



# THE COMPASS

Official Newsletter of the Great South Bay Amateur Radio Club

October 2017

Volume 45

Issue #10

## Upcoming Club Events

### Next General Meeting:

Thurs., Oct., 26th,  
8 PM at the EOC

## Upcoming Special Events

Suffolk County  
Marathon:  
Sunday Oct., 28th

Hope for Warriors Run  
Saturday, Nov., 18th

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](http://www.facebook.com/gsbarc)

## Public Service: ARES/RACES



*When all else fails and the blank hits the fan,  
Amateur Radio gets through...*

*Volunteers are still DESPERATELY needed for the November  
18th Hope for the Warriors Run.*

*Please help out this worthy event! Ham and/or GMRS  
operators.*

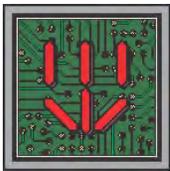
*Event is over at noon!*

*Email John Melfi, W2HCB at [radiorights@gmail.com](mailto:radiorights@gmail.com)*

## Inside this issue of The Compass...

- *K2TV on Hams' response to Puerto Rico*
- *Inside the Squirrel Cage: A column*
- *KB6NU's Guest Column*

# President's Message



welcome fall! I thought it would never come. It's time for antenna fun now that the cooler weather is here. Do you have a project you have been putting off due to the hot days? I know that scenario all too well myself. Who else has the antenna repair or tower project or cleaning out the garage? I know I plan on getting some things done around my QTH.

Speaking of projects, the new 2 meter repeater is approaching the final phase of building programming and testing. Ed KD2ADC, Pres W2PW and Bill WB2QGZ have been working tremendously long hours on it. I don't think a lot of you know that a number of members devote countless of hours of their time to work on the many projects and events for our club.

Now did you all see Bob K2TV on News 12 with Walter KA2CAQ, then on CBS Channel 2? Bob explained that providing emergency and community service is what amateur radio is all about. Yes we all like to contest, DX, ragchew and build and experiment. The FCC grants us the use of all those frequencies we all enjoy. Our payback is to provide public service to our communities as part of the agreement to maintain our end of the deal with FCC.

Speaking of community service, the Hope for the Warriors run is November 18th - I know that many of you signed up to help but we are 40 operators short. I thank all who have already signed up. I know that you are all been there year after year for this one. I want to thank you very much. If you have not signed up to help please email me at [w2hcb@arrl.net](mailto:w2hcb@arrl.net) ASAP. I have to start working on the logistics of where I am placing every one by the 1st of November. Please do not wait till the last minute.

Our open houses are always interesting. You never know what's going to happen. At the September 30th open house, two members acquired two HF stations for a great

price. One of them was a complete Ten Tec Cosair station and the other a Yaesu FT101B with an amp. Walt W2TE donated money to the club for the Ten Tec station and Phil KD2GFO donated money to the club to acquire the Yaesu. Both stations were donated to club from the YLs of Silent Keys. John W2JGH has been instrumental in taking care of logistics of getting the equipment to the EOC.

As we continue to grow our club, I often wonder as to how keep things interesting for everyone. Do have any ideas that you would like to see the club do? If you do please email us [info@gsbarc.org](mailto:info@gsbarc.org) - we would love to hear about some new things and ideas. As a matter fact, look at the special event stations. We do know we have added another lighthouse to our list and we are working on two others as well. It is great to see that more of our lady operators are getting on the air. They are doing a great job: BTW Salli K2RYD got bitten by the ham radio bug big time! I think Lou NO2C better watch out before she takes over the station completely. No joke, she is a great operator, loves to contest and work the parks on the air. Sorry to say but she is a little sidelined right now but I spoke with Lou and she is recovering from ankle surgery. Salli may not be able to ride her beloved horse for a while but she can sure be making contacts around the world. Get well soon Salli from all of us here at GSBARC!

In case you didn't know, we had computer meltdown at the W2TOB repeater but thanks to Bill WB2QGZ and Ores W2PW we are back up and running. This month we have a few things going on around that we are taking part in. October 14th is the Buddy walk at Tanner Park. October 28th is the Deer Park open house and October 29th is the Suffolk County Marathon. Please email John KB2SCS at [kb2scsjb@gmail.com](mailto:kb2scsjb@gmail.com) .

AREA Members and GSBARC members on October 7th-8th was the ARRL Simulated Emergency Test. Those who took part in it did a great job. The messages were given both voice and digital modes. One thing we noticed was a lack of stations up on digital. To be honest it took me a while but once I did I noticed the benefit of receiving a message in the digital mode. The software most use is FLDIGI.

To get it, go here: <https://sourceforge.net/projects/fldigi/files/latest/downloadalong>. You will also need FLMSG go here to get that <https://sourceforge.net/projects/fldigi/files/flmsg/> Some radios require FLRIG go here to get that <https://sourceforge.net/projects/fldigi/files/flrig/> One more thing you might want to check out is FLWRAP. It is used to send files and pictures. To get that, go here: <https://sourceforge.net/projects/fldigi/files/flwrap/> I just downloaded it and will be playing with it. I've heard a lot of good things about it. It is very important to keep your station capable of being able to provide the best mode for the situation. During the SET we noticed a few things: Net control was changed from operator to operator. When sending information in to net control we must remember to

slow it down -- I myself am sometimes guilty of going a little too fast when giving a message. It is always good to try and give a message as if you were writing it and wanted it to be very nice looking and legible.

How many times have I asked “is this station prepared for a loss of power?”

Battery backup is very important for your home station. A few years ago I wrote an article for our newsletter about how I do it. Well after the shack redo I made some changes I would like to share with you all.

### A revisit to my DC BACK UP SYSTEM



On the right is the West Mountain Radio Power Guard Plus. This device protects the radios and devices from over or under voltage spikes. The power guard is wired to the power supply terminals on the EZ - GATE 80 . The EZ-GATE 80 has two inputs the power supply and then DC battery. The reason why I switched to the EZ GATE 80 is it has a meter to see voltage and amps. The fuse determines the charging rate as follows fuse in 20 Amp charge no fuse 10AMP charge. The output terminals go to the two West Mountain Radio Rig Runners model number 4008. The lower one gets wired to the EZ-Gate 80 and the second one is wired from the lower rig runner to upper rig runner using one of the outputs.

My Battery supply is Two 12v [98A.H@20HR](mailto:98A.H@20HR) They're gel-cell sealed batteries. The part number is 8G31DTM. Not the cheapest batteries but worth every penny!



Whatever you do this month have some fun, stay safe, get on the air, get on the repeaters. They are there so use them! D-STAR is awesome and works great. Try it out! Don't be shy, new operators, let's hear you all have some fun. By the way Ben KD2NOU is the net control for the computer net check the website and yahoo groups for updates and news. WHAT??? You're not part of the yahoo group? Look for GSB-ARC and sign up. We send out reminders for meetings, open houses, VE sessions and when the weather gets bad, cancellations of classes, meetings and open houses are posted there.

If you know someone who did not get The Compass, please let us know so we can take care of that. Make sure you get the correct email address so we can fix it. It's October and soon it will be time to renew your club dues. Please renew early via PayPal, check or cash. The dues we all pay provide a lot of things for our club. Maintaining the club HF station the repeaters. Our great trailer which all enjoy. Ham Radio University will be January 6th and is at a new location please visit [www.hamradiouniversity.org](http://www.hamradiouniversity.org) for the complete details. Tom KA2D is the chairman for the event, so let's make sure we give him the GSBARC support .

One last thing: do you need a GSBARC shirt? How do I get one? Go to Viking at 80 East Montauk Hwy., Lindenhurst, NY 11757. Tell them you're a Great South Bay Amateur Radio Club member and pick out a shirt. You can even try on shirts and jackets, they have a showroom. They have everything: hats, jackets, shirts – so show your GSBARC pride. Speaking of which...I think I need to go there myself.

They will put your call sign on it and the club logo any shirt or jacket. It takes a few days after you order it for them to get it done. They take cash or credit, no problems. I am looking forward to some more members wearing some GSBARC apparel.

### Events to mark on your calendars:

- October 14th Buddy Walk Tanner park
- October 28th, Deer Park Fire Department Open House Event
- October 29th Suffolk County Marathon
- November 18th Hope for the Warriors run

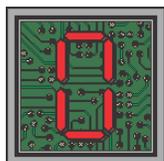
As I wrote this month's message amid the the pile of paperwork and stuff, I realized I need to clean my shack again. I could swear that not too long ago I did that. All I know is every time I clean it, it sure doesn't take long to be a mess again. What the heck it's like the movie “Groundhog Day.”

Have a great month everyone 73 W2HCB

73. John Melfi, W2HCB ©

# HAM? HAM radio? ham radio? Amateur Radio? amateur radio!

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU



In the ARRL PR mailing list, we've been discussing the proper way to refer to amateur radio. What brought this up was an email from one list subscriber, Richard, WB6NAH, who was (rightfully) proud of the work that his club—the Skagit Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Club—was doing. He noted that they were even featured in the police department's emergency preparedness brochure:

As you can see, the brochure refers to “HAM radio” and “HAM radio operators.”

Referring to amateur radio in this way just drives me crazy. “Ham radio” is just a nickname for amateur radio, and “HAM” is certainly not an acronym for anything. I congratulated Richard on getting his club included in the brochure, but noted, “...it's not HAM radio! It's either ‘amateur radio’ or ‘ham radio’ (ham is not an acronym). I hate to be nitpicky about this, but as a professional writer, this usage just drives me crazy.” He replied, “I agree on Amateur Radio, that was the city's call.”

That kicked off the discussion.

One ham replied to me privately, “Thank you...I am continually trying to explain that it is not an acronym or abbreviation.”

Another replied to the list:

The most correct term is “amateur radio” or alternatively “ham radio”, both written in normal case. If using “ham radio”, it is a best practice to first write “amateur (ham) radio” in the first non-header/non-title occurrence.

Some will write “Amateur Radio” in proper noun format

(first letters in caps) and while this may be acceptable to many and in certain venues, anyone using a style handbook will say it is incorrect. Less correct is to write “Ham Radio” in proper noun format as this is a slang term, albeit a popular one. Of course either term may be written as proper nouns when part of a title or name of an organization.

Least correct is to write “HAM” in all caps; as stated by others, ham is not an abbreviation or acronym. Writing it as “HAM” is completely wrong, will drive many people bonkers and should be avoided at all costs.

Ward, N0AX, offered this explanation:

To clarify where the capitalization originated, there is a long-standing ARRL Board Directive, decades old, stipulating that the words “Amateur Radio” be capitalized in ARRL publications and documents. Most non-amateur publications return it to the lower-case style that is used for non-proper nouns.

One guy got a little miffed that we were wasting our time discussing this at all:

You know, I've been reading this thread and I think people are getting too hung up on very minor details. The bottom line they got PR. So something wasn't spelled right or capitalized, so what. The message got out and IMHO that's the bottom line. Let's not waste any more bandwidth on this.

I agreed that it was great that they were included in the brochure, and that we were probably beating this topic to death, but I don't think these are minor details. I said that PR professionals pride themselves on getting the details right. So should amateur radio PR people.

I'll give the final word to Dan, AI4GK. He wrote:

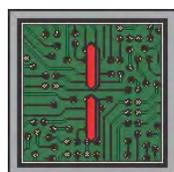
I don't think that standardizing what we call ourselves qualifies as getting hung up on minor details. If we don't have a standardized way of referring to us, how can we expect a public, who already is confused, to understand who we are?

I don't think that you can argue with this. Let's avoid confusion by using “amateur radio” when writing about our hobby/service. I'd even urge the ARRL to rethink their use of “Amateur Radio.” Sometimes, it may be OK to use “ham radio,” but it's just not correct to use “HAM radio” or just “HAM.”

*Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, is the author of the “No Nonsense” amateur radio license study guides and blogs about amateur radio at [KB6NU.Com](http://KB6NU.Com). When he's not picking nits about the name of our hobby, he teaches ham radio classes and operates CW on the HF bands. You can email him at [cwgeek@kb6nu.com](mailto:cwgeek@kb6nu.com). *

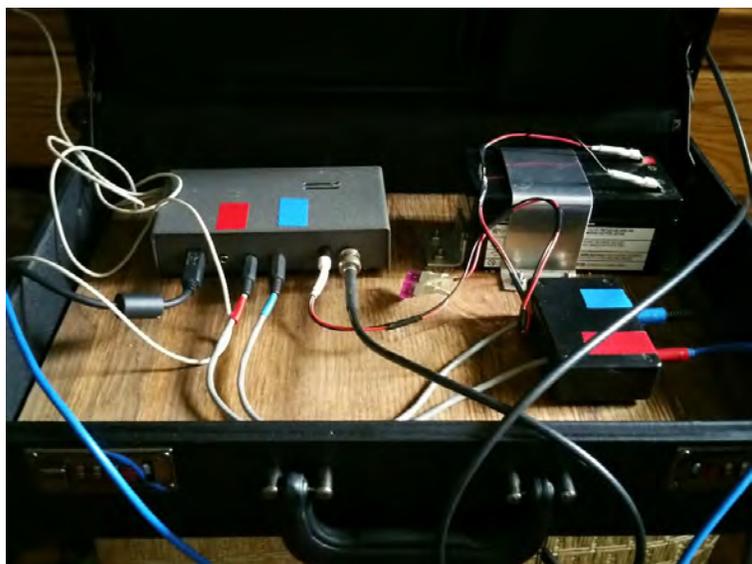
# Inside the Squirrel Cage

by Caryn, KD2GUT



In this month of Halloween, let's pause to pay tribute to one of the world's pre-eminent home-brewers: Dr. Viktor Frankenstein. Everybody knows that the lab monster he created and reanimated in the Mary Shelley classic wasn't exactly from Heathkit. The good doctor not only had to source his parts, he had to dig pretty deep to find them.

A late-comer to the hobby of amateur radio, I've always assumed that my own kit-build skills would be a horror show. I can embrace the joys of reanimation that others' skilled hands bring to the bench, but I have always had excuses as to why my own fingers would have to stick to flipping a switch. Until now.



Thanks to Ed KD2ADC, who breathed new life into a SoftRock RxTx as a way of helping me realize my hopes to go portable on a budget, I've become a bit reanimated myself

on this whole build-it-yourself concept. No, I didn't touch a soldering iron this time around or even do much more than glance at the schematic to see what was under the hood. But experiencing the final result – seeing 20 and 40 meters dance across a laptop screen with choreography courtesy of HSDR - I found myself channeling Gene Wilder in the Mel Brooks' masterpiece "Young Frankenstein." In the film, Wilder is the good scientist Frederick Frankenstein - Viktor's grandson - standing triumphantly and cheering over his homebrew creature. Just as the power begins to flow, he cries out: "It's----It's----IT'S ALIIIIIVE! IT'S ALIIIIIVE!" (The Frankenstein monster, of course, was hardly QRP. I'm sure Dr. F. had the equivalent of an amp at his disposal.)



But yes, it's alive all right, 1 watt and going strong. Something else has reawakened too: that old debate with myself about kit-building that I thought I had settled long ago by adopting an easier plug-and-play philosophy.

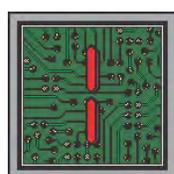
It's Halloween (or almost). I'm having quite a howl with this little rig. Maybe my own first real project won't end up a monstrosity after all. 🦉



*The Softrock RXTX Ensemble Kit*

# Emergency traffic from Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria

Bob Myers K2TV



normally do a lot of Radiogram traffic handling on the National Traffic System every day. Right after two hurricanes hit parts of the Caribbean, I started to get Welfare Radiogram inquiries into Dominica and Puerto Rico. I sent them on their way via the normal SSB traffic nets and the Winlink digital system (NTSD) not knowing whether they would get there due to the devastation from the storms.

I thought, well, maybe I should check the 20 meter emergency nets and see if they were taking traffic into the area. I soon found several stations in Puerto Rico on various frequencies sending traffic out of the area but no one taking traffic into the area. Of course there was a good reason for this: the communications infrastructure was totally destroyed. No cell service, no landline telephones and no electricity. There were only a few ham radio stations on the air because most had been destroyed, had lost antennas or had no power. The few stations that were on the air were operating with either battery or portable generator power and makeshift antennas.

I found Angel WP3R from Aricibo on the air on 14.240 MHz passing some welfare traffic into the States and offered to help pass some messages. Angel told us that the place “looked like an atom bomb had been dropped.” His antenna was still up, but was bent up pretty badly.

After signing with WP3R I tuned up the band a bit to 14.265 MHz and heard the Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network (SATERN) in action taking messages from the Caribbean. I was able to copy the Puerto Rico stations quite well and volunteered to help out as a relay station. The SATERN net control station would have several relay stations standing by and each would contact

a station having traffic. The individual station would take a telephone number, an addressee, a short message and a signature. After taking one or two messages, the receiving station would then turn it back to net control and make a telephone call to the addressee and deliver the message. After the messages were delivered, they would check back into the net and confirm to the sending station that the message was indeed delivered and see if there was a short reply. Now this was not in Radiogram form, but verbal. It was quick and effective. Having unlimited calling throughout the United States and Canada was a blessing, but even if it entailed a long-distance charge, I would have done it. Just hearing the relief of the people on the other end of the phone call was worth it. The SATERN group has been operating ever since the start of the emergency and has been continuing ever since.



**Bob, K2TV on Long Island's News12**

A day or so into my handling some traffic, *News12* Long Island called me and wanted to interview me. After a whirlwind cleaning and straightening up my shack, I had them come over. You don't want to see the inside of the room's closet, but that is a chore for another day. My shack looked presentable. Rich Barrabi did the interview and after editing, it turned out really well on the air. *News12* Long Island always shows amateur radio in a good light. A day later, I got a call from WCBS-TV channel 2 in New York City asking for an interview. I had worked at the CBS-TV broadcast Center in New York City for 40 years and this was like “old home week” when they stopped by. Jennifer McLogan was the reporter and she was at WCBS when I worked at the Broadcast Center. I was able to demonstrate the emergency nets for them as well as taking and delivering a message. Jennifer actually delivered one of the messages on the telephone.

One of the questions that was asked of me was “what would be ham radio's response if a hurricane happened here?” I explained that we were well-prepared for that at the Babylon Town Hall. I explained how our “GO KITS” with complete amateur radio stations would be deployed to shelters. The Emergency Operations Center contains several UHF/VHF and HF stations for emergency operations use as well. They wanted to see the EOC and the kits, so I picked



up Walter KA2CAQ and we went down to the EOC. They shot some video there which ended up on the air.

Finally I got a call from Newsday, Long Island's daily newspaper, and they interviewed me on the telephone. A nice story was printed online about our ham radio activities in response to the hurricane.

A few observations about the amateur radio communications: It is true that “when all else fails, there is amateur radio,” but one of the best assets that we have is the ability to tailor our mode of operation to the needs of a particular emergency. In this case, Radiogram messaging which normally would work did not work well because of the lack of on-site communications in the affected area. You could get a message there, but there was no way at the time to deliver it to a specific addressee. Having the individual stations send verbal messages out of the area and telephoning the recipient worked out well. It was fast and accurate.

The ARRL sent 50 ham radio volunteers to the affected area along with plenty of amateur radio GO-KITs and VHF repeaters. They are under the auspices of the Red Cross and have been sending back messages digitally and on SSB. The SATERN net continues to operate on 14.265 MHz at this writing. Several VHF repeaters have been set up to communicate around Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. ☺

# 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](http://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:** 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

- 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](http://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](mailto:Kevin, AB2ZI at kmorgan6@optonline.net)**