



## “EPIRBs, PPIRBs and GPIRBs – What?”

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Many of us have heard of satellite systems hailing the USCG when a boater pulls the (chord, pin, string, wire – pick one). A signal goes up from the boater’s device to a satellite (in the old days it went up to planes that were, hopefully, flying by) and down to the Coast Guard’s Rescue Coordination Center. This would start the “rescue clock starts now” clock at that point. The device is called an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon – an EPIRB (said “ee”-purr-b).  
**Back in the Day...**

The old model EPIRBs transmitted on dual frequencies of 121.5 and 243 megahertz (MHZ). This was hopefully picked up by passing planes and satellites. It could take 4-6 hours for someone or something to pass overhead before it reached the USCG. Also, the footprint that you were within could be as much as 12 square nautical miles. That is a square that is 12nm long and 12nm miles wide. That is a lot of water to cover. On the USCG website (<http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss>), it says that the 121.5/243MHZ devices are “no longer recommended.”

**The State of the Art...**

Interestingly, the 121.5MHZ frequency is favored for radio direction finding (RDF). So the newest EPIRBs now transmit simultaneously on 406MHZ and 121.5MHZ. The 406 reduces the footprint to one square



nautical mile. And the 406MHZ is heard by satellites all over the world and, within an hour, the USCG RCC will have commenced coming to your aid. And the rescuers will also be looking for your EPIRB’s 121.5MHZ signal with their RDF gear. In heavy seas, that may very well be the difference between passing right by you while you are in the trough – or knowing that you are just over the next wave...

Also, EPIRBs are classified by whether they will deploy automatically (Category I) or you have to “pull the pin” (Category II.) I am of two minds. I have a CAT-I on my own vessel but I am hoping that I get the chance to grab it before it floats free and starts signaling for help! I want them to find me – not it! However, you can conjure up

circumstances (knocked out in a capsize?) where you are in no shape to pull any pin and the EPIRB is at least drifting along with the boat, beeping and flashing away... So, you tend to plan around worst case...

But what are GPIRBs and PPIRBs? A “GPIRB” (gee-purr-b) is an EPIRB with a GPS signaler built-in. It has all the functionality of the EPIRB but it also sends a GPS lat/lon. The search square is now roughly 30ft by 30 ft. Unless you are trying to hide from the rescue team, they will find you... A “PPIRB” (pea-purr-b) is a Personal EPIRB. You wear it on your person. It also has the built-in GPS. When you attain a coxswain rating in the USCG Auxiliary (the person responsible for the boat, the crew and the mission),

the USCG gives you a PPIRB. “Even if you go hiking, take this with you. If you get lost, we’ve got too much invested in you not to come get you!”

The basic criterion between the EPIRB, GPIRB and PPIRB is price. Smaller search area equals higher price. Smaller size (carry it on your person) equals higher price again. Prices range, based on a quick internet search, from \$200 to \$1,000.

**What to Do?**

Do you need one if you never leave the bays and creeks Out East? Frankly, no. Read *The South Shore Press* column on “Radio Smarts” and you’ll be fine. How about going out to the Canyons for shark? You could be anywhere on a 100nm rhumb line from Moriches Inlet to the Canyons. You are out of radio range and, unless you have a GPS aboard, you don’t know your lat/lon within miles. Think about it, bunky.

When you buy one, you will register all your details with NOAA who maintains the global database. Keep that data up to date and one day you may find a red and white helicopter hovering over you.

BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at [JoinUSCGAux@aol.com](mailto:JoinUSCGAux@aol.com) or go direct to the D1SR Human Resources department, who are in charge of new members matters, at DSO-HR and we will help you “get in this thing...”



## County Clerk Update

by SUFFOLK COUNTY CLERK  
JUDY PASCALE

### SENIOR I.D. CARDS AVAILABLE AT COUNTY CLERK’S OFFICE

Suffolk County Clerk Judith A. Pascale would like to remind County residents that Suffolk County Senior Citizen Identification Cards are available free of charge at the Suffolk County Clerk’s Office in Riverhead.



Senior Citizen Identification Cards are issued free of charge for Suffolk County residents aged 60 and over. The card entitles seniors to a reduced fare on the Suffolk County Bus System and discounts on purchases from participating businesses.

“It’s my pleasure to provide the Senior Citizen Identification Cards to residents so they can utilize additional savings,” commented Suffolk County Clerk Judith A. Pascale. Additionally, the back of the card has ample space to fill in emergency call numbers and other pertinent medical information.

For residents who possess valid proof of age, cards can be picked up at the County Clerk’s Office at 310 Center Drive in Riverhead. Please call 852-2000 ext. 100 for more information or to make arrangements to get your card today.

“My staff and I stand ready to assist you in acquiring a Senior ID card as well as assisting you with any matters for which you may need assistance. While the scope of duties and powers of the Clerk are often limited to those prescribed in law, our office frequently acts as a liaison for people who need assistance but are unsure which level of government to call upon,” concluded Suffolk County Clerk Judith A. Pascale.



## Janice Harkins Dog Talk

Dear Dog Talk,

I have a question... I started leash work yesterday with Cooper (he's one and had no training prior to rescuing) as he pulls pretty hard. He likes to sniff and to explore. Halfway into our walk, he got very "playful" and was jumping up. He was doing the paw pounce and bark and then he started mouthing my arm. I was very calm. I said down. I had him sit and then patted the ground for him to lie down...



Dear Cooper’s Momma,

Let me start by saying congratulations on starting training! The reason behind his silly antics is he is trying to dominate you. Basically, he is telling you what to do. I know this is not a feel good answer, but it is an honest one. When you are walking him, remember this is his job. When you are at work, you are not allowed to take breaks as you choose. The same rule of thumb works for Cooper. When on a walk, there is no sniffing, playing around, or going to the bathroom (unless you want him to). His walk is his job, so he needs to have respect for you and his “job”. Cooper is sniffing and exploring because he sees it as “why not?” This is always viewed that he is not listening. In the early stages, it is essential that he takes you seriously. You need to be more firm for him to realize that you mean business and you are not a pushover. Each time you let him get his way, he is winning and also learning that things are his way, not your way. The pulling, jumping, barking, mouthing your arm portion, again, he is trying to tell you how it is. You will want to use the proper training equipment. A Pincher collar is the best collar to use. This collar gives you the ability to communicate to your dog in a way they will instantly understand. You want to introduce a command and do it consistently for a week. Do not introduce too many commands at once; this maybe asking a lot of Cooper. Be proud of yourself that you remained calm. This is very helpful to be successful. The way you explained things, when you stated “down,” I get the feeling you more meant to state “off.” The command “down” is only used for laying down. Most everything else, you want to use the command “off.” I really hope this has helped you. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me. If after these tips you are still having issues, you will want to hire a trainer to give you both the education to succeed. Remember Ultimutt K9 Training and Pet Sitting is just a call away! Send questions to: [sspress2000@aol.com](mailto:sspress2000@aol.com), Attention: Dog Talk.