



Squelch Tales



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Assoc. for May 2002

N1JIM does dog-n-pony at Lincoln Club meeting



In early April, MARA's I-Link guru Mark Rideout, N1JIM made another excellent presentation on the I-Link system to the Lincoln County Amateur Radio Club at the Lincoln County Courthouse in Wiscasset.

Mark's presentation got the ham glands in the participants flowing as they heard how the system works. By the end of their meeting they were on a mission to get I-Link up and running on their Lincoln County 2-meter repeater. They authorized the purchase of an I-Link interface module and Mark volunteered to facilitate the purchase of one for them.

As of this writing the Lincoln Club is just about ready to link the 146.985 repeater to I-Link.

PAWA's Greater Portland Electronics Fleamarket 2002 a Success

The Portland Amateur Wireless Association presented their second fleamarket at the Stewart Merrill American Legion Post in South Portland on Saturday, April 20th. With fair weather the attendance was pretty good, with sever tailgaters presenting their treasures in the parking lot. Two floors in the building were dedicated to table selling from a dozen or more folk.

On the second floor balcony the AM International group had a vintage AM station consisting of a Heath DX-100, National receiver and like-new Johnson matchbox. A real great glow in the dark station.

Four grand prizes Consisting of an Alinco, DJ-V5th, Dual-Band HT; Icom IC-2100, 2M 50-watt mobile, ADI AT-201HP 2M 5-watt HT and ICOM IC-T2H, Sport, 2M HT were given away to four lucky hams. Throughout the event smaller prizes were called out with the MARA's own Dan N5AGG was the first prize winner and the proud recipient of a new ARRL 2002 repeater directory.

MARA Membership at a nine-year high!

With the advent of I-Link on the 2-meter repeater and a push by Mark (N1JIM), Bruce Randall (W1ZE) and MARA President Loren Dudley (W1LHD) to get interest and participation back into our Association, paid membership is now at 40.

Thanks to all of you that have joined the MARA for the first time, and those of you that have renewed your membership, for swelling our ranks. We hope that you will stay involved and continue your interest in the MARA and our great hobby.

Maine Ham Clubs Contribute to New England QSO Party

A month ago Bruce Randall, W1ZE received a letter from the organizers of the New England QSO party. They asked if the MARA could do what we could to get as many hams on the air for the event and represent Maine, especially hams in Sagadahoc, Cumberland, Lincoln and Androscoggin Counties.

In addition the organizers asked if we would consider a contribution to the plaque fund and we agreed.

Since that time Maine Section Manager, Bill Woodhead, N1KAT speaking for the Androscoggin club said he would like to go in the plaque fund. In addition he offered to ask other clubs in the state if they would also like to contribute.

The ball started rolling and we received contributions from most all the Ham Clubs in central and southern Maine.

If you have HF equipment or even VHF to get on and operate May 4th and 5th. Check out www.nepq.org for additional details.

AMATEURS SUMMON HELP AFTER SAILBOAT RUNS AGROUND

Vigilant members of the Maritime Mobile Service Net on 20 meters (14.300 MHz) relayed calls for help from a sailing vessel that ran aground March 26 off the northern coast of Cuba. Aboard the sailing vessel Tao were Dave Beane,

GOTAG, and his wife, Sara, whose frantic calls on the Net frequency got a quick response. The couple subsequently was rescued by Cuban authorities and their sailboat refloated.

"She was in a big panic, and then they just stopped transmitting," reported Ed Petzolt, K1LNC, in South Florida, who said he happened onto the situation when he turned on his transceiver.

US Virgin Islands ARRL Section Manager John Ellis, NP2B, said that less than an hour earlier, Beane had checked into the MMSN to say the couple had enjoyed a visit to Cuba and was planning to sail around to the south side. "There was no indication of any problem," he added. Since Ellis had the best copy, he managed the incident.

"It turned out that Dave and Sara had run upon a reef, had called for help from the Cuban authorities, but had received no response," he said. "Sara was rather frantic when she came on 14.300. We immediately gave her a clear frequency." Ellis said a net slightly higher in frequency yielded to give the Net a wide berth.

Mike Pilgrim, K5MP, in Texas notified the US Coast Guard. At about the same time, Petzolt contacted the Swiss Embassy--the US has no diplomatic relations with Cuba, and Switzerland often serves as an intermediary. The Swiss Embassy put him in touch with the Cuban mission in Washington, which, in turn, contacted authorities in Havana by radio. The US Coast Guard was only able to contact the Cuban authorities via telex.

"We tried to determine if they were in danger of sinking, but that is when we lost communication," Ellis said. "We never heard from them for the remainder of the evening."

Ellis said GOTAG checked into the Net later in the week to say that Cuban authorities were able to float the vessel off the reef and get

the couple under way again. "Dave, GOTAG, had nothing but good words to say about the Cubans," Ellis said. "The authorities were very nice and helpful, they even sent two divers down to inspect the bottom of the boat--all at no charge!"

The MMSN had "excellent cooperation and assistance" during the incident from net control Frank Kelly, N3FK, Petzolt, Pilgrim and Dave Dalziel, N4ICE, Ellis said. "There were a number of others on frequency available to help, but all maintained top-notch order and control," Ellis added.--thanks to Brandon Horn, KC2HFG, for alerting ARRL to this incident

MAY HAM EVENTS:

3rd & 4th = **Hosstraders,**

**Hopkinton, NH. Hopkinton
Fairgrounds (exams)**

May 4 Sat 10:30am - **EXAM,**
Bath Public Library,

**Washington Street, N1WC Wes
Clement 729-8563**

May 4-5 = **New England QSO
Party**

May 15 Wed, 6:00pm - **EXAM,**
**Togus VA Center, Bldg. 210,
AE1Q 207-495-3891**

May 17 Fri, 6:30pm - **EXAM,**
**Saco Middle School, AA1CZ
Albert Nobel 207-642-8830**

May 18 Sat, 9:00am - **EXAM,**
South Portland, Broadway Am.

**Leg. Post 314, WZ1N John
Bergeron 799-3687**



**Are you
Prepared to
Help?**

**MARA WEB SITE
www.gwi.net/mara
has been visited 2155 times**

Lincoln, Maine has more bad luck

If having much of Main Street burn to the ground earlier this year and the local ham club having to cancel their yearly hamfest was not enough, more bad news from Lincoln. On The 24th of April the big commercial radio tower on Bagley Mountain overlooking Lincoln and the surrounding area fell to the ground. This event has taken the 147.00 MHz KW1Q repeater off the air. The 147.00 machine is linked to the KQ1L system that connects southern, central and northern Maine.

When and if the KW1Q repeater will come back on line is still unknown.

New England QSO Party May 4th & 5th



The object of the NEQP is to contact as many New England Stations (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI and VT) in as many New England counties as possible. (New England stations work anyone).

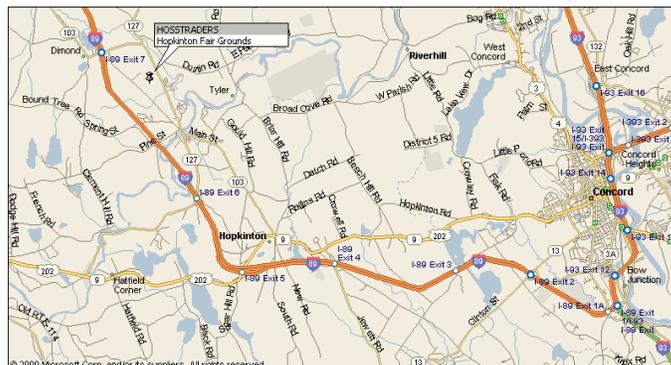
For more information on this event check out the NEQP web site at www.neqp.org.

HOSSTRADERS



May 3rd & 4th

That is correct. The big fleamarket on the State Fairgrounds in Hopkinton, NH is the first weekend of the month. The event starts Friday (3rd) at noon and runs through Saturday (4th).



From Maine, head to Concord, NH. Take 93 south in Concord to 89 west. Follow 89 to exit 7. From exit-7 turn right then right again at the first right. Travel south about 1 mile to fairgrounds. Hope to see you there.

**HELP
SOMEONE
BECOME A
HAM!**