



SQUELCH TALES



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Assoc. for June 2002

EchoLink, an I-Link Enhancement

The MARA's, "voice over the Internet", Guru Mark Rideout, N1JIM has discovered a PC program to use with your I-Link connection that is user friendly and free off the Internet.

The EchoLink program, as it is called by its developer Jon Taylor, K1RFD, is a Windows based I-Link compatible terminal program that is very user friendly and a breeze to install and use. We will not go over all the features because you can read about them all when you download it from: www.synergienics.com/el/.

You do not need to delete your I-Link program because the EchoLink program uses information from your older program to start up EchoLink.

EchoLink has a Sysop Node/gateway program that has been installed into Mark's N1JIM-L gateway station in Bowdoinham. That is why you are hearing different sounding messages when we get an Internet connection.

There is a new set of commands that you can use to drive the I-Link connection from your radio and they are that are very similar to the old I-Link commands. They are:

Command	Description	DTMF Code
Connect	Specific Station By Index	# A nnn
Connect By Call	Specific Station By Index call Sign	C+call+#
Random Node	Any Random Station	A 0 0
Random Link/ Repeater	Any Random Link/Repeater	A 0 1
Random Conference	Any Random Conference	A 0 2
Disconnect	Terminate Current Caller	# #
Play Info	Play Info File	A *
Query By Call	Enter Call, Get Index # & Status	07+call+#
Query By Node	Enter Index #, Get Call & Status	A06+Id##

KS1R repeaters may have new Eagles Lair

Many of you have been receiving email from the MARA about a possible move of the association's two repeaters to Oak Hill. Maybe we should say back to Oak Hill.

Throughout the 1980s and early 90s the two repeaters were on Oak Hill and served a large portion of the mid Maine coastal region. But in 95 our 2-meter repeater was experiencing interference from a strong paging system just a few yards away. In addition, the tower we were on was in very poor condition and climbing it was risky at best. Pete got permission from Bowdoin College to relocate our repeaters to Cole's Tower where it would be in a secure area, have generator back-up and access to telephone lines. Over the years our repeaters worked fine from the Cole's tower site, but had been a one-man maintenance crew and he is thinking of retirement in the not too distant future. With the advent of I-Link (EchoLink) on the 2-meter repeater, that is increasing the membership from folks outside the Bath-Brunswick area, along with planned upgrades to the UHF repeater and various linking plans for it, Pete and Bruce started thinking of ways to improve coverage.

Pete was having a conversation with Bill Messier, K1MNV owner of the Oak Hill site about the things we were doing with the repeaters. Bill then extended an invitation to relocate the MARA's repeaters back up on his hill and locate it on his secure Verison Telephone tower and associated equipment building. The tower is well over 500 feet above average terrain. To sweeten the offer he said that he had a 140 to 148 MHz commercial 4-pole already up on the tower with 7/8th hard line connected to it. He just had the antenna swept and it exhibited a very low SWR from 140 to above 148 MHz. All that Bill asked is for the MARA to pay \$20 a month for power usage and generator maintenance.

MARA President, Loren Dudley W1LHD and Trustee Bruce Randall, W1ZE represent

the MARA and area hams on the Sagadahoc County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). Over the last six months or so they have been talking about setting up a 2-Meter repeater to service Sagadahoc County volunteer hams in the event of an emergency.

The County is in favor of this but site rental has been a snag and a bit steep for the county EMA budget. With Bill Messier's invitation, Bruce presented a new offer to the County that in general states. If Sagadahoc County would assist the MARA with some of the monthly operating expense, the repeaters would become the County's amateur radio repeaters for their use in the event of an emergency, drills, ARES/RACES nets, etc. on a priority basis.

Response from Sagadahoc EMA to Bruce's proposal was very positive and a meeting between the MARA and County officials is scheduled to discuss and nail down the installation costs.

The MARA now pays \$27 a month for the telephone and when we relocate to Oak Hill it now looks like Sagadahoc County will assume the power costs. We will keep you all informed on the relocation project.

The set-up and takedown always needs volunteers and we need folks to stop by and operate, even if it is just an hour or two.

Hope to see you there!

Amateur Radio News Line Audio Streaming

Those of you that listen to Amateur Radio News Line on the WZ1J, 147.135 repeater Wednesday evening are treated to some good Ham Radio news and information thanks to Steve Hanks, WZ1J plus Jerry Partelow, KB1FYA who feeds the audio stream to the repeater.

For those of you that miss this well produced broadcast for one reason or another, and want to hear it again, here is how to do it:

All you need is a MP3 program or Windows Media Player on your PC and connect to www.arnewsline.org. You can then hear what the rest of us heard Wednesday Evenings.

NEW ENGLAND QSO PARTY

By W1ZE

Several weeks ago I participated in the first New England QSO Party and had fun doing it. I think there was only two stations on from Sagadahoc County were John Doyle, K1GUN in Woolwich and yours truly in West Bath. Dan, N5AGG and Steve, WZ1J and a few others from Cumberland County were heard in the pile-ups.

After it was all said and done I logged a little over a hundred QSOs. About 30 of them were with my Yaesu FT-817 5-watt QRP transceiver and a 70-foot random wire. They were the most fun.

I did not have a lot of time to devote to the QSO Party but it was a good tune-up for the June ARRL VHF/UHF contest and Field Day.

73, Bruce

June 22nd & 23rd



Are you ready?

Just a few more weeks until we break out the bug spray, microphone and telegraph key, transceiver and assorted bundles of wire and head to the Woolwich Town Park and museum, behind the fire station, to start a weekend of radio fun. Hope to see you there for the good time.

If you want a copy of the Field Day 2002 rules go the ARRL web site www.arrl.org and do a Field Day Rules search.

We encourage you all to participate in this event. If there is enough interest, we may do a barbecue or potluck picnic along with the radio communications.

HARECOM Net to change name

During the May 20 HARECOM net Bruce, W1ZE asked Net Control Charlie Cole, N1CUW how many active members of the net lived in Harpswell. Charlie didn't delay in responding with the word "none." Armed with that information Bruce said, "why don't we change the name of the net to something that reflects

the new demographics of the net.” He proposed MID-COAST ARES or Emergency Net. Charlie had each of the check-in stations to comment on Bruce’s proposal and the majority thought it was a good idea. Other names were proposed such as Merrymeeting ARES Net, MARA-ARES net to name a few. Charlie advised everyone to think about it and be prepared to vote on a change and name at the next net session on the 27th.

After the net, Bruce, Sagadahoc County Assistant ARRL EC, sent off a report to Maine EC, Max Soucia, N1KGS; Southern Maine EC, Bryce Rumery, K1GAX and Sagadahoc EC, Dr. Allan Kuong WA1SCS advising them of a pending name change for the HARECOM net. Each one thought it was a great idea and all thought that the name Mid-Coast ARES net would be an excellent pick since the net included the three mid coast counties plus parts of Kennebec and Androscoggin counties.

If you are not now a participant in the 7:30 Monday evening net, stop by and check into a friendly net where information on local activities are exchanged.

ARRL VE test sessions for 2002

JUNE:

6 Thur 6:00pm - Winslow Elementry School, AE1Q Don Smith 495-3891

8 Sat 9:00am - Bangor Hamfest, Hermon High School, K1AG Bill Sullivan 947-4051

15 Sat 12:30pm - Union Hamfest, Thompson Community Ctr. W1RU Dick Baldwin 529-5781

JULY:

17 Wed 6.00pm - Togus VA, Bldg. 210, AE1Q Don Smith 495-3891

AUGUST:

10 Sat 9:00am - St. Albans Hamfest, K1AG Bill Sullivan 947-4051

SEPTEMBER:

7 Sat 12:30pm -Windsor Hamfest, K1NIT Bill Crowley 623-9075

14 Sat 9:00am - Bangor Community Center- Davis Rd. K1AG Bill Sullivan 947-4051

20 Fri 6:30am - Saco Middle School, AA1CZ Albert Noble 642-8830

21 Sat 9:00am - South Portland. Am.Leg. Post 413 Broadway, WZ1N John Bergeron 799-3687

21 Sat 10:30am - Bath Public Library, Washington St. N1WC Wes Clement 729-8563

OCTOBER:

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

19 Sat 10:00am - Winslow Elementry School AE1Q Don Smith 495-3891

19 Sat 9:00am - Rockland, Knox County Courthouse, W1RU Dick Baldwin 529-5781

NOVEMBER:

15 Fri 6:30pm - Saco Middle School, AA1CZ Albert Noble 642-8830

16 Sat 9:00am - Bangor Community Ctr.-Davis Rd., K1AG Bill Sullivan 947-4051

16 Sat 9:00am - South Portland, Am.Leg. Post 413 Broadwar, WZ1N John Bergeron 799.3687

20 Wed 6:00pm - Togus VA Center Bldg. 210, AE1Q Don Smith 495-3891

DECEMBER:

7 Sat 10:30am - Bath Public Library, Washington St. N1WC Wes Clement 729-8563

Other Ham Events

June 8 = Bangor Hamfest, Herman, ME High School (exams)

June 15 =Union Hamfest, Union Masonic Lodge (exams)

June 22-23=Field Day

July 27=Lincoln Hamfest (Canceled)

August 2-4= Lighthouses on the Air, Aug. 2, 0001UTC to Aug. 4, 2359 UTC

August 10=St. Albans Hamfest, Snow Devil's Field (exam)

August 23-25=ARRL New England Convention, Boxboro, Mass

September 7= indsor Hamfest, Windsor Fairgrounds (exams)

October 4-5 =Hosstraders, Hopkinton, NH, Hopkinton Fairground (exams)

**No Breakfast-Meeting
this month, Field Day is
the event for this month.
Hope to see you there!**



**ARE YOU A MEMBER
YET?**



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