



Squelch Tales



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association for April 2015

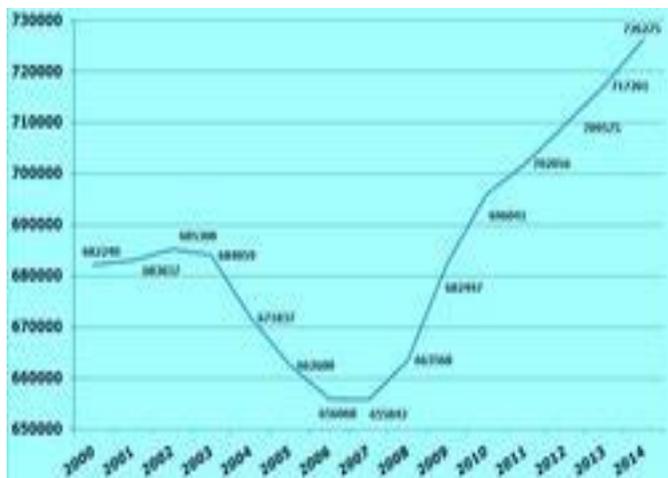
Number of US Amateur Radio Licensees at All-Time High

also a banner year for the ARRL Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (VEC).

"For the first time in the ARRL VEC program's history, we have conducted more than 7000 Amateur Radio exam sessions in a year, an important milestone," said ARRL VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM. "A total of 7216 ARRL-sponsored exam sessions were administered in 2014, compared to 6823 in 2013."

Somma said the number of new licensees spiked to more than 33,000 in 2014, up by about 15 percent from the previous year. Successful license upgrades rose last year by an unprecedented 13 percent over a year earlier.

The US Amateur Radio population continues to soar. At the end of 2014, the total number of US Amateurs in the FCC's Universal Licensing System (ULS) database reached an all-time high of 726,275 -- and the trend has continued in the first 2 months of 2015, which saw the total rise to slightly more than 727,000. The figures exclude expired licenses that are within the 2-year grace period, and



Amateur Radio numbers in the US from 2000 through 2014. The FCC dropped the Morse code requirement in 2007. Prepared from statistics compiled by Joe Speroni, AH0A]



ARRL VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM.

At the end of 2014, there were 136,405 Amateur Extra, 169,524 General, and 357,236 Technician class licensees -- all record numbers, Somma pointed out. While the number of Amateur Extra

licensees grew in each month of 2014, the number of Technicians and Generals -- and of licensees overall -- faltered a bit last July and September. Last year's overall upward trend quickly recovered, however, during the final quarter of 2014. The General population also dipped briefly in May 2014, before rebounding.

Somma believes the July and September dips may have been a result of applicants adjusting to the new Technician question pool that went into effect last July 1. "We always expect an adjustment period

club station licenses. Outside of a little dithering last fall, growth in the Amateur Radio Service in 2014 was steady, according to figures compiled by Joe Speroni, AH0A, on his FCC Amateur Radio Statistics web pages. Over the past decade, the number of Amateur Radio licenses in the ULS database grew by some 8.1 percent. But 2014 was

when a new question pool is introduced to the public, as VEs, teachers, and candidates must prepare new study and exam materials," she said. Somma called the dips "a normal part of the question pool cycle."

Technician licensees comprise slightly less than one-half of the US Amateur Radio population. As of December 31, some 51,000 Advanced and 12,000 Novice licensees remained in the FCC database. The FCC no longer issues Advanced and Novice licenses, and their numbers continue to decline.

Once again, California far and away was home to the largest number of licensees among the 50 states, with 102,806 at the end of February. Texas was a distant second, with 51,022, Florida came in third, with 40,743, Washington was fourth, with 30,511, and Ohio was fifth at 28,256. With the exception of Ohio, the licensing trend in these states has been through the roof. In Ohio, ham radio numbers began to flag a bit in 2014, after holding steady for about the past 4 years.



The state with the fewest Amateur Radio licensees in 2014 was North Dakota, with 1477, but in an overall upward trajectory since around 2009. Others with small ham populations included Delaware (1715 and growing), Rhode Island (1926 and dropping), Wyoming (1868 and headed up), and Vermont (2101 and slipping, after a bump in 2013 and 2014). These numbers may go a long way toward explaining why these are rare multipliers in the ARRL November Sweepstakes and other events.

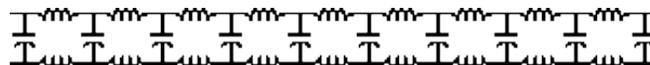
Club station licenses in the US numbered 11,501, according to Speroni's statistics. -- *Thanks to Joe Speroni, AH0A; FCC ULS licensing statistics; ARRL VEC*



CPR refresher video for Midcoast ARES-CERT Volunteers

Midcoast ARES-CERT folks and all readers of this newsletter may want to take a few minutes and view the following training video on the latest Cardio-Pulmonary Recitation (CPR) produced by the University of Arizona. It may be well worth Your time. Being volunteers it is good to have your skills reinforced

<http://heart.arizona.edu/cpr-video>



W1AW 2015 Spring/Summer Operating Schedule

Morning Schedule:

Time	Mode	Days
1300 UTC (9 AM ET)	CWs	Wed, Fri
1300 UTC (9 AM ET)	CWf	Tue, Thu

Afternoon/Evening Schedule:

2000 UTC (4 PM ET)	CWf	Mon, Wed, Fri
2000 " "	CWs	Tue, Thu
2100 " (5 PM ET)	CWb	Daily
2200 " (6 PM ET)	DIGITAL	Daily
2300 " (7 PM ET)	CWs	Mon, Wed, Fri
2300 " "	CWf	Tue, Thu
0000 " (8 PM ET)	CWb	Daily
0100 " (9 PM ET)	DIGITAL	Daily
0145 " (9:45 PM ET)	VOICE	Daily
0200 " (10 PM ET)	CWf	Mon, Wed, Fri
0200 " "	CWs	Tue, Thu

0300 " (11 PM ET) CWb Daily

Frequencies (MHz)

CW: 1.8025 3.5815 7.0475 14.0475 18.0975

21.0675 28.0675

DIGITAL: - 3.5975 7.095 14.095 18.1025 21.095

28.095

VOICE: 1.855 3.990 7.290 14.290 18.160 21.390

28.590

Notes:

CWs = Morse Code practice(slow)= 5, 7.5, 10, 13 and 15 WPM

CWf = Morse Code practice(fast)= 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 13 and 10 WPM

CWb = Morse Code Bulletins = 18 WPM

CW frequencies include code practices, Qualifying Runs and CW bulletins.

DIGITAL = BAUDOT (45.45 baud), BPSK31 and MFSK16 in a revolving schedule.

Code practice texts are from QST, and the source of each practice is given at the beginning of each practice and at the beginning of alternate speeds.

On Tuesdays and Fridays at 2230 UTC (6:30 PM ET), Keplerian Elements for active amateur satellites are sent on the regular digital frequencies.

A DX bulletin replaces or is added to the regular bulletins between 0000 UTC (8 PM ET) Thursdays and 0000 UTC (8 PM ET) Fridays.

Audio from W1AW's CW code practices, and CW/digital/phone bulletins is available using EchoLink via the W1AW Conference Server named "W1AWBDCT." The CW/digital/phone audio is sent in real-time and runs concurrently with W1AW's regular transmission schedule.

All users who connect to the conference server are muted. Please note that any questions or comments about this server should not be sent via the "Text" window in EchoLink. Please direct any questions or comments to w1aw@arrl.org.

In a communications emergency, monitor W1AW for special bulletins as follows: Voice on the hour, Digital at 15 minutes past the hour, and CW on the half hour.

FCC licensed amateurs may operate the station from 1400 UTC to 1600 UTC (10 AM to 12 PM ET), and then from 1700 UTC to 1945 UTC (1 PM to 3:45 PM ET) Monday through Friday. Be sure to bring your current FCC amateur license or a photocopy.

The complete W1AW Operating Schedule may be found on the web at,

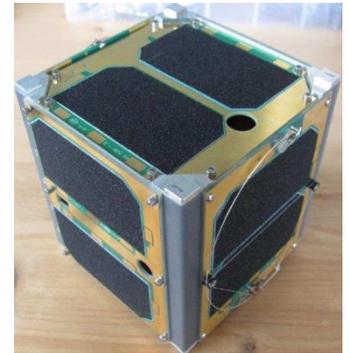
<http://www.arrl.org/w1aw-operating-schedule>.



Fox-1A Ready for Launch

From ARRL HQ, Newington, CT March 10th

Following successful vibration and thermal/vacuum testing, AMSAT-NA's Fox-1A CubeSat now sits in a clean environment awaiting launch. AMSAT Vice-President-Engineering Jerry Buxton, N0JY, said that NASA, the launch provider, now is reviewing several required reports. Fox-1A completed its Mission Readiness Review at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, CA, on February 24 before a review board of Cal Poly and NASA representatives, he said, adding that Fox-1A delivery and integration has been set for March 25.



"From there, we won't see her again, but certainly look forward to hearing from her again," he said.

Fox-1A will include a Mode B (U/V) FM transponder and capabilities similar to the AO-51 satellite, which went dark in late 2011. The first phase of the Fox series 1-Unit CubeSats will allow simple ground stations using hand-held transceivers and simple dual-band antennas to make contacts. The Fox-1 CubeSats also will be able to transmit continuous telemetry during normal transponder operation.

Fox-1A is scheduled to launch in late August from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, as part of the NASA Educational Launch of Nanosatellites (ELaNa) program, which offers free launches to educational entities and encourages science missions. Fox-1A will host a Penn State student experiment with micro-electromechanical systems (MEMS).



Police-Fire scanner App for your PC or handheld device

By Bruce Randall, W1ZE

Like many of you I like listening to the public service frequencies to keep up with the goings on in my local area and as a tool in my APRS-CERT activities. Some police and fire agencies have gone to digital P25 and/or trunking communication systems. Sagadahoc County and soon Brunswick will be using all P25 digital transmissions. My el-cheap-o Uniden scanner and Ham HTs works well but will not receive P25 or other digital broadcasts. Dude, that's a Bummer.

As you all may know the XYL and yours truly are snowbirds and spend the winter in southern California. This winter I was concerned about the extremely bad weather and wanted to see in there was an online scanner site so I could listen to mid coast Maine public service frequencies. It did not take and a Google search landed me on a site called BROADCASTIFY.COM. This site has public service feeds from receivers all

over the country. I clicked on its Maine map then clicked on Sagadahoc County and there was a multi-frequency feed that included Sagadahoc County police/fire dispatch and Brunswick PD.

<http://www.broadcastify.com/listen/ctid/1184/web>

A search of Cumberland County listed a feed to Brunswick Fire at:

<http://www.broadcastify.com/listen/feed/17037/web>

and State Police (south Zone-1) at:

<http://www.broadcastify.com/listen/feed/9066/web>

These websites are now on my desktop and I let the Sagadahoc County dispatch run in the background on my laptop.

Check out Broadcastify and see if they have your favorite agency's broadcast listed. 73, W1ZE/6



K1N, a very complicated DXpedition

Al Corderman, W3ZD alerts us to the March 2013 Grayline newsletter that gave a detailed and very informative report on the K1N Navassa Island DXpedition. Many of you may have worked one or more of the stations set up for the event. Check out the story on:

<http://www.tcdxa.org/Newsletters/March2015Grayline.pdf>

