



# Nassau County ARES

[www.NassauCountyARES.org](http://www.NassauCountyARES.org)

## Charting Our Future, our Role and our Path

### Web Site

#### Highlights ~

- Educational Resources
- Skywarn & Storm pages
- NBEMS Resources
- Technical Videos
- ARES Literature
- Weekly Radio News line
- New Links
- Current Events Page
- 2014 ARES Schedule
- Member Resources
- Much, much more

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The local EMCOMM community within Nassau County consists of the ARRL ARES and NTS organizations, RACES, CERT, SKYWARN, County Fire Battalion and village EOC's, and of course the American Red Cross and its supporting EMCOMM teams which include the ARC radio operators at Mineola HQ and those within the Queens-based ARCECS. Additionally, there are smaller radio groups which focus on local FRS, GMRS or CB who offer highway safety assistance or subscription-based communications.

Of these communications groups, ARES is certainly among the oldest and largest at 79 years and over 80,000 national members. In Nassau County, ARES is a very active communications organization with two meetings, 8 digital nets and 4 combined ARES and RACES nets per month. ARES members combined assets, along with our close association with KB2BWV, WB2WAK, the LIMARC repeater system, N2ION, KE2EJ and other repeater systems, represent one of the largest and most well equipped radio services in the United States. Nassau County ARES employs equipment redundancy, commercial power independence and significant digital capabilities on U/VHF and HF bands.



However, within our County Government, there is no defined ARES role. The County operates RACES and CERT under their OEM, who in turn work together with ARES on our combined net, during activations and on CERT regional drills. CERT also has its own Comms Group, RACES has its vital mandate, and the American Red Cross has its own radio station and licensed radio operators.

And of course, many of our ARES members belong to one or more of these fine organizations as well as ARES.

All of these factors combine to dilute our ARES resources and fog our role and capabilities as an amateur radio emergency service.

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As the first quarter of 2014 draws to a close, I was taking a look at what has transpired so far this year. Even though our "regular" season of public service events has not yet begun, we have taken some bold steps forward. We started off with a good showing at HRU, with a brief exposure on News 12.

Our Cadre has resumed meeting on a regular basis. We have taken a proactive stance on recruitment and training of new members, while solidifying our working relationship with the American Red Cross.

In the recent past there has been a new Tech class, and a General class, both with a very high "pass rate", with an Extra class yet to be held, all using the WebEx format. More of our members are active on NBEMS/FLDIGI, and by the time this goes to press, the comms room at the Mineola Chapter shall have been so equipped.

Moreover, we have begun preparations for a county-wide comms drill from actual shelter locations, with an eye toward expanding this drill to include surrounding jurisdictions. However, our forward momentum must continue.

## DEC Corner

by Tim Cregan, N2RDB, DEC



To that end, our Cadre has met to evaluate our course up to this point, and our direction in the future, specifically with regard to public service events, drills, and the definition of our mission. This will have positive repercussions in the coming months, so stay "in the loop" by checking into the weekly nets, and checking the website from time to time.

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## Ready. For Action



**Nassau County ARES**

### ***Field Operations Manual***



Our new 100+ page **Field Operations Manual** is a fully indexed, hyperlinked power tool chocked full of concise, right-to-the-point information and details on everything you might encounter during an ARES Activation. No fill. Just the facts.

Topics are grouped into sections for easy access to information with one-click linking because it's in PDF form and works smoothly on smart phones *i-Pads*, Nooks, Kindles and laptops. Of course you can print and create a 3-ring binder copy as well.

When you *need* to know how to troubleshoot your inverter, find the coax connection at a particular shelter, quickly dial a Fire Battalion or construct an emergency antenna, this manual will provide you with all of the details. Fast.

The Emergency Contacts Directory section is probably the best of its type in Nassau County, and contains its own linked index. Since the manual is a single download, we can easily add new sections and edit existing ones. Active ARES members will be equipped with the most recent version.



*The recent Tech Class VE session at the Red Cross resulted in a 100% pass rate and extremely favorable student reviews.*

## Online Training Launched

Nassau County ARES member **Joe Gomez, W2BMP** has completed a major achievement for LIMARC and ARES members by incorporating his terrific teaching style and computer expertise with online classroom licensing instruction from your home.

Joe explains, "The world of online learning has exploded in recent years. This is partly due to the increase in technology which has made the entire process far easier and more accessible. It has also stemmed from an increase in social acceptance of online learning as a legitimate and equal method of obtaining a new valuable degree or skill set."

"Nassau County ARES is leading the way for other ARES groups by embracing this new instructor led, web based training system which allows for a more relaxed friendly atmosphere, while significantly improving comprehension and retention for the student."

Using this new technology, the instructor gets immediate feedback, and can more effectively address "weak spots" or reinforce important areas as needed, while the individual students gets more personalized attention and assistance, as they may require.

The result is a much more enjoyable and pleasant learning experience for both the instructor and student, due to immediate feedback for the instructor, the absence of strict time pressure associated with traditional classroom settings, and better concentration on the subject matter.

Joe continues, "The feedback we are getting from people taking our online courses is amazing! Students report feeling more at ease, more comfortable, and generally enjoying the experience."

Recent national studies seem to indicate that mature students of on line courses do better than their traditional classroom counterparts. Test scores for students who have taken our courses are also higher than those who choose alternative teaching methods such as self-study or cramming.

Nassau County ARES invites you to take advantage of this new, simple, easy and fun way of learning from your home, or on any mobile device.

For a complete listing of classes offered, please contact us at [info@NassauCountyARES.org](mailto:info@NassauCountyARES.org)

An online Extra Class is starting soon!

**"Nassau County ARES is leading the way for other ARES groups by embracing this system"**



## The ARCECS Now Meeting in Mineola

We recently had the pleasure to attend an ARCECS Queens Chapter meeting at the Red Cross HQ in Mineola, where we had an opportunity to discuss ways where we might better assist one another's organizations in emergency activations.

This meeting led to some interesting ideas on how we can bolster both our group's assets, while further assisting the Red Cross with more regional Station and Shelter operations. Additionally, we made some nice friends there, and three of their members acted as VE's at our last Tech Class VE session in February!

We have cordially invited all ARCECS members to attend any of our training classes, and to collaborate on NBEMS communications with us as well. ARES looks forward to the possibility of working together with the ARCECS during our April 26th shelter simplex test, and we extend our thanks to the ARCECS for their meeting invitation.

We hope to forge a MOU with the ARCECS in the coming months and look forward to working together!



*The Red Cross has had some slick Comms vehicles!*



The ARCECS (Amateur Radio Club Emergency Communications Service) is based in Queens, but now meets monthly at the Red Cross in Mineola on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm. This organization began in 1964, and their focus is on performing Red Cross communications in the metro area during emergency activations.

Be sure to visit the ARCECS website at

[www.arcecs.org](http://www.arcecs.org)

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## Nassau County ARES Members in the Spot Light



Congratulations to our three new General Class members! They are Michele KD2EDX, Roderick KD2EXI, and Gladys KC2YFT.

Matt KC2YDT is our new ORS (Official Relay Station) and AEC to the NTS. Dave AK1NS is now a RLI (Reg. Licensing Instructor, Extra Class).

Let us know when you've upgraded your license class or earned another notch on your mic by emailing us. Or just shout it out at the next meeting!

***Well Done Folks!***

## Our Path .. continued

**It is evident that Nassau County ARES lacks a clearly defined role within the EMCOMM community when emergency activations occur.**

### That is about to change!



Consequently, Nassau County ARES will underscore its purpose and mission to the regional EMCOMM community. We will clarify our role about what we can do and will do during another major activation. To this end, our ARES Cadre has recently met to discuss procedures to define and prioritize our role and resources for those specific agencies that we believe we should serve first and foremost.

**The cadre is in agreement that Nassau County ARES primary role is to assist the American Red Cross and the County's Fire Battalion radio stations.**

In doing so, we remain ready to accept our RACES responsibilities, and we recognize the importance for ARES to remain flexible as an incident unfolds.

Nassau County ARES has identified specific issues and the steps necessary to best utilize our members and equipment. These are outlined as follows:

1. We acknowledge that we may have limited personnel and mobile assets available, especially in the height of a storm. We recognize that many of our members carry other responsibilities and duties. Consequently, we have begun identifying every ARES member's primary role and organization they will be initially responsible to, including RACES, CERT, the Red Cross, NTS, or Fire Battalions. By doing this, we will more effectively coordinate with *all* of our EMCOMM partners, and they with *us*.

Jointly, we will all have a much clearer picture of who and what assets are deployed, and to where, thereby eliminating duplication of efforts, or preventing failures to provide any resources to a particular location.

2. For the Red Cross, we will fully test shelter communications by simplex to Red Cross HQ and to ARES OES stations beginning this April, and work in unison with the Red Cross radio team to identify and solve any communications problems. We will establish operational NBEMS services for the Red Cross to shelters. In turn, this will be linked to our more experienced members using Winlink packet for email, and we will communicate more directly to the NTS.
3. ARES EC's will begin a campaign of new introductions and visits to our Fire Battalions where we will offer to schedule periodic equipment tests and participate in joint drills.
4. ARES will remain a key communications partner for SKYWARN and continue to have our members certified.
5. ARES and NTS joint participation will be significantly improved. An NTS presentation is scheduled in April to begin this process at an upcoming ARES training meeting.
6. Sandy demonstrated the value of LIMARC's membership, and their robust repeater systems. LIMARC members provided continuous notifications on their storm net about downed power lines and trees, fires and flooding emergencies. Their ability to provide telephone relay communications for ARES to shelter clients who became separated from family members, was a *high value* service. After the storm passed, LIMARC members continued to assist the region by locating gasoline supplies, and by providing road closure and power outage details for many days.

Therefore, Nassau County ARES will establish an ARES Reserve Corps, comprised of licensed amateur radio operators who have taken a WebEx online ARES Basic Training Class and completed a basic ARES procedures test. This corps of reserves will be comprised of LIMARC members and other hams who cannot participate as regular ARES members, but who have a demonstrated a keen willingness to serve as radio operators within their local areas. An online ARES Basic Course will be developed to provide them with the essential tools required to be effective ARES members. This effort should *greatly* increase our capacity to help our district, and provide ARES with additional trained personnel.

*Continued on page 6*

## 2nd Quarter 2014 Agenda

Apr 10 — NTS Training  
 Apr 26 — ARC Simplex Test  
 Apr 24 — General Meeting

May 08 — EMCOMM Training:  
 May 22 — ARC Shelter Ops

Jun 12 —Training: EMCOMM Nets  
 Jun 26 — Emer Prep Training  
 Jun 28-29 — Field Day

See Web for more Events

[www.NassauCountyARES.org](http://www.NassauCountyARES.org)



## *Nassau County ARES Emergency Coordinators*

Section Manager	Jim Mezey, W2KFV
SEC	Russ Logar, KC2LSB
DEC	Tim Cregan, N2RDB
ADEC	Dave Akins, AK1NS
Public Information Officer	Rich Cetron, K2KNB
AEC City of Glen Cove	Bob Batchelor, W2OSR
EC City of Long Beach	George Geller, WB2GTC
EC Town of Hempstead	Rob Yenis, KC2ILP
EC Town of North Hempstead	John Gulotta, AC2KZ
AEC Town of Oyster Bay	John Wilson, KD2AKX
Net Operations	Robin Brandvein, KC2SYM
Membership/PSHR Secretary	Jerry Abrams, WB2ZEX
Fire Battalion Liaisons	George Cavaliere, WB2HPI
	Rob Henrichs, W1RHH, and John Gulotta, AC2KZ
NWS Skywarn Coordinator	Bruce Gronich, K2BRG

## Charting Our Future, our Role and our Path

*.. continued*

7. ARES will adjust member deployments to last only until communications are restored. ARES members will then be re-deployed to other locations or purposes, or ARES will stand them down. ARES may then provide Public Service assistance in the form of mobile or portable charging stations for cell phones, laptops or rechargeable lighting equipment. ARES may also offer messaging, telephone and email services to the public in areas with failed infrastructure.

8. After the items above are instituted, Nassau County ARES will begin to reach out to local village and town EOC's to determine how we may be of service to them. This effort will require new introductions and comms tests. Placing ARES Reserve members in village EOC radio stations within their own local towns may prove to be a practical method to increase situational awareness for the EOC's and help expand ARES its assistance into local communities.

The cornerstone of these efforts is to make Nassau County ARES a more responsive and effective organization, focused on key agencies and duties. We absolutely must not offer services or make promises we cannot deliver on, and yet we need to remain dynamic under changing conditions. Completion of our ARES field resource manual is a tremendous step forward in this pursuit. Updating our Nassau County ARES Emergency Communications Plan will now receive our highest priority.

We believe these steps, and perhaps others still to be identified, will strengthen our organization, improve our capacity to perform efficiently and professionally, and increase the value of amateur radio to our served agencies, our fellow EMCOMM organizations and to the citizens of Nassau County.

73, Dave Akins, AK1NS

**Practice the Art of ARES**