



Squelch Tales

Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Assoc. for December 2000

November MARA Breakfast Meetings Report

The Associations November Breakfast Meetings was held at the Cook's Corner Denny's restraint and had several members in attendance. The major topic of discussion was where and when to hold the 2000 year-end Dinner meeting. As in past years the China Rose on old Bath road in Brunswick got the nod. The dinner will take place on Saturday, December 16th at 7:00 PM. We encourage all MARA members and friends to attend. Bring a significant other or a ham friend and enjoy a good Oriental buffet feed.

Upcoming New England Ham Radio Events

<u>DATE/TIME</u>	<u>EVENT/LOCATION</u>
<u>DECEMBER (Sat.) 2nd, 10 AM:</u>	<u>ARRL Exam, Bath Health Care Facility. POC: Robin Walls, N1NFK 725-5135</u>
<u>FEBRUARY (Sat.) 17th 10AM to 2 PM</u>	<u>Marlborough, MA Flea Market. Exams 9AM to 11 AM. Marlborough Middle School, Thresher Dr (off Union St.) or off Bolton St. (Rt.85). POC Ann Waldon KA1PON 1-508-481-4988. Talk-in 146.61(PL 146.2) , 233.94(PL 103.5), 449.925</u>

M.U.R.S.

Is it the new 2-Meter CB Band?

In June of this year the FCC introduced A new unlicensed radio service in addition to UHF Family Radio Service (FRS) and the old 11-meter (27 MHz) Citizens Band. The new service is called Multi-Use Radio Service, MURS. The service will allow the operation of HTs with power not to exceed two watts on 151.82 MHz, 151.88 MHz, 151.94 MHz, 154.57 MHz and 154.60 MHz. Any type of modulation is permitted as long as it fits

within the 11.25 kHz or 12.5 kHz channel bandwidth (sounds like narrow-band FM to us). The service will allow phone-patching, repeaters, digital communications (i.e., packet etc.) and external antennas as long as the Effective Radiated Power (ERP) does not exceed 2-watts. How popular this will be is still a question. The old 27 MHz CB was around for several years before it popularity took off in the late 1960s. Truckers and other commuters should be excited about this new band because it will afford them the ability to communicate several miles on the highway with out the problems caused by skip making local communications almost impossible.

If it does become popular it may bring a new batch of radio enthusiasts to the Ham Radio hobby.

When A ground isn't a ground, but could be.

By Bruce, W1ZE

So, you just purchased a new Big Gun, Coal burning, 1200-watt up the chimney linear from Latasmoke Amplifier Company in East Overshoe, Vermont. You hook it up to your old Yaesu that has a 10-foot copper wire running from the rig on the second floor shack to a ground rod in the flower border. You fire the rig and amp up on 40-meters and all your signal reports are 20 dB over S-9. In addition, you're lovely and tolerant XYL is in the living room watching "I want to be a millionaire" on the 27-inch Sony and she doesn't even know you are on the air. You have the QRO fever now.

The DX-packet cluster announces that Vlad, S50J is on 28.450 with a pile-up. Here is your chance to give your new amp the acid

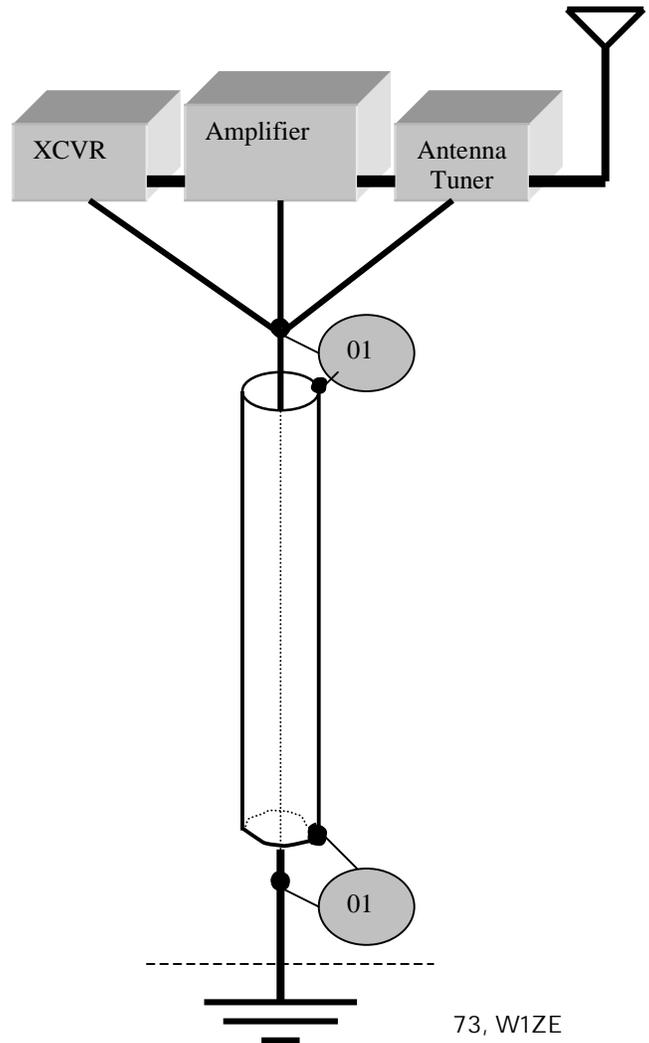
test. You tune to 28.450 and give one call. You blow through the pile-up, and just as you hear Vlad call you back, from the living room you hear the XYL screaming that you just put the TV set into cardiac arrest just as Regis Filben was giving the contestant the one million dollar question. What happened?

Well, maybe your station ground isn't a ground. At 40-meters your 10-foot ground wire and ground rod was OK, but at 10-meters that ground wire was not a ground but an antenna. Your rig and Amp together should give you +/-40db of attenuation on first harmonic energy (56.8 MHz, about TV Ch.2). Your amp is kicking out 1200 watts PEP and at 40db you still have about 1/10-watt of RF. With the XYL's Sony less than 30-foot from the ground wire (antenna), OOP's!

OK you are on the 2nd floor and you can not make the ground any shorter. You could increase the wire size or replace it with copper strap, but that may not do the trick because it is still 10-feet long. Why not employ a shielded ground. No, this isn't an April fools joke, there is such a thing and it will help. Here is how you do it:

1. Replace your ground wire with some RG-8, RG-11 or better yet, some old scrap CATV 75-ohm hard-line (available at your local dump, or cable TV line crew).
2. Connect the center conductor of the coax to your ground rod and the opposite end center conductor to the rig (or station ground bus). ***Do not connect the coax shield at either end to ground.***
3. Connect a .01uF ceramic disc capacitor between the center conductor and shield at both ends of the coax.

Theory: RF that may be present on the center ground wire is shunted to the ground rod via the two .01 capacitors. This is not a perfect fix, but it will significantly reduce RF from radiating from your ground wire.



JOIN US FOR THE YEAR-END MARA DINNER



**China Rose Restraint
Old Bath Road, Brunswick
Saturday December 16 at 7:00PM**

Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Assoc.

KS1R

177 Sabino Road, West Bath, ME 04530-9503