



Squelch Tales



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Assoc. for April 2005

MINUTES OF MEETING, February 24th, 2005 By KC1W

The February Meeting

Call to Order: of the Merry Meeting Amateur Radio Association was called to order at 7:03pm by our President Donnie/WD1F at the Mid Coast Chapter of the American Red Cross in Topsham Maine.

Attendees:

MARA Members:

Abe/KC1W

Donnie/WD1F

Brian/AA1WI

John/KC6TVF

Michele/KC7LIF

Paul/KA5FPT

Allan/WA1SCS

Bruce/W1ZE

Bob/N1VVF

Gay/N1XBN

Bob/N1GWE

Harry/KB1KJY

Guests:

Karen Hoffman/MidCoast Chapter of the American Red Cross and our host for the evening Bill/N1KAT - ARRL Maine Section Manager, and Roger/N1XP

Treasurer's Report:

Bob/N1GWE reports a current balance of: \$760.07.

Technical Committee:

Bruce/W1ZE and Don/WD1F report: The 147.21 auto patch has a "technical malfunction" should be repaired and back operating in the very near future.

The 1.2GHz repeater is up and running well - MARA is looking for users of the repeater to let Donnie, Bruce or Bill know signal strength and location to determine the range of the machine.

There is a minor problem with the packet TNC - seems to not work when the temperature falls below 15 degrees F. Hopefully the problem can be found and the temperature will rise. Members of the technical committee are still learning all of the "Bells and Whistles" available on the new 147.21 controller. As new capabilities are activated, and programmed into the machine the membership will be notified.

Activities:

Lee/N1HOC1 was unable to attend the meeting, Abe/KC1W reports our next event will be the MS Walk, and believes the date is April 10th, 2005. Lee will

be soliciting for volunteers soon.

Sagadahoc ARES:

1. MidCoast ARES Training Day - Bruce/W1ZE (for Allan/WA1SCS Sag EC)

The first training day was a success with lots of good feedback from the attendees. Allan is hoping to make this an annual, or even a semi-annual event, where one of the sessions could be the Maine Emergency Communications course presented by Bryce/K1GAX the Maine ARRL SEC.

2. Sagadahoc LEPC is presenting a HAZMAT Awareness course at the West Bath Fire House, Tuesday evening March 22nd. This is an introductory awareness course and anyone interested in attending needs to register with the LEPC at 443-8210.

3. Michele/KC7LIF reminds us of the upcoming emergency preparedness activity scheduled for June 6 & 7, 2005. The scenario will be weapons of mass destruction and the scenario will be finalized at a table top exercise on June 3rd. IBM reps are providing information on voice over the internet and

HAM participation during the event is still being investigated.

Old Business:

1. And the Androscoggin Hamfest/convention - March 25-26 at the Ramada Inn in Lewiston. There will be a testing session Saturday morning March 26th and Bill/N1KAT reports the final agenda of session topics should be on the Maine Section web page by February 26-27. Among the topics proposed are Lee/W1LWT's Balloon project, meteor scatter, home brewing (radio gear wise) and J-poles, etc...

2. February 19th VE testing session in Bath was a success. 12 examinees took exams and all but 1 passed, one individual came in without a license and left the session as an Extra!

New Business:

1. Bill Woodhead/N1KAT recently attended the ARRL New England Cabinet meeting. There was a presentation on Broadband over Power Lines (BPL) by W1RFI. The demonstration showed the potential for this technology to interfere with radio signals throughout the United States. Unfortunately the current resident of the White House is very much in favor of the technology as a potential money maker for the power companies at the price of harmful

interference to not only the Hams, but also other licensed users of the radio spectrum. Bill/N1KAT also learned during the meeting that any changes to the entry level license structure, a no code HF license, were a long way off.

2. Karen Hoffman /Am. Red Cross reported that during a recent meeting of the Lincoln County Fire Chiefs she learned the county fire departments were upgrading the radio system. The old radios are available, and if MARA was interested, Misty Green of the Lincoln County EMA should be contacted.

3. Karen also stated the MidCoast Chapter of the ARC has a monthly Disaster Service meeting. The meeting is usually the 3rd or 4th Monday of the month and takes place at the MidCoast Chapter office. MARA members interested in attending can contact the chapter for dates and times.

Program:

Karen/ARC, Michele /KC7LIF, John/KC6TVF, Paul/KA5FPT and Brian/AA1WI provided a tour of the new home of the MidCoast Chapter office of the American Red Cross that included a demonstration of the equipment available in their radio shack. The chapter has Red Cross HF, Amateur HF, VHF/UHF,

and packet available. Their current antenna farm includes a VHF/UHF vertical, 40/80 meter vertical, a G5RV and an HF folded dipole. Michele, John, Paul, Brian and Shane/KB1LJX have volunteered a lot of time getting the radio shack up and running and Karen wanted to thank them all.

Thank you Karen Hoffman for hosting tonight's Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association Meeting.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association will be Thursday, March 31st, 7:00pm, at the MidCoast Hospital.

Adjournment:

At 8:01 PM Bruce/W1ZE made a motion to adjourn, and it was seconded by Bob/N1GWE.

Editors Note: As always Abe, great job on the minutes.



May 6th & 7th

For more info:

www.qsl.net/k1rqg

NEWS FROM NEWINGTON



ARRL Bulletin ARLB008
March 1, 2005

FCC Morse restructuring proposals could be out by mid-year

The FCC continues to work toward developing a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) that will spell out what the Commission has in mind with respect to possible changes in the current Morse code requirement and Amateur Radio licensing.

A total of 18 petitions have been filed, including one from the ARRL, seeking Part 97 rule changes addressing the future of the 5-WPM Morse requirement (Element 1) and revisions to the overall Amateur Radio licensing structure. The FCC plans to tackle all 18 in a single proceeding.

On the code issue, petitions--and comments in response to them--run the gamut from retaining or even beefing up the Morse requirement to eliminating it altogether. (The ARRL's proposal would retain the 5

WPM Morse examination for Amateur Extra class applicants only.)

The League and others have also put forth proposals for a new entry-level Amateur Radio license class. At this point, personnel in the FCC Wireless Telecomm. Bureau are continuing to review the thousands of comments filed on the 18 petitions.

While the FCC appears unlikely to release an NPRM any sooner than mid-year, the issue still may be a major discussion topic during the FCC Forum at Dayton Hamvention, May 20-22.

Once public, the NPRM would initiate another round of public comments on what the FCC has proposed. An FCC Report and Order implementing any new rules is unlikely before the second half of 2006, although it's possible the Commission could wrap up the proceeding before then.



**The ARRL
needs your
support and
membership
during these
critical times
for Amateur
Radio**

Teckie Talk Report from the Tech Committee By W1ZE

On Monday March 14th I was driving from Phippsburg into Bath and decided to give Bill Messier, K1MNW a call of the 444.4 repeater. I keyed the mic. PTT button and got a very weak signal back, I had to switch squelch off to hear the repeaters ID. At most spots along Route 209 I could not access it at all. When I got to Witch Spring hill I could access the repeater but the signal from the repeater was only an S-2. I called Bill again and he came back. I advised him that the power out on the UHF repeater was very low so he took a walk through the snow over to the repeater building. Bill moved a few wires and noted the B+ (12VDC) wire going to the voltage bus strip was not making good contact. He re-secured it and we went from 25 mw to 15 watts. That did the trick. The best thing about that incident is the realization how far a 25 mw signal will travel.

The telephone line going to the 2-meter repeater has been reconnected so control and autopatch service is now available. Audio adjustments still

have to be made to the controller-phone line interface. It will be a project for warmer days.

Sagadahoc County LEPC needs volunteers

As many of you may know your MARA has participated in the Sagadahoc County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) for many years. Back in 1999 and 2000 Then MARA President Chris McGraw volunteered to help the County effort as a representative from the MARA and BNAS. After that Loren Dudley, W1LHD and Bruce, W1ZE took over after Chris was reassigned to the USS Kennedy out of Washington State. Bruce and Lee, N1HOC are still members of the LEPC and actively involved.

Sagadahoc EMA Director Rusty Robertson is looking for more volunteers from the community. Concerned citizens, first responders, ham radio operators and representatives from local business are encouraged to become involved. If you live in Sagadahoc county or live and work in the Brunswick-Harpswell area

you are also invited to participate. If you can see your way clear to spend a few hours four times a year and interested in Emergency preparedness Haz-Mat and disaster control, your participation in this community effort would be appreciated. For more information about the LEPC, contact Lee, N1HOC or Bruce, W1ZE.

NEW ENGLAND QSO PARTY

Letter from K1KI
March 13th 2005

To: Merrymeeting
Amateur Radio Assoc.

We've enclosed the rules for the fourth running of a great operating event - the New England QSO Party. It will take place on the first weekend in May (7th and 8th) and we'd like to ask for your help in making it successful. The contest starts at 4 PM on Saturday and goes until 1 AM Sunday, then on Sunday 9 AM until 8 PM.

We hope you'll give the NEQP some publicity at your next club meeting and in the next club newsletter. The NEQP web site at <http://www.neqp.org> has the full set of rules, plus

maps and other related tools.

One of the prime goals is to make sure that all New England counties (67) are active in the contest. As you might guess, Maine is a state with a large number of counties with few hams in them. Piscataquis County only has about 65 hams. Cumberland, York and Penobscot have the most (500-900) and the other 12 counties have from 100-500 hams. We do expect to have several mobiles out during the contest trying to get to as many counties as possible. If you can help us identify people who will be active in the smaller counties it will help us a great deal - and if you have the capability to go HF mobile, we'd love to add you to our list of planned mobile operations.

Please contact us (info@neqp.org) if you have any questions or suggestions on how we might boost activity in the NEQP, and especially if you'd like to help out in any way. Hope to hear you on during the NEQP!

--Tom Frenaye, K1KI--

New England QSO Party Rules

Object: To contact as many New England stations in as many New England counties as possible on 80-40-20-15-10m. (New England stations work anyone).

Date: First full weekend of May (May 7-8, 2005 and May 6-7, 2006).

Contest Period: 2000Z Saturday until 0500Z Sunday (4pm ET Saturday until 1am ET Sunday) and 1300Z Sunday until 2400Z Sunday (9am ET Sunday until 8pm ET Sunday).

Categories: Single operator high power, low power and QRP categories, plus multi-operator, single transmitter. Same four categories for mobiles. Single-operator stations using assistance during the contest (packet or Internet spotting nets, etc.) will compete in the multi-single category.

Contest Exchange: Send signal report and state/province (OX stations send signal report and "OX"). New England stations send signal report, county and state.

Valid Contact: Work New England-stations, once per band/mode. New England stations work anyone (and must copy the county for New England stations worked). CW contacts must not be

made in the phone band segments. Mobiles can be worked again in new counties. County line QSOs should be logged as two separate QSOs. Crossmode, crossband and repeater QSOs are not permitted.

QSO Points: Count one point per phone QSO, two points per CW (includes digital modes) QSO.

Multiplier: Stations outside of New England use counties as multipliers for a total of 67 CT/8 MA/14 ME/16 NH/10 RI/5 VT/14). New England stations use states(50), Canadian provinces (14) and OXCC countries as multipliers.

Scoring: Total score is QSO points times the multiplier. Mobiles count QSO points per county and multipliers from all counties (counted once).

Suggested frequencies:
CW - 3540 7035 14040 21040 28040, Novice/Tech -3705 7130 21130 28130,
SSB- 3875 7280 14280 21380 28380

Reporting: Logs should indicate times in UTC, bands, modes, calls and complete exchange.

Multipliers should be clearly marked in the log. New England stations put your club's name on the summary sheet. Entries must be submitted within 30 days and sent to NEQP,

PO Box 3005, Framingham MA 01705-3005 or via e-mail to logs@neqp.org (Cabrillo format preferred). Send a large SASE for a printed copy of the results.

Awards: Certificates will be awarded to the top scorers (25 QSO minimum) in each New England County, US state, Canadian province and DXCC country. At least twenty plaques will also be awarded to top scorers, and some special awards are available to non-New England stations (check the web site for the current list).

More information: The New England QSO Party web site is at <http://www.neqp.org>.

Check there for information on planned fixed station and mobile activity from New England Counties, contest software information, county abbreviations, plaques to be awarded, and information on New England state county awards. NEQP results will be posted on the web site when they are complete. Questions can be addressed to: info@neqp.org.

New England stations: We hope you will be able to get on for at least a short period of time to make some QSOs! Join in the fun!
3/13/2005

New England Counties Map

