



Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club



RF News



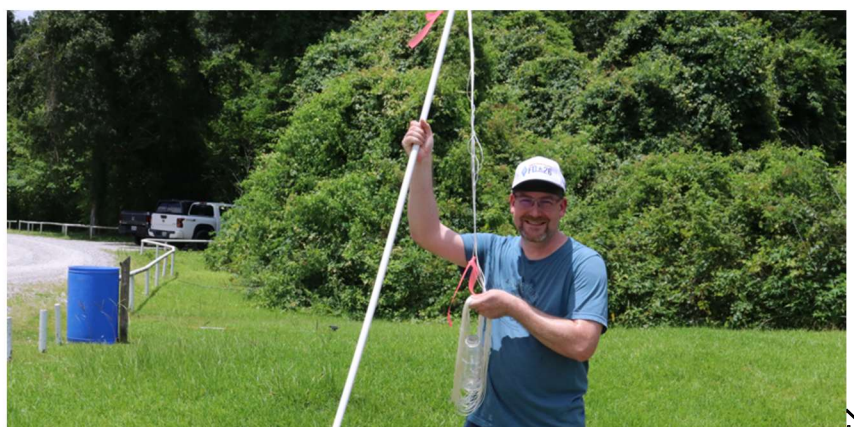
If you missed ARRL Field Day out at the Highland Road Park Observatory, you missed a good time. Instead of telling you about it, here's some photos that tell the story much better. Special thanks

to Dana Browne, AD5VC for his tireless work every year to make Field Day so much fun, as always!





Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club



July-August 2026



Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club



July-August 2026



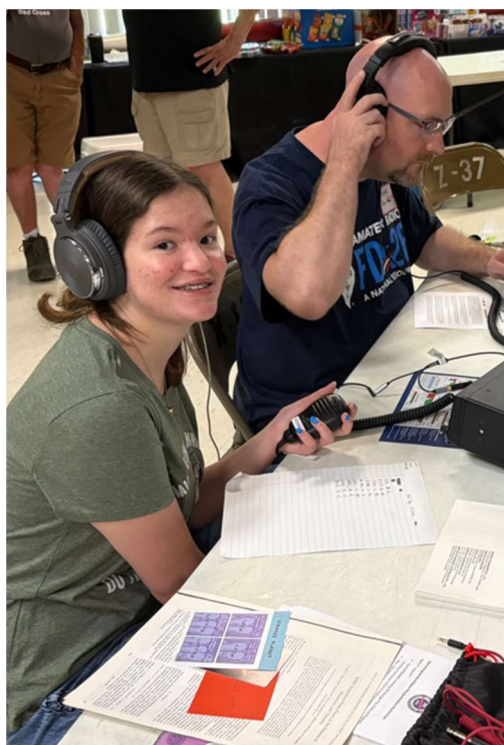
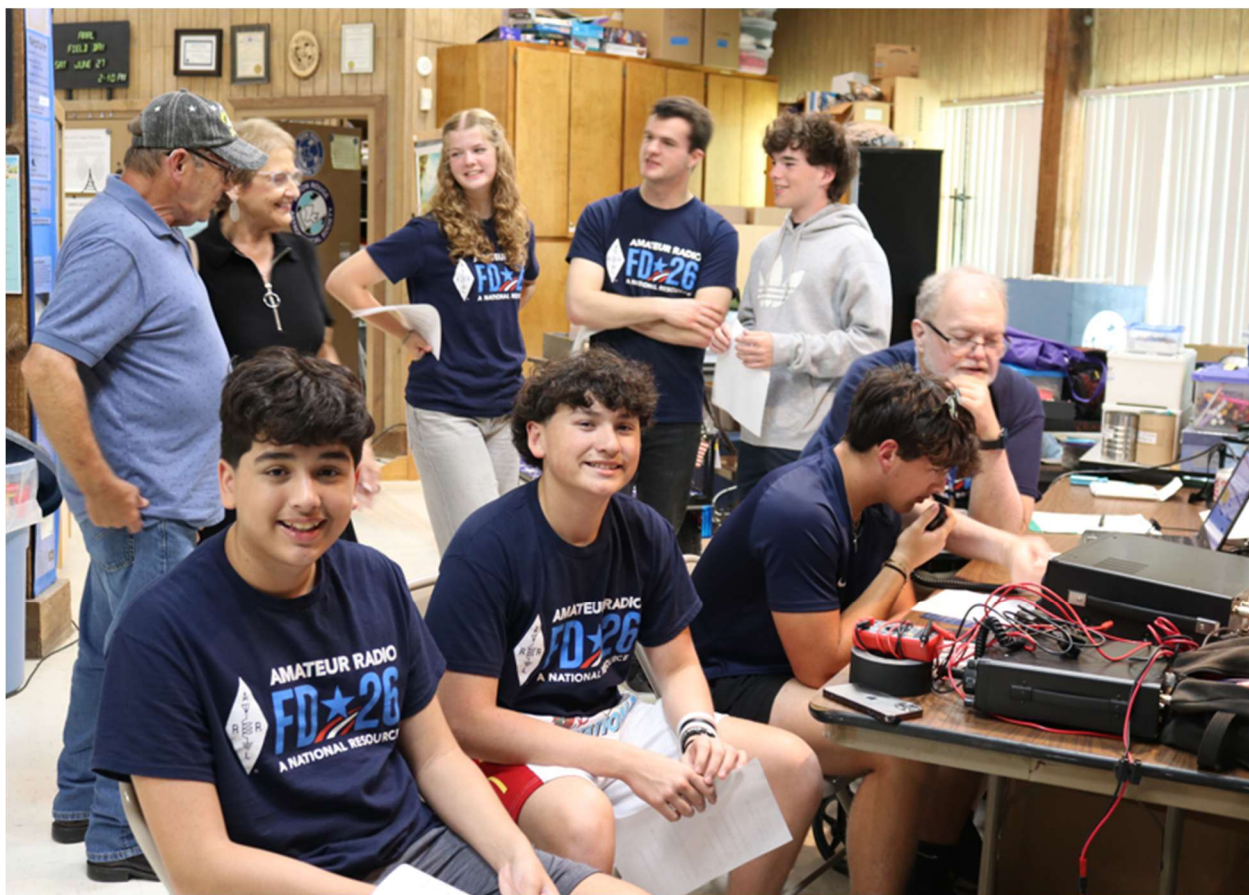
Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club



July-August 2026



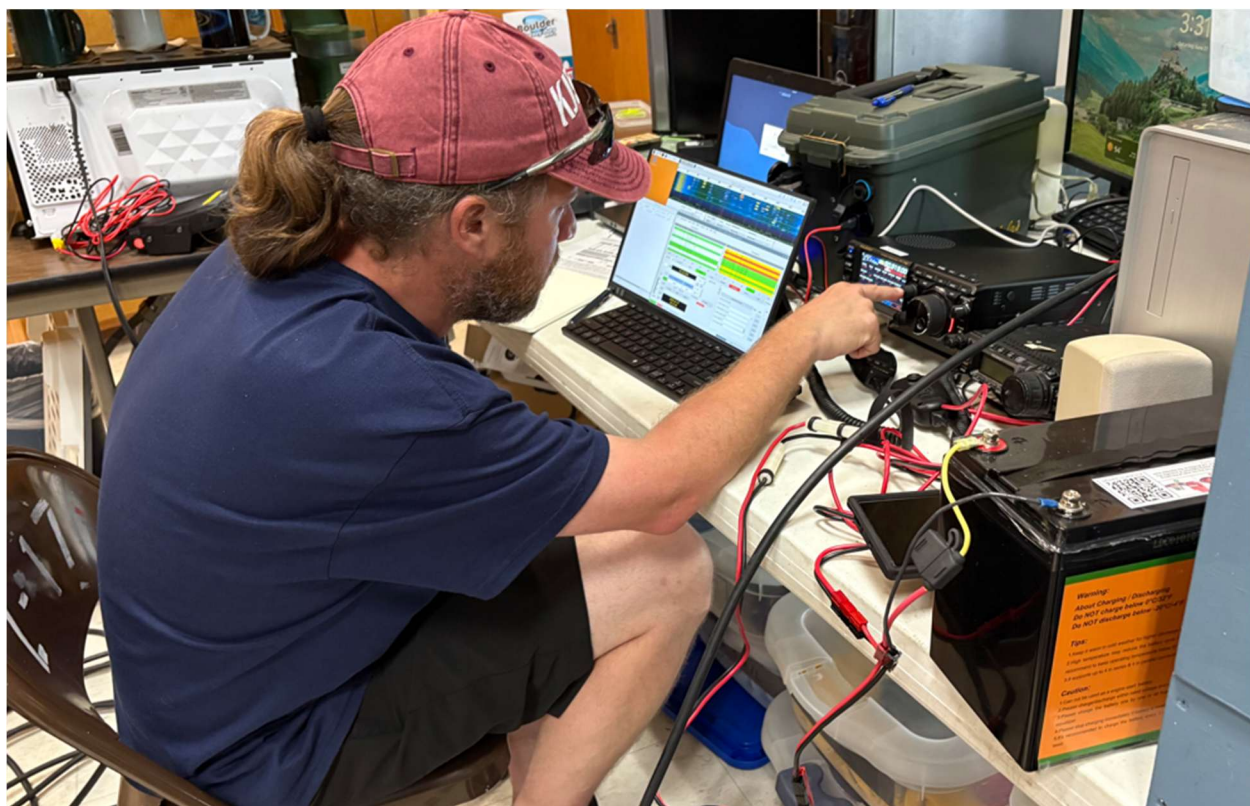
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July-August 2026

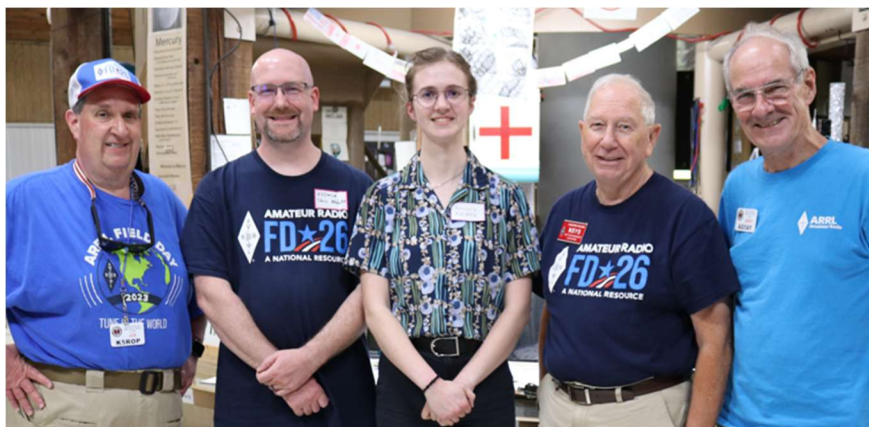


Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club





Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club



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Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club



Club Meeting

The next club meeting will be held on July 28 with a presentation by **Sahasranshu Purohit, N5SPY** on his **XIEGU G-90 GO-BOX BUILD**



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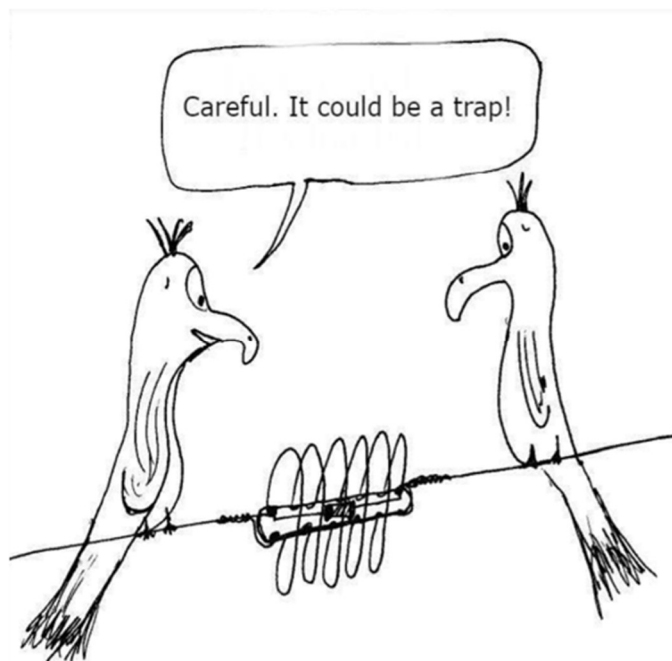


Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club



Frequency	Net
146.79- MHz PL tone 107.2	Region 2 ARES Net Sunday 8:00 PM
146.79- MHz PL tone 107.2	BRARC Public Service Net Sunday 8:30 PM
146.46 MHz 147.47 MHz	Baton Rouge Simplex Net Monday 7:00 pm
28.450 MHz USB	Ten Meter Net Monday 7:30 PM
7.043 MHz CW	Slow CW Net 2nd & 3rd Tuesdays 6:30 pm
442.2+ MHz PL tone 107.2	MissLou Net Wednesday 7:00 pm
146.835- MHz PL tone 114.8	MissLou Net Wednesday 8:00 pm
146.79- MHz PL tone 107.2	Friendship Net Thursday 7:00 PM
444.400+ MHz PL tone 107.2	W5GIX Fusion Repeater

Repeaters & Nets





Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club



Upcoming Club Events

- July 28 Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club monthly meeting, Saint George Fire Prevention District (Training Center), 14100 Airline Hwy, Baton Rouge, LA
- August 4 BRARC Board Meeting
- August 5 Ascension Amateur Radio Club
Prairieville Fire Department Training Center at 14517 LA Highway 73
- August 25 BRARC Monthly Meeting: **Matt Mapes – KJ5MTE Experiences of a New Ham**
- September 2 Ascension Amateur Radio Club
Prairieville Fire Department Training Center at 14517 LA Highway 73
- September 29 BRARC Monthly Meeting: **Bill Buck – KJ5IVB Learning tools for CW**
- October 27 BRARC Monthly Meeting
- November 17 Auction! **Auction! Auction! Auction! Auction!**
- December 12 Christmas Luncheon 11:30-2:00pm



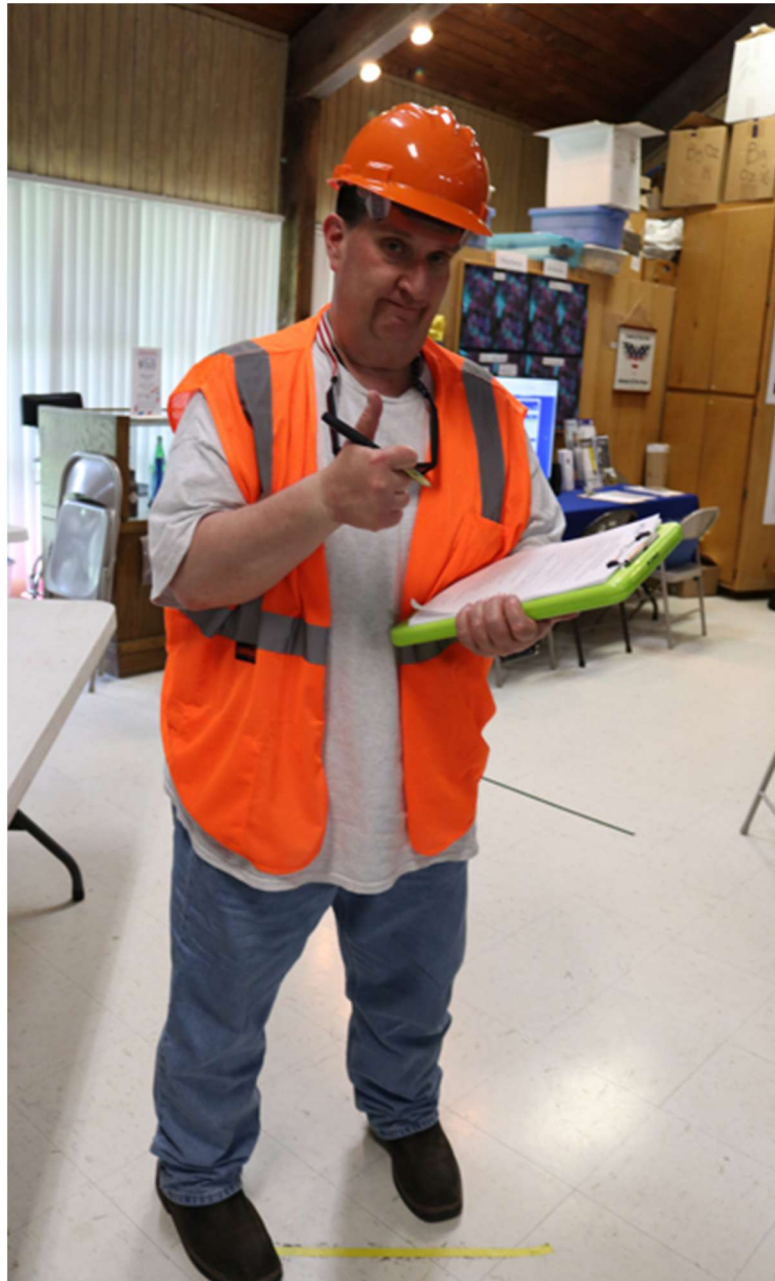
Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club



From the President

CQ my friends!

We have some exciting things coming up over the next few months! Unfortunately, our president isn't able to say a few words this month. While I'm preparing the newsletter, he's busy taking care of business for all of us as preparations for upcoming tropical storm Bertha. I know I feel safe knowing that Joe is on the job. Thanks for all you do Joe – K5ROP.





Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club



VE Testing and News



A license exam session is scheduled for **September 5, 2026, 10:00 am – 12 noon** at the East Baton Rouge Main Library, 7711 Goodwood Blvd, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, in the **Technology Lab on the 2nd floor** (Rooms 2A, 2B, Tech Lab). If you want to take an exam

for a new license or to upgrade an existing license, please **PRE-register** at <https://forms.office.com/r/1UqZip37EN>

All exams will be paperless, using a Laptop or Tablet. Bring your fully charged Laptop, iPad, or Tablet with an 8-inch or larger screen with a browser app installed. Smartphones are not recommended due to their small size. **If you cannot bring your own** Laptop or Tablet, let us know ahead of time and we will try to make other arrangements for you.

If you are taking your first test, you must register with the FCC and get your **FRN** number (FCC Registration Number). This will be used on the forms instead of using your Social Security number. You can register for the FRN at <https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/support/universal-licensing-system-uls-resources/getting-fcc-registration-number-frn>

To take the test in person, candidates need to bring the following:

- Photo ID
- Copy of your current FCC license or CSCE (for those upgrading)
- \$15 cash or check made out to ARRL VEC
- Laptop computer or Tablet to access the exam content
- Calculator – Optional. If used, you must demonstrate the memories are blank.



Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club



ARRL Youth Licensing Grant Program

The ARRL Youth Licensing Grant Program went into effect on April 19, 2022. ARRL will cover the one-time \$35 application fee for new license candidates younger than 18-years old for tests administered under the ARRL VEC program. The \$35 FCC application fee will be reimbursed after the ARRL VEC receives the completed reimbursement form and the new license has been issued by the FCC. The reimbursement check will be mailed to the fee payer. Also, candidates younger than 18-years old would pay a reduced exam session fee of \$5 to the BRARC VE team at the time of the exam. The \$5 fee is for all candidates under the age of 18 regardless of the exam level taken. Proof of under 18 status is required at the session. Visit the ARRL website for the program instructions and reimbursement form at www.arrl.org/youth-licensing-grant-program.

Reminder: FCC \$35 Amateur Application Fees Effective

Amateur radio application fees, including those associated with Form 605 application filings, became effective April 19, 2022

The \$35 FCC application fee applies to new, renewal, rule waiver, and modification applications that request a new vanity call sign. The fee will be per application.

Administrative updates, such as a change of name, mailing or email address, and modification applications





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to upgrade an amateur radio licensee's operator class, will be exempt from fees.

The BRARC Volunteer Examiner (VE) team does not collect the \$35 fee at exam sessions. The VE team licensing procedures are unchanged. New applicants will pay the \$15 exam session fee to the BRARC VE team as usual and pay the \$35 application fee directly to the FCC.

Candidates should go to the [FCC Application Fee](#) webpage for the detailed instructions and information about the FCC fees.

Future Exam Dates

- Saturday, September 5, 10 am
- Saturday, December 5, 10 am





Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club



Hands-on Tutoring for HF Radio

If you want to learn the basics of making HF radio contacts, this session is for you. We are offering personal sessions of hands-on learning covering the following:

- Introduction to our station equipment
- Basics of making contacts
- Logging software basics
- Using the PSK Reporter website for mapping CW or FT8 digital contacts



You will be instructed by an Extra class amateur radio operator at the Highland Road Park Observatory, operating W5GIX. After you learn the basics, you will make radio contacts with other hams around the country using our ICOM IC-7300 transceiver.

Sign up for a **personal** session [on this web page](#). We'll focus on one or more modes of operation (voice, CW, FT8 digital) according to your interests.

Station Equipment:

The Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club maintains a club station at the Highland Road Park Observatory. We run an ICOM IC-7300, 100 W transceiver, with an antenna tuner, to a tribander Yagi or wire antenna.



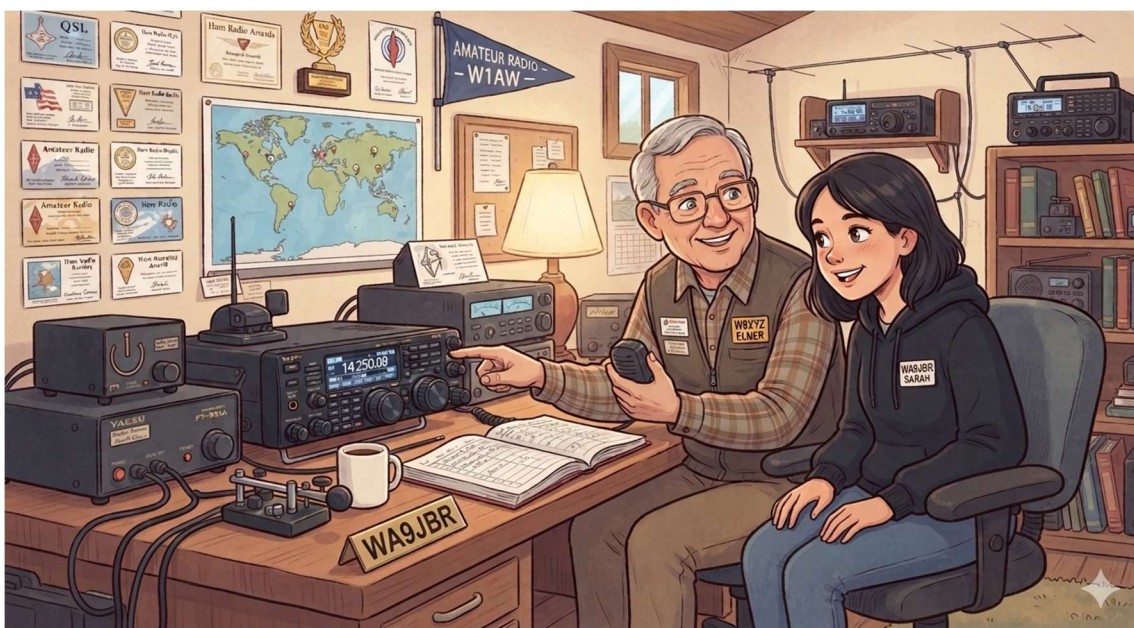
Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club



We suggest that radio operators / members wear their callsign or club badges or apparel to help identify themselves to the BREC staff and visitors as representatives of our club and the amateur radio community.

Jon Reise, WA9JBR

John Krupsky, WA5MLF



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SS KIDD



The **USS Kidd** most famously refers to the highly decorated World War II *Fletcher*-class destroyer (DD-661). Known as the "Pirate of the Pacific," she is a National Historic Landmark permanently berthed on the Mississippi River in downtown Baton Rouge, Louisiana, as the closest surviving U.S. destroyer to her original WWII configuration.



Keep up to date with the restoration progress by following the Facebook site, USS KIDD Veterans Museum at <https://www.facebook.com/USSKIDD661> and the YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@usskidd661/videos>.

The project will continue through the year, but so far no word on when the radio room will be operational.

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Hamfests

- Shreveport-Bossier Hamfest – August 7 & 8



- Huntsville Hamfest August 22 & 23
- Ozone Hamfest Slidell – September 4 & 5



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DX, Special Event, Contesting

July

- 25-26 Alabama QSO Party

August

- 1-2 North American QSO Party, CW
- 8-9 Maryland-DC QSO Party
- 15-16 North American QSO Party, SSB
- 22-24 Hawaii QSO Party
- 22-23 Ohio QSO Party
- 29-30 U.S. Islands QSO Party
- 29-30 Kansas QSO Party





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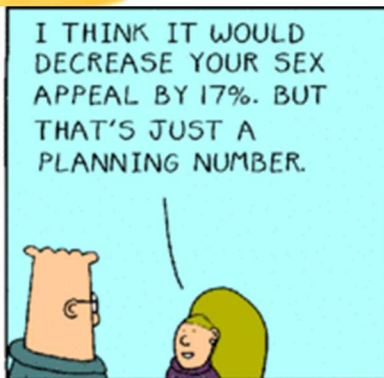
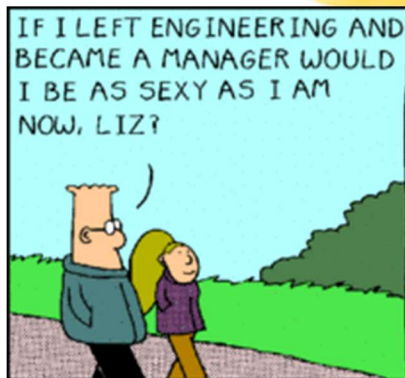


Swap Shop and Club Items

Name Badges, Mugs and Clothing with Club Logo available on the BRARC.org website.



Do you have something to sell? This is where you can advertise it. Just send a note to jerry.cloutatre@gmail.com and I'll put it in the next issue of **RF News!**





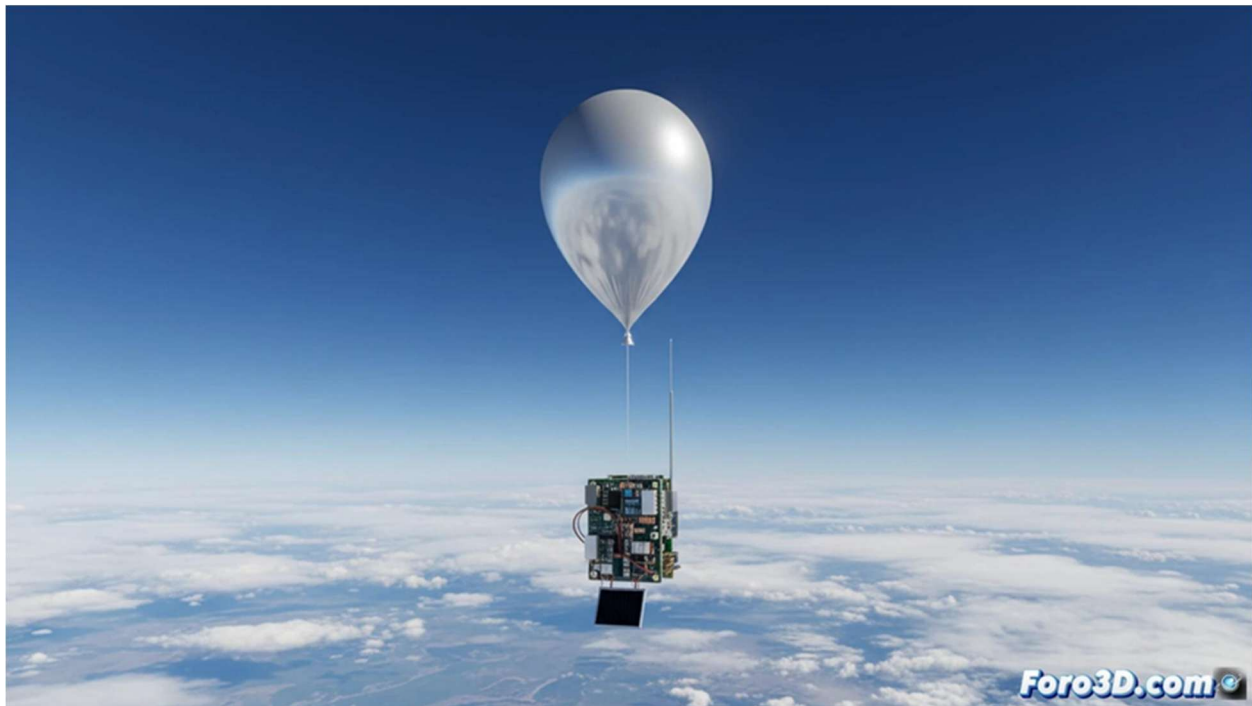
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Operating Tech and Tips

Pico Balloons – The Amateur Radio Adventure That Can Circle the World

Could our next BRARC club project travel around the globe?



A complete pico balloon payload often weighs less than 20 grams but can remain aloft for months.

“Some amateur-built pico balloons have circled the Earth multiple times while transmitting only a few milliwatts.”



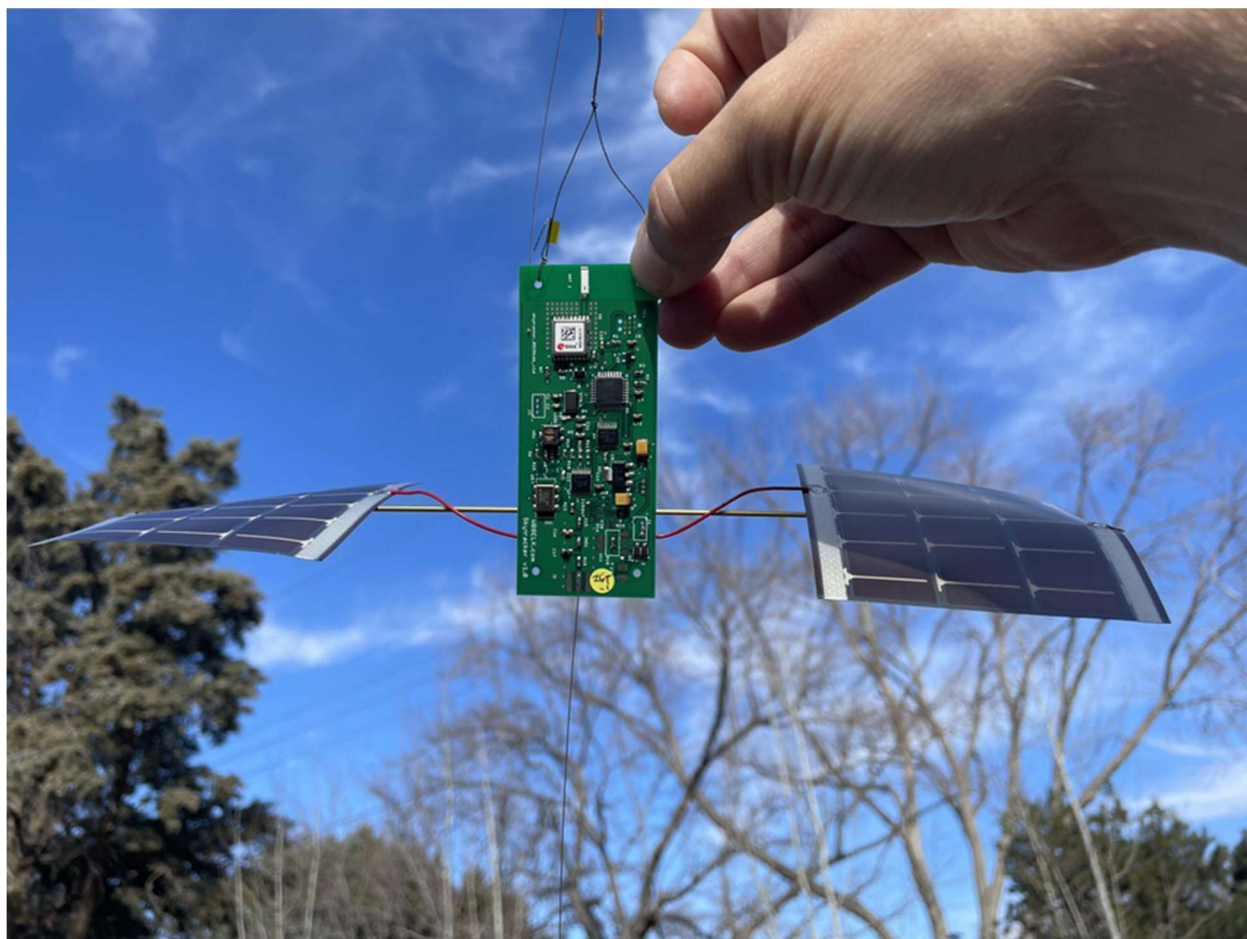
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What Is a Pico Balloon?

Most of us are familiar with weather balloons carrying large scientific payloads. A pico balloon something entirely different. It is designed to float for extended periods at 35,000–50,000 feet using an extremely lightweight payload, often weighing only 10–20 grams.

The payload normally includes a balloon, solar panel, microcontroller, low-power amateur radio transmitter, backup energy storage, and a fine-wire antenna.



Every gram matters. The entire electronics package may weigh less than a handful of paper clips.



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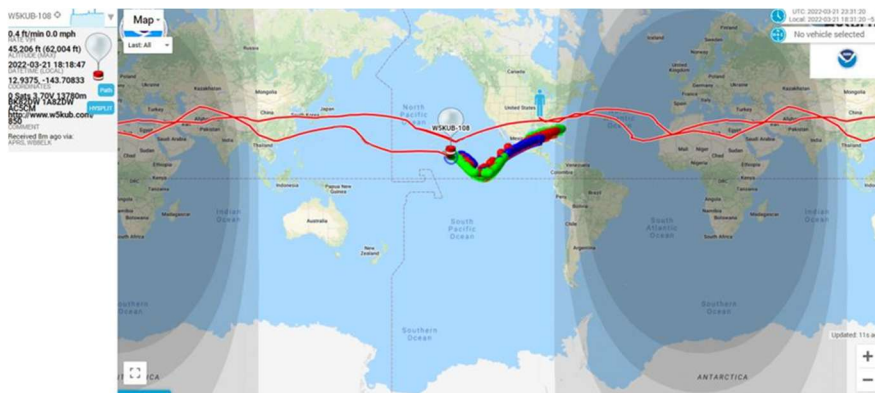


How Can Such a Tiny Signal Be Heard?

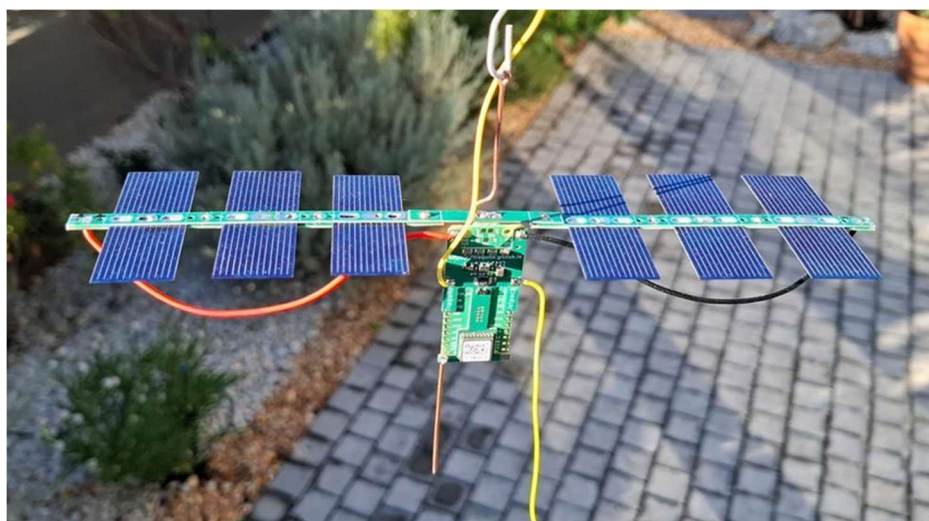
Most pico balloons transmit using WSPR (Weak Signal Propagation Reporter), a digital mode developed by Joe Taylor, K1JT.

WSPR is designed to decode signals far below the noise floor. Every two minutes the

balloon transmits its callsign, grid locator, and power level. Thousands of receiving stations automatically upload reception reports, allowing the balloon to be tracked without satellites or cellular service.



Imagine a balloon weighing only a few grams, carrying an amateur radio transmitter no larger than a postage stamp, powered by a tiny solar panel. Although incredibly lightweight, these balloons have crossed oceans, circled the Earth multiple times, and remained aloft for months.



Building a Club Balloon

A successful project is a team effort. Electronics builders can assemble the transmitter, antenna specialists can optimize the radiator, weather



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enthusiasts can study jet-stream forecasts, and programmers can predict flight paths. Ground testing before launch is essential.

Why This Makes a Great Club Project

Pico balloons combine electronics, antennas, digital communications, weather, construction, and operating skills. Even members who prefer not to solder can help with flight prediction, launch logistics, documentation, photography, or tracking. The launch is only the beginning—the balloon's journey can be followed for weeks or months.

Pico Balloon Facts

- **Altitude:** 35,000–50,000 feet
- **Payload:** 10–20 grams
- **Power:** 10–25 mW
- **Mode:** WSPR
- **Power Source:** Solar with backup storage
- **Flight Duration:** Days to months

“Imagine hearing that your club’s tiny transmitter has just been received on another continent.”

Looking Ahead

Imagine a Saturday morning launch with club members gathered in a field. Within hours, the balloon may be hundreds of miles away. Days later it could be crossing an

Typical Component	Approximate Cost
Balloon	\$20–40
Solar panel	\$10–20
Microcontroller	\$10–30
WSPR transmitter	\$20–40
Miscellaneous	\$20–40



ocean, with stations around the world reporting its signals. Whether it flies for two days or two months, every launch teaches valuable lessons in engineering, propagation, and teamwork.





Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club



2025 Board Officers

President

K5ROP

Joe Roppolo

Vice-President

AB5TH

Todd Houvinen

Secretary

N5UKZ

Mike Blazek

Treasurer

N4XEG

Jeff Sibley

Board Members:

WA9JBR

Jon Reise

K5HLC

Thornton Cofield

KF5TQN

Dan Lott

AG5AY

Jerry Cloutre

NS5W

Russ London

AJ5AK

William Buck

KD5MLD

Mike Nolan



Webmaster	WA5MLF	John Krupsky
Volunteer Examiner	WA9JBR	Jon Reise
Field Day	AD5VC	Dana Browne
Public Info & Outreach	K5HLC	Thornton Cofield
Repeaters	N5DGK	Brook Samuel
Education & Training	K5ROP	Joe Roppolo
RF News	AG5AY	Jerry Cloutre
Loaner Program	KF5TQN	Dan Lott
Emergency Operations	KD5MLD	Mike Nolan
QSL / Awards	WA9JBR	Jon Reise
USS KIDD	WA5MLF	John Krupsky



Elmers:

Todd Huovinen AB5TH
Jerry Cloutre AG5AY
Dan Lott KF5TQN



Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club



Be sure to check out **BRARC.org** for the latest news, and don't forget about the  to win great prizes!