



# Squelch Tales

Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association for August 2003

## Field Day a Success

By W1ZE

The weekend of July 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> brought excellent weather, a real plus for Field Day operation. Set-up of the site overlooking the water and town landing went quickly. Don, WD1F and XYL Louise provided their trailer camper so the station was set-up under a canopy. Mark, N1JIM provided his trusty generator that purred along throughout the two-day event. A 132-foot doublet antenna, an R-5000 vertical and a 6-meter quad loop were hoisted in the air on a couple masts. RF started flowing out of the IC-736 transceivers promptly at 1800Z.



N5AGG racking up the QSO Sunday Morning

Band conditions were not all that great with the bands above 15 meters void of signals. No QSOs were made on 15 and 10 meters throughout the contest. During the contest 20-meters got the bulk of the QSOs with 75 and 40 meters close behind. Even a few QSOs were made on 6 SSB and 2M FM simplex. After all was said and done 237 QSOs were made, 131 phone and 106 CW.

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Throughout Field Day, Ham and non-ham guests stopped by to say hello and see what we were doing.

Many thanks to all that came out to help set-up, operate and provide moral support. We are all looking forward to next year.

## FAMOUS HAMS

In addition to outstanding hams that are members of the MARA, there is a long list of folks that are famous or noteworthy individuals that also have a ham ticket.

The following is a list of famous or semi-famous hams, a few you may have heard of:

### United States

**K0DWC** Lt. Gen. Francis "Butch"

Griswold, colleague of Curtis LeMay

**K0HWY** Tex Beneke, band leader

**K1JT** Dr. Joseph Taylor Jr, 1993 Nobel Prize winner in Physics

**K1OKI** Mickey Schulhof, head of Sony US

**K2HEP** John Sculley, former CEO of Apple and Pepsi (lapsed)

**K2ORS/4** Jean Shepherd, author  
(cont. next page)

**K2SSQ** Henry Feinberg, designed and built E.T.'s communicator (cont.)

**K4TPJ** David Funderburk, member USA House of Reps  
**K4ZVZ** Paul Tibbets, pilot of "Enola Gay"  
**K6DUE** Roy Neal, television reporter  
**K6IR** Ken Miller, QCWA distinguished service, company executive  
**K6RFU** Albert Glasser, scores feature films  
**K7TA** Clifford Stoll, author ("Cuckoo's Egg") & astronomer  
**K8LAP** Bandel Linn, talk radio host  
**KA6UXR** Dr. Alex Comfort, author of "The Joy of Sex"  
**KB2GSD** Walter Cronkite, former news anchor  
**KB6LQR** Jeana Yeager, Voyager '86 pilot  
**KB6LQS** Dick Rutan, Voyager '86 pilot  
**KB6OLJ** Paul J Cohen, mathematician  
**KD4WUJ** Patty Loveless (Patricia Ramey), country singer, XYL of W4WRO  
**KD6OY** Gary Shandling, comedian/actor  
**KE6MCM** Hugh Downs, TV compere ("Concentration") (form. KD6WUS)  
**KG7JF** Jeff Duntemann, author and publisher of Coriolis Group  
**KI6M** Stu Gilliam, comedian  
**KN4UB** Larry Junstrom, rock musician (bass player in .38 Special)  
**N4KET** David French, CNN newsman  
**N5YYV** Kathy Sullivan, Chief Scientist NOAA (former astronaut)  
**N6CKF** Lloyd Bochner, actor ("Colby")  
**N6YOS** Priscilla Presley  
**NK7U** Joe Rudi, baseball player (ret)  
**NZ6N** Randy Powell, actor (was WA0QZW)  
**W3ACE** Armin Meyer, former US Ambassador to Japan

**W4WRO** Emory Gordy Jr, record producer and OM of Patty Loveless  
**KD4WUJ**  
**W5LFL** Owen Garriot, astronaut  
**W6AQ** Dave Bell, film producer and Academy Award winner  
**W6UK** Alvin Rey, musician/bandleader  
**WA4SIR** Ron Parise, astronaut  
**WA6MOS** Joseph Pevney, former Star Trek director, actor, singer  
**WB4KCG** Ronnie Milsap, country singer  
**WB6ACU** Joe Walsh, rock musician (James Gang and The Eagles)  
**WV6VLY/WA6BND** Steve Wozniak, co-founder of Apple (lapsed)  
[Silent Keys - United States](#)  
**K4LIB** Arthur Godfrey, TV performer  
**K7UGA** Senator (US) Barry Goldwater  
**WA4CZD** Chet Atkins, guitar player  
**KA6HVA** Burl Ives, singer/actor  
**KH6IJ** Katashi Nose, radio columnist and former physics professor  
**N6KGB** Stewart Granger (born James Stewart), actor  
**W2SKE** Bill Leonard, former President of CBS News  
**WB6RER** Andy Devine, cowboy actor  
**N5SDH** Marty Robbins, Singer, Songwriter, Nascar Driver.  
[Worldwide](#)  
**FO5GJ** Marlon Brando (Martin Brandeaux).  
**JY1** King Hussein of Jordan (SK)  
**JY2** Queen of above  
Maybe you noted that there are no W1-land calls in the list. There is still time for you to make it. Write a best seller sequel to KA6UXR's book, Save the planet; invent an AA fuel-cell battery that fits your HT that lasts for 10 years or facilitate world peace. That will get you on the list.

# MARA participates in ARRL New England Advisory Committee Meeting in Portsmouth

Report by Bruce Randall, W1ZE

Saturday July 12<sup>th</sup> Maine Section Manager Bill Woodhead, N1KAT called me to see if I and/or MARA President Don Doupin could attend the New England Advisory Committee meeting in Portsmouth, NH the next day. Bill said, "I know it is short notice but I had been out of town for the holidays and neglected to get the word out." My calendar was clear and said OK. I attempted to get in touch with Don but was unable to make contact.

The meeting got started at 9 AM Sunday morning at Yokers restraint and convention center on Route-1 in Portsmouth. Section Managers, ECs, AECs, and club officials from all over New England were in attendance. New England Director Tom Franey, K1KI ran the show and passed along a lot of news and information on what is happening at Head Quarters and at the WRC 2003.

A hot news item was the announcement that at the final hour of the WRC an agreement on the 40-meter band was reached after previous word that consensus had not been reached. As reported earlier the 7.0 to 7.3 MHz band will be given to hams worldwide. Broadcast services will be moved to above 7.3 MHz clearing up heterodyne alley for hams. It will take several years to implement but by the end of the decade we will have the whole band to ourselves.

Another big news item was that the International requirement for Morse code

proficiency to operate in the HF spectrum has been dropped. The FCC has been in favor of this for some time, so we should expect to see the requirement to copy 5-WPM code to be eliminated in the very near future. There may be power restrictions for no-code HF privileges and/or a more comprehensive written exam that includes written questions about the CW mode but weighted more like questions asked about RTTY, digital and other modes. Stay tuned on this one.

This announcement generated a lot of attention by the attendees. No one was shocked to heart the news, but there is a lot of concern about the socialization of new hams, so they drop their CB type oriented conduct and good buddy lingo and get off two-meter FM repeaters and explore more of the hobby.

Rule Making items at the FCC were discussed and there is a consensus of opinion at HQ that many of the RM items are awaiting the final results or WRC, no-code and other issues.

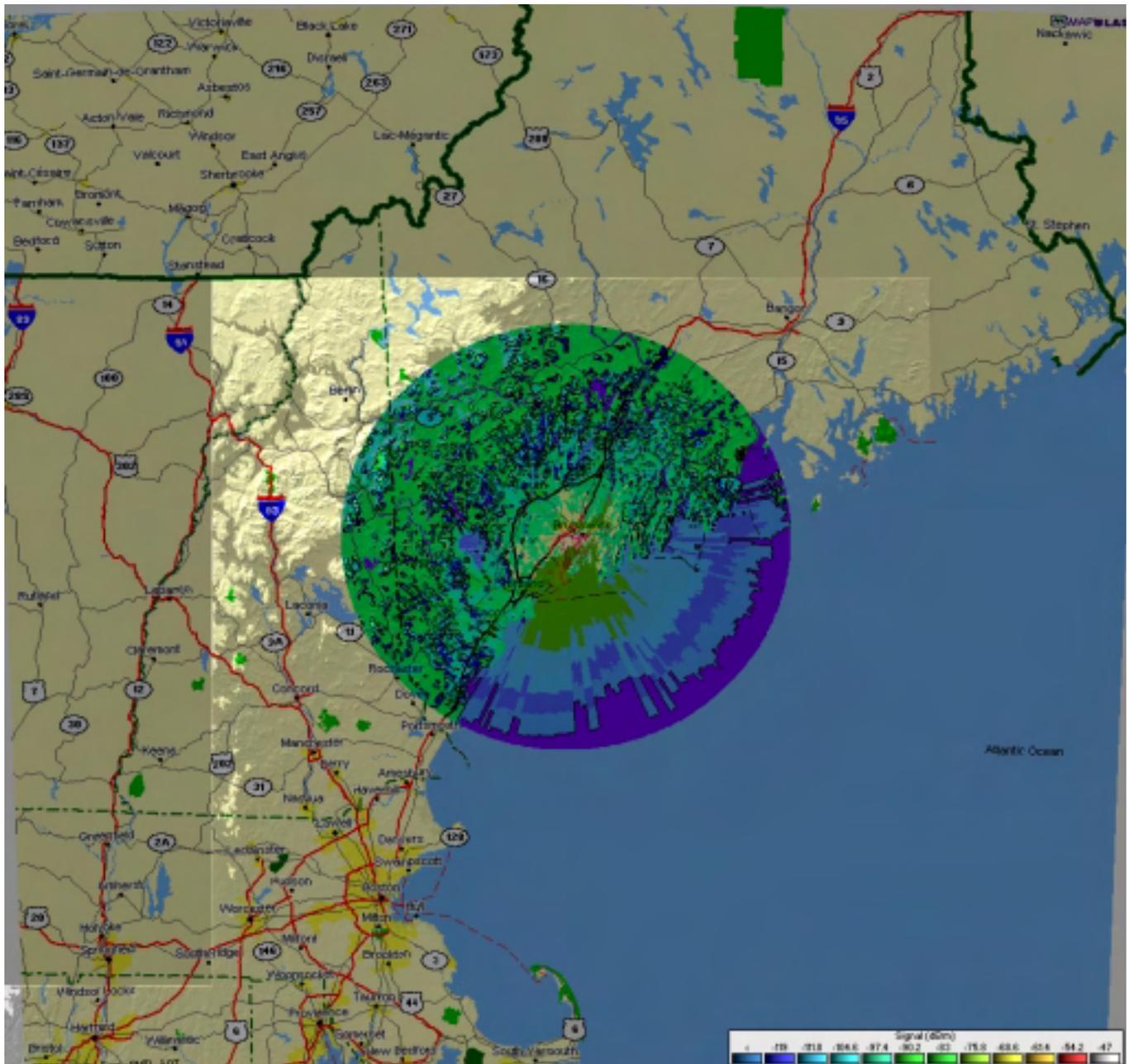
The big concern of the ARRL is the power companies push for broadband over power lines. **WE NEED TO GET THIS STOPPED!** This technology will eliminate reliable communications on HF due to the increased broadband noise from 3 to 80 MHz radiating from power lines. We are in hopes that the Federal Government and DOD will join the ARRL and other groups in opposing this ill-conceived technology.

**Are you ready to provide communications in the event of an emergency? Have you signed up to take the free ARRL on-line Level-1 certification course? Contact Lee, N1HOC for details on how to get started.**

# VHF-UHF RF Mapping Program

Have you ever thought it would be nice to know where you're 50-watt VHF transceiver and roof mounted Ringo-Ranger antenna would reach? Well you can. There are commercial computer programs out there that will do that for you if you are willing to plunk down enough greenbacks that would purchase a new Kenwood TS-2000.

Good news MARA members and friends, Bill Messier, K1MNW has just such a program and is willing to run your station data and print you a map showing where you should expect your signal to go and where you should expect Q5 2-way communications.



The above map shows the coverage of the new KS1R/R 1284.0 MHz repeater from Oak Hill in Brunswick. Note the green blotches on Acadia National Park, Cape Cod and other outlying areas. those are elevated or over-water line of sight.

We hope to have mapping for all the MARA's repeaters on the web site in the near future.

If you would like a mapping of the signal from your station, Bill is willing to make one for you but needs the following data to make a comprehensive map.

1. The band of operation (6M, 2M, 70cM, etc.)
2. Power output of your radio.
3. Length of the transmission line between your rig and antenna.
4. Type of coax (RG-?)
5. Type of antenna (J-Pole, yagi, etc.)
6. Gain of the antenna, indicate DBd or DBi.
7. GPS location, Latitude and longitude. of your QTH.
8. Height of you antenna above ground in Meters (if you can't figure out meters, supply it in feet, Bill will convert it)
9. Your email address.

After Bill runs the program he will email you the map. If you do not know your exact location, Ask someone like Mark Rideout, N1JIM or Bruce Randall, W1ZE who have portable GPS receivers and come to your QTH and take a GPS reading.

## Super Station Master back on 147.21

The week of July 8th had Bill Messier getting the platform installed on the 80-foot tower on Oak Hill. The following week Bill, Bruce and Donnie getting the Associations 2-meter Super Station Master hoisted up to the platform. During the following week Bill fabricated some galvanized mounting brackets and on Thursday of that week the trio got it mounted in place between the 2-meter 4-pole and the 444.4 repeaters antenna. The StationMaster has improved outlying coverage. Good reports have been reported from Augusta, Oxford Hills and in the Sebago Lake area, even with the

repeaters sick transmitter only putting out power between 12 and 20 watts.

In the not to distant future, users of the .21 repeater will be able to switch between the 4-pole and the Station Master by just entering a switch code on their touch-tone pads. For things like local public events where low power HT are used the 4-pole with greater close-in coverage can be used. But if the station you want to communicate with is heading up US-1 or up 95 to Waterville you can remotely switch to the Station Master and extend the repeaters coverage.

As just reported, the 60-watt GE transmitter isn't feeling well these days, so Pete Russell, K1MJP and Bill, K1MNW are going to build up another exciter and amplifier so we can get the power back up to over 50-watts. Stay tuned!

### PREZ SEZ

By WD1F

It was the 4th of July and Louise (KB1IEF), Devin (my son) and I were getting ready to head to the Parade. When suddenly I was hearing people from South Carolina come through my HT. Now I have had this HT for a while and this has never happened to me. I looked a little harder and found there were stations making long distance contacts on 6 meters. My HT monitors 52.525 and was picking stations while I was standing in my driveway. I don't own a 6-meter beam or anything but I did have a 40-meter dipole and a tuner so I jumped on the IC-706 and gave it a shot.

First Contact worked was Gary, WA1TSS in North Carolina. After (Cont.) speaking with him I moved on to SSB. I worked lots of stations down the East Coast. We had the usual exchanges, weather, signals, equipment, and names. One guy I spoke with was on a 5 EL beam running 1KW. I felt bad telling him I was on a home brew 40-meter dipole. I had a blast and learned a few things about the 6-meter band.

*Donnie*

### NEWS FROM NEWINGTON

ARRL TELLS FCC "BPL IS A  
PANDORA'S BOX OF UNPRECEDENTED  
PROPORTIONS, "

Citing the potential for interference to and from Amateur Radio, the ARRL has called on the FCC to "take no steps" to permit Broadband

over Power Line (BPL)--a form of power line carrier (PLC) technology. In response to the FCC's BPL Notice of Inquiry (NOI) published May 23, the League this week filed a 120-page response--including studies. The NOI, which asked how the FCC should regulate the delivery of broadband services to homes and businesses using electrical wiring to conduct high-speed digital signals, attracted some 1900 comments--many from the amateur community--by the July 7 comment deadline.

"ARRL is unwilling to have the Amateur Service gored with the double-edged sword of an incompatible service that will at once (1) cause widespread interference, and (2) preclude any future changes in the amateur HF allocations," the ARRL said. The League said that based on "diligent and exhaustive research," it's concluded that BPL must avoid any and all amateur MF, HF and VHF allocations without exception. The League said that while it's aware that current Part 15 rules permit BPL, its interference potential remains untested and unrealized, since no access BPL systems are in operation. BPL proponents would prefer that the FCC authorize even higher power levels for such systems, however.

"BPL is a Pandora's Box of unprecedented proportions," the ARRL declared. It asked the FCC to modify its Part 15 rules to prevent interference to users of the HF and low-VHF spectrum from the start and "to prevent consumers' reliance on BPL as an interference-free broadband delivery system."

Studies appended to the League's comments suggest received signal levels of BPL broadband noise at typical amateur stations would be anywhere from 34 dB to 65 dB higher than typical ambient noise levels in the worst-case situations. "BPL cannot be deployed using amateur allocations in the MF, HF and VHF bands without severely high interference potential," the ARRL reiterated.

Electric utility companies would operate many, if not most, BPL systems. ARRL pointed out that some power companies have demonstrated a less-than-stellar record of cooperation in resolving complaints of power line noise to hams. "It is a very substantial problem now for

the Amateur Service, without the addition of BPL to the mix," the League said.

The ARRL concluded by urging the FCC to ensure that BPL "is not permitted to operate in or near any Amateur Radio allocations" and that any future changes in ham allocations would "trigger (Cont.) retroactive modifications to BPL facilities" to avoid amateur frequencies.

The ARRL has initiated an important Spectrum Defense Fund campaign to support activities to educate government officials on the potential threat that BPL poses to Amateur Radio

#### **WHAT TO DO ABOUT THE MORSE REQUIREMENT POST-WRC-03?**

World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 (WRC-03) made optional the requirement to prove the ability to send and receive Morse code to operate below 30 MHz. While Morse exam elements remain on the books in the US, Canada and elsewhere, Switzerland and the United Kingdom have apparently become the first countries to delete their Morse requirements for HF operation. In the US, however, the FCC is unlikely to act on its own motion to simply make the Morse testing requirement go away.

"There isn't an exception in the Administrative Procedures Act that we am aware of that would permit the Commission to issue an administrative fiat changing the license structure or exam-requirement rules," said an FCC staffer who's closely involved with Amateur Service rules. Other countries can do this because they have different laws and procedures, the FCC staff member observed, adding that even if it could be done here, "that still leaves unanswered the fundamental question: What do you want the new rules to be?"

In its December 1999 Report and Order restructuring Amateur Radio licensing, the FCC stopped short of revising the rules to sunset the Morse requirement automatically if WRC-03 deleted Morse proficiency from the international Radio Regulations. The FCC also acknowledged "a clear dichotomy of viewpoints" on the Morse code issue within the amateur community.

The ARRL's policy for several years has been that Morse should be retained as a testing element in the US. At its July 18-19 meeting in Connecticut, however, the Board said it would solicit and review input from members on the

Morse testing requirement and other possible revisions to Part 97 arising from WRC-03.

The first move on the Morse code question in the US is for someone to file a Petition for Rule Making with the FCC seeking a rule change. No Code International (NCI) <http://www.nocode.org/> has spearheaded the battle to eliminate the Morse requirement and would be a likely organization to file such a petition. NCI Executive Director Carl Stevenson, WK3C, said late last week that NCI was still studying the matter and had not yet made a final decision on a plan of action. An ARRL member, Stevenson says he hopes personally that the League would join NCI in actively encouraging the FCC to eliminate the Morse exam element as soon as possible.

Hopes for a quick resolution to the Morse question could be wishful thinking, however. Once a petition to drop the Morse exam element is filed, the FCC will put it on "public notice" by assigning an RM number and soliciting comments. If more than one such petition is filed, the FCC is obliged to invite comments on each. When that process is completed, the FCC may determine that a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) is in order. The Commission at that point could incorporate all Morse-related rule making petitions into a single proceeding. The NPRM would get a docket number, and the comment process would begin anew.

Further complicating and extending the process, the FCC most likely would incorporate other pending Amateur Radio-related issues into the same NPRM.

At the end of the comment and reply comment periods, the FCC would issue a Report and Order (R&O) that includes its decision on the Morse code requirement and any other issues incorporated into the proceeding. The whole process could take a couple of years, perhaps longer.

Ratification of the WRC-03 Final Acts by the US Senate does not appear to be necessary before the FCC can act or begin the rule making process.

Following World Administrative Conference 1979 (WARC-79) which resulted in three new HF amateur bands, the FCC acted in 1982, prior to Senate ratification of the conference's Final

Acts, not only to initiate the rule making process but to give amateurs limited access to 30 meters.

Canada has advised hams in that country that the Morse qualification requirement remains in effect for operation below 30 MHz, "pending a review by Industry Canada of the impact of the WRC-2003 regulatory changes on the Canadian radio regulations, policies and procedures."

## July Meeting had good turnout

The July meeting at the West Bath Fire Station had a small but improved attendance of a dozen or so members. First topic was a treasurer's report phoned in by Bob Watson just prior to his departure to San Diego, California for a vacation. Bob reported that there is a little over \$1000 in the treasury which brought a big sigh of relief from the conditions of the treasury a year ago (*A lot of increase is due to membership renewal, new members and not having to hemorrhage funds to the telephone company for the past six months or so, plus sales of club and donated equipment that sold at the Herman Hamfest. Special thanks to membership chairman, Mark Rideout for his efforts in contacting folks and reminding them about membership renewal.*)

The technical committee reported that the 1.284 GHz was up and running with a temporary lash-up and transmit antenna. Bruce is still working on the 444.4/1284 repeater(s) controller and hopes to have it ready in the near future.

Lee, N1HOC, Activities Chairperson advised that August will be a busy month for the MARA with two communications support events scheduled. The first is August 9<sup>th</sup> is the Brunswick Regatta and August 23<sup>rd</sup> is the Dan Michoud Century Bike Ride. She hopes many of you will come out and support the events.

Show and tell had Bill, K1MNW and Bruce, W1ZE demonstrating the 1.2GHz repeater and 10GHz gunplexers.