



SQUELCH TALES



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Assoc. for June 2001

FIELD DAY, Are you ready?



Andy Estes, KB1ERX making contacts during Field Day 2000

That's right, the last weekend in this month is Field Day. Thanks to efforts of Bob Meade, WA1ZGN we will have the use of the Woolwich town park area on Route-1 just behind the town museum and fire station.

The event will start Saturday, June 22nd with breakfast at Denny's Cook's Corner restraint at 9 AM. Then we will QSY to the park site and start the station set-up.

We still need to locate a generator and figure out what class we will operate in this year. We will be operating a 1A station again this year, unless we have a large group that wants to participate. At a minimum we hope to see a good group of operators and folks to help set-up and take down Sunday afternoon. Come out, practice your communication skills and have some fun.

HOSSTRADERS BACK ON TRACK

Reports from folks that attended the Spring Hosstraders flea market and hamfest said that moving the event to Hopkington, New Hampshire was a very good decision resulting in a successful event. The weather was good, attendance was up and the new fairground location is as good or better than the old Deerfield location, with lots of shade trees, exhibit halls, and room.

We hope to see more of you there this October.

Will there be a new HF Ham band

ARLB017 ARRL Executive

Committee Reviews 5 MHz

Date: Monday, May 14, 2001

Meeting May 5 in Dallas, Texas, the ARRL Executive Committee reviewed a preliminary draft Petition for Rule Making seeking a new US ham band in the vicinity of 5 MHz. Experimental operation in that part of the spectrum under a license issued to the ARRL has been going on since 1999.

The Executive Committee agreed that the petition should seek a domestic secondary allocation around 5 MHz for the Amateur Service with a bandwidth of 150 kHz. Executive Committee members will review the completed draft petition before it's filed with the FCC, possibly before the next ARRL Board meeting in July.

Participants in the ARRL WA2XSU experimental operation on 5 MHz have established that an allocation at 5 MHz could improve emergency communication capabilities by filling the gap between 80 and 40 meters. An amateur allocation in the vicinity of 5 MHz long has been an objective of the International Amateur Radio Union.

Winning an allocation at 5 MHz--even on a domestic basis--could take several years. Securing an international allocation will be more difficult and take even longer. Consideration of an allocation at 5 MHz is not on the agenda for WRC-03 nor on the preliminary agenda for WRC-05/06.

In other matters, the Executive Committee was told that an FCC Notice of Proposed Rule Making still is expected soon in response to the ARRL's petition, RM-9404, seeking Amateur Radio access to the low-frequency spectrum. Filed in late 1998, the ARRL petition asks the FCC to establish LF allocations in the vicinity

of 136 kHz and between 160 and 190 kHz.

ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, also told the Committee that the ARRL's Application for Review that seeks to clarify the FCC's PRB-1 limited preemption policy with respect to amateur antennas is pending before the full Commission. The ARRL wants the full Commission to review--and reverse--an FCC staff decision declining to extend PRB-1 coverage to include CC&Rs--covenants, conditions and restrictions. The EC agreed to request an en banc presentation to the full FCC this fall, after new Commission appointees have been seated.

The Committee also was told that favorable FCC action is anticipated on a petition seeking to upgrade Amateur Radio's status from secondary to primary at 2400 to 2402 MHz. The ARRL recently asked the FCC to elevate Amateur Radio from secondary to primary at 2300 to 2305 MHz.

The minutes of the ARRL Executive Committee meeting in Dallas are available on the ARRL Web site, http://www.arrl.org/announce/ec_minutes_466.html.

BANGOR HAMFEST THIS MONTH

The Bangor area hamfest held at Herman High School will take place on Saturday the 9th. Over the past several years this event has been popular with good attendance. For those of you that have not been to Herman before, head north on I-95 to the Herman exit (just before the Bangor exits) and head west past Disarts truck stop to Route-2. Continue west on Rt.2 about 1 mile to the high school on your right.

Bring some stuff to sell or trade, or just come and see if there is a treasure you just can't pass up. There will be an ARRL exam session there too.

Upcoming Maine Ham Events

June

Thu. 7th 6:00PM, AE1Q/ARRL Exam.
Winslow Elementary School. POC Don Smith 207-293-2935

Sat 9th 9:00AM Bangor Hamfest,
Herman HS, RT.2 Herman, AE1Q/ARRL Exam. POC Don Smith 207-293-2935

Sat. & Sun 22nd & 23rd MARA Field Day
Woolich town park

July

Sat. 14th Union Hamfest, Union Fairgrounds. W1RU/ARRL Exam. POC Dick Baldwin 207-529-5781

Wed. 18th 6:00PM AE1Q/ARRL Exam,
Togus VA Bldg 210.
POC Don Smith 207-293-2935

August

Sat. 11 St. Albans Hamfest. Snow Devils Field + 1AG/ARRL Exam, 10:00AM at St. Albans Elem. School. POC Bill Sullivan 207-947-4051

Sun. 12th 7:30AM Morris Tour Des Farms Wiscasset (MARA community assist event)

Sat. 25th 9:00AM N1JTH/ARRL Exam,
Auburn Red Cross. POC Doug Rugg 207-784-2374

Sat. 25th 7:00 AM Dan Machoud Century & Half Century Bike Ride Brunswick (MARA community assist event)

September

Sat. 8th Windsor Hamfest, Windsor Fairgrounds, Rt.32, S. Windsor. K1NIT/ARRL Exam, 12:30PM POC 207-947-4051

Fri. 14th 6:30PM AA1CZ/ARRL Exam
Saco Middle School, RT 112. POC Al Noble 207-642-8830

Sat. 15th 9:00AM WZ1N/ARRL Exam S.Portland. Stew. Morrill A.L. Post-35, 417 Broadway S.Portland. POC John Bergeron 799-3687

Sat. 15th K1AG/ARRL Exam, Bangor Community Ctr. Davis Rd. Bangor. POC Bill

Sat. 22nd 9:00AM Lincoln Hamfest, Ella Burr School, Rt.2 Lincoln + N1GOI/ARRL Exam. POC Dave Baker 207-749-3389

Sat. 22nd N1NFK/ARRL Exam Bath Healthcare Facility. POC Robin Walls 207-794-3389

October

Thu. 4th 6:00PM AE1Q/ARRL Exam,
Winslow Elem. School. POC Don Smith 207-293-2935

Tue. 16th 6:30PM WA1YNZ/ARRL Exam.
NMTC, Augusta Christy Bldg Rm. 113, Presque Isl. POC Wilburn Scott 207-455-8333

November

Fri. 9th 6:30PM AA1CZ/ARRL Exam,
Saco Middle School, Rt.112. POC Al Noble 207-642-8830

Sat. 17th WZ1N/ARRL Exam S.Portland,
Stew. Morrill Am. Legion Post-35, 417 Broadway S. Portland. POC John Bergeon 207-799-3687

Sat. 17th K1AG/ARRL Exam, Bangor Community Ctr. Davis Rd. Bangor. POC Bill Sullivan 207-947-4051

Wed. 21st 6:00PM AE1Q/ARRL Exam.
Togus VA Bldg 210. POC Don Smith 207-293-2935

December

Sat. 1st 10:00AM N1NFK/MARA/ARRL Exam. Bath Healthcare Facility. POC Robin Walls 207-725-5135

Sat. 15th 9:00AM N1JTH/W5YI Exam.
Auburn Red Cross. POC Doug Rugg 207-784-2374

DAYTON, THE EXPERIENCE

By Bruce Randall, W1ZE

On Mothers Day, upon conclusion of the 75-meter QCWA net, ARRL Maine Section Manager, Bill Woodhead, N1KAT asked, "Hay Bruce, how would you like to come along with me to Dayton next Thursday?" I was a bit taken back, but within a few seconds of thought I replied, "sure!"

Thursday morning at 4 AM I pulled into Bill's driveway and transferred my bags to his van. A few minutes later we were underway on our 14-hour trip to central Ohio. The trip went well as we drove through 4 call districts. Bill had set up a HF station in the van and along with VHF/UHF plus APRS. We had a lot of things to play with and had several QSOs with other hams traveling to Dayton.

Bill's daughter lives in Columbus so we stayed in a hotel there so he could visit with his daughter and his new grandchild during the evening hours.

Friday morning we got up bright and early and made the hour drive from Columbus to Dayton. As we headed west on I-70 the sky got darker and darker. When we got to Dayton Hamvention area the overcast was thick but no rain. The area was packed with folks. The parking areas were full of cars and almost every one had some kind of ham antennas on it. Let me tell you folks, I am not the only ham geek with a HF screwdriver antenna on his vehicle.

It was about a quarter mile walk from where Bill parked his van to the arena. Bill went to the will-call area to get his pre-paid ticket and I got in a long line to plunk down my \$22 and get a 3-day ticket. With tickets in hand we entered the Hara Arena.

As I entered the first exhibit room, the size a two basketball floors the visual impact was something. Company banners, Antennas lights and another sea of folks milling about as au-struck as I was. Bill having been there many times and noting my bewilderment said, "follow me," and we started our tour on the event. One of the first places we paused was the Yaesu pavilion where we got wall maps, ball caps and loads of information on their products. They had half-dozen folks from their California headquarters there to answer any question we had on their products. We then moved to the Kenwood pavilion where we encountered the same thing, but this time shopping bags and Kenwood logo lapel pins.

I had managed to leave my tote bag back at the hotel but Bill was prepared and had two cloth tote bags and handed me one. We stopped in at the QCWA booth and said hello to those good folks and spent some time discussing QCWA politics and what to do about getting folks involved in the QCWA. We then moved off to a dozen other booths and ogled all the goodies. I paused for a minute or two at the 10-10 Net booth, said hello and signed the membership guest book. Then it was on to the ARRL pavilion where we met up with all the League big wigs that were there to shake hands and answer questions. Bill had a nice chat with ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JPB and Exec.VP & QST Publisher Dave Sumner; K1ZZ who wanted us to pass along their greetings to the hams in Maine and the members of the MARA and thanks for being an ARRL affiliated club.

Throughout the event prizes are given away every few minutes. Throughout the arena there are TV sets and you can check the screen to see if your number scrolls across the screen. As luck would have it my number appeared. I went to the prize area and they said, "yes, you are a winner." Then handed me a big bag that was full of goodies. I got a free subscription to World Radio News, a

Sam's CD call book, telephone RFI filter, low-noise pre-amp module, books and other good stuff.

By this time several hours had passed, so we headed to the refreshment area for a cold soda and a bite to eat. We thought it was getting a bit warm and sticky and as we passed an open door to the flea market area we noted the rain was coming down in sheets and folks were flocking into the arena to escape the wet.

As we ate our food Bill got out his shopping list so we could head over to the AES and HRO areas to check out prices. I didn't have anything I really need to buy but after seeing the price war going on between all the ham dealers I couldn't resist some of the deals. It was working it's way into the late afternoon and Bill and I decided our feet were hurting and out tote bags were stuffed so we headed back to the van and made the hour commute back to Columbus for a light dinner and some well needed sack time.

The next morning we got there before the gates opened at 8 AM and headed to the flea market area for a walking tour. If you have been impressed with the size of Deerfield when it was at it's biggest, think about a flea market 20 times bigger. That is Dayton.

About 9 AM we headed back inside the arena so Bill could get those items he wanted. I had thought about putting a 2-meter radio into the XYL's car and while I was at the Kenwood pavilion the previous day I noted the TM-261A a simple clean looking 50-watt rig with good specs that was normally discounted to \$170. I priced it with both of the big boys (AES & HRO) then walked out with it for fewer than 140 bucks. I picked up a few other small items I wanted in addition. I was really proud of myself I managed to have some self-control and didn't fill up the van with goodies from the candy stores.

After our purchase of new stuff we went back into the flea market area to continue looking around. There was a fellow with pallet loads of new, in the box, TV rotors and controllers.

I asked, "how much?" A guy with a fist full of bills said \$15 each or two for twenty. I looked at Bill as he was pulling out a 20-dollar bill and handing it to the fellow. On the other side of the pallet load of rotors was a stack of about 60 new 30-foot push up masts, the type Radio Shack sells for about \$60. I again asked the guy with a fist full of dollars, "how much for the 30-foot masts?" He replied, "take as many as you like ten bucks each." I broke open my wallet and so did Bill I handed the guy ten and bill handed him sixty. We now looked like safari porters making trip after trip of 12-foot long mast to the parking lot.

By that time we had worked up a pretty good sweat and had just about seen and purchased everything we want to. We both decided to say good buy to the Dayton Hamvention and head out to lunch and a extra large cold soda. I didn't need any rocking to get to sleep that evening.

The next morning at 3:45 AM we started our trip home. The trip was uneventful and I pulled into my driveway about 7 PM Sunday with loads of treasures and memories of a great time.

There was only one disappointing thing about Dayton. Yours truly did not win one of the grand prizes and they were grand. Kenwood TS-2000 ICOM Pro and other high end rigs. Oh well, maybe I'm just a bit greedy, you think?

If you ever get the chance to attend the Dayton Hamvention, do it. You will not be disappointed.

73, Bruce

BBC to end broadcasts ☹

NPBN reported on Wednesday, May 23 that the venerable British Broadcasting Corporation World Service would end their short wave broadcast beamed to North and South America and Australia on July first of this year after 60 plus years. The announcement took the short-wave listening community by surprise and disappointment that the premiere English speaking broadcasts will be

terminated. The BBC said that today the majority of their audience listeners to them on the Internet or from their satellite feed. Some short-wave listener groups dispute this assessment by the BBC, but it does appear that come July first there will no longer be BBC broadcasts on the HF bands.

It was also reported that the BBC along with the VOA and others are preparing to come back to the short-wave bands with the new digital broadcast technology in the next few years. Digital broadcasting will be like listening to FM stereo rather than the typical short-wave AM with fading signals. This type of broadcast technology will require the makers of short-wave receivers to build them with the ability to receive digital signals and in the process make the old analog short wave receivers obsolete in the next few decades. *The times they are a changing!* ☺



**MARA
BREAKFAST-
MEETING AND
FIELD DAY
ARE BOTH ON
SATURDAY
JUNE 22nd, 9 AM
AT COOK'S
CORNER
DENNY'S**

**MERRYMEETING AMATEUR
RADIO ASSOCIATION
KS1R
177 Sabino Road,
West Bath, ME 04530-9503**