



THE COMPASS

Official Newsletter of the Great South Bay Amateur Radio Club

September 2017

Volume 45

Issue #9

Upcoming Club Events

Next General Meeting:

Thurs., Sept., 28th,
8 PM at the EOC

Upcoming Special Events

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

Currently running Technician Class.

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

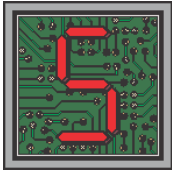
International Lighthouse & Lightship Weekend at Fire Island Lighthouse



Inside this issue of *The Compass*...

- *Fire Island Lighthouse Event Photos*
- *“Bug Light” Lighthouse Activation*
- *KB6NU's Guest Column*

President's Message



ummer is almost over. What am I saying? This year has been moving very quickly! I hope you enjoyed the Labor Day weekend. It was a busy one for our members, starting with the antenna take-down. Leon WA2LJW donated his complete antenna system to Walter KA2CAQ and on early Saturday morning Walter and I with the help of Mike KC2SYF and Ben KD2NOU and of course Bob K2TV, we got it down with no damage. As we were transporting the antenna system to its new home, our very active remote location operators were headed out to the Bug Lighthouse. If you were at the general meeting you might have heard Howard WB2UZE mention some more lighthouse events. Well I am very pleased to have another member step up and do a great job. When we were at the Fire Island Lighthouse, we talked about some other lighthouses around the island that have not been on the air in a long time or not at all. Howard WB2UZE did all the hard work of getting the information and all the permissions for us to do the Bug Lighthouse. So with that in mind on the night after the meeting, Mike KC2SYF and I went and loaded up the equipment needed for the event. I had plans of going but got a text from work so I had to stay behind.

So how did it go? They did a great job – many countries – and more than 150 QSOs in about four hours. (You can read more about the activation and the lighthouse elsewhere in this newsletter.) Thank you Howard WB2UZE, Mike KC2SYF, Patti KD2CFA, Lou NO2C, Salli K2RYD, Rich K2UPS and Ben KD2NOU, you all did a great job. The lighthouse staff has asked for a return trip to their lighthouse. Howard is also considering some other lighthouses to activate. So stay tuned!

As you know we do a lot of fun events and have a great time. So what else do we do? Well, most of you all know all too well what can happen here on the Island. Flooding is a major problem, trees down, power outages. I know that a

lot of you are very active when this happens but we really need a lot more amateur radio operators to get involved. It is great to have fun and we do a ton of that. If you have not considered doing any public service or emergency service radio operating, it not as hard as it sounds. Ask us! We will help you get started. We need a more operators who can be on the air during an emergency situation. By now you should all have heard that WD2NY is back on the air and is out east working great! Thanks to Pres W2PW, Bill WB2QGZ, and Kevin KD2BAH. It took them long many hours to get it all going so if you use that repeater make sure you all thank them when hear them or see them.

If you were at the Fire Island Lighthouse event, you'll know we had a great time from setup operation and tear down. We got there at 6:30 a.m. and were on the air by about 8:30. The weather was absolutely unbelievable. Conditions were not the best but we did manage to make a good number of contacts. It was like pulling teeth at one point. We were trying everything to make contacts, including switching bands. Let me share something about that. Make sure you always turn off your radio when you unplug or plug anything into a plug on the rear of it. Why, you ask? Well I thought I fried one of the new Icom radios – yes the IC-7600! I unplugged the external antenna tuner, moved over antennas and plugged the tuner back and pop! It went dead and yes the panic started. But I stayed calm and checked the manual and found an internal fuse. Actually Ben KD2NOU spotted it in the radio and it protects the radio. Luckily we had a spare fuse installed and the radio was happy again.

I want to thank everyone who was there. The setup crew did a great job and the operators were awesome as always and the take down crew did an awesome job. Walter KA2CAQ did a great job with all the permits and working with the park rangers and lighthouse staff. Thank you Walter for taking care of everything for that event.

On September 9th we held a class for the Northwell group. It was a one day tech class. I would like to thank all who helped out with the instruction and VE session. Instructors were NO2C, WB2QGZ, W2JGH, KD2GFO, K2TV, KD2EXM and myself. I am pleased to say all the students are now Amateur radio operators. The Northwell group provided a very nice room to teach this class and were very hospitable.

As you can see we stay busy so here is what we need from all of you we have some events coming up and we need operators for them.

October 29th is the Suffolk County Marathon. Please email John Blowsky at kb2scsjb@gmail.com

November 18th is the Hope for the Warriors run. Please email me at W2HCB@arrl.net

On September 10th we had the Babylon Village Fair at

Argyle Park. We were very VERY short-handed at this event! I would like to thank Walter KA2CAQ, Walt W2TE and Tom KA2D who showed up to help out. It was great to see Alice and Amelia who stopped by to say hello. Justin K2ZMB has been away for training and will be deploying in March with 101st in Communications division. Our normal spot is no longer where we are. If you were there and didn't see us, we were on the club simplex and the repeaters both 2 meters and 440 as well as DSTAR. I hope this is not going to be the case for the Hope for the Warriors Run and the other events we do.

Keep this in mind: Public service is a very important part of amateur radio. There are so many events all over the island and in our hometown of Babylon. We have a few – this is a busy time now through December. Please step up and help out. It's a great feeling. Besides, as Part 97 notes, the reason we have all those frequencies we all enjoy so much is that we provide a public service to the communities that we live in at no cost to them. We must stay active to ensure our future for amateur radio.

Step up and lend a hand for the above events. If you stay out of the public arena and hide when you do radio, these events get us out and we are seen by the public. I hope you all will be able to help at the events. We really need a tremendous number of operators for the Hope for the Warriors run in November. Please make every effort to help out with it this year. To all who have been there for the last nine times, thank you so much for everything you have done.

To all our ARES members, I hope you all have been working on those digital stations. On Monday nights, we do a digital net as part of the ARES net so if you need help please let us know. We can get you set and ready for the ease of this mode, which is a great way to pass information. Another tool is a website called www.ventusky.com, a great way to track tropical storms and hurricanes. It's very easy to use. I compare it to my tracking the eye software which I use. They both put Irma south of us but we did see another storm developing off the coast of Africa. Yes it is that time of year so be ready for power outages and all the other situations that appear during our weather events here on Long Island.

Speaking of being ready, on October 2nd we will once again be holding an on-air SET drill. I will be calling up a net sometime in the late afternoon that day. If you are so inclined and would like to drive to a location for the SET please let me know. The locations will be our three local shelters. It would great to have an operator at each of those locations for the SET. We will be doing a simplex message, repeater message and a digital message as well. We will be using the Radiogram and ICS forms for this SET. If you can go portable and have the capabilities to do all of what I have mentioned please let me know. W2HCB@arrl.net or INFO@gsbarc.org

The purpose of the SET is to see just how ready we are and if we can do what we say we can do at a moment's notice. Once again HF operators please assist in the emergency nets if you can as our lower states are getting beat up badly from Irma. In closing I would like you to have fun with all the great modes and features of amateur radio. Antenna maintenance is a very important job. Please before the weather turns cold get outside and double check everything this way you can enjoy the winter DX fun. The more we use the bands the better it is for us all!

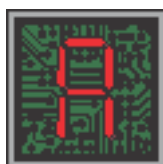
73. John Melfi, W2HCB 

Fire Island Lighthouse Event



ARRL Finally Realizes Status Quo Isn't Going To Cut It

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU



n item in the July 2017 ARRL board meeting caught my attention. It notes that a committee of staff members was tasked with identifying the challenges facing ARRL and possible solutions. The August 3, 2017 issue of the ARRL Letter ran the following report:

“ARRL Chief Executive Officer Tom Gallagher, NY2RF, presented the report of six Headquarters staffers who had been tasked with identifying the challenges facing ARRL and devising feasible solutions. Specifically, the committee addressed market research findings that have continued to reveal that only a small percentage of new hams join the League, and only about one-half of new hams actually get on the air.

“The committee began with the premise that ARRL must act in order to remain relevant going forward. It proposed instituting a Lifelong Learning Program to focus on developing a clear developmental path for all radio amateurs, from newcomers to established radio amateurs. The committee recommended the creation of new programs and services to increase the knowledge base of newcomers in order to get them active, as well as programs to keep experienced amateurs up to date with changing technology and practice.”

The board meeting minutes were a little more detailed:

“Mr. Roderick yielded the floor to CEO Gallagher who presented the report of a committee of staff members tasked with identifying the challenges facing ARRL and possible solutions. The members of the committee – Diane Petrilli, KB1RNF; Norm Fusaro, W3IZ; Becky Schoenfeld, W1BXY; Debra Jahnke, K1DAJ; Steve Ford, WB8IMY; and Sean Kutzko, KX9X, joined the meeting at 9:20 AM, to present this report. Their findings show the importance to ARRL of getting newly licensed hams actively on the air and how that relates to continued growth of the organization. In order to achieve that goal, the committee proposed developing a lifelong learning department, which would address the needs of all amateurs with the focus being on

developing a clear knowledge path for all amateurs. They proposed creating straightforward programs and services to enhance the knowledge base of new amateurs as well as to enhance their sense of community within the hobby.

“Another recommendation involved refocusing the priorities of the emergency preparedness department to address the current trends in public service.

“A third recommendation was to improve the value proposition of membership. The committee proposed doing a survey, which would include test material that is targeted to the interests of newer hams. The content would include a strong emphasis on serving communities, agencies, and partners; digital communications, and human interest. Projects would be simple. The survey would obtain information on new ham’s interests and needs in the hobby. The survey would also try to determine the delivery system that might best meet the newcomer’s desire for receiving this type information (print, digital, messaging, etc). The test material is proposed to be delivered to recipients in fall 2017.

“From the committee’s vantage point, the status quo is no longer adequate: we need to have a vision of the future and convey it to our current membership. If we do not convey the need to change the paradigm, the ARRL’s relevancy will not move forward.”

The good thing here is that the ARRL finally realizes that there are some serious problems. I’ve written about these in the past. I’ve challenged the ARRL to set a membership goal of 25% of the licensed amateurs in the U.S (<http://www.kb6nu.com/arrl-membership-is-25-asking-too-much/>). I’ve also encouraged the ARRL to play a bigger part in emergency communications research (<http://www.kb6nu.com/go-big-go-early-go-fast-smart/>).

Unfortunately, it appears that the ARRL is approaching this issue in typical ARRL fashion. That is, working on these issues in their little cocoon in Newington and then issuing these statements as if they expect everyone to just fall in line. I quote, “From the committee’s vantage point, the status quo is no longer adequate: we need to have a vision of the future and convey it to our current membership.” That approach is doomed to failure. Any “visioning” or strategic planning that doesn’t get the membership involved right from the start just isn’t going to work.

The ARRL HQ staff just doesn’t have the horsepower to pull this off properly. The staff is already pretty bare bones, and they still have to publish QST every month, keep Logbook of the World running, process thousands of license applications, etc., etc. The only way this is going to be a fruitful effort is if they get members—and lots of them—involved in this process.

If you agree with me, please let your director know. Contact your director and tell him that you want to be involved.

Great South Bay Arc Makes A 'DXpedition' To Long Beach Bar Lighthouse (Bug Light) On September 2, 2017

By Howard, WB2UZE



A few lucky hams had the exhilarating experience of making a boat trip to Bug Lighthouse for a day of radio fun. Salli K2RYD, Lou NO2C, Mike KC2SYF, Patty KD2CFA, Ben KD2NOU, Rich K2UPS (President of Nassau ARC) and Howard WB2UZE made the trip. Bug Light is a 20-minute boat ride from Greenport, positioned northeast of Shelter Island in Gardiners Bay. Here is a short introduction to this lighthouse's history:

The much-photographed Victorian structure is a near-replica of the original built in 1870. The original structure was on screw piles (metal shafts), fully exposed underneath the house, which led to its colloquial name of "Bug Light" because at high tide it looked like a giant water bug. Here is a photo how the original house looked:



The original structure was destroyed by arsonists on the night of July 4, 1963. During 1989-1990, hundreds of local people donated financial support, material and equipment to rebuild Bug Light. The replacement lighthouse was built on shore at the Greenport Yacht and Shipbuilding Company. After completion, it was launched down the yard's marine

railway on to barges while a Navy band played followed by a 21-gun salute. The whole reconstruction project, based on original blueprints, took only 60 days and the placement of the new house on to the existing foundation took only one day. There is a story about a local fisherman who sailed by the lighthouse's empty foundation that morning and when he returned that evening and saw a complete working lighthouse, he doubted his vision and his sanity. All of this makes the rebuilding of Bug Light one of the most unique lighthouse restoration projects in the world.

So how did our trip come about? During Lighthouse Weekend at Fire Island Lighthouse, President John Melfi W2HCB and Howard WB2UZE were discussing what other lighthouses GSBARC might operate from with perhaps even the intention to activate all the Long Island lighthouses as a club project. Of particular interest to John was Execution Rocks Lighthouse. Howard had previously done some research on potentially operating from there and some of the other Long Island lighthouses, and promised to get back to John with a report on where radio operations were possible. We learned Execution Rocks was possible but at \$175 per head it was out of the picture for the moment so Howard then concentrated on finding a next-best scenario.

Long Island has 20 lighthouses. Many are on shore and a number are on islands or piles of rock with some even being dangerous to reach by boat. The Coast Guard some years back put many of these lighthouses up for auction as they were no longer needed for navigational purposes. Some of the more interesting lighthouses on the east end of Long Island are now privately owned and getting permission to operate there would be difficult.

In calling the various societies that own some of the lighthouses of Long Island, we immediately got permission to operate from Bug Light and also Cedar Island Lighthouse in Sag Harbor. Bug Light being the more interesting as it is off shore, was what we concentrated on first.

Jen Curtin of the East End Seaport Museum in Greenport, the current owners of Bug Light, graciously agreed to give us permission to operate there. Howard explained in detail to Jen what would be involved to set up ham radio at the lighthouse and he described the professionalism of our group and the fact that we every year operate from Fire Island and Horton Point Lighthouse. We offered full references including insurance coverage. We also explained that our group operated from the White House area last year and was cleared by Homeland Security so we are trustworthy and know what we are doing. Howard mentioned that Bug Light would become famous around the world as many radio operators would be learning about the light and its location. All of this fascinated the board of the museum to

Continued on page 6...

Bug Light, continued from page 5...

the point where their chairman Bob Christensen remarked that "this sounds really cosmic." Hence the museum really rolled out the red carpet for us and quickly too.

Having gotten the permission on a Wednesday for the upcoming weekend it was coincidental that the GSBARC general August meeting was the next day, Thursday August 31. The reason this particular weekend was ideal was the fact that the museum was running two boat trips which would give us the opportunity to stay five hours at the lighthouse. So on very short notice we had seven hams ready to go which was quite remarkable being that it was Labor Day weekend and that some of those same hams had already committed to take down an antenna on that Saturday morning. Those hams who agreed to go were for the most part the backbone of the club's NPOTA White House crew, so they are all experienced portable operations hams. They all knew how to mobilize, what to bring and to get it all together at the drop of a hat.

We decided to operate three stations; two full-time SSB and one full-time CW. The rundown of the equipment we took was:

CW: KX3 and amplifier giving us 100w into a telescoping home brew 31-ft. vertical with 2 radials

SSB 1: TS480 into a Transworld antenna

SSB 2: ICOM 7100 into a Chameleon antenna set up vertically.

Besides all the rigs, we brought two small Honda generators, backup batteries and some spare antennas just in case of any failures. Once at the lighthouse we knew there would be no chance to get supplies so it was prudent to have alternatives. The lighthouse has no electricity, running water or food. Toilet facilities are similar to those on a small boat. We all prepared for this accordingly.

To our surprise we learned after contacting the Amateur Radio Lighthouse Society (ARLS) the day before our trip, that most of Long Island's lighthouses have been activated by hams already. In fact we were going to be the fourth known activation of Bug Light because there have been regularly scheduled boat visits over the years. The previous activations were some years ago before the time of the current owners of the lighthouse; the East End Seaport Museum. In fact the ARLS was so interested in our activation they sent out an email blast to scores of their ham members who were waiting anxiously for us.

On September 2, we all arrived at noon at the East End Seaport Museum in Greenport (very unfortunately minus John Melfi who at the last minute was called into work),

from where the first boat the Peconic Star 2 was going to leave. Jen Curtin met us and discussed the logistics. We were allowed to drive our trucks on dock right up to the boat which made transferring our supplies quite easy. The boat had about 15 other passengers who were going to visit Bug Light for an hour and then leave for a continuing tour of other lighthouses in the area (only viewing from the boat). It took 20 minutes to get to the Bug and the view of the lighthouse coming closer and closer was eye-catching and pulling up to its dock was very exciting. The weather was holding with about 68 F under partly cloudy skies and luckily no rain. Atmospheric radio conditions improved a bit upon our arrival which was encouraging as a few hours prior they looked dismal.

It took us about 30 to 45 minutes to set up and during that time period Yvonne Lieblein from the museum was giving a lecture about Bug's history. She requested that Howard address the tour group and explain what we hams were going to be doing. To our pleasant surprise we found many of the group quite interested and in our CW too. This group left about 1:30 p.m. and we had the whole lighthouse to ourselves until 4:30 p.m. when the next boat arrived with visitors. Dave Abatelli of the museum stayed with us the entire time which we appreciated. Everything continued as planned without a hitch.

If you look at the photos of the lighthouse, you will see the first floor has a balcony wrapping around the entire structure. We set up one station inside and two on the balcony. The two verticals were fixed to the balcony and the Transworld antenna was put right on the rocks near the water's edge. Being right near the water gave us a terrific ground bounce. As experienced portable operators, we always know that operating near the ocean is ideal for getting out.

Mike KC2SYF had Ben KD2NOU had the first station up and running on 20m SSB and made many contacts very quickly. Salli K2RYD and Lou NO2C were on 40m SSB and were doing well also. The CW guys Rich K2UPS and Howard WB2UZE had to use 17m as our antennas were too close for operating two stations per band. Both 17m and 15m were open but there was very little activity. So the SSB guys in the first hours did the most QSOs. At the end of the day, 30m opened which is only a CW band and we were quite lucky to contact YJ0AT in Vanuatu, an island in the Pacific near Australia, who gave us a 559. He was doing a holiday-style DXpedition with only 100w to a vertical so getting through to him vertical to vertical made us all feel quite accomplished.

As mentioned, there was a second group of visitors that arrived at 4:30 p.m. and by 5 p.m. we started to break down as that last boat was due to leave at 5:30 p.m. Breakdown and loading on the boat was seamless and we arrived back

in Greenport having made 154 QSOs into 35 states and 15 countries. We reached the West Coast of the U.S., as far east as southern Russia, down to Brazil and of course into Vanuatu. If we had another hour or two, we believe that 30m and 20m would have provided us even more DX perhaps into Japan, Australia and New Zealand on CW.

We arrived back in Greenport at about 6 p.m. Jen Curtin gave us a nice tour of the museum after we loaded up the cars. We all felt we could have spent a few hours more at the Bug and time flew by very quickly. In fact it would have been nice to be able to sleep over and do a longer operation. The museum has not done something like that in years as the location is not necessarily set up for overnighting.

All in all, an experience like this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and something our crew will always remember and will be talking about. There are other lighthouses we can activate but it might be difficult to get to any of the offshore ones for reasons of expense or them being off limits due to private ownership.

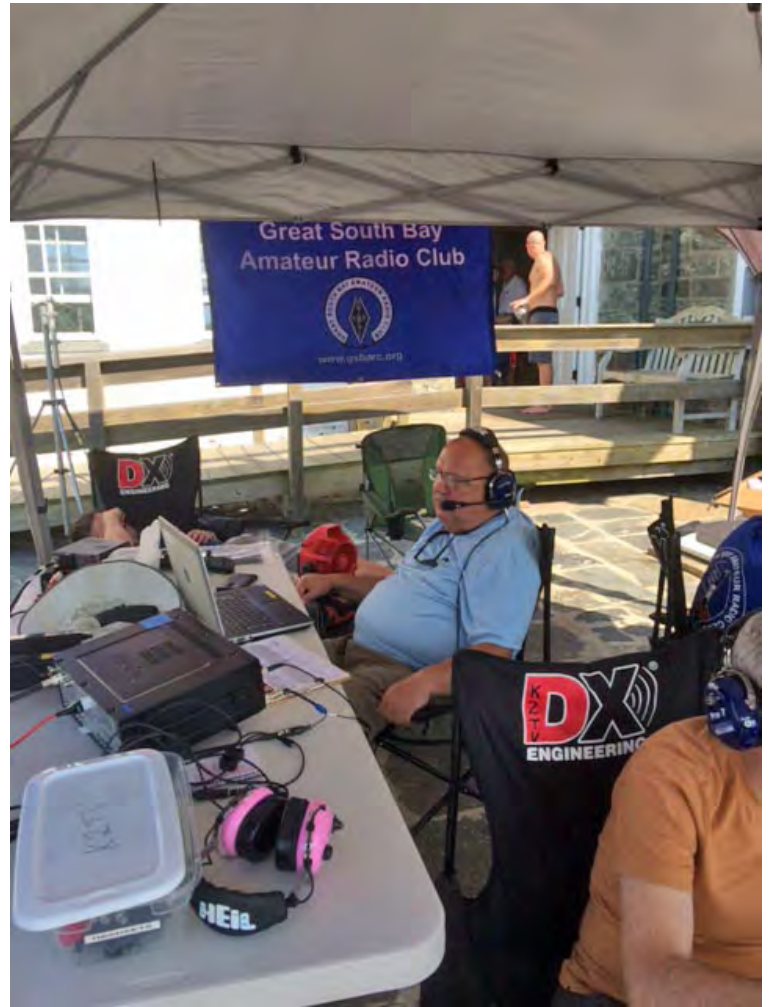
In looking back at this event, GSBARC can be proud that they have the ability to take advantage of these memorable types of opportunities such as operating from the White House, Governors Island and now remote Bug Light. We should all endeavor to do more of these type of activations whether here on Long Island or at other interesting sites in the tristate area. 📍



KB6NU's column, continued from page 6...

The status quo of having the HQ staff not working with the membership “is no longer adequate.” That’s how we got here in the first place.

Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, is the author of the “No Nonsense” amateur radio license study guides and blogs about amateur radio at KB6NU.Com. You can reach him by emailing cwgeek@kb6nu.com. 📍



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

Div. 3—Town of Islip ARES/RACES

Mondays 8:30 PM
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: 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: 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, N2NEL, 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—146.820 (136.5 PL)

New York State

RACES Net (HF)

Sundays 0900 Local, 3993.5 KHz LSB

Notice: Beginning Sept. 7th, 2017 anyone convicted of a felony will be required to disclose the details on FCC form 605 and will be subject to further review before a license is granted.

2017 VE Session Dates

- September 23rd
- October 28th
- November 25th
- December 23rd

2018 VE Dates

- January 27
- February 24th
- March 24th
- April 28th
- May 26th
- June 16th
- July 28th
- August 25th
- September 22nd
- October 27th
- November 24th
- December 22nd

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".

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

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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GSBARC Free License Class Schedule:

Technician: Sept. 5th thru Nov. 14th

Note: All Classes Tuesday evenings from 7 to 9:30 PM. Class text book is the current ARRL License Manual for that level. For more info email Kevin, AB2ZI at kmorgan6@optonline.net