



Squelch Tales



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Assoc. for September 2002

Hams meet to discuss Oak Hill site proposal.

On the morning of Saturday August 17th a group of hams gathered atop Oak Hill in Brunswick at the old New England Telephone microwave link building for coffee and donuts, and to attend a meeting organized by the MARA's technical committee. The meeting discussed a verity of site proposals to the old microwave building and associated 80-foot free standing microwave tower being offered by site owner and manager, Bill Messier, K1MNW. The tech committee wanted to determine if the proposals would get the active support of the ham community in the Bath-Brunswick and mid coast region.

The following proposals were offered up as possibilities:

- A site to experiment with all facets of ham radio.
- To receive instruction in electronics and radio technology.
- A workshop with test equipment and some tools to build, repair, modify and test radio equipment. With a tech library to assist and gather information.

- Have the KS1R club station available with HF, VHF and UHF capabilities for contesting, weak signal DXing, or just rag chewing.
- A place to receive Amateur Radio license study.
- A site to support ARES drills and emergencies.
- A location to house the KS1R repeaters. ARES packet node and APRS node, possible VHF-UHF propagation beacons and maybe a 430 MHz ATV repeater to serve southern Maine.
- And last but not least, a place to hold meetings by the MARA.

The attendees to a person, thought it would be a very good thing to do.

When the meeting ended, several MARA members started in with the project. Andy, AC1R and Dan N5AGG started assembling equipment storage racks while Brian AA1WI started gathering up the HF station equipment. In the early afternoon Dan connected a portable G5RV dipole to the microwave tower about two-thirds the way up and by 2:30 the HF station was on the air. After finding all the tuner settings Brian made the first QSO in the North America QSO party on 20-meters and the first QSO from the new KS1R club station.

The MARA signs are up on the building and over the following weeks things will take place. We will keep you all posted by email of pending projects so you can come up and join in.

Ham Events left in 2002

VE test sessions

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 Elementary 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 (exam)

Other Ham Events

- September 7 = Windsor Hamfest**, Windsor Fairgrounds (exams)
- October 4-5 = Hosstraders**, Hopkinton, NH, Hopkinton Fairground (exams)

Two August bike rides a success thanks to MARA volunteers

The month of August had MARA volunteers helping out with two 50/100-mile bike rides.

The first was the Morris farm Tour-Des-Farms supported by Lee, N1HOC; Bob, N1VVF; Gay, N1XBN; Bruce, W1ZE and Dan, N5AGG acting as net control. The ride wound its way through most of Lincoln County and a little chunk of Kennebec County. The 50 milers headed back to Wiscasset at Cowshit corners in Newcastle while the 100 milers continued on to the Pemequid lighthouse before heading back to Wiscasset.

The Morris farm folks were tickled pink to have us out in the field making sure their event went smooth and hope that we will help them again next year.

A communications team consisting of MARA volunteers Dan, N5AGG; Bob, N1GWE; Brian, AA1WI; Donnie, N1PAA; Louise, KB1IEF; Bruce, W1ZE and Lee, N1HOC showed to help with the Dan Michoud Memorial

Ride. The ride went pretty well. This year the 100-milers took off first at 7:30 AM with the 50-milers starting a few hours later. The weather was moderately cool in the early part of the day, which was an aid to the riders. The last 100-mile participants rolled into the gazebo on the Brunswick Mall about 5:00 PM.

To all the volunteers from both rides, you have done an outstanding job for some deserving organizations, plus you have again put a very positive spotlight on Amateur Radio and the folks in it.

MARA member to receive ARRL Level-1 Disaster Comm. Training

One of the MARA's newest members was nominated by Sagadahoc County Assistant EC, Bruce Randall, W1ZE and selected by ARRL Maine Section Manager, Bill Woodhead, N1KAT to receive one of the five Level-1 Emergency Communications training slots available to the Maine Section. That person is Carolee "Lee" Tribou, N1HOC of Bath.

Lee has been one of the MARA's most frequent community event volunteers. She is a Red Cross worker at the Brunswick Chapter and member of the Sagadahoc County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). At the LEPC she represents the Red Cross and is another voice for Amateur Radio along with fellow LEPC members MARA President Loren Dudley W1LHD and the KS1R Trustee Bruce Randall W1ZE.

Lee will take the on-line course and has three months to complete it and receive her Level-1 certification. After she is certified, she will then "Elmer"(mentor) the rest of us here on the mid-coast so we can get certified.

We were in hopes that there would be additional slots open for level-1 training, because the MARA had additional well qualified members that would benefit by the training and make good mentors. Unfortunately that was not to be. We are sure Lee will do a great job and be able to get those of us that need the training up to speed so

we can help our communities.

MARA September Meeting

The September 26th meeting of your MARA will be held at the Oak Hill, K1MNW Amateur Radio Learning Center (ARLC) starting at 7:00PM.

Paul, N1ZYB and Linda, N1ZYC will present the program for the evening on transmitter hunting (DFing). There will be a video made by Paul and Linda along with show-n-tell. Hope to see you there.

HELP!

By W1ZE

Like most ham clubs around the country we have a modest membership with membership peaking this year at about 50. This makes 2002 one of the highest memberships in many years, almost doubling since 2001. The big jump in membership is due to the addition of Echo Link (I-Link) access to the 2-meter repeater. A membership of this level is pretty good considering we are in a small state with a limited amount of hams in it.

A problem: When paid membership was in the high 20s there was not a lot of help or

participation by the membership. Just a small core of less than a dozen doing 90% of what we do. But I am well aware that this is just a hobby and good ham radio folks have lives and obligations outside this pass-time.

After loosing our meeting place at the Bath Salvation Army in 1999 we decided to move the Thursday Evening meetings to the last Saturday morning and make it a breakfast meeting in hopes that would continue participation. Since I was acting VP and Trustee, acting President Loren Dudley asked me to take over running the Saturday meetings because he had to work Saturdays. I said, "OK," expecting help from the rest of the Board of Directors.

Following that change, events beyond our control started happening to board members. One member became disabled, another became busy taking care of a disabled family member and had their own health issues. Two found themselves working on Saturdays and weekends when most of our club activities take place. That left four BOD

members to attempt to run the Association.

Most of the Association activity centered on a few public events, the occasional Field Day and maintaining the repeaters.

Now that the membership has grown, I am in hopes that some of you will step up to the plate and help by becoming BOD members and/or chair a committee, or at a minimum participate.

It is my wish to step back as Association dictator and go back to just being on the tech committee and KS1R trustee by 1-1-03. I will continue for the next year, along with Loren, W1LHD to represent the MARA on the Sag. Co. LEPC, continue to support Allan, WA1SCS as assistant EC for Sag. Co. and VP of the QCWA Pine Tree Chapter. So it is time for a new batch of members to become Board of Directors and Association officers. If many take a little part then good things happen.

I for one want to see this 22-year-old club thrive and be a good vehicle for hams to have fellowship in our great technical hobby.

**Merrymeeting Amateur
Radio Association**

KS1R

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