

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

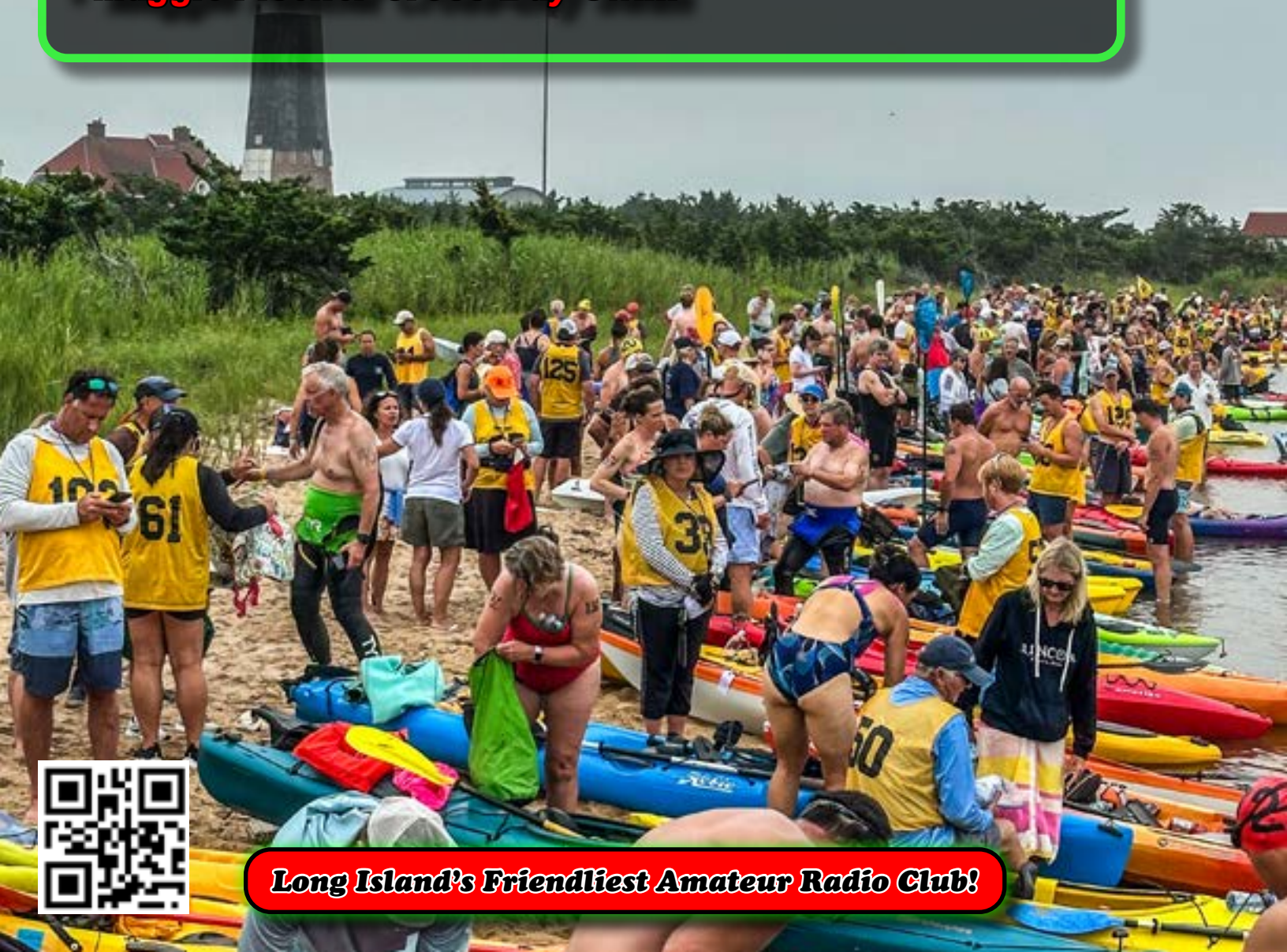
August 2025

Volume 53

#8

Inside this edition:

- **NOTE: All GSBARC Official Meetings begin at 7:30 PM!**
- **Technician License Classes Running Tuesday Evenings from 7 - 9 PM in the EOC and Running Through August**
- **Is ARRL Membership Worth It?**
- **AB2ZI'S YouTube Picks**
- **Maggie Fischer Cross-Bay Swim**



Long Island's Friendliest Amateur Radio Club!



Great South Bay Amateur Radio Club, Inc. Upcoming Meeting and Events Schedule



2025

- **August 14th** — Board Meeting
- **August 16th & 17th** — International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend @ Fire Island Lighthouse
- **August 28th** — General Meeting



- **September 7th** — Babylon Village Fair
- **September 25th** — General Meeting
- **October 19th** — Suffolk County Marathon
- **October 30th** — General Meeting



- **November 13th** — Board Meeting
- **November 20th** — General Meeting — Nominations
- **December 18th** — Annual Business Meeting and Elections

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



August is here! I started this message while I was sailing a few hundred miles off the coast of Alaska.

It was good to see many HF antennas in Alaska. While on a land tour, I ran into a few guys from China who were also ham operators. We talked for a while, and they stated that they worked our station at the Fire Island Lighthouse on FT8 in 2024 and 2023. They were at Lighthouse CN0001 in Jinxianding. They are hoping to work W2GSB again this year. Our trip was good, it is very beautiful up there and the air is so much cleaner than over here.

International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend is approaching fast. We will bring two radios, a BuddiHEX and a 40-meter Transworld. Our modes will be dependent on conditions. The conditions have not been great lately. So please keep an open mind and come on Aug. 16. The rain date is Aug. 17.

Setup time will be 7:30 a.m. We will meet in Field 5 at 7 a.m. local time. We will need around 8 people for setup and takedown, more is better. Teamwork gets us set up quickly and on the air before most lighthouses, so it is important to get us on the air as soon as possible. New York State starts charging its fee for park access at 6 a.m. so if you are an early-riser, take sunrise pictures of the lighthouse. Things to bring to the lighthouse station include: sunglasses, bug spray and sunblock.

I cannot stress this enough! Please bring a chair for yourself. CW operators please bring your own Key. All operators: We are the DX for this event. Call CQ! Please do not hunt and pick. Our call is "CQ CQ CQ W2GSB International Lighthouse Lightship Station CQ CQ CQ." Your reply will be ----- 59 US0019 Fire Island Lighthouse." Get their report back then say "----- 73 QRZ CQ CQ CQ W2GSB Fire Island Lighthouse." Everyone gets a 59 report.

Then on Sept. 7, we will be at the Babylon Village Fair to assist if there is an emergency. We will need operators to walk around the park. If you see something, call it in. Many operators will bring a chair and sit by the lake. Keep a sharp eye out for everyone's safety and any emergency situations. Just call net control and we will get the word out to village or county police to get aid. So, give us a good sense of the location so we can get assistance to the right spot.

We need to do some work on our solar panels on the trailer. To all our work-crew regulars: We would like to get it all done before the Suffolk County Marathon on Oct. 19. By the way, we still need operators for this very important event so if you can help us out, please email me at suffolkcountydec@outlook.com ASAP. If you have been part of this event before, we would like to assign you to the same posts you had previously.

It sure is nice to be home! There is nothing like your comfortable bed and a shower that has a lot of pressure – but being on the last frontier was amazing. The scenery was outstanding – the whales, the bald eagles. If you are a history buff, the history of the Gold Rush was very interesting. If you take a ride on the Alaskan railroad and White Pass Yukon railroad, it is like going back in time.

I did have a handheld with me and I was mostly scanning the marine band which was pretty cool when I was whale watching. Several cruise ships were talking to each other about spotting the whales.

Important note for all Hamshack Hotline users: As you know it will be going away so everyone should switch over to hams over ip. www.hamsoverip.com for new number asap.

We are in Hurricane Season ladies and gentlemen! Are we all ready? Do we have charged-up batteries to run our stations and handhelds? Are we all set up with Winlink and peer-to-peer communications? It doesn't take much to get up to speed. If you need help just ask us. Our RACES ARES AUXCOM team has many talented people who can assist you. All you have to do is ask.

It sure has been hot around here. Take advantage of our club room on Saturdays to cool off. The AC is working great. I hope to see a lot of you at the Fire Island Lighthouse event on August 16th (August 17th is the rain date).

— John Melfi, W2ZCB ©

Maggie Fischer Memorial Cross-Bay Swim 2025















PROBLEM SOLVING FLOWCHART



coolfuncub.blogspot.com

Ham Radio Conversations: Is Being an ARRL Member Worth it for Hams?

By Kevin, AB2ZI (ARRL Member)



The ARRL is the largest membership association of amateur radio enthusiasts in the United States and one of the most influential ham radio organizations in the world. Here's an overview of its history, functions, and impact:

History of the ARRL

- Founded: 1914 by Hiram Percy Maxim, an inventor and amateur radio enthusiast.
- Original Purpose: To organize a national system for relaying amateur radio messages across the country. At the time, long-distance amateur communication required cooperative message relaying from station to station—hence the name “Radio Relay.”
- Incorporated: In Connecticut in 1915, and later recognized as the national association for amateur radio in the U.S.

Core Functions

1. Advocacy & Representation

- Represents amateur radio interests before the FCC and Congress.
- Defends spectrum access and fights against potential regulatory or commercial encroachments.

2. Education & Licensing

- Publishes training materials, including the widely used ARRL License Manuals.
- Promotes licensing and offers support for Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (VECs) who administer ham exams.
- Sponsors youth education and STEM initiatives like Teachers Institute on Wireless Technology.

3. Emergency Communications

- Organizes and supports the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES®), providing trained radio operators for emergency and disaster response.
- Collaborates with FEMA, Red Cross, and local emergency management agencies.

4. Publications

- Publishes QST magazine, the most widely read amateur radio publication in the U.S.
- Also produces books, newsletters, and technical journals like QEX and National Contest Journal (NCJ).

5. Contesting and Awards

- Sponsors contests (Field Day, Sweepstakes, DX contests) that foster skill-building and international camaraderie.
- Issues popular awards such as DXCC, Worked All States (WAS), and VHF/UHF Century Club (VUCC).

6. Technical Development

- Provides technical assistance and resources for antenna design, propagation studies, digital modes, and more.
- Supports experimentation and innovation (e.g., software-defined radio, digital voice, and satellite communications).

7. Membership Services

- Offers QSL bureau services, equipment insurance, a regulatory information desk, and a mentoring program called Elmering.

Global Influence

While the ARRL focuses on U.S. hams, it also represents American amateur radio internationally through the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU), which it helped to found in 1925.



Pros of ARRL Membership

Advocacy & Spectrum Protection

- Defends your frequencies: ARRL lobbies Congress and the FCC to preserve amateur radio spectrum from commercial or government encroachment (e.g., broadband over power lines, 5G, etc.).
- Acts as the national voice of U.S. hams on regulatory issues, licensing reform, and RF interference.

Education & Licensing Support

- Provides study materials and training resources for all license classes.
- Supports Elmering, youth outreach, and school programs to grow the hobby.

Continued on next page...

Publications

- Includes a subscription to QST Magazine (print + digital)—a flagship technical and community magazine or "On the Air" magazine instead.
- Access to QEX, NCJ, newsletters, and online archives of decades of radio knowledge.

Contesting & Awards

- Enables participation in ARRL-sponsored contests, awards programs (DXCC, WAS, etc.), and Operating Events like Field Day.
- Recognition programs promote engagement and operating skill development.

Member Services

- QSL Bureau for international contacts.
- Equipment insurance and member discounts on books, gear, and travel.
- Access to technical help, regulatory advice, and the ARRL Lab for equipment testing or interference resolution.

Emergency Communications

- Supports ARES® (Amateur Radio Emergency Service) and works with FEMA, Red Cross, and local EMAs.
- Provides training, guidelines, and tools to become an effective emergency communicator.

Community & Representation

- Shows solidarity: joining supports your local club and national efforts.
- Encourages local club growth, mentoring, and public service visibility—especially for "Special Service Clubs."



Cons of ARRL Membership

Cost

- Annual dues (currently around \$49/year) may feel steep to casual or budget-conscious hams.
- Some content is paywalled, and non-members may feel they're missing out unless they subscribe.

Digital Shift vs. Tradition

- Some criticize QST for less technical depth than in years past, or too much focus on general-interest content.
- ARRL has been slow to modernize in some areas (e.g., digital infrastructure, open-source integration).

Perceived Bureaucracy

- Seen by some as too centralized or slow to act on member concerns.
- Occasional internal politics or board controversies may turn some away.

Limited Focus

- Primarily serves U.S.-based hams; international hams may find less benefit.
- May feel less relevant to hams focused on non-ARRL activities (e.g., satellites, FT8-only ops, maker-centric projects).


Value Perception

Some hams don't feel they get enough out of the membership to justify the cost, especially if:

- They're not contesters.
- They prefer online content or free resources.
- They aren't active in emergency communications.

Summary: Who Benefits Most?

<i>Ideal For</i>	<i>Less Ideal For</i>
Active club members	Solo operators with no club ties
ARES/RACES volunteers	Hams uninterested in public service or advocacy
Contesters, DXers, award chasers	FT8-only operators who rarely chase awards
New hams seeking structure	Veterans who already know the ropes and prefer free learning

(Note: The Great South Bay Amateur Radio Club is an ARRL Special Services Club (SSC), which is a club that exists to go above and beyond for their communities and for Amateur Radio. They are the leaders in their Amateur Radio communities who provide active training classes, publicity programs and actively pursue technical projects and operating activities.—Ed.) 



ARES/ RACES Information



Div. 1—Town of Babylon ARES/RACES
Net: 440.850/R, Sundays 8:45 AM
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,
Huntingtonnyaresraces.org/

Div. 3—Town of Islip ARES/RACES
 Wednesday 8:30 PM
Net: 147.345 +600/PL 100.0
EC/RO: Philip Jacobs, W2UV,
 631-838-2500
 Website: k2irg.org

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: Ed Wilson, N2XDD,
 631-484-8826

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:
Mon 2100 Local, 145.330/R (136.5PL)
Alt. Frequency—146.820 (136.5 PL)

New York State RACES Net (HF)

2025 VE Sessions

- ~~January 25th~~
- ~~February 22nd~~
- ~~March 29th~~
- ~~April 26th~~
- ~~May 31st~~
- ~~June 21st~~
- ~~July 26th~~
- August 30th
- September 27th
- October 25th
- November 29th
- December 27th

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. Nonprogrammable calculators are allowed. The exam fee is \$15 payable by cash or a check made out to "ARRL VEC."

IMPORTANT!

If you do NOT already have an FCC FRN (Federal Registration Number) you MUST [Visit the FCC Universal Licensing page](#) to register for an FRN to use on the paperwork.



Club Name Badges

Club name badges are available from **The Sign Man** (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"

GSBARC Repeaters

LINKED REPEATERS

146.685 W2GSB -shift 110.9 Hz
Encode - 127.3 or CSQ decode

146.685 -shift 127.3 Encode/
Decode (south — receiver site
linked to 146.685)

445.725 W2TOB -shift 110.9 PL
Enc/Dec Note: No Longer DSTAR

438.475 - shift 136.5 Hz Encode/
Decode

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
Encode, 127.3 PL Decode (NEW)

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 W2TOB/C + shift DSTAR
Steerable

Echolink W2GSB-R
 AllStar ACCESS NODE 465710
 affiliated repeater

KB2UQK 449.23750 - SHIFT 114.8
 ENCODE / DECODE

Portable Event Repeater (Trailer):
 KB2UR 446.3875 - 110.9 Enc/Dec
 W2GSB TRP

Club Apparel

Want a shirt, jacket, hat, sweatshirt or T-shirt with a Great South Bay club logo?

We use **VIKING** (previously Mr. Shirt) located at 80 East Montauk Hwy. in Lindenhurst. We now have a group order page.

[Click Here to Place an Order](#)

Now you can get color matched backgrounds on your logo too. Check them out...