



Squelch Tales



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association for July 2011



FEMA Administrator: Amateur Radio "The Last Line of Defense"

In an FCC forum on earthquake communications preparedness, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Administrator Craig Fugate described **the Amateur Radio operator as "the ultimate backup**, the originators of what we call social media." The forum-- held May 3 at FCC Headquarters in Washington, DC -- brought together officials from the White House, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the United States Geological Survey (USGS), FEMA, the FCC and the private sector. Fugate and FCC Bureau of Public Safety and Homeland Security Chief Jamie Barnett gave the opening remarks.

Later in the forum, Fugate spoke more on Amateur Radio. "During the initial communications out of Haiti, volunteers using assigned frequencies that they are allocated, their own equipment, their own money, nobody pays them, were the first ones oftentimes getting word out in the critical first hours and first days as the rest of the systems came back up," he told the forum. "I think that there is a tendency because we have done so much to build infrastructure and resiliency in all our other systems, we have tended to dismiss that role 'When Everything Else Fails.' Amateur Radio oftentimes is our last line of defense."

Fugate said that he thinks "we get so sophisticated and we have gotten so used to the reliability and resilience in our wireless and wired and our broadcast industry and all of our public safety communications, that we can never fathom that they'll fail. They do. They have. They will. I think a strong Amateur Radio community [needs to be] plugged into these plans. Yes, most of the time they're going to be bored, because a lot of the time, there's not a lot they're going to be doing that other people aren't doing with Twitter and Facebook and everything else. But when you need Amateur Radio, you really need them."



There's Still Time to Enter the 2011 ARRL Photo Contest!

Have you ever wanted to see a photo of yours in *QST*, the annual ARRL Amateur Radio Calendar or another ARRL publication? Well, here's your chance! If you're among the winners, not only will your photographic skill be propagated far and wide, but we're offering \$100 as the First Prize. The winning photo and three runners-up will be published in *QST*. All submitted photos will also be considered for the 2012 ARRL Calendar.

- Deadline: Photos must be received at ARRL HQ by June 30, 2011.
- Subject: Must be directly related to Amateur Radio, and be in good

taste. Extra points will be awarded for photos showing folks having fun with Amateur Radio. Photos will be judged on overall quality and composition.

- Requirements: Digital images or color prints accepted. A digital image printed on photo paper, however, doesn't work as well as a high-resolution file attachment. Digital images should be high resolution. A digital image up to 8 MB in size can be e-mailed to upfront@arrl.org, subject line "2011 Photo Contest." An image may also be burned to a CD and mailed to ARRL Photo Contest, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111. All entries must include caption information describing where the photo was taken, along with a description of the subject of the photo, as well as the names and call signs of any persons shown. If you entered last year's contest, please do not resend the same photo for this year's contest. One entry per person.
- Miscellaneous: The decisions of the judges -- composed of *QST* editorial and production staff -- are final.

while the Poppers are using a radio tuned to 21.2460 (15 meters SSB), this frequency was not available to US hams as a phone frequency in the 1976-78 time period, as shown in the movie. Neither do the Poppers use call signs. Instead, they use handles: Young Tommy is "Tippy Toe" and Mr Popper is "Bald Eagle." Mr Popper -- who, in one transmission, is in Marrakesh -- calls his son in New York City. There is no interference or static on the frequency; it seems they are the only ones on the band. While it is exciting to see Amateur Radio on the big screen, movies such as [Frequency](#) and [Contact](#), and television shows such as [Jericho](#) and [The Simpsons](#) have presented Amateur Radio more accurately.



RCI's Antenna Array in New Brunswick

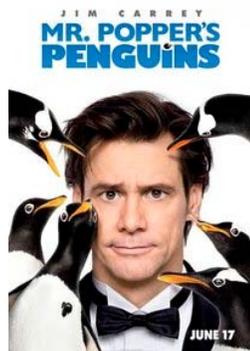
By Bruce Randall, W1ZE

During the first part of this month I took a short vacation to northern Nova Scotia to attend Canada Day celebrations in Pugwash and the Tattoo in Halifax. On the drive over, just before you cross from Sackville, New Brunswick into Nova Scotia on the Trans Canada 2 I drove right past the massive Radio Canada International (RCI) short-wave broadcast transmitter site and antenna arrays.



Mr Popper's Penguins

In [Mr Popper's Penguins](#) -- one of the newest films out this summer -- young Tommy Popper communicates with his father using what many reviews are calling ham radio. But



Very impressive. On my return trip I pulled to the side of the road and took the above lead-in photo.



If you want to see things close up and see the massive Sterba and collinear dipole wire arrays go to:

<http://www.mds975.co.uk/masts/sackville.html>.

I wonder if the nice folks at RCI would let me operate from there during the next Sweepstakes contest, probably not. Oh darn....
73, W1ZE

morning and into the afternoon event was very important.

If a golfer make a hole-in-one on the 4th or 11th green, PAR-3 holes, he or she would receive a new car for hole 4 or a new motorcycle for hole 11. As one would expect, no one made that rare shot but one fellow got very close on the 4th green when his drive landed two feet from the hole.

The Parkview Hospital event organizers want to thank, Marjorie Turner (KX1I), Steve Kercek (AA4AK), Don Wakeman (KA1WAL) Tom Garcia (N7CHG) and Bruce Randall (W1ZE) for their professionalism. Well done MARA Team.



MARA assists in Parkview Hospital Golf Classic

Brunswick: In the early morning of July 12th five members of MARA gathered at the Brunswick Country Club to assist in providing event radio communications and become Hole-in-One prize verification officials in this years Parkview Hospital Golf Classic tournament. It was a bright sunny and very warm humid day in the high 80s and staying hydrated during the all

Field Day 2011, a little rain but still lots of fun

Just a short note to let everyone know that those that came out for Field Day 2011 at the Topsham Red Cross building had a good time, some very good food and a fair amount of amateur radio activity.

In the August issue of this newsletter there will be a detailed blow by blow of the activities of this years MARA premier event, so stay tuned.