandy, she studied, took the technician test and was finally "legal!" Shortly thereafter, she passed the General test and was now "HF legal!" While I cannot take credit for the Elmering to date—as that credit goes to the Great South Bay Amateur Radio Club (<http://www.gsbarc.org/>)—once she became "HF legal," I stepped in to help. It was time to Elmer, long distance.

Christmas 2014 comes and Caryn, her husband (Rod), my wife (Janet) and I get together for breakfast as we try to do annually while I'm visiting family in Long Island. Rod and Janet are bored to tears as Caryn and I talk ham radio speak. Caryn, clearly non-technical, had a lot to learn. With help from local Long Island hams, she purchased and

installed a Yaesu FT-450D and a Gap Titan DX vertical. Must be it's time for Ron to get back on HF. Returning to Syracuse, between Christmas and New Year's, I unbox the Heath SB-101 transceiver, Heath SB-610 monitor scope and 40 m dipole after 20 years in storage. Bring them up slowly, the transceiver comes to life and the monitor scope pops electrolytics. Hang the dipole, yes, isn't winter the best time for antenna work? I'm on the air!

Yes, the SB-101 still works—but Caryn's got a Yaesu FT-450D. Yaesu is offering a rebate on the 450 that runs out December 31. Easier to assist Caryn if we have the same rig. Time to call HRO and spend some money. Out of stock, dock strike in San Diego, 3 to 4 weeks ETA.

Caryn's available for a QSO, January 1, 2015. Time to get on 40 m. Woohoo, our first QSO!!!! Next Sunday, failed QSO, following Sunday, failed QSO... You get the idea. Frustration, big time. Yet, I can hear other plenty of Long Island stations. What gives?

FT-450D arrives, power it up, check it out and woohoo, it's got a built-in SWR bridge. Time to text Caryn and explain SWR. Pick a point in the center of each band, turn off the internal tuner and measure the SWR. 10M, 15M, 20M, 80M all OK. 40 m through the roof. Time to research the Gap Titan DX. Counterpoise only used on 40 m. Must be an issue with the counterpoise. Time to send Caryn out to check out the counterpoise installation—but wait, there's a blizzard out there and snow. Snow melts, confirmation of installation issue with the counterpoise, time to get an assist to fix. Woohoo, SWR on 40 m normal. Second successful QSO. Then more successful QSOs.

Caryn works second shift (getting home at midnight), I work first shift so late-night QSOs only viable time. But wait, that doesn't work. Time to explain propagation, MUF, ionosphere. Google surf time, find an article on propagation and text link to Caryn. So 40 m QSOs limited to weekend afternoons when schedules dovetail.

Caryn can't hit local repeaters with her HT from home. Time to explain VHF propagation and HT antennas. Time for a J-Pole. Ron builds a couple of J-poles out of copper pipe, suggests Caryn order some more pre-terminated coax and an SMA to UHF adapter. Ron delivers J-pole during Easter vacation, visits Caryn's QTH (Janet, remember Janet, she knows enough to stay at my Mom's as she'd be bored to tears with even more Ham Radio speak), install J-Pole and Caryn's now on the VHF successfully hitting Long Island repeaters.

Caryn wants to try digital modes. But wait, are there digital modes besides RTTY? Looks like times have

changed in 45+ years. PSK, JT65 and others. Time to figure out this new stuff. Buy a Signalink, download free Ham Radio Deluxe and interface to Yaesu. Look, I can control the rig from the PC!! Time to text a video to Caryn with PC and 450D with a demonstration. Send Caryn a USB/Serial cable. But wait, how to explain HRD setup? Time for Cisco WebEx, a free desktop sharing web site (yes, there's Skype and others but this worked best for our purposes). Start a WebEx, walk Caryn through the WebEx setup and now I can see her PC. Next step, work through HRD setup to control the rig.

Time to figure out PSK. Unpack Signalink, more Google surfing, and success with PSK-31. Caryn, go buy a Signalink and let me know when it arrives. Go find a GSBARC member that's got a spare resistor (Yaesu microphone input too hot) and configure the internal jumper. Take picture of my jumper, text to Caryn for confirmation of jumpers, connect Signalink, set knobs the same as mine and success, Caryn now on PSK-31!!!!

Next lesson: Look—HRD has logging capability and it integrates with HRD DM780 for digital modes. Time for another WebEx session to demonstrate HRD logging.

Next, it's a session to figure out PSK-31 macros. Time for more Google surfing, edit the macros and now it's time for another WebEx session to walk Caryn through macro configuration.

Caryn has, during the last 18 months, worked 42 states, 25 countries, two field days, numerous special event stations (Papal visit, American Airpower Museum on L.I.), numerous public service events (Hope for the Warrior...), authors a monthly column (not surprising, "Inside the Squirrel Cage" for GSB ARC Compass newsletter, chairs the GSB ARC Good and Welfare Committee, writes the weekly Amateur Radio Newsline report and is an avid member of the "100 Watts and a Wire" Facebook group. Look out ham radio world, Caryn is on a roll!

So, what's the moral of the story? Elmers need not be subject matter experts in all aspects of amateur radio. They just need to stay one step ahead of the "student." Elmers Elmer themselves in the process of Elmering the student. Go find a new ham or a ham yearning to learn something new and Elmer! ☺

(Ron Panetta's article first appeared in the April issue of the RAGS Review, the newsletter of Radio Amateurs of Greater Syracuse.—Ed.)

DX Expeditions... cont'd from page 5



It all came together one evening when I had VK0EK sounding like a local CW station on 30 meters, and yes, I did work him. It was just a matter of being in the right spot at the right time. Unfortunately I didn't have the same luck with the FT station. Hopefully they'll be back in the near future.

It was also nice to find out that the antenna system I put up two years ago works very nicely. I'd still like to get a 6-meter antenna up and hopefully, come warmer weather, it will happen.

I'm sure there will be a few upset hams, getting OO notices for operating out of band on voice; both the DX stations were under different rules than we are in the States.

Now everything will hopefully get back to what passes for normal. There are quite a few events coming up and hopefully a lot of operators will be using what they learned from trying to be the one station that the DX operator picked out of the pile of the rest of the world calling. ☺



The Dangers of DX!

YAHOO!

GSBARC has a New Yahoo Group and the old one has been deleted

If you are a member in good standing and want to join the club's new Yahoo group, go to:

<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/gsb-arc/info>

and click on "Join Group" Be sure to add a note when filling out your information with your call sign so we know who you are!

Club Apparel

Want a shirt, jacket, hat, sweatshirt or t-shirt with a Great South Bay club logo? We now use *Mr. Shirt*, located at 80 East Montauk Hwy in Lindenhurst (www.mrshirt.com). Now you can get color matched backgrounds on your logo too. Check them out...

ARES/RACES Information

Div. 1—Town of Babylon ARES/RACES

*Net: 146.685/R, Mondays 8:15 PM
EC/RO: John Melfi, W2HCB, (631) 669-6321*

Div. 2—Town of Huntington ARES/RACES

*Net: 147.210 MHz +600/ PL 136.5,
Mondays 7:00 PM*

EC/RO Steven W. Hines, N2PQJ, (###) ###-####

Div. 3—Town of Islip ARES/RACES

EC/RO: John J Blowsky, KB2SCS, 631-467-2410

Div. 4—Town of Smithtown ARES/RACES

*Net: 145.430 MHz, PL136.5, Mondays 7:30 PM
EC/RO: Joe Albertus, KB2JOE, 631-664-6709*

Div. 5—Town of Brookhaven ARES/RACES

EC/RO: Ted Debowy, AC2IR, 631-751-6576

Div. 6—Riverhead ARES/RACES

EC/RO: < Unknown — no longer in state. >

Div. 7—Southampton ARES/RACES

EC/RO: Dennis O'Rourke, KB2ZWW, 631-728-5424

Div. 8—Southold ARES/RACES

*EC: Don Fisher, N2QHV, 631-765-2757
RO: Charles Burnham, K2GLP, 516-779-4983*

Div. 9—East Hampton ARES/RACES

EC/RO: Nat Raynor, N2NEI, 631-324-3738

Div. 10—Shelter Island ARES/RACES

EC/RO: Neal Raymond, N2QZA, 631-749-9330

Suffolk County

ARES/RACES Net:

*Mondays 2100 Local - 145.330/R (136.5 PL)
Alternate Frequency - 145.370 (136.5 PL)*

New York State

RACES Net (HF)

Sundays 0900 Local, 3993.5 KHz LSB

2016 VE

Session Dates

- April 23rd
- May 28th
- June 18th
- July 23rd
- August 27th
- September 24th
- October 22nd
- November 26th
- December 17th

All sessions are at the Town of Babylon EOC at 10 a.m., located in the basement in the rear of town hall. Please bring photo ID, a copy and your original amateur radio license (if you have one), and any CSCE's you may have. Non programmable calculators are allowed. The exam fee is \$15 payable by cash or a check made out to "ARRL VEC".

The Prizes for our next raffle.



1st Prize: Rigol 1054Z Oscilloscope



**2nd Prize (left) MFJ-269C Antenna Analyzer
3rd Prize (right) Extech EX330 Digital Multimeter**

Club Name Badges

Club name badges are available from *The Sign Man* (www.thesignman.com) of Baton Rouge, LA.

The badges which are 1-3/4 in. x 3 in. If you visit *The Sign Man's* webpage you can order the badges by using a drop down selection on the orders page and clicking on "Great South Bay ARC - NY"



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Need Antenna Work?

Sign-up on the list at the EOC. Please supply as much information about your situation so the committee can be properly prepared with assistance and tools when they come to your QTH.