



# Squelch Tales



*Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association for October 2004*

## Cam on the Hill

By Bill Messier, K1MNW

There is now a Tower Cam located on the 85' tower that the KS1R 147.21 MHz and 444.4 MHz repeaters are located. The Tower Cam employees a LINUX based video server (So it doesn't crash!). Soon Internet users will be able to pan 360 degrees and be able to see the Maine coast, Casco Bay, Portland, Harpswell, Phippsburg, and surrounding Islands, as well as Mt. Washington area.

In the future there may be icons with local hams callsigns on them. These icons will be clickable, and swing the camera around and point to their QTH! There is also a video (NTSC) loop through where the 439.250 MHz (CATV ch.60) ATV repeater will be attached. Hopefully when the software is written, and verification of a legitimate HAM callsign, the user will be able to remotely key-up the ATV transmitter via the Internet!

The video server also has the capabilities to sense alarm inputs, and then take a picture and send it via 'E' mail to people listed on the

server E mail list! This Video Server does it all folks.

If you want to see what the tower cam is looking at, connect to MARA web-site [www.ks1r.net](http://www.ks1r.net) then click on tower cam. **73's, Bill**

## MARA Tech Committee helps W1WEW's XYL

In early September the MARA received a request from Mary Wood, XYL of Woody/W1WEW (SK) to help her clear out his ham shack and find a new home for his ham and computer equipment. On the afternoon of September 7<sup>th</sup>, Pete Russell/K1MJP, Bill Messier/K1MNW and Bruce/W1ZE went over to Mary's house and inventoried Woodie's equipment. He had a nice shack with good equipment so the three disconnected and packed up the majority of the equipment and cleaned out the shack.

That evening Bruce sent out an ad on the web and within hours interested inquiries started rolling in. The intent was to take the

equipment that didn't sell up to the Windsor Hamfest the following Saturday. By Thursday of that week area hams purchased all the ham equipment. Woodie's PC was saved by the MARA tech committee for future PC/ham radio interface projects.

The Tech Committee would like to thank the folks that purchased the equipment so they could provide some funds back to help out the XYL of a valued MARA member and fellow Ham.



## NEWS FROM NEWINGTON

### "INTRUDER SIGNAL" ON 40 METERS REMAINS A MYSTERY FOR NOW

An unidentified signal that's been showing up on the 40-meter phone band on or about 7238 kHz has

mystified amateurs in the western US and Canada, where it's been heard frequently for the past few weeks. Although it resembles a steady carrier, a closer inspection suggests that the intruding signal actually is a series of closely spaced signals. Don Moman, VE6JY, in Edmonton, Alberta, says the signal is quite loud at his QTH.

"This signal looks a lot more interesting than it would sound--just a broad tone/hum/buzz, depending on where you tune," he said. One spectrogram from VE6JY showed perhaps a half-dozen or more discrete signals. "It's certainly loud enough out here, peaking broadly south-southwest from Edmonton," he said. Moman was using a 5-element Yagi and was hearing the signal at 10 dB over S9.

That conforms with observations reported by Bob Gonsett, W6VR, at Communications General Corp. (CGC). He says engineers at the CGC lab in Fallbrook, California took a quick look at the intruder September 6 at around 2120 UTC and found "several close-spaced CW

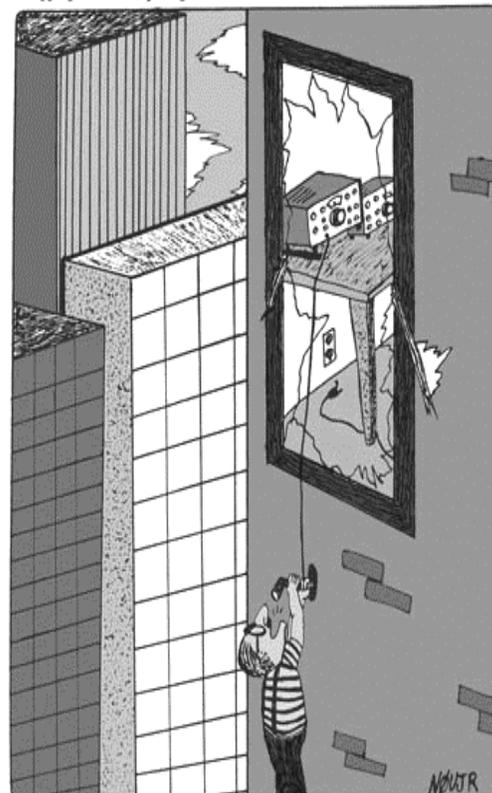
carriers--perhaps from one specially modulated transmitter, perhaps from transmitters at different locations," he reported. CGC reported the signals appeared on 7238.063, 7238.150, 7238.237 and 7238.412 kHz, with the 7238.237 kHz signal being "the strongest of the group."

While no one's sure what it is, the FCC HF Direction Finding Facility has been able to determine that it's coming from somewhere north of Prescott, AZ, and west of Interstate 17. FCC monitoring indicates the "buzz" is centered on 7238.1 kHz with a bandwidth of about 1 kHz and spikes spaced at about 90 Hz apart.

Reports to the IARU Region-2 Monitoring System indicate the signal has been heard from about 1700 to 2130 UTC, although Moman reported hearing it at around 0300 UTC and said the signal even went off the air for a few seconds while he was listening to it. Jack Roland, KE0VH, in Colorado also heard the signals for a couple of evenings this week. "Something is not right there," he remarked.

High Noon Net Manager Bill Savage, N5FLD, in Albuquerque, New Mexico said several net participants--in Nebraska, Colorado, Nebraska, Wyoming, Minnesota and Arizona--were able to hear the mystery signal.

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"Sorry about the noise, I tripped...anyway, the name here is Roy...I am located near downtown Chicago, and I've been a ham now for 20 years..."

## Signal reports from away

On September 14<sup>th</sup> Bill Messier/K1MNW received the following e-mail from Harry Chase. WA1VVH in the bay state:

From: H Chase  
To: bmessier@clinic.net  
Sent: Wednesday,  
September 15, 04 4:18 PM  
Subject: KS1R 1.284 GHz  
repeater signals and other  
stuff!

OK, at last, here is your e-mail! I started listening for your repeater on August 22; here is the almost day-by-day results - note that in all cases, the enhancements happened after sundown, and no signals were heard from here during the day, but as you will notice, some of the nighttime propagation was fantastic!

8/22--triggered repeater with 100 mW, good signals at 1W --WX = cool, clear dry night

8/23--no signals at any level heard

8/24--GOOD signals-- hit repeater at 3 mW, --WX = cool dry clear night.

8/25--just tickled repeater at 1W, QSB strong at 3-4 minute intervals. After midnight hit it at only 50 mW.

8/26 -->8/31: no signals; WX was warmer and more humid throughout this period.

9/1--no signals; but WX = cool dry night.

9/2--good signals late, around midnight; poor before that. WX = cool, dry night.

9/3-9/5: no signals

9/6--Just hit repeater at 1-watt, slow QSB like on 8/25.

9/7-9/10: no signals.

9/11-hit repeater at 100-mW, noticed unusual tropo on 2 Meters into Ohio and Michigan at the time!

(Worked some new grids!)

9/12--9/13: no signals - but these nights I only had time to check once around midnight each time.

9/14- just hit rptr at 1 W @ 7PM; huge enhancement at 11PM-- hit rptr at 100-uW (microwatts)! WX = cool, dry night, calm.

I hope these entries don't "wrap" all over your screen! EQUIPMENT USED FOR ALL TESTS: Standard C628A 1W 1200 MHz handheld, feeding a DIAMOND 10 dB vertical collinear at 120-feet, fed with 1/2" hard-line LOCATION: Pepperell, MA (FN42eq) A step attenuator used for all low power testing.

As you can see, the conditions were very much all-over-the-place; but 2 things stand out: first, the best propagation is on the

cool calm dry evenings, and second, the openings are frequent enough to really have some fun with! At least so far, I haven't had to wait weeks and weeks for a chance to gab on the repeater.

BTW, Just for your info, I now have a 10 GHz beacon here, at 10,368.200 MHz running 1/2 watt into a 10 dB slot waveguide antenna at 150 feet, and this week there will also be another beacon at 3456.200 MHz, running 4-watts into a 10 dB slot waveguide antenna at 140 feet, Anyone on either band is encouraged to listen for it and send me a signal report! It ID's with my callsign/B.

Hope to see you at Hosstraders, listen on 1284.00 simplex when you are there!!! (I will also be on 146.52 and on 224.64 simplex)  
Harry, WA1VWH

**MARA'S**

October Meeting,

Thursday

the 28<sup>th</sup>

at 7:00 PM

Midcoast Hospital

see you there!

## 160 to 10 Meters or 80 to 10 meter short rotor cable dipole that fits your lot

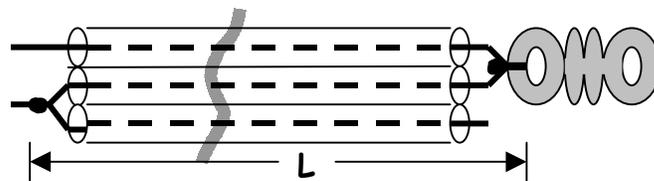
By Bruce Randall, W1ZE

I was at a flea market a while ago where I noted a chap selling pre-made short dipoles for the 160 to 10 meter and 80 to 10 meter bands. The price was what one would expect for an assembled wire antenna. I said to myself, "Self, you old son of a gun, you could build one of those." There were no special materials involved.

Basically the antenna is a balanced fed doublet. The 160 to 10-meter models are 140-foot long, with the 80 to 10 meter model only 70-foot in length. The short doublets are fed with 300 TV twin-lead or 450-ohm ladder-line, with a transmatch (antenna tuner) with balanced output at the transceiver end.

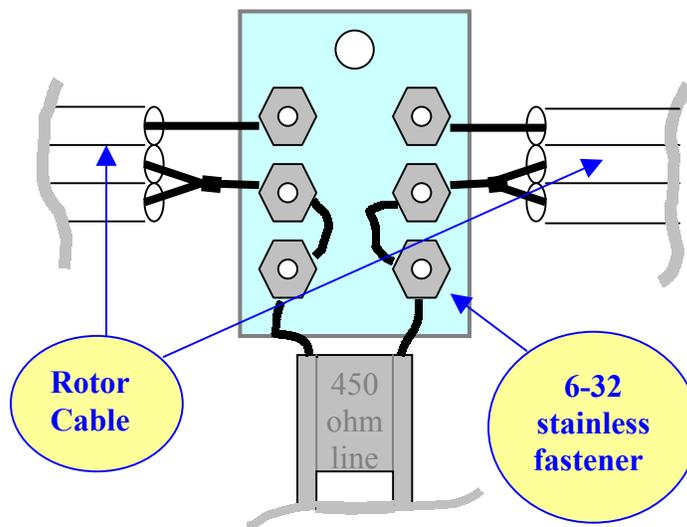
The low-frequency portion in the doublet element folded back on itself and the high frequency (short) element is for the higher frequencies. In the 160-meter model, one 70 long folded element has a wire length of 140 feet, slightly longer than a quarter-wave at 1.8 MHz. The added length is to compensate for the reactance caused by the folding process and close coupling with the shorter element.

The heart of the antenna is the wire used to make the two doublet elements. The wire is three-conductor rotor cable available at Radio Shack (RS#15-1150, 100'for\$15) or any store that sells TV antenna rotors.

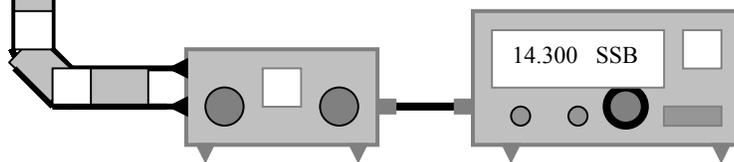


**L = 70-feet for 160 to 10 meter model  
35-feet for 80 to 10 meter model**

As you can see in the above sketch, the three element wires are connected in a zigzag configuration. The center insulator can be made by a 2" x 4" rectangle piece of plastic or Plexiglas available at your corner hardware store. Other insulator material such as 1" PVC pipe could be used.



Like most doublet antennas, the two models described here will make a good all-band HF antenna and can be mounted in the classic flattop or inverted-V configuration.  
*Happy DXing & 73, Bruce*



## Feedback from Fall Sag. Co. Local Emergency Planning Committee meeting

By Bruce Randall, Sag. Co. AEC

On the evening of September 21st I attended the Sagadahoc County LEPC meeting at the Richmond firehouse.

Brian McCue, KB1EQC from the American Red Cross attended his first LEPC meeting. He works for a sub-contractor at BIW and lives in Bath. Brian advised me that the Ham Station at the Topsham A.R.C. building is now set-up. They have the VHF antenna and HF G5RV installed. The station has been tested and now capable of going on the air.

Also at the meeting, we were advised that MEMA may have the states LEPCs consolidate into regional LEPCs vs. County level LEPCs. Since Sagadahoc is a very active LEPC and already includes the Cumberland County towns of Brunswick and Harpswell in it activities. Sag. LEPC may end up being a key or hub in the reorganization process. The counties of Lincoln, Sagadahoc and Cumberland could become

one region, but that mix is not assured.

Sagadahoc County EMA Director, Rusty Robertson is cracking the books and studying for his Technician Class ticket. He is in favor of more folks in LEPC obtaining a ham ticket to provide a reliable secondary communications capability. The LEPC Chairman and members in attendance agree.

*73, de W1ZE*



## Board of Directors Election set for November

Boy, does the time fly by when you are having fun. It seems like the last two years went by at light speed. Two years ago we selected four good folks to serve on the Associations governing Board of Directors (BOD). As you may know the MARA selects four members for a four-year term then two years later we select three BOD members for a total of seven members.

This November we need to fill the positions now held by:

1. Bob McQueeney/N1VVF
2. Bob Watson/N1GWE

We are in hopes that both Bobs will consider running again.

The following folks are the holdover BOD members:

1. Lee Tribou/N1HOC,
2. Don Dauphin/WD1F
3. Louise Dauphin/KB1IEF
4. Jeff Herbster/AI1B

Note: For those of you that are new to the MARA, the position of Trustee is not a BOD position. The Trustee only votes at a BOD meeting if there is a tie that needs to be broken. The Trustee is also the holder of the Association KS1R Callsign and license.

Anyone interested in becoming a member of the governing Board of Directors should contact Association President Donnie/WD1F, any member of the BOD or Trustee Bruce Randall/W1ZE.

## MINUTES OF MEETING, September 30<sup>th</sup>

### Call to Order:

The September Meeting of the Merry Meeting Amateur Radio Association was called to order at 7:05pm by our President

Donnie/WD1F at the Mid Coast Hospital, Brunswick Maine.

#### Attendees:

MARA Members:

Abe/KC1W, Bruce/W1ZE,  
Bob/N1GWE, Lee/N1HOC,  
Donnie/WD1F, Louise/KB1IEF,  
Brian/AA1WI.

Guests:

Shane/KB1LJX, Linda/KB1KBT,  
and Devin

#### Treasurer's Report:

Bob/N1GWE current balance is:  
\$650.79

#### Technical Committee:

Following reported by  
Bruce/W1ZE and Donnie/WD1F.

1. Packet Node - on the air from Donnie's QTH. New UPS that should allow for several days operation in the event of a power failure. The technical committee is reviewing the possibility of relocating the node to Oak Hill.
2. APRS Node - still down.
3. 444.4 Repeater - currently in pieces on Pete's workbench going through an upgrade. Should be back on the air in 1-2 weeks. Once back up the 440 repeater will be linked to 6 meters.
4. Tower Cam - up and running. A link from the KS1R website will take you to the site.
5. 1.2 GHz - getting busy. Bill/K1NMW reports regular check-ins from Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Northern Maine. A group in Northern Maine is looking into linking a 1.2 GHz repeater up there with MARAs.

#### Activities:

Lee/N1HOC1.

MARA's annual Holiday party is a go. Lee has scheduled the China Rose, on the Old Bath Road for Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00pm.

There will be an ARRL VE testing session on October 16<sup>th</sup> at 1:30pm at the Library in Bath. Volunteer examiners are still needed. If you are a VE and available that day let Bruce/W1ZE know.

#### Sagadahoc ARES:

Allan/WA1SCS Sag EC was not able to attend the meeting. Bruce/W1ZE and Donnie/WD1F provided the following reminders

1. There will be a table top SET for Sagadahoc county in October. A likely date will be Saturday October 23<sup>rd</sup>. More to come as we get closer.

2. In November an all day ARES seminar will be held. Subjects on the agenda may include: First Aid/CPR, providing assistance on scene of an emergency, the Incident Command System and the Maine Emergency Communicator Level I course. Date, time and location to be determined, more to come as the plans firm up.

3. During the last Sagadahoc LEPC meeting at the Richmond Fire Department the subject of reorganizing the LEPCs in a Regional configuration vs by counties was brought up. Bruce/W1ZE was one of the members at the meeting and will have more information as decisions are made.

#### Old Business:

Mid Coast American Red Cross communication capabilities. At the last meeting Allan/WA1SCS, John/KC6TVF and Lee/N1HOC wanted to explore the communications capabilities at the new home of the Mid Coast ARC. At tonight's meeting Linda/KB1KBT, reports the ARC station is up and running on

HF/VHF/UHF. Interested parties can contact Brian at the Mid Coast ARC to get a closer look at what is available.

#### New Business:

1. Lee/N1HOC wanted to advise MARA members that there is only one year left on the grant the ARRL has for the Emergency Communications courses, which allows ARRL members to get the tuition for the course refunded upon successful completion. If you are considering taking the course stay up till midnight on that first Monday and enroll. The courses are very worthwhile and can help refine our emergency communications skills. Bruce/W1ZE reports that there is the potential for an extension on the grant - but do you want to take that chance? Enroll soon.

2. Bruce/W1ZE reports that the ARRL will be sending out certificates to members who are active on Nets. Brian/AA1WI will be recognized as a certified Traffic Handler for regularly checking in and handling traffic on the local net. Bruce/W1ZE is the Net Manager for our Monday night Mid Coast ARES net, and members who regularly participate in that net can also expect a certificate from the ARRL.

#### Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the MerryMeeting Amateur Radio Association will be held at MidCoast Hospital on October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2004 at 7:00PM.

#### Adjournment:

At 7:53pm Bruce/W1ZE made a motion, seconded by Donnie/WD1F, to adjourn the meeting.