



# Squelch Tales



**Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Assoc. for July 2006**



## **L. L. Bean Independence Day 10K race needs volunteer communicators.**

Cumberland Counties' next public service event is the L. L. Bean 10k run on Tuesday, July 4, 2006. This is a short, but intense event. The run begins at 7:00 AM and usually ends up around 9:30 AM.

We will be getting together at 6:30 AM in the L. L. Bean parking lot in Freeport for assignments and briefing. The operational frequency for the event will be 146.415 simplex. 12 to 14 hams are needed.

If you are available for the event, please let me know by reply e-mail. Thanks!

In your reply, please include your "T" shirt size so I can pick them up in advance.

73, Bryce, K1GAX PAWA Public Service Events Coordinator (k1gax@juno.com)



## **Bangor Hamfest, wet but still fun!**

A report by WIZE

5:00AM of Saturday June 3<sup>rd</sup> came very early as I looked out the window. Like the previous two days watched the water pours off the roof. I already had some stuff in

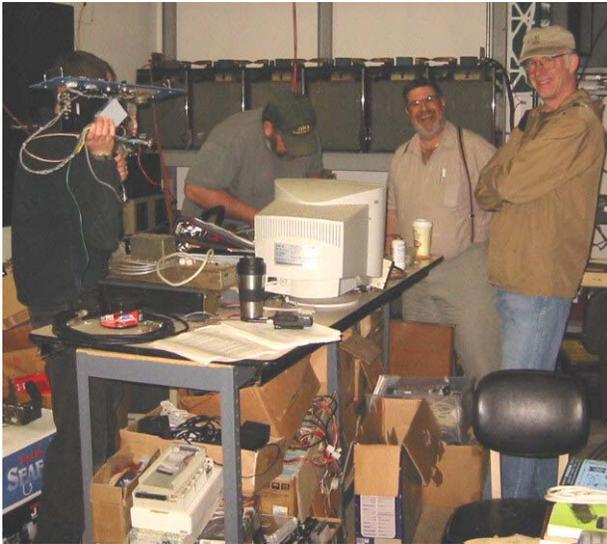
the back of my pick-up truck and I was advised that sellers could move into the gym at Herman High School. As one would expect on a damp rainy day, attendance was down compared to previous years. I managed to move in my fold-up table and a box of stuff to sell. No sooner than I had put my goodies on the little table the attendees started coming by and within 20 minutes I managed to sell several items. I had stuff from my basement collection and a few items donated to the club by W1LHD and K1IQA.

By the end of the event I had managed to offload all but one item, an old Heathkit 12VDC power supply ( On the way home from Bangor I was talking to WD1F on the 444.4 machine and he said he wanted the power supply.

Even though the attendance was down, I managed to have a successful day selling stuff. Pete Russell, K1MJP was there with is hundreds of electronics parts grab bags and I think he did OK also. After the door prize drawing I headed over to the Happy China restraint where I chaired the Maine Chapter QCWA meeting, had a good meal and made the pilgrimage home.



# Tech Team Tackles Tasks



WD1F, N1IPA, K1JJS & KC6TVF, "the shock troops!"

**Oak Hill, Brunswick:** The morning of Saturday, June 10<sup>th</sup> the tech team of Bill/K1MNW, Dommie/WD1F, Bruce/W1ZE, Jim/N1IPA, John/KC6TVF and John/K1JJS gathered at the repeater building for the second in a series of repeater systems house cleaning and repairs.



N1IPA & K1JJS. "John, do'ya remember where the blue wire went?"

Jim and the two Johns started making hardware modifications, grounding and bonding improvements to the two repeater systems.

While cabinet work was going on, Bill, Bruce and Donnie took the 2-meter receiver over to Bill's shop to see what was needed.



WD1F & W1ZE "what to do next?"

Test showed that the receiver was working just fine but the three-stage pager notch filter was acting like a 20db attenuator. Somehow the first stage capacitor was screwed in way to far. With the aid of Bill's station monitor the filter was retunes and the signal attenuation problem went away. For you all you folks keeping score at home the receiver showed 1.35uV at 20db SINAD with a squelch threshold at .15uV, a hot receiver.

The next hill top fix-it day as of this writing has not been set, but the plan of attack at that session is to get all the control-ops and Tech Committee folks with the repeater command control codes, do some controller program house cleaning with ID announcement changes and deletions on both controllers. At that session an assessment will be needed to determine what is needed to resurrect the KS1R "BRUNS" packet node and KS1R-10 APRS node. Both nodes have new antennas that need to be mounted on the side of the repeater tower. Hopefully the packet node will be addressed first because it is needed to support the southern Maine packet users and enhance its ability to support ARES/RACES efforts.



Many thanks to the MARA's KS1R tech team for their efforts and talents.



## News from Newington

**SB QST ARL ARLB013**

### **ARLB013 Full US House Okays Telecoms Bill with BPL Study Language Intact**

On a 321 to 101 vote, the US House of Representatives on June 8 passed the Communications Opportunity, Promotion and Enhancement (COPE) Act of 2006. The House-passed bill, HR 5252, leaves intact language that

required the FCC to study the interference potential of BPL systems. US Rep Mike Ross, WD5DVR (D-AR), one of two radio amateurs in Congress, sponsored the BPL study requirement, "Study of Interference Potential of Broadband over Power Line Systems," contained in Title V, Section 502 of the complex bill. HR 5252 now goes to the US Senate, where a separate--and very different--telecoms bill, the Communications, Consumer's Choice, and Broadband Deployment Act of 2006 (S 2686) is still in committee.

"We were concerned that a representative might be persuaded by BPL interests to introduce an amendment to delete or dilute Section 502," said ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ. "As it turns out that didn't happen, although we had taken steps to counter it if it had. So for now, our focus returns to the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee." Sumner says that if similar language were introduced on the Senate side, it would be more likely to remain when and if the House and Senate versions go to a conference committee.

Section 502 calls on the FCC to "conduct, and submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, a study of the interference potential of broadband over power line systems," within 90 days of the bill's enactment.

The Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee will consider S 2686 in a markup session later this month. The ARRL has e-mailed members in the 22 states with Senators on the committee, urging them to write seeking support to include similar BPL study language in the Senate bill.

### **Vermont Governor Signs Amateur Radio Antenna Bill**

Vermont Gov Jim Douglas has signed Amateur Radio antenna legislation that puts the language of the limited federal preemption known as PRB-1 into the Green Mountain State's statutes.

Vermont is the 23rd state to adopt an Amateur Radio antenna law.

"Today we reached a milestone in Vermont Amateur Radio history," exulted David Cain, W1DEC, on May 30. "PRB-1 is now officially codified into Vermont's statutes." Cain chaired the PRB-1 Committee and serves as Vermont ARRL State Government Liaison. "To all of you who worked so hard on this a hearty 'thank you' and 'well done!'"

ARRL New England Division Vice Director Mike Raisbeck, K1TWF, offered his congratulations to all involved in seeing the bill through. "This is a major achievement for Vermont, the New England Division and the hobby," he said. The legislation, H.12, cleared Vermont's General Assembly on May 10.

The new law requires local ordinances to comply with §97.15(b) "by allowing for the erection of an Amateur Radio antenna or an Amateur Radio antenna support structure at a height and dimension sufficient to accommodate Amateur Radio Service communications."

Cain notes that a PRB-1 bill has been in the General Assembly hopper in Vermont for more than three years. "Hard work and persistence paid off," he said, noting that lawmakers "recognized the value of ham radio and the need for reasonable accommodation."

Section 1 of the bill declares it Vermont policy "that Amateur Radio use and Amateur Radio antennas and support structures protect and promote the public interest by providing important communications support to both government and the public during times of emergency when other communications infrastructure is disabled or overburdened and by presenting the public with an opportunity for public service, self-training, communications and technical investigation."

Language in the original Vermont antenna bill outlined a schedule of minimum regulatory heights, below which localities could not impose restrictions. That language did not survive the legislative process, however.

The legislation that did pass also provides for the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) to report to the House and Senate committees on



## AM is not dead!



**Heathkit DX-40 AM-CW transmitter, circa 1960**

Amplitude Modulation (A3) mode on the Ham bands is alive and thriving. If you tune the 160 and 75 Meter bands in the evening you will hear groups of AMers, or as they call themselves Yea'emmerns having nice QSO from all over the northeast. If your HF transceiver has the AM mode on the mode dial try a tune across the band and take a listen. If you do not have a HF transceiver and have a shortwave AM receiver that tunes through the 75-Meter (3.7-4 MHz) you can hear the AMers that way. When the bands are open you will find AM activity on the 20 and 10 Meter bands on a regular basis. 10 Meter AM popularity is due to old CB transceivers retuned from 27 to 29 MHz.

MARA's own K1MNW, W1ZE and WD1F are in the process of building up older design tube transmitters to be placed into AM activities on 80 Meters. Bill, K1MNW has salvaged the parts out of an old Gates AM broadcast transmitter to build up a KW transmitter on AM.

Bruce, W1ZE checks into the 6-meter AM net several times a month. You will find AM activity on six meters around 50.400 MHz, just above the SSB window.

The following is a list of recommended Amplitude Modulation operating frequencies:

**160 Meters:**

1.885, 1.900, 1.945, 1.985 MHz

**75 Meters:**

3.825, 3.870 (West Coast), 3.880, 3.885 MHz

**40 Meters:**

7.290, 7.295 MHz

**20 Meters:**

14.286 MHz

**17 Meters:**

18.150 MHz

**15 Meters:**

21.285, 21.425 MHz

**10 Meters:**

29.000-29.200

**6 Meters:**

50.400 MHz (generally), 50.250 Northern CO

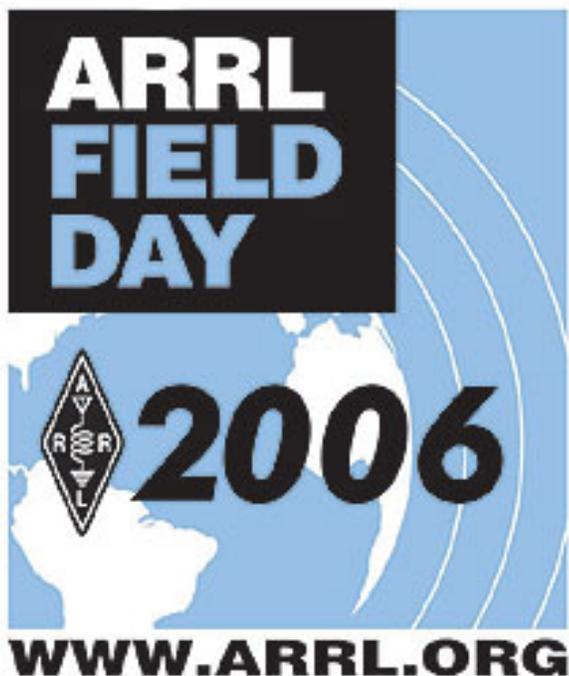
**2 Meters:**

144.400 MHz (Northwest)

144.425 MHz (Maine, Massachusetts & NH)

144.280 MHz (NYC-Long Island)

You can use your trusty Japanese solid-state Radio to make AM QSOs, but the die-hard AMers like to resurrect old tube-type equipment with plate or screen modulation so it has that warm AM sound like you hear on an AM broadcast band. **Give it a try, Hope to hear you on AM!**



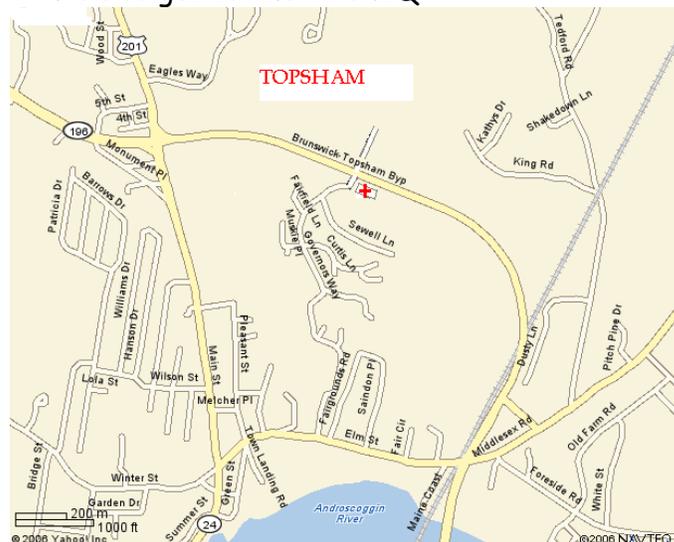
This issue of Squelch Tales will go out just a few days before the June Field Day event on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of June. We hope you take then opportunity to come out and join in the fun of Field Day. As we are sure you know by now that the MARA will set-up the KS1R station at the American Red Cross Headquarters just off Route-196 in Topsham. This year KS1R will be operating in a new contest category for us. The new category will be "F" for operating from a public service location (i.e., EMA HQ, Fire House, Sheriffs office, Red Cross HQ, community public service building, etc.).

Saturday the Red Cross will host a Bar-B-Q for the Red Cross Volunteers and the MARA Field Day team. The RC folks will provide the meat for the BBQ and asks that the MARA folks bring side dishes (i.e. Potato salad, Bake beans, chips, melons etc).

Field Day will be married with the ARC this year as the RC folks will be doing shelter training in conjunction with our communications efforts.

The public is invited to attend and see what the MARA and ARC folks are up to. Invite your friends and neighbors to swing by and see what we are up to.

How to get to the ARC HQ:



Head east on 196, turn right at first signal intersection after route-201/Lee Toyota. ARC building is on the corner. We hope to see you there to join us in one of the year's fun ham radio events. **QRZed FIELD DAY, KS1R**