



The Compass!

Official Newsletter of the Great South Bay Amateur Radio Club, INC.

May/June 2020

Volume 48

#5/6

ALL MEETINGS, OPEN HOUSES, CLASSES AND VE SESSIONS CANCELLED DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS

PLEASE FOLLOW CDC, FEDERAL AND STATE GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING AND DISINFECTING

WATCH YOUR EMAIL FOR ANY CHANGES AND UPDATES

STAY SAFE AND KEEP YOUR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS SAFE—WE WILL RETURN WHEN THINGS ARE BACK TO NORMAL

Field Day Fail Issue!

Inside this issue:

- ***K2H Special Event Report***
- ***KB6NU's Guest Column***
- ***6m Sporadic E –Skip Season is here***
- ***QRP Labs Clock Kit gets updated firmware***



Long Island's Friendliest Amateur Radio Club!



President's Message



June is here – but what about Field Day? Well, we typically always get ready for Field Day in June but with the Coronavirus still around and the concern for all of our members' safety, there will be no public group Field Day this year. We want to encourage all members to get on the air on Field Day weekend, however. You can do this from home. We are having Zoom sessions showing how to set up N1MM for logging and how to submit your information to the ARRL. Everyone should operate from home as 1D -- or 1E if you are running on emergency power. Important: When you set up N1MM make sure you fill in "Great South Bay ARC" as your club affiliation. (I will be operating as 1E).

If you're still a bit confused or want more details about the changes this year, know that the rules have changed. We are allowed to operate from home and will get a separate score listed in QST. If you have the club affiliation on your log, Great South Bay will also get a score listed. So let's do everything we can to get that awesome club score we always get!

Here's a good look at the new rules for this year:

<http://www.arrl.org/temporary-rule-waivers-for-arrl-field-day-2020>

Meanwhile, you can get N1MM here:

<https://n1mmwp.hamdocs.com/mmfiles/categories/programfullinstall/>

Another cancellation: As we found out at our last meeting that the Fire Island Lighthouse event for this year is cancelled, also for safety reasons and concern for our membership. The International Lighthouse Lightship Weekend event is still going to be there – around the world - so get on the air and chase those very cool lighthouse QSL cards.

One bit of good news from our May meeting: Gordon West WB6NOA was present with us on Zoom and talked about how important amateur radio can be. As always, he brought some stories and comments to make us laugh.

Please remember all our GSBARC meetings, open houses, and training Zoom sessions are all sent out via the groups. io page and that the EOC is still closed until further notice.

I hope everyone enjoys the Fourth of July weekend. Look for all those special events in between relaxing and perhaps enjoying a great BBQ.

By the way, my spring cleaning continues: As I was cleaning out my shack I decided to sell my Icom IC9100 radio so if you are interested please let me know by email at radiorights@gmail.com

Enjoy what you do – be safe – and who knows? Perhaps we'll be back together in September!

73 and don't forget to get on the air.

73. John Melfi, W27CB 

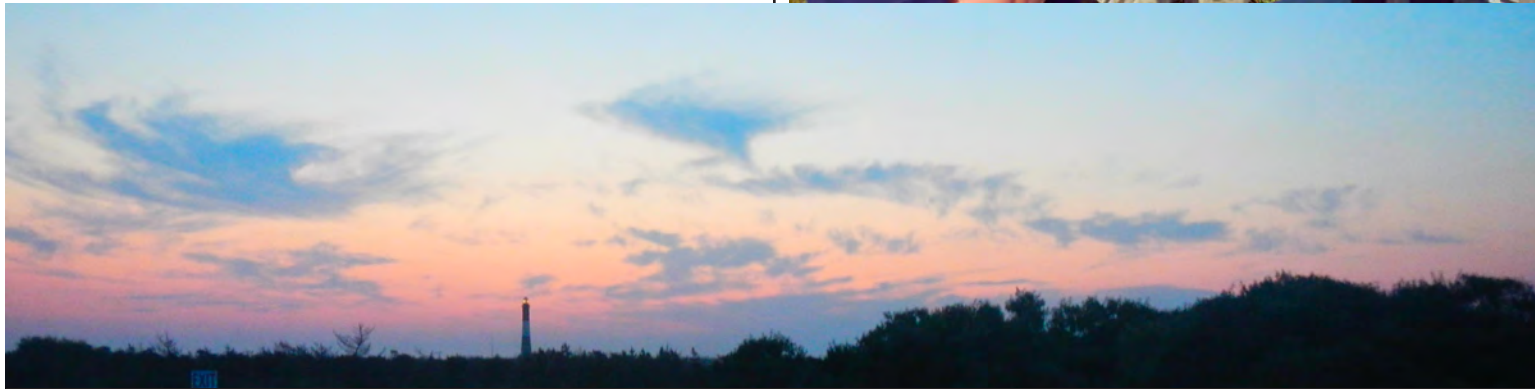


K2H Special Event

Special Event Station K2H may have set a new standard for giving a statewide thank-you in New York. Coordinated by Lou N02C with a committee consisting of Salli K2RYD, Mike KC2SYF and Caryn KD2GUT, we hoped for the very best – and we do believe we got it! “Kilo Two Heroes” operated in 50 of the state’s 62 counties, collecting 24,447 QSOs along the way, tallied among 1,682 U.S. counties (that’s half of those in the nation) and a total of 135 countries around the world. Our 113 operators called QRZ on SSB, CW, EchoLink, FT8, SSTV, PSK, EME, UHF/VHF and MSK 144 “Rocks” Meteor Scatter.

Our statewide activation didn’t go for the big numbers (though we got them anyway, with 650 logs submitted). We were going for the big thanks, the heartfelt ragchews and the stories. So many of us saw or heard the live streamed QSO between Peter Portanova W2JV and Harry Przekop WB9EDP, an infectious disease specialist who, minutes into the exchange, was overcome by the helplessness of the moment while still expressing courage and hope. So many K2H operators reached out to other K2H operators asking how they could help them succeed: Could they drive an hour or two to activate an additional county or two as mobile or portable? Jump onto EchoLink and include a large group of well-wishers in India a part of the effort? Ask -- and it somehow happened.

How do you express New Yorkers’ endless appreciation to the men and women who risked front-line duty in their many avocations – from medical and enforcement to culinary, retail and mortuary? We did it in the way amateurs always do best: we keyed the mic, we pressed the keyer, we tuned up and we transmitted. What a month it was. When the trauma of these awful days and nights can be put behind us (soon, please), let Kilo Two Heroes be one part of the COVID-19 pandemic we will be grateful to always remember because we helped the voices of gratitude and hope express themselves – and the world heard it all. 🇺🇸



Looking forward to the return of “normal.” Here are a few photos from past Field Day and FILH events.—AB2ZI

Updated Review of the QRP Labs Clock Kit

By John Smale, K2IZ



A few years back I discovered the QRP Labs website. I purchased and built their clock kit and did a review for the Compass. I have also purchased two of their very popular QCX QRP transceivers.

Since then the clock has been a part of my shack, always showing accurate GMT, longitude, latitude and the Maidenhead Grid location for my QTH. I knew there were some other features but I was happy with the way I had it set up.

Quite a few of us are waiting for Hans to release his new multi-band QRP kit so we are keeping an eye on his website. I noticed that there were upgrades available for both the clock and the QCX transceivers. My chip for the clock was version 1.01. There had been another update a few years earlier but now version 1.03c was being offered. This is the list of the updates so far:

Firmware version history

Date	Features
16-Feb-2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Negative altitudes in the #AF tag are now displayed (were previously set to just 0)- Bug fix: incorrect weekday calculation (affects #DA, #D3, #LA, #L3)- Bug fix: incorrect local date month on new year's eve for locations who are behind GMT
16-Sep-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Bug fix: incorrect weekday calculation (affects #DA, #D3, #LA, #L3)- Bug fix: Occasional quick change of #GT and #GS rapidly between small and large numbers
09-Sep-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Bug fix: Typo in day of week, "Saturday" was written "Saturdayday"
06-Sep-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Added #UH, #UM, #US tags for Greenwich Sideral Time- Added #TH, #TM, #TS tags for Local Sidereal Time- Added #AF tag for altitude in feet- Added #DA, #D3 tags for UT weekday in full and 3-letter abbreviation respectively- Added #LA, #L3 tags for Local weekday in full and 3-letter abbreviation respectively- ADC now averages 100 samples to reduce noise (for temperature calculation etc)- Bug fix: Local date now fixed (was showing yesterday)
08-Oct-2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Bug fix: T1 & T2 were overridden by relay outputs. Now if the relays 1 and 5 are not configured on any alarms, the inputs can be used for temperature measurement

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04-Oct-2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Add tags #ND, #NM, #NY for local date days, months and years (taking into account local time offset) - Upgrade Clock firmware to require only .hex installation, as for other QRP Labs kits - Added 10 alarm settings, each with start/stop that can control I/O and relays, and be enabled individually - Add Alarm Local setting, when ON the alarm times use local time (otherwise UT) - Local time offset configuration parameter changed to 3 digits (enough for all world timezones) - Add tags #R0 to #R5 which display 1 or 0 to show the state of the specified relay or I/O signal - Add tag #GD for GPS Ground Speed - Add tag #GC for GPS Ground Course - Add tag #AL to show bell icon if the alarm is enabled - Add tags #DT and #DN for Decimal degrees latitude and longitude - Add tags #ST and #SN for Degrees Minute Seconds latitude and longitude format - While running, Right button now toggles enabled state of alarms - Enable Alarms setting is now an ON/OFF selection - Add lowercase characters, if enabled by new “Lowercase” setting - Six new tags #I0 to #I5 which display raw ADC inputs - 10 new tags #A0 to #A9 which display alarm times - Optional extended tag formatting ##s1NN where NN = tag, s = start character, l = length - GPS Checksum validation, same as Ultimate3S, if enabled by new “GPS Checksum” setting - Display “Setting up” message during operator-initiated factory reset - Bug fix: 6th character of Maidenhead locator incorrect in some cases - Bug fix: Line1 Factory reset was missing last two characters - Bug fix: Properly display temperatures of 100 or over
01-Dec-2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Just a recompilation under latest AVR Studio on Win 10. No new functionality or changes!
31.Aug.2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for 4 x 20 LCD. - Local Time Offset entry, in minutes. - #LH and #LM tags for local time hours and local time minutes. - #H2, #AP tags for local time hours in 12-hour format, and “AM”/”PM” display. - Added alarm function: Alarm, AlarmOn params. To cancel Alarm, press Right button. - Bug fix: Factory reset copied 2nd display line on 1st, and did not reset second display line - Bug fix: Factory reset put temperature calibration values to non-Factory values. - Bug fix: If GPS latitude/longitude displayed on top row, it could cause some display corruption of row 2 in some cases. - Bug fix: Long message strings, overwrite the top LCD line when looping through menu.
08.Apr.2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Original kit firmware version

The upgrade is easy: There’s some disassembly and you need to remove the old chip and install the new one. Of course now the setup must be reconfigured following the version c1.03c manual. This is when it got interesting: First of all I learned a couple of new words, Concatenating and Sidereal Time. Yes, I had to look them up. There is still so much to learn. Second of all I found it difficult to set a lot of the parameters. The instructions are there; it’s just that the arthritis in both my hands makes it somewhat painful to keep pushing the buttons. For a younger person it shouldn’t be a problem.

This is the list of the latest features:

- GPS date, time and other parameters, using a GPS module such as the QRP Labs QLG1
- Location (latitude, longitude and altitude) and Maidenhead grid square or subsquare
- Display of UT date, time and weekday
- Display of local date, time and weekday
- Display of Greenwich and Local Sidereal Time
- Configurable time zone offset, with display of local date and local time

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Let's get creative this year on Field Day

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU



Since many of us are still hunkering down, and that doesn't look like it's going to change much by the end of June, Field Day is going to be a lot different this year. Our club has cancelled our club event, and I'm really going to miss helping newcomers operate the GOTA station, the food, and all the camaraderie. That doesn't mean that Field Day can't still be fun, though. Let's get creative!

First, note that the ARRL has modified the Field Day rules for this year. The biggest change is that Class D stations, that is home stations using commercial power, can now work other Class D stations for points. Previously, this wasn't allowed.

The second change is that the ARRL will publish aggregate club scores this year. In previous years, this was only done for Class A and Class F entries. Remember, though, Field Day isn't a contest (yeah, right!).

Personally, I plan to operate 1B-Battery. I'm going to set up my KX3 on the front deck and power it with a LiFePo battery charged by a recently-acquired solar panel to get the 100 point bonus for alternate power. For an antenna, I plan to set up my 20m/40m fan inverted-V "GOTA antenna" in the front yard.

I'm going to shoot for other bonus points, too:

- Copy the bulletin—no brainer.
- Promote my location on social media—I am going to get on nextdoor and invite neighbors over to watch from an acceptable "social distance."
- Put some literature down at the bottom of the hill near the street and claim a public information table.
- Send a press release to the local online paper and claim a media publicity credit.
- Perhaps get someone under 20 to come and operate while I coach from an acceptable "social distance."

If Class B isn't your cup of tea, check out the presentation, "[Field Day and Social Distancing.](#)" by Anthony, K8ZT. It has a lot of great ideas, including ideas on how to operate mobile (Class C).

Field Day doesn't have to be a downer this year. Get creative and have some fun. ☺

—Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, is the author of the KB6NU amateur radio blog (KB6NU.Com), the "No Nonsense" amateur radio license study guides (KB6NU.Com/study-guides/), and often appears on the ICQPodcast (icqpodcast.com). When he's not thinking up new ways to enjoy Field Day, he likes to build stuff and operate CW on the HF bands.

QRP Labs Clock Kit Update, continued from page 5

- 10 alarms, which can be configured to switch on and off 6 different external relays or output signals
- Flexible configuration of the display contents
- Multiple messages can be set up to display sequentially on the display lines, for configurable duration
- Support for 4-line displays

Two analogue temperature sensors can optionally be connected to the kit, so that temperature measurements can be displayed (for example, indoor and outdoor temperature).

When the alarm is triggered, the Westminster Chimes tune is played through to completion, then stops. If you want to stop it immediately, you can press the button on the right. The instructions show a simple circuit for hooking up a speaker to one of the control leads so the Westminster Chimes can be heard.

The clock kit sells for \$19 and QRP Labs sells a custom-made case for \$22. Please note that the kits and case are coming from overseas. From the time the order is processed it takes between 6 to 19 days to reach a location in the United States.

Personally I feel there are quite a lot of features available for \$19. If you are proficient in metalwork or plastic you can make your own case. ☺

Sporadic E Skip Season is here

By Bob Myers K2TV



We have entered the spring-summer E-skip propagation season. This form of propagation comes about because of ionized clouds appearing usually between the middle of May and mid-August. There are a lot of theories as to why the ionized “clouds” appear in the E-layer of the ionosphere, but they are only theories. The bands mainly affected are 6 and 10 meters. Signals on these bands tend to bounce off the clouds and can travel distances as far as 1,300 miles on a single hop. If several clouds appear in succession it is possible to get two or three bounces enabling you to propagate a signal for quite a distance. Of course each bounce weakens the signal quite a bit, but using a Yagi antenna on CW or some of the newer digital modes such as FT8 can make contacts fairly easily as far as 3,600 miles. Some consider 6 meters, as a VHF band, only usable for line-of-sight propagation, but we amateurs know that the propagation rules are not written in stone. Unfortunately the ionized clouds do not appear on a scheduled or regular predictable time. Sometimes they will appear for the entire day and other times not at all. I think this is part of the magic of working DX and it gives the name “The Magic Band” to 6 meters.

Now the E-skip propagation allows us to work stations at great distances on the 6 and 10 meter bands, allowing those with a Technician license to get a taste of DX’ing. DX is not only stations in foreign countries, but on 6 meters DX is

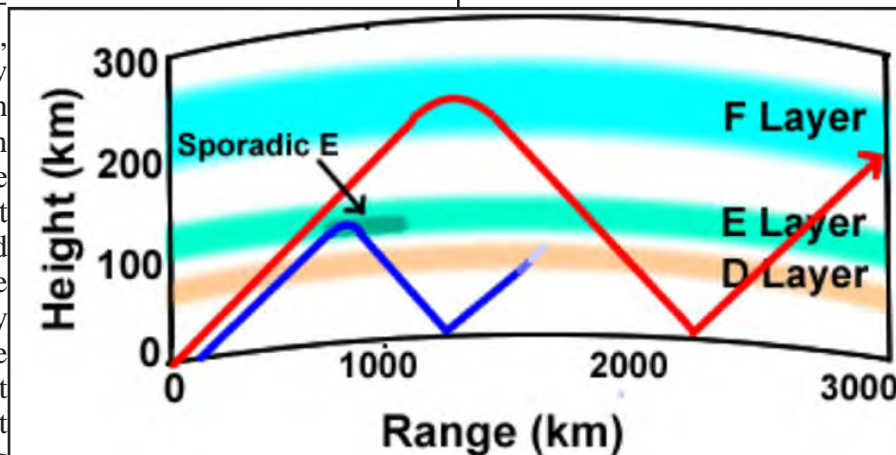
usually considered any station that is beyond line of sight.

Ten meters also has E-skip propagation and it usually occurs at the same time as on 6 meters. If the 10-meter band is open, then the 6-meter band might also be open.

Although a simple dipole antenna will work quite well once the band opens up, a small two- or three-element yagi will work even better. If you use a yagi, the convention is to keep it horizontally polarized giving a slight noise advantage and compatibility with most of the local line-of-sight stations. Sometimes it pays to experiment to see if your existing long wire or dipole antenna will tune and yield good results. For instance, a Mosley TA-33 triband beam will tune up and work on 6 meters. A 5/8 wave MFJ magnetic mount 2 meter mobile antenna will resonate on 6 and give excellent performance on E-skip and 6-meter FM on 52.525 MHz. There are also 6-meter repeaters. A very good open one on Long Island is the WB2CIK repeater on 53.110 MHz out and 51.330 MHz input with a 107.2 HZ PL tone. The repeater is located in Melville and is also linked with other machines on 2 meters and 70cm.

Here are some common frequencies to use for 6 meters:

- 50.080 to 50.100 CW.
- 50.100 to 50.120 DX window.
- 50.110 DX calling frequency.
- 50.120 to 50.250 SSB.
- 50.125 SSB calling frequency.
- 50.313 FT8.
- 50.400 AM calling frequency.
- 52.525 FM calling frequency.



So try tuning to the 50 MHz band, switch on your transceiver and give 6 meters a listen. You may be pleasantly surprised. 📻

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,
<http://www.huntingtonnyaresraces.org/>

Div. 3—Town of Islip ARES/RACES

Mondays 8:30 PM
EC/RO: Philip Jacobs, W2UV, 631-838-2500

Div. 4—Town of Smithtown ARES/RACES

Net: 145.430 MHz, PL136.5, Mondays 7:30 PM
EC/RO: Rich Johnston, KC2TON, 631-872-4039

Div. 5—Town of Brookhaven ARES/RACES

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

Div. 6—Riverhead ARES/RACES

EC/RO: Steve Casco, W2SFC, 917-701-3919

Div. 7—Southampton ARES/RACES

EC/RO: Removed & Currently Vacant

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: Eddie Schnell, WZ2Y, 864-973-9250

Div. 10—Shelter Island ARES/RACES

EC/RO: Vacant (Neal Raymond, N2QZA, SK)

Suffolk County

ARES/RACES Net:

Mondays 2100 Local—145.330/R (136.5 PL)

Alternate Frequency—146.820 (136.5 PL)

New York State

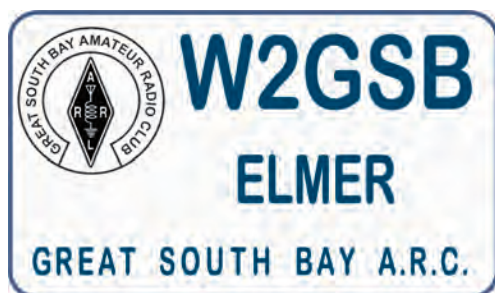
RACES Net (HF)

Sundays 0900 Local, 3993.5 KHz LSB

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" ☎



2020 VE Session Dates

- March 28th
- April 25th
- May 23rd
- June 20th
- July 25th
- August 22nd
- September 26th
- October 24th
- November 28th
- December 26th

CANCELLED

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 CSCEs you may have. Non programmable calculators are allowed. The exam fee is \$15 payable by cash or a check made out to "ARRL VEC."

Visit [FCC Universal Licensing System site](http://www.fcc.gov) to register for an FRN number to use on the paperwork.

The GSBARC Repeater List

146.685 W2GSB -shift 110.9 Hz
Enc/Dec

146.685 -shift 127.3 PL (south input
LINKED to 146.685)

438.475 WB2QGZ -shift 110.9 PL
LINKED TO 146.685

223.860 W2GSB -shift 110.9 PL Enc/
Dec w/ECHOLINK

223.860 -shift 156.7 PL Enc/Dec
Local use

440.850 W2GSB + shift 110.9 PL
Enc/Dec

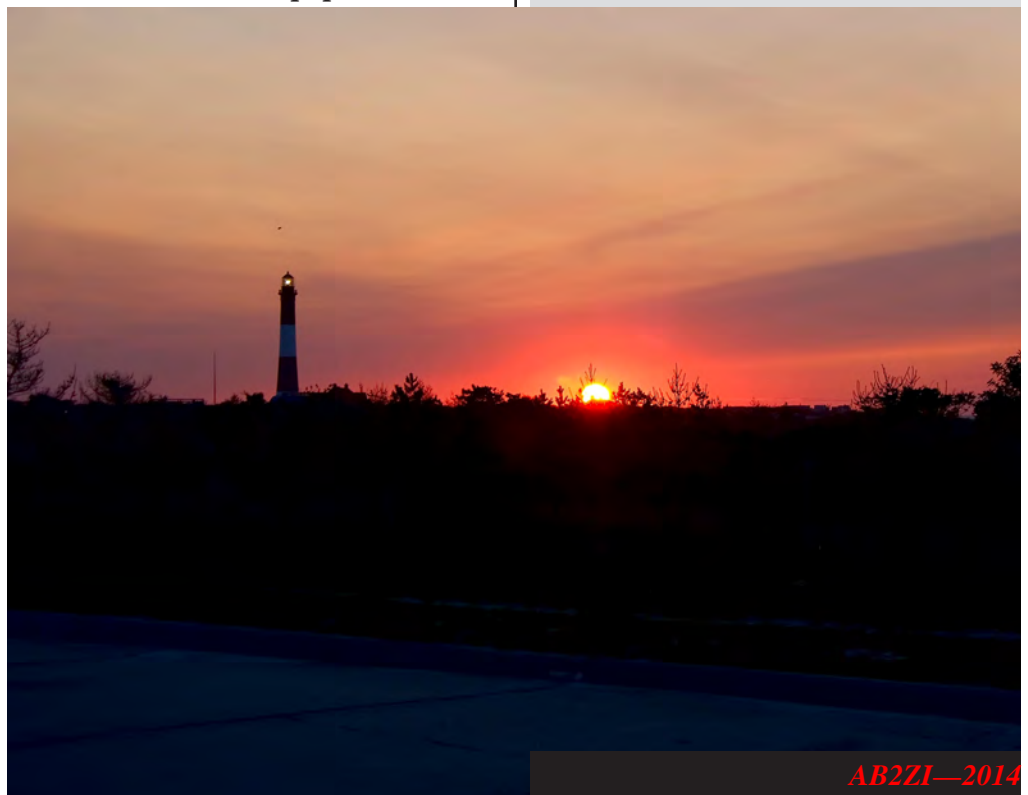
446.775 KB2UR -shift 110.9 PL
Enc/Dec Fusion Steerable

927.3125 W2YMM -shift D606 Enc/
Dec

440.250 W2TOB/B + shift DSTAR
REF020A Babylon

147.255 WB2TOB/C + shift DSTAR
Steerable

445.725 WD2NY/B -shift DSTAR
REF020A Selden



AB2ZI—2014