



Squelch Tales



Newsletter from the Merymeeting Amateur Radio Assoc. for August 2005

Field Day 2005 a success!



One op, one logger & 3 supervisors

Woolwich: This year's last weekend in June's romp in the park, called Field Day was a success. Turnout was much higher than in previous years and it seemed that most folks made it through the oppressive heat and late night skeeters.



Jim, N1IPA, John KC6TVF and Harry, KB1KJY rack up the points on 20 meter SSB

After years of operating in the 1A classification, the group expanded their operation and added another transmitter. The second station was dedicated to PSK and RTTY, the first time digital was added to the mix of modes. Bryan Dorval (AA1WI) set up that station and managed to log in several QSO, copy the ARRL Field Day bulletin. That alone added 100 points to the combined score. Bryan was

assisted throughout the event by his first harmonic (son) Shane, KB1LJX.



Brian, AA1WI operating the digital station

Bruce, W1ZE did the final tally and for a modest effort, the following is the submitted score:

TOTAL CW	=	184	x	2	=	368
TOTAL DIGITAL	=	27	x	2	=	54
TOTAL PHONE	=	103	x	1	=	103
TOTAL QSOs	=	314				525 points
Power Multiplier				x	2	1050 points

We will claim bonus points of: +810
Total Score Claimed 1860

In the November issue of QST the scores will be listed and we will be able to see how we did against all the other clubs and groups in Maine.

For all of you that came out and participated in the heat and bugs, give yourselves a pat on the back and a "WELL DONE!"

Thanks Al /N1MHC for the great FD photos



Are you trained and ready to help if?

August to be a busy month for MARA volunteer communicators



As you may already know we have three bike ride events this month we provide communications support for. They are:

- **Tour de Merrymeeting Bay bike ride, Saturday August 13th** in Brunswick and along Merrymeeting Bay
- **Tour de Farms, 100mi bike ride, Sunday August 21st** at the Morris Farm in Wiscasset and throughout Lincoln County
- **Dan Michaud Memorial Ride 100mi ride Sunday August 28th.** Starting at the Gazebo in Brunswick covering Freeport, Durham, Lisbon, Topsham Bowdoin, Bowdoinham and Richmond.



We need your help so we can show what the MARA communicators can do. If you can help on one, two or all three bike rides, please contact event coordinator Lee, N1HOC at sionaann@zwi.net or Bruce, W1ZE at W1ZE@arrl.net

Tech Committee Talk



KS1R 147.21 and 444.4 MHz repeaters + APRS & packet nodes

Now that Field day has come and gone and the spring rains have finished, your tech committee is going to start catching up on the maintenance and upgrade projects that need to be accomplished. September may be the big month for some dedicated time on the hill. Stay tuned.

News from Newington

ARRL CITES "ADDITIONAL AUTHORITIES" TO BUTTRESS BPL RECONSIDERATION PETITION

The ARRL has cited the conclusions of a UK study and of the FCC itself to further support its call for the Commission to "reconsider, rescind and re-study" the broadband over power line (BPL) rules it adopted last October. In its Petition for Reconsideration last February in the BPL proceeding, ET Docket 04-37, the

League argued that in permitting unlicensed Part 15 devices such as BPL, the Commission's main obligation is to establish a radiated emission level low enough so that the devices "will predictably not interfere" with licensed services.

"Unless this conclusion can be fairly reached, the Commission has no statutory authority to permit the facilities to operate on an unlicensed basis," the League maintains in a Citation of Additional Authority (Citation) filed July 8. Furthermore, the League says, the FCC itself affirmed the ARRL's argument in another proceeding.

The League cited a Commission conclusion in last December's Second Report and Order and Second Memorandum Opinion and Order in the Ultra-Wideband (UWB) proceeding, ET Docket 98-153. The FCC held in its UWB Order that a reasonable reading of Section 301 of the Communications Act would limit licensing to "any apparatus which transmits enough energy to have a significant potential for causing harmful interference." The FCC, the League asserts in its Citation, cannot authorize BPL--although it's an unintentional radiator--due to "acknowledged (and field-proven) substantial interference potential to licensed services." The

solution, the ARRL said, is to establish radiated emission limits at a level that would make the chances of interference negligible.

Accompanying the Citation are studies of BPL systems in Scotland conducted by Ofcom, the UK's telecommunications regulator. Ofcom says concern over signal leakage is one reason for BPL's small UK market share compared with DSL and cable. "Although efficient for their primary purpose, electricity supply cables are not designed, screened or balanced for high frequency use, and in this application they produce significant leakage emissions," the Ofcom study said, adding that the emissions potentially can interfere with radio communication services "including short wave broadcasts."

In its Citation, the ARRL again argues that the FCC "incorrectly rejected" the League's recommendation for a 20 dB extrapolation factor in measuring BPL signal decay on HF based on distance from the signal's source.

Instead, the FCC opted to apply the existing--and less stringent--40 dB/decade factor in Part 15.

"The existing Part 15 standard is clearly inapplicable and underestimates the BPL field strength by up to 11.5 dB," the ARRL said, pointing to the Ofcom studies to support its assertion. The League called the FCC's adopted 40 dB/decade factor

"inappropriate." The ARRL also said the Ofcom studies clearly show that notching is ineffective to mitigate interference and that certain BPL systems cannot even meet the FCC's "overly liberal" Part 15 field strength.

The League further noted that the FCC already applies a 20 dB/decade standard to measure signal decay of Part 18 Industrial, Scientific and Medical devices that can operate below 30 MHz.

In last October's BPL Order, the League pointed out, the FCC stated that if new information became available auguring in favor of alternative emission limit/distance standards or extrapolation factors, it would revisit the issue. "There is no time like the present," the ARRL urged.

A copy of the ARRL's Citation is on the ARRL Web site:

<http://www.arrrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/filings/BPL-Reconsideration-Citation-of-Additional-Authority.pdf>.

VANITY CALL SIGN APPLICATION FEE TO RISE

The regulatory fee to apply for an Amateur Radio vanity call sign will go up slightly later this year, an FCC Order indicates. A Report and Order and Order on Reconsideration (R&O) in the assessment and collection of regulatory fees for fiscal years 2004 and 2005 released July 7 increases the fee for FY 2005 to \$21.90 for the 10-year license term. The FCC said it had adjusted FY 2004

"payment units" for each service to better reflect expected FY 2005 payment liabilities.

"We tied to obtain verification for these estimates from multiple sources and, in all cases, we compared FY 2005 estimates with actual FY 2004 payment units to ensure that our revised estimates were reasonable," the FCC said in the R&O. "Where appropriate, we adjusted and/or rounded our final estimates to take into consideration the fact that certain variables that impact on the number of payment units cannot be estimated exactly."

In a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) in the proceeding last February, the Commission had proposed keeping the vanity call sign fee at its current \$20.80. The fee rose from \$16.30 to \$20.80 last August. A reevaluation in the number of anticipated vanity call sign applications--or "payment units"--accounts for the latest fee hike.

In its February 2005 NPRM, the Commission had estimated it would receive 8000 vanity applications during FY 2005. This month's R&O reflects a downward recalculation to an anticipated 7600 vanity applications--up only slightly from a year earlier--so the fee had to be raised to meet FY 2005 revenue requirements.

While the R&O does not specify the effective date of the change, this generally occurs 30 days after the

R&O's publication in The Federal Register, which hasn't happened yet. In past years, the effective date has been in August or September.

More information on vanity call signs is available on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/vanity.html>>.

FCC ISSUES REVISED FORM 605, OBSOLETES PREVIOUS EDITIONS

A revised FCC Form 605, "Quick-Form Application for Authorization in the Ship, Aircraft, Amateur, Restricted and Commercial Operator, and General Mobile Radio Services," has gone into effect. The new form must be used for all receipts as of July 18.

"Applicants can avoid filing outdated editions by submitting their applications through the Universal Licensing System (ULS) <http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls/>, given those changes to the paper forms will be incorporated into the system automatically," the FCC said. The new Form 605 is available online from the FCC Web site <http://www.fcc.gov/Forms/Form605/605.html>.

The revised form includes a new Question 13 (subsequent questions have been appropriately renumbered) that will affect amateurs applying for an administrative update (AU) to reflect a change in licensee name. Question 13 now asks: "If the licensee name is being updated, is the update a result from the sale (or transfer of control) of the

license(s) to another party and for which proper Commission approval has not been received or proper notification not provided?" Amateur Radio Service applicants should always answer "NO" to Question 13.

Not answering the question--which has nothing to do with the Amateur Radio Service--could result in dismissal of an application.

For additional information or assistance, visit the FCC Help and Support Web page <http://esupport.fcc.gov/index.htm>. This change does not affect the NCVEC Form 605 that VECs and VE teams use.

HAMS PACK COURTROOM FOR JAMMER'S SENTENCING

Radio amateurs turned out in force July 13 as reputed Los Angeles-area radio jammer Jack Gerritsen, who was briefly licensed as KG6IRO, was sentenced on state charges of threatening another amateur and his daughter via a local repeater. He was convicted July 8. Some 50 radio amateurs showed up for the sentencing, and many more mailed or e-mailed the court.

Superior Court Judge Craig J. Mitchell gave Gerritsen 120 days in jail and three years probation. He also barred Gerritsen from any contact with those who had testified against him and from operating ham gear without a valid FCC license. Gerritsen was arrested in May on a contempt citation

for allegedly violating the terms of a temporary restraining order the victimized radio amateur had obtained to keep Gerritsen off a local repeater. That radio amateur and two others subsequently testified against Gerritsen.

Serving as his own lawyer, Gerritsen contended he was falsely accused and that his First Amendment rights were being violated. Mitchell told Gerritsen the case was not about the First Amendment but about Gerritsen's threatening and bullying behavior.

The 69-year-old Bell, California, resident still faces federal charges following his May 5 arrest and seizure of his radio equipment by FBI agents accompanied by FCC personnel. Released on bond in that case, he's been subject to monitored home detention and barred from possessing or using any radio equipment. The federal criminal complaint cited an FCC investigation revealing that Gerritsen "often transmits his prerecorded political messages and real-time harassment and profanity for hours at a time, often making it impossible for licensed radio operators to use the public frequencies."

The FCC has affirmed a \$10,000 fine against Gerritsen for unlicensed operation and proposed another \$42,000 in forfeitures for alleged interference-related infractions.--some information provided by Burton Brink, N6USO

EOS-1 a SUCCESS!

Lisbon: The morning of Saturday July 16th had a large group of hams from around southern, central and mid-coast Maine gathering at the QTH of Lee, W1WLT in Lisbon for the "Great Balloon Launch" called ESO-1.

After a few Oops, like not enough gas to get the two balloon assembly off the ground, the ATV package was removed and the package lifted off the ground and headed northeast. Hams from all over southern and central main tracked ESO-1 via APRS and listened to the 147.555 onboard beacon loud and clear. Other stations made transmissions through the onboard 146.55 simplex repeater. Bill Messier, K1MNW tracked it on his navigational RADAR set mounted on his garage roof atop Oak Hill in Brunswick until it got so high (12,000-feet over Bath) that it was higher than the vertical beam-width of the RADAR could get an echo.

When the Balloon package got to the zenith, around Monhegan Island off Rockland and the package parachuted down to a point about 5-miles east on the island. A tuna fisherman found the package in the water, retreated it and called Lee. On Monday Lee drove up and retrieved ESO-1. Everything, except the balloons are in tact and will be used again next year for ESO-2.

If you would like to see very good graphics of the flight of EOS-1 developed by Ray Sirois, N1RY check out the following web sites:

www.ray.sirois.com/EOS-1/W1WLT-1.JPG

www.ray.sirois.com/EOS-1/W1WLT-2.JPG

www.ray.sirois.com/EOS-1/W1WLT-VERTICAL.JPG

The following note was received from Lee, W1WLT on Monday July 18th:

I wish I could personally thank each person involved with the experiment with a hand shake right now, but in due time at HAMFEST and other happenings, I believe I will meet each person and shake their hand.

This Project was a big setting for a life long dream to see and feel the experience of launching a balloon and recovering it.

My first balloon launch was when I was 12. I did in fact launch a helium balloon and a toy soldier and wondered where and if it landed.

Well, with the capabilities of what we have in our hobby and knowledgeable ham friends with shared feelings of accomplishment, it was all there. More than that we all build a friendship more in our HAM world we showed each one of us that we as humans who can Communicate and have a love for a goal, we can do anything and finish it as a team. Thank you again. There are special certificates and QSL cards that will be made but me going to choice the best design and share my love of the hobby and appreciation to each and every one as when it is made shortly.

Now one more thing, as it is said in a ball park LETS PLAY BALL and general Mac AUTHOR said when he left the Philippines but to later to return I'LL SHALL RETURN.

IN that thought, YES I'm going to start planning for the next EOS-2-MAINE 2006 specializing this time with ATV perfection. It will not be left behind. NASA, eat our dust. AGAIN, THANKS TO ALL, LEE-W1WLT