



# Squelch Tales



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association for May 2009



## Two MARA Members were a big hit at Maine State Convention

At the March Maine State Convention in Lewiston the MARA's own Steve Kerchel, AA4AK and Al Corderman, W3ZD presented talks on two different subjects of interest to Maine hams.



Steve gave a comprehensive talk on Radiation Hazards (Rad-Haz) as it relates to Amateur Radio RF emissions. He presentation was well laid out and presented in a level that kept everyone's attention supported by excellent graphics and appropriate levels of levity. Steve really knew his subject matter. He stated he did a lot of study and research into the subject after his XYL Nancy had a pacemaker installed around the Christmas holiday season and he did not want his hobby effecting her health. Steve was also worried that maybe he would not be able

to get on the air with a hobby he dearly loves.



Al Corderman, who now has his father's callsign of W3ZD, did a presentation simply called *History of my Father*. Al's Dad was one of the early movers and shakers in the Amateur Radio. Al did a great job telling the gathered hams about his father's influence on the hobby and backed up with photos and log-books and interesting stories.

Comments from attendees at both presentations were extremely positive and they both received requests to do their presentations again at other Ham clubs in the near future.

(Photos by KC7LIF)



<p><b>Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association</b>  <b>KS1R Repeaters &amp; Nodes:</b>  <b>147.21/147.81 MHz (PL 100.0 Hz)</b>  <b>444.40/449.40 MHz (PL 88.5 Hz)</b>  <b>447.575/442.575 MHz (digital-experimental)</b>  <b>1284.00/1272.00 MHz (no PL)</b>  <b>145.010 MHz BRUNS (KS1R-2) Packet Node</b>  <b>All located on Oak Hill, Brunswick, Maine</b></p>
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## Maine State Convention & Andy Hamfest, Another success!



**I**t must have been cabin fever that got the hams in Maine out to this years ARRL Maine State convention and Andy Hamfest at the Ramada Inn in Lewiston.

As in previous years the Friday evening set of seminars and forums had significant attendance to listen to a knowledgeable set of presenters provide information on a verity of subjects from APRS to Radiation Hazards. New England ARRL Officials were there for the ARRL Forum to let everyone what was going on in the world of Ham Radio and what was going on at head quarters in Newington.

Early the following morning the parking lot at the Inn was full to overflowing with all kinds of vehicles sporting a wide verity of antennas from tiny to massive.

The flea market hall was shoulder to shoulder with Amateur Radio enthusiasts looking over the items being offered for sale by various vendors and hams, plus lots of socializing.

Throughout the morning there was a continuation of forums on repeat and new topics, plus QCWA and Yankee club meetings. In the late morning there was a large Amateur Radio Exam session that had several students from the MARA's

Technician Class study group passing their test and joining the ranks of Maine hams.

After the event was over it was reported that around 350 individuals attended the event and the organizers were very pleased with the outcome, almost reassuring a repeat performance in March of 2010.



## April Fools Internet Hoax Get Hams fired up

**D**uring the first few days of April email started fling around the Internet alerting Hams that the County Board of Supervisors in San Louis Obispo County, on the central coast of California passed a law that would outlaw operating Amateur Radio. The email stated that a new ordinance had just been passed outlawing Amateur Radio transmissions within then county limits due to study done by Stanford University that RF radiation from Hams was causing health problems with very young children. The email stated even though it news sounded like an April Fools joke, it was not.

Hams from around the country started calling the ARRL, FCC, San Louis Obispo County and each other expressing outrage. Even this Editor (W1ZE) contacted ARRL New England Director, Tom Frenaye, K1KI to ask him if there was any truth to the email. Tom went to the S.L.O County web site and could find no reference to a Ham Radio ban or any reference to Amateur Radio at any County Board meeting. John Goran, K1JJS, Maine Section Public Information Guru went to the County web site and viewed the streaming video from the

S.L.O County Board of Supervisors meeting and there was no mention of Ham radio.

The rumor spread fast and with so many calls going to the County that the County officials had to respond. They submit a letter to the ARRL and other Ham organizations stating that in no way did a ban on Ham radio take place and that the County very much appreciated Amateur Radio operators and it's ongoing relationship with Ham operators in disaster and emergency communications.

**Editor's Opinion:** This event has not brought a good light on our hobby. The only semi-positive thing about this event is that it shows how quick Hams can communicate and get the information passed.



## Forty Meter Phone, a DX band.

By WIZE

In last months issue of Squelch Tales there was a short column about the expanding phone segment for DX stations in the forty-meter band with the departure of high power foreign broadcast stations.

Well, I am happy to report that this has been a very positive change for DXers. In previous months the 7.1 to 7.2 MHz segment was full of 20db over S-9 heterodynes. Now starting in the late afternoon through the night and into early morning hours until just after sunrise there is no broadcast heterodynes. In place of foreign broadcast are hams having solid QSOs with DX stations.

Starting on the evening of April 15<sup>th</sup> I decided to get out of the CW band and QSY up into the new DX phone segment. I turned my SteppIR 40-meter dipole so it

avored Northeast and southwest and I was pleased to hear stations in Europe pounding in with S-9 plus. I worked everyone I called and got all S-9 reports. The next morning just before 7:00 AM I heard a station on around 7.165 MHz chatting with some stateside (W7) stations. He had a heavy Australian accent so I listened a bit longer and he ID with VK2ON. I slid down frequency, fired up the KW amplifier and moved back to his frequency. When he signed with the W7 I gave him a call and he came back and said, "WIZE, your five nine plus 10 here near Sidney Old Man, over."

You folks with new General tickets have a 25 kHz chunk of the new DX phone window 7.175 to 7.2MHz. You Advanced and Extra class folks have an additional 50 kHz starting at 7.125 MHz, so tune around and see if you can land some nice phone (SSB) DX contacts.

73, Bruce/WIZE



## Two mid coast Hams receive Longevity Awards



**Damariscotta:** On April 17<sup>th</sup> members of the Maine Chapter of the Quarter Century Wireless Association and members of the

MARA gathered to present Dick Baldwin, W1RU and Carl Watson, W6NV with Impressive longevity awards from the QCWA. Both gentlemen have been in the hobby for three-quarters of a century. Dick, a past president of the IARU, was instrumental in getting hams the Thirty-meter (10.1MHz) band in the late seventies. He was awarded a Seventy-Five Years in Amateur radio Plaque. Carl spent a lifetime in radio and in his early career was a flying radio Officer for PanAm Airlines on the China Clippers in the 1930s and 40s. He has been a ham for 74-years. He received his Seventy Years in Amateur Radio award certificate (issued in 5-year increments).

It was also Carl's birthday so his family and nursing home staff were there to help Carl and Dick celebrate their milestone event.



**A.F.D. CROSSBAND  
MILITARY/AMATEUR  
RADIO  
COMMUNICATIONS TEST  
(09 MAY 2009)**

The Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard are co-sponsoring their annual Military/Amateur Radio Communications Tests in celebration of the 59th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day (AFD). Although the actual Armed Forces Day is celebrated on Saturday, May 16, 2009, the AFD Military/Amateur Communications Test will be conducted on May 9th 2009 to prevent conflict with the Dayton Hamvention (15-17 May 2009), which is the same weekend as the actual Armed Forces Day.

The annual celebration features traditional military to amateur cross band communications SSB voice tests and copying the Secretary of Defense message via digital modes. These tests give Amateur Radio operators and Short Wave Listeners (SWL) an opportunity to demonstrate their individual technical skills, and to receive recognition from the Secretary of Defense and/or the appropriate military radio station for their proven expertise. QSL cards will be provided to those stations making contact with the military stations. Special commemorative certificates will be awarded to anyone who receives and copies the digital Armed Forces Day message from the Secretary of Defense.

**MILITARY-TO-AMATEUR CROSS BAND SSB & CW TEST CONTACTS.** Military-to-Amateur crossband operations will take place on the dates/times in ZULU (UTC), and frequencies listed at:

<http://www.eham.net/articles/21452>

Voice contacts will include operations in SSB. Some stations may not operate the entire period, depending on propagation and manning. Participating military stations will transmit on selected Military MARS frequencies and listen for amateur radio stations in the Amateur bands listed in the above web site. The military station operator will announce the specific amateur band frequency being monitored. Duration of each voice contact should be limited to 1-2 minutes. The following stations will be transmitting on MARS frequencies listed in the above web site which are provided as "Window/Dial Frequency" in kHz. Some stations will use CW to provide the opportunity to check in by Morse code.





## New England QSO Party, May 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>

The first weekend in May is the New England QSO Party. The event starts at 2000z Saturday, May second until 0500z Sunday (4PM to 1AM) then starts again at 1300z Sunday, May third until 2400z Sunday (9AM to 8PM). This is a fun event you can do from home of if you have HF mobile you can become a rover and go from county to county in New England making QSOs.

The Object of the QSO Party is to contact as many New England stations in as many New England counties as possible on the 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meter bands. New England stations work anyone. QSO points are earned in the following manner: One point for each phone QSO and two points for every CW and digital mode QSO.

For more info on the NEQP, go to: <http://www.neqp.org/> and learn about the rules and awards available for participants.

In 2006 and again in 2008 The MARA's own Bruce Randall, W1ZE took 1<sup>st</sup> place in Sagadahoc County, just edging out Michelle Briggs KC7LIF (now W7LIF). Steve Kercel, AA4AK took top honors in Cumberland county. And a top scorer in New England. All three were in the Single-op low power category.

Maybe you can be the top dog in you're County in 2009. You will have time to get home from Near-Fest in Deerfield, NH and be in time to enter the party.



# Deerfield, here we come!

It's May and time for the spring edition of the **NEAR-Fest** flea market in Deerfield, New Hampshire. The event runs from Friday, May first to Saturday May second. The Gates open Friday at 9:00 AM. Ticket prices are:

- General admission Tickets (good for both days) \$10.00.
- General Admission Tickets (Saturday after 0600) \$5.00
- Persons under 18 years of age: no charge  
(may be required to show ID)

For more info on NEAR-Fest go to: <http://www.near-fest.com> . Hope to see you there!



## MS Walk has great WX

**Brunswick:** On the morning of April-25 eight members of the MARA gathered at the Middle school to provide communications support and route duties for the 2009 MS Walk. Turnout of walkers was light but the weather was great, best spring day of the year so far.

The event went off without a hitch thanks to the efforts of Lee Tribou (N1HOC), Marjorie (KX1I), Steve Kercel (AA4AK), Allan Irwin (AB1KA), Jim McIrvin (N1IPA), John Goran (K1JJS), John Munton (N1OIG) and Bruce Randall (W1ZE). Another great job by the MARA Team.

