



Squelch Tales

Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association for February 2002

WA1SCS called to active duty

Sagadahoc County ARRL ARES Emergency Coordinator and MARA member, Dr. Allen Kuong, WA1SCS has been called to active as a US Navy Doctor in support of our nation's war on terrorism.

With the call up Allen needed someone to fill in as EC. Southern Maine District EC, Bryce Ramsey, K1GAX asked Bruce Randall, W1ZE to fill in as Assistant EC since he and Loren Dudley, W1LHD are already co-members of the Sagadahoc County EMA L.E.P.C., representing the Counties Amateur Radio community. Bruce accepted the assignment and hopes he can fill the big shoes temporarily vacated by Allen.

All of us in the MARA wish Allen and his family well during his call-up. We know the difficulty that places on Service Families, and his expertise at Midcoast Hospital will be missed. Hurry back Allen.

Tech Committee proposes new KS1R repeater IRLP link project.

At the January 26th breakfast/meeting Bruce Randall, W1ZE representing the Technical Committee, advised that co-technical committee member Pete Russell, K1MJP had obtained a higher power 440 MHz transmitter strip to replace the lower powered strip on our 444.4 MHz repeater. The new transmitter strip may cause the old Comet 440 MHz antenna to fail, so Pete recommended we replace it with one designed to handle a higher power level. A Celwave Station-Master would be nice but would eat up most of our Associations funds. After review of the ham equipment catalogs the committee settled on the Diamond F-718A, an 11.5 dB collinear designed to handle well over a hundred watts.

Bruce also presented the committee's plan to make our UHF repeater IRLP capable. IRPL (Internet Radio Linking Project) would allow MARA members to link up with other IRLP capable repeaters across the country and around the world. A brief description outline was passed out to the members in attendance to give them a little information about IRLP. For those of you that did not make the meeting there is web site that can provide you with a very good description of IRLP and we highly recommend you check

it our at: <http://ac6v.com/repeaters.htm#IR>

The 440 MHz antenna acquisition (\$200) and IRLP proposal was put up for vote approval by the membership in attendance, and it passed unanimously.

Mark Rideout, N1JIM donated a Pentium based laptop PC to support the IRLP link application. (Many thanks Mark!).

The tech committee will now proceed on the project in steps and will keep everyone informed of their progress.

ARRL adopts modified Novice band plan

The ARRL Board of Directors has adopted a modified proposal to reframe the Novice bands, now that the FCC no longer issues Novice licenses.

The ARRL Novice Spectrum Study Committee had proposed allowing Novice and Tech Plus (or Technician with Element 1 credit) licensees to operate CW on General-class 80, 40, 15 and 10-meter CW segments at up to 200 W output. The panel recommended reaffirming the current Novice/Tech Plus CW subbands, in part to allow expansion of phone allocations on 80, 40 and 15 meters.

The Board approved a modified plan that would leave in place or slightly trim the amount of additional phone spectrum the committee had recommended for 75 and 15 meters. The amended plan would drop the US phone band to 3725 kHz on 75 meters but leave it at 21,200 kHz on 15 meters. The original plan called for dropping both by 25 kHz.

The 75-meter proposal would expand the phone band by 50 kHz for Generals over the present allocation and by 25 kHz for Advanced and Extra licensees.

On 15 meters, Generals would get another 25 kHz of phone spectrum, but phone privileges for Advanced and Extra class operators would stay the same.

New HF Amateur Radio antenna installed in ISS

Amateur Radio on the International Space Station gained a new HF antenna January 25 although there's no HF gear aboard the ISS as yet. The antenna--the second of four slated for installation aboard the Service Module--was put into place during a spacewalk, or EVA--conducted by Expedition 4 Crew Commander Yuri Onufrienko, RK3DUO, and astronaut Dan Bursch, KD5PNU.

The antenna is a flexible-tape design--similar to, but longer than, a VHF-UHF antenna installed during a January 14 EVA by Onufrienko and astronaut Carl Walz, KC5TIE. ARISS Board Chairman Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, said the antenna would be installed at the end of the Service Module in the 2 o'clock position (6 o'clock is pointing toward Earth).

The HF antenna is a 2.5-meter (8.2-foot) long flexible tape. Bauer thinks it will definitely work on 10 meters and speculated that it might work on 15 or 20 too. Bauer added that he did not know when HF gear would be transported to the ISS nor when it might be made available for use by a future crew.

The EVA lasted several hours and also involved attaching six thruster plume deflectors on the ISS as well as the ham antenna work. Installation involved not only the mechanical deployment of the antenna but routing cables, Establishing the RF connection and even photographic documentation.

A paper entitled "2001: an Amateur Radio Space Odyssey on the International Space Station," which details the development of ARISS and discusses the four new ARISS antennas is available via the ARISS Web site

<http://ariss.gsfc.nasa.gov/EVAs/amsat01.pdf>.

The Expedition 4 crew is tentatively scheduled to speak with students at Butte High School in Montana the week of January 28. The contact was being arranged either via Tony Hutchison, VK5ZAI, in South Australia or via WH6PN at Sacred Hearts Academy in Honolulu.

JA1CB, SK

Shiro Nomura, JA1CB, of Tokyo, Japan, died January 18. He was 70. An ARRL and JARL member, Nomura was a Kenwood Communications chief engineer for research-and-development manager prior to his retirement. He also was the designer of the popular TS-930S transceiver. Between 1989 and 1997, he directed Kenwood USA operations in California.

Nomura was a DXCC Honor Roll member (352 mixed) and was active on the air until shortly before he died. Survivors include his wife and the couple's son and daughter. A service was held January 22 in Tokyo.

Winter 2001 & 2002 a DXers Dream

By WIZE

If you are no on HF this winter you should be. As most of you know, I am fond of 6 and 10 meters. If you are on HF and especially 6 and 10 you can skip this column and go on to the next one. For those of you that are not very active on HF or just haven't got around to getting that 5-wpm cod test out of the way so you can get on the HF bands, maybe I can wet your appetite.

For most of the fall the upper HF bands were just OK and if you were a big-gun on 6 meters you could get the occasional morning shot at a little DX. But come November the peak of the sunspot hit and the DX started rolling in on the ham bands above 14 MHz. One morning in mid November I was sitting at my PC and turned on my little Yaesu FT-817 QRP rig that was sitting on 10 meters and the band was hopping with big signals thundering out of Europe and the Middle East. I managed to work several European stations on CW and SSB with just 5-watts and a 70 foot wire a few feet off the ground. It was now 9:30 AM so I hit the band up button and 50.110 MHz appeared. There was K1GUN in Woolwich exchanging reports with GM0VVG in Scotland and I could hear the Scottish station pretty well on my wire. I tuned down to 50.100 and on the way down I could hear several moderately strong stations. I shut off my 817 and headed to the basement shack to fire up the IC-736 on 6-meters and pointed my 4-element yagi at Europe. I called a G8 and got a nice 599 report. I moved off his frequency and called CQ DX and didn't get away from the rig for the next three hours. I worked in excess of 50 European stations on CW and SSB and as the Europeans started to fade out about 1 PM the central and south American stations started to appear with S9 plus signals. That lasted only about a half-hour and the West Coast started pounding in. I worked stations from Tia Juana, Mexico and San Diego to north of Vancouver BC including stations in Nevada, Arizona, Idaho and Utah, one right after another. That day I worked in excess of 170 stations. The next several days were just the same but I was hearing the same stations I had worked the first day so my daily totals dropped to 50 plus. The six-meter band stayed that way past Christmas but after the New Year 6 meter DX dropped off. However 10, 12 and 15 meters continue to rock all the way through January. On Friday January 25th, on my way home from work about 6 PM I worked 6 JAs (Japan) from my truck on 10 meters SSB and got 58 and 56 reports two hours after sunset.

You Tech class holders can get on 6 meters but you Tech Plus holders can get on 10 meters and still work the world. Now, do you want to get on HF? **73, Bruce WIZE**

friends and support a Maine ham club.

Ham Radio Events in Maine for 2002

VE Exams

February

2 Sat 10:30a Bath Public Library, Washington St.

N1WC/ARRL Wes Clement 207-729-8563

16 Sat 9:00a Bangor Community Center Davis Road W1COP/ARRL Dave Melochick 207-942-

4586

March

9 Sat 9:00a Rockland, Knox County Courthouse W1RU/ARRL Dick Baldwin 207-529-5781

16 Sat 9:00a So. Portland, AL Post 417 Broadway WZ1N ARRL John Bergeron 207-799-3687

20 Wed 6:00p Togus VA Center Bldg. 210 AE1Q/ARRL Don Smith 207-495-3891

22 Fri 6:30p Saco, Saco Middle School AA1CZ/ARRL Albert Noble 207-642-8830

30 Sat 12.00p Lewiston, Maine state Convention

Ramada Conference Center

April

16 Tue 6:30p Presque Isle, NMTC Christie Bldg Rm 113

WA1YNZ Wilburn Scott 455-8333

20 Sat 9:00a Bangor Community Center, Davis Road

K1AG/ARRL Bill Sullivan 207-947-4051

May

15 Wed 6:00p Togus VA Center Bldg. 210 AE1Q/ARRL Don Smith 207-495-3891

17 Fri 6:30p Saco, Saco Middle School AA1CZ/ARRL Albert Noble 207-642-8830

18 Sat 9:00a So. Portland, AL Post 417 Broadway WZ1N/ARRL John Bergeron 207-799-3687

June

1 Sat 10:30a Bath Public Library, Washington St.

N1WC/ARRL Wes Clement 207-729-8563

6 Thur 6:00p Winslow, Winslow Elementary School

AE1Q/ARRL Don Smith 207- 495-3891

8 Sat 9:00a Bangor Hamfest, Hermon High School Rte 2 K1AG/ARRL Bill Sullivan 207-947-4051

July

13 Sat 12:30p Union, Union Hamfest W1RU/ARRL Dick Baldwin 207-529-5781

17 **Wed** 6:00p Togus VA Center Bldg. 210AE1Q/ARRL Don Smith 207-495-3891

27 **Sat** 10:00a Lincoln, Lincoln Hamfest, Ella Burr School N1GOI/ARRL Dave Baker 794-3398

August

10 **Sat** 9:00a St. Albans Hamfest K1AG/ARRL Bill Sullivan 207-947-4051

September

7 **Sat** 12:30a Windsor Hamfest K1NIT/ARRL Bill Crowley 207-623-9075

14 **Sat** 9:00a Bangor Community Center - Davis Road K1AG/ARRL Bill Sullivan 207-947-4051

20 **Fri** 6:30p Saco, Saco Middle School AA1CZ/ARRL Albert Noble 207-642-8830

21 **Sat** 9:00a So. Portland, AL Post 417 Broadway WZ1N/ARRL John Bergeron 207-799-3687

21 **Sat** 10:30a Bath Public Library, Washington St. N1WC/ARRL Wes Clement 207-729-8563

October

15 **Tue** 6:30p Presque Isle, NMTC Christie Bldg Rm 113 WA1YNZ Wilburn Scott 455-8333

19 **Sat** 10:00a Winslow, Winslow Elementary School

AE1Q/ARRL Don Smith 207-495-3891

19 **Sat** 9:00a Rockland, Knox County Courthouse

W1RU/ARRL Dick Baldwin 207-529-5781

November

15 **Fri** 6:30p Saco, Saco Middle School AA1CZ/ARRL Albert Noble 207-642-8830

16 **Sat** 9:00a Bangor Community Center - Davis Road

K1AG/ARRL Bill Sullivan 207-947-4051

16 **Sat** 9:00a So. Portland, AL Post 417 Broadway WZ1N/ARRL John Bergeron 207-799-3687

20 **Wed** 6:00p Togus VA Center Bldg. 210 KE1Q/ARRL Don Smith 207-495-3891

December

7 **Sat** 10:30a Bath Public Library, Washington St. N1WC/ARRL Wes Clement 207-729-8563

SOME HAM EVENTS FOR 2002

February 9 Winterfest at Crystal Falls, Chelsea

March 29-30 Lewiston Maine, Andy Hamfest and State Convention at Ramada Conference Center

May 3-4 Hosstraders, Hopkinton, NH, Hopkinton Fairgrounds

June 8 Bangor Hamfest at Hermon, Hermon High School

June 22-23 ARRL Field Day

July 13 Union Hamfest, Union Fairgrounds

July 27 Lincoln Hamfest, Ella Burr School

August 10 StAlbans Hamfest, Snow Devil's Field

September 7 Windsor Hamfest, Windsor Fairgrounds

October 4-5 Hosstraders, Hopkinton, NH, Hopkinton Fairgrounds

Merrymeeting Amateur radio Association

KS1R

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www.gwi.net/mara