



Squelch Tales



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Assoc. for June 2007

Field Day 2007

Steve Kerchel, AA4AK

We had a lively discussion of Field Day plans at the April 26 meeting of MARA. The plan for this year is very similar to what we did last year, except that we plan to pick up some bonus points that we left on the table last year.

Field Day is June 23-24, 2007, from 2:00 PM Saturday to 2:00 PM Sunday. Between 2:00 pm and dusk on Friday, we will be doing some antenna installations and perhaps other preparations on the site. The site is the Red Cross Chapter House, 16 Community Way, Topsham. Our intention is to use the same basic Class 2F configuration as last year. There will be one transmitter for SSB/CW, one transmitter for data, a VHF station, and we will use the existing Red Cross station as the GOTA (get on the air) station. The GOTA call sign is N1TRC, and the call sign for all other operations is KS1R. (Technical note: We will be using band pass filters and other techniques to minimize interference between HF stations.)

One thing I hope we can do differently this year is to run both stations continually around the clock. Recently, many MARA members have taken up data communications, and I was very encouraged by the response at the 4/26 meeting as to how many people are interested in taking a turn at operating the data station. I feel fairly confident that we can keep the data station running for the entire period, and I am counting on the club's data operators to make it happen.

Regarding CW, the club has at least three experienced CW contesters, and of course we welcome more. If all three are available, I feel fairly confident that we can duplicate last year's good results on CW.

One outcome that surprised me last year was the relatively sparse results we got on SSB. Thus, for the SSB/CW HF station and the VHF station, we are looking for additional SSB operators. Please also be aware that the MARA Field Day is not a "go for blood" contest operation. Our goal is to do well, but maximizing our QSO rate is not a priority of the operation. However, maximizing number of on the air participants is one of our priorities. Thus, even if you have little or no contest experience, we welcome you to have a (or several) turn(s) at the HF and VHF stations.

We have had a great many members upgrade to HF privileges in the past year. We invite everyone who is new to HF to operate the GOTA station. The GOTA operation is designed for people with little or no HF experience and we

get lots of bonus points for GOTA contacts. As I've mentioned at several meetings, one thing we need is GOTA coaches. I would encourage some of our more experienced HF operators to take a hand at coaching the GOTA station. Please note the following revised bonus point rules for 2007. Since different members have different specialties, various members may have their own specialized way to contribute to the bonus points.

7.3.1. Emergency Power: We get 200 points for emergency power. The usual Field Day rules do not apply to Class F operation. Instead, we are covered by the following provisions:

4.8.4. A Class F station may claim the emergency power bonus if emergency power is available at the EOC site.

4.8.4.1. The emergency power source must be tested during the Field Day period but you are not required to run the Class F operation under emergency power. We get the points by starting up the Red Cross generator something during the contest interval. I'm not sure if the generator has been run since last Field Day. In any case, we are looking for someone with electrician experience to assure that the generator is running on Field day.

7.3.2. Media Publicity: 100 bonus points...I'll take care of this one.

7.3.3. Public Location: 100 bonus points ...We get this one "for free." The Chapter house is a public location.

7.3.4. Public Information Table: 100 bonus points for a Public Information Table ...Marjorie, KX1I, did an excellent job with this last year, and has already begun her preparations for the upcoming operation.

7.3.5. Message Origination to Section Manager:

100 bonus points for origination of a National Traffic System (NTS) style formal message to the ARRL Section Manager or Section Emergency Coordinator ...One of our traffic experts needs to handle this.

7.3.6. Message Handling: 10 points for each formal NTS style originated, relayed or received and delivered during the Field Day period, up to a maximum of 100 points (ten messages). Properly serviced copies of each message must be included with the Field Day report.

Last year, we left these points on the table. I would encourage participants to think of someone (to meet the format requirements you will need to include their postal address and phone number) to whom you would like to send a message (Field Day greetings to an out of town ham friend or whatever.) We need to spin up ten messages that we can feed into the NTS at the same time as we send the SM message. ARL radiograms are preferred since speed is of the essence. If you would like to contribute a message but do not know how to prepare it, either Bruce or I can help you.

7.3.7. Satellite QSO: 100 bonus points for successfully completing at least one QSO via an amateur radio satellite during the Field Day period.

Unfortunately, we may need to leave this one on the table. Brian says that at present it is nearly impossible to make amateur satellite QSOs. It is probably not a good use of our time to make elaborate preparations and not produce a contact. However, we will explore this a bit further before we give up on it.

7.3.8. Alternate Power: 100 bonus points for Field Day groups making a minimum of five QSOs without using power from commercial mains or petroleum driven generator. This means an "alternate" energy source of power, such as solar, wind, methane or water. This includes batteries charged by natural means (not dry cells). The natural power transmitter counts as an additional transmitter. If you do not wish to increase your operating category, you should take one of your other transmitters off the air while the natural power transmitter is in operation. A separate list of natural power QSOs should be

submitted with your entry. **Available to Classes A, B, E, and F.**

Note: this is different from the emergency power credit. I'm hoping that Donnie and some of our other "alternate energy" experts can set up a solar powered station and make these five contacts.

7.3.9. W1AW Bulletin: 100 bonus points for copying the special Field Day bulletin .We need to be sure that someone does this.

7.3.10. Non-Traditional Mode Demonstrations: A maximum of 300 bonus points (100 points for each demonstration up to three) for setting up a demonstration of a non-traditional mode of amateur radio communications. This includes modes such as APRS, ATV, and SSTV. **Available to Classes A, B, and F.**

We have a terminal node controller (TNC) in the Red Cross station. A TNC is the indispensable to most of the most "non-traditional" modes. We demonstrated APRS last year, and hopefully we can do it again this year. At the May MARA meeting, we should probably include an agenda item to discuss what we need to do in order to enable SSTV and/or ATV. John, KC6TVF, is in the process of setting up Winlink 2000 (a technique for originating e-mail via amateur radio) on the Red Cross station. However, as this requires access do a distant server, it may or may not be available for Field Day. Other than disallowing PSK31, the rules are a bit vague as to what constitutes a non-traditional mode. If anyone has an idea for something they would like to demonstrate, please let me know. I can check with the ARRL Field Day organizer and see if we can get credit for it. Also, please note the following particular.

7.3.10.2. A complete portable packet system may be included as one of the demonstration modes. This system must include a temporary, portable node and must be completely separate from the existing packet infrastructure of your area. Simply setting up a packet station does not qualify as a demonstration mode.

7.3.11. Site Visitation by an elected governmental official: One (1) 100-point bonus may be claimed if your Field Day site is visited by an elected government official as the result of an invitation issued by your group. **Available to all Classes.**

7.3.12. Site Visitation by a representative of an agency: One (1) 100-point bonus may be claimed if your Field Day site is visited by a representative of an agency served by ARES in your local community (American Red Cross, Salvation Army, local Emergency Management, law enforcement, etc) as the result of an invitation issued by your group. ARRL officials (SM, SEC, DEC, EC, etc) do not qualify for this bonus. **Available to all Classes.**

For both of these areas, Michele, KC7LIF, and I will be visiting various politicians and public service people. Although we get points even if only one dignitary shows up from each category, we will be trying to attract as many visitors as possible from officialdom. The idea is not merely to do the minimum effort to score the points, but rather to use the Field Day operation to showcase amateur radio to the emergency and public service officials in the community.

7.3.13 . GOTA Bonus. Class A and F stations operating a GOTA station may earn the following bonus points:

7.3.13.1. When a GOTA operator successfully completes 20 QSOs, they receive 20 bonus points. Upon reaching an additional 20 QSOs the same operator receives a second 20 bonus points, up to a maximum of 100 Bonus points per GOTA operator. An operator may make more than 100 QSOs but the QSOs over 100 do not qualify for an additional bonus. For members recently upgraded to HF privileges, this is your place to shine. For every 20 contacts that a GOTA operator makes, we get bonus points

7.3.13.1.1. Additional GOTA operators may earn the GOTA bonus points under this rule, up to the maximum of 500 bonus points. (Remember that there is a 500-QSO limit for the GOTA station. But no single GOTA operator may earn more than 100 of the GOTA bonus points except as provided in 7.3.13.2.

7.3.13.1.2. A single GOTA operator must complete all 20 QSOs required before the bonus is earned. There is no "partial credit" for making only a portion of the 20 QSOs or "pooling" QSOs between operators.

7.3.13.2. If a GOTA station is supervised full-time by a GOTA Coach, the bonus points earned for each 20 QSOs completed under Rule

7.3.13.1 will be doubled. Again, here is where we need experienced people.

7.3.13.2.1. The GOTA Coach supervises the operator of the station, doing such things as answering questions and talking them through contacts, but may not make QSOs or perform logging functions.

7.3.13.2.2. To qualify for this bonus, there must be a designated GOTA Coach present and supervising the GOTA station at all times it is being operated.

Please note this important gotcha.

7.3.14. Web submission. A 50-point bonus may be claimed by a group submitting their Field Day entry via the www.b4h.net/cabforms web site. Available to all Classes. I'll handle this one.

7.3.15. Field Day Youth Participation.

7.3.15.1. A 20-point bonus (maximum of 100) may be earned by any Class A, C, D, E, or F group for each participant age 18 or younger at your Field Day operation that completes at least one QSO.

If you have friends, children, or grandchildren, please invite them to come out. They do not need to be licensed, since unlicensed people can make a supervised contact under the FCC's "third party" rule.

Please also note that there is no requirement that Field Day participants be MARA members. Please invite your ham friends outside the club to participate.



HAMFEST IN HERMAN

The Bangor Club is holding it's annual Hamfest and flea market Saturday June 2nd at the Herman High School. Gates open at 8 AM and the event will run until noon. For those of you that have worked up a hunger at the Fleas, you could join Steve (AA4AK) and Bruce (W1ZE) at the QCWA lunch-meeting following the Hamfest.

For those of you that will be tailgating at the Hamfest can go to www.n1me.com and

click on Hamfest. Go to the bottom of the page and list the items they have for sale, and they can see what has been listed by the other Hams. Thank You. Roger KA1TKS
Chairman



Summary of preparations for N1P as of May 30

By AA4AK

The following is scheduled to appear in the August 2007 issue of *QST*:

Aug 17-Aug 19, 1601Z-2359Z, Phippsburg, ME. Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association, N1P. Commemorating the 400th Anniversary of the Popham Colony. 7.262 7.032 3.985 3.532. Certificate. Joseph B. Randall, W1ZE, 1 Smithfield Crossing, Phippsburg, ME 04562. www.ks1r.net

Venue:

Operation is at Meadowbrook Campground. They are not charging us any money for the use of the site of the operating position, the restrooms, water, electricity, *et cetera*.

We're looking at a big open area near the front of the campground. We will probably need a big tent.

Food:

There is concession and a full service restaurant on the site. We're expecting to work out some sort of deal (in which the Club throws a bit of money into the pot) for throwing a BBQ or clambake *et cetera* on Friday night. If someone wants to organize pot luck meals or picnics for the other days, that would be welcome.

Radio Gear:

Tentative configuration: Just like 2007 Field Day less the GOTA setup

QSLs:

Except for the case of DX QSL cards received via the QSL bureau, we will send a certificate instead of a card. For all other cases we will send a certificate in response to a QSL card with SASE or SAE/IRC. AA4AK will try to get permission to use a Maine's First Ship image on the certificate.

Publicity:

Besides MARA, there are 14 major ham clubs in Maine. AA4AK is visiting some of them to give a presentation on the Popham Colony and the N1P operation, and to personally recruit operators. In consideration of Meadowbrook's generosity, flyers for the campground are being handed out at these meetings. A letter has been sent to Gov John Baldacci, KB1NXP, inviting him to participate in the operation. A feature on the N1P operation needs to be added to the MARA Web page.

Report of N1P planning meeting, Tuesday, May 15, 2007 at Meadowbrook campground:

Present at the meeting were Steve Kerchel, AA4AK, Don Benson, WN1OTV, and Bruce Randall, W1ZE. Chris, the owner of the Meadowbrook Campground was also present. Other committee members, Brian Dorval, AA1WI, Lee Tribou, N1HOC, and Al Sirois, N1MHC are to be kept current by e-mail.

*Green indicates action items.

*Red indicates expenditures by the club.

The following is scheduled to appear in the August 2007 issue of *QST*:

Aug 17-Aug 19, 1601Z-2359Z, Phippsburg, ME. Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association, N1P. Commemorating the 400th Anniversary of the Popham Colony. 7.262 7.032 3.985 3.532. Certificate. Joseph B. Randall, W1ZE, 1 Smithfield Crossing, Phippsburg, ME 04562. www.ks1r.net. Similar announcements are scheduled to appear in the August issue of *CQ* and *Worldradio*.

N1P is listed on the www.ik3qar.it and www.qrz.com Web sites.

Venue:

Is the Meadowbrook Campground expecting any payment for the use of the site? In a serious act of generosity, Chris is not charging us any money for the use of the site of the operating position, the restrooms, electricity, *et cetera*. What Chris gets in return for his generosity is publicity for the campground, and added business at the on-site restaurant and concession. In addition out-of-town participants who stay overnight and use the paid campsites will be charged the usual (not very expensive) rates.

Q. Are water and restrooms continually available?

A. Yes

Q. Does the site already have security?

A. We will schedule “night owls” to operate through Friday and Saturday nights. AA4AK will take one shift. Thus, we’ll have at least one participant on watch continually.

Q. Are there any insurance issues?

A. No more than we face on Field Day. The Campground has the usual protections against injuries and damage occurring on site. Participants may be requested to sign a waiver. **This is yet to be worked out with Chris.**

From where are we likely to run the actual operation? Do we require camping gear/ trailers, etc? We’re looking at a big open area near the front of the campground. We will probably need a big tent. **The details of the temporary site remain to be worked out.**

Q. Is onsite power safely/readily available?

A. Yes.

Food:

There is concession and a full service restaurant on the site. **We’re expecting to work out some sort of deal (in which the Club throws a bit of money into the pot) for throwing a BBQ or clambake et cetera on Friday night.**

If someone wants to organize pot luck meals or picnics for the other days, that would be welcome.

Radio Gear:

Tentative configuration: Like Field Day less the GOTA setup

1 VHF station (Borrow rigs from KX1I W1ZE and/or K2LOT? Antennas from W1ZE)

2 HF stations (Borrow rigs from W1ZE and KC6TVF Antennas from AA4AK)

One HF station rigged to run data. (Borrow gear from AA1WI or KC6TVF?)

Memory keyer/paddle from AA4AK

Sign out BP filters from Red Cross

24 hour clocks (preferably digital) needed at each operating position

Q. Are trees suitably spaced?

A. Yes.

Q. Do we need pushup poles or other temporary supports?

A. Those would be desirable

Computerized logging: This is one of those ideas that is a lot easier to talk about than to actually do. If we have computerized logging, we’d need to

have three laptops, and logging programs on each, and possibly interfaces between the computers and the rigs. However, if some committee member wants to undertake this task, he/she would be welcome to it. Otherwise, the provision for logging consists of buying 3 spiral logbooks at the next hamfest.

QSLs: AA4AK will arrange to have all QSOs entered into ARRL’s Logbook of the World (LOTW). W1ZE is the QSL manager for paper QSLs. He will send envelopes/postage to W1 QSL bureau for DX QSL cards. (DX QSL cards will slowly filter in over the next 5 years.) (MARA needs to pay for envelopes and postage.) eQSL and e-mailed QSLs are worthless; they are not allowed for any of the major awards.

We need a supply of 200 regular QSL cards to answer QSLs that we receive from DX stations via the QSL bureau, and which we will answer via the QSL bureau. MARA needs to pay the “Outgoing Bureau” fee.

Except for the case of DX QSL cards received via the QSL bureau, we will send a certificate instead of a card. For all other cases we will send a certificate in response to a QSL card with SASE or SAE/IRC. **AA4AK will try to get permission to use a Maine’s First Ship image on the certificate.**

Note:

Our “Worked N1P” certificate is completely different from the “Celebrating Popham Colony” certificate being proposed o the Pine Tree Chapter of QCWA.

Publicity:

In addition to the existing publicity, we can post an announcement to the MARA and Maine ARRL Web sites, and probably QCWA, WR6WR websites. Announcements need to go to the major DX newsletters a few weeks before the event.

Biggest concern:

Getting operators from around Maine to come and operate. Besides MARA, there are 14 major ham clubs in Maine. AA4AK is visiting some of them to give a presentation on the Popham Colony and the N1P operation, and to personally recruit operators. In consideration of Meadowbrook’s generosity, flyers for the campground are being handed out at these meetings.

Status of the visits is as follows:

Already visited: Augusta (likely to send some participants) Narraguagus (likely to send some participants despite the fact that their N1B, Blueberry Festival Special Event is the same weekend) Firm dates in June/July:

QCWA at Bangor Hamfest June 2

Pine State Club (Bangor) June 4

Andy June 6

St John Valley (Fort Kent) June 12

St Croix (Calais) June 17

Ellsworth July 12

Not interested (but said in a nice way):

PAWA. We'll let you know:

Yankee Waterville. Still awaiting reply to offer to visit Waldo Kennebec

A presentation on NIP preparations should be the featured program for the MARA meeting on July 27, 2007.

A letter has been sent to Gov John Baldacci, KB1NXP, inviting him to participate in the operation. Phil Duggan, N1EP, the printer of KB1NXP's QSL cards has promised to put in a good word with him regarding the invitation.

Chris may put a link to MARA on the Meadowbrook web page.

A feature on the NIP operation needs to be added to the MARA Web page.



**Portland jetport
Exercise 2007**

From: "K1GAX"

The Portland Jetport Exercise 2007 is being held on June 12, 2007 from 7 AM to 2 PM. Seven volunteers from the ARES community are needed to provide communications from the Cumberland County EMA EOC to the Incident Command Post and from the Southern Maine Chapter of the American Red Cross to Incident Command Post, Maine Medical Center, Mercy Hospital and Southern Maine Medical Center in Biddeford.

This is a VHF exercise. Most will be handhelds (excepting SMMC in Biddeford).

If you are available for the exercise, please let me know by reply e-mail and I will send further details.

*73, Bryce, K1GAX, AEC for Logistics
k1gax@juno.com*

Lubricate those vocal
cords, limber up that
CW sending wrist
and practice up on
your typing skills,
WHY?
Because
FIELD DAY 2007
is going to be
here quicker
than you think.
The last full
weekend in
June.
HOPE TO SEE
YOU THERE!