



Squelch Tales



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association for November & December 2011

Carving Out Time for Ham Radio

BY Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

On a recent episode of This Week in Tech (www.twit.tv), Leo Laporte, W6TWT, mentions ham radio, and a guest asks him how much time he is spending on the air. Leo, who just recently got his Tech license says “Zero!” and laughs.

This is not uncommon. Lots of people seem to get a ham radio license and then do very little with it. I think one reason for this is that they don’t take into account how much time the hobby really can eat up.

They get their ticket because it seems like a cool thing to do, but then they have to carve out some time to actually be a ham radio operator. Even if you don’t make any of your own gear, setting up a station takes time, and then there is the operating time, of course. Carving time out of busy schedules—and I would guess that Laporte has a pretty busy schedule being the owner of TWiT—is a challenge.

I see things like this all the time. At one ham radio club meeting that I attended, the club vice president asked, “OK, here’s the question of the month. How many of you actually got on the air in the past month.” Less

than half of those in attendance raised their hands. Geez, I thought to myself, why do they even bother to come to meetings if they don’t get on the air?

Making time for ham radio So, if you’re a busy person, how do you make time for ham radio? Well, being the Internet geek that I am, I Googled, “making time for things you love.” I got a lot of links to sites that talked about work-life balance and some new-age blogs, but none of them offered much in the way of concrete advice.

Then, I Googled “make time for hobbies” and right off the bat, I found two good articles—7 Creative Ways to Make Time For Your Creative Hobby!

(<http://www.exploringwomanhood.com/homelife/hobbies/maketime.htm>)

and 5 Ways to Make Time for Your Hobby

(<http://o5.com/5-ways-to-make-time-for-your-hobby/>).

Both articles offered very similar advice. Here are four points that both made:

1. Schedule it. Set aside a specific time during which you’re going to do ham radio. Don’t let that time get pre-empted.
2. Designate a place in your home for ham radio. Having to set up your radios or dig out your tools every time

you want to operate or build something is not much fun and wastes a lot of time. Having a “shack” and a workspace designated for your projects will let you spend more time on the fun stuff.

3. Partner up. Arranging to work with another ham will make it harder to blow off ham radio for some other activity. Besides, it’s a lot of fun to do things with other hams. If you’re a newly licensed ham, find an Elmer. There really are plenty around who would be willing to help you.

4. Create a project plan. Setting up an amateur radio station is no small feat. Breaking it down into smaller chunks will make it seem more doable, and you’ll get a feeling of accomplishment when you meet your in-between goals.

There’s so much to learn and do in amateur radio that it can seem quite overwhelming. I think that’s one reason why so many Techs never really get into the hobby and why some experienced hams drift away. I think if you follow the advice above, though, you’ll not only find the time to pursue amateur radio, but get a lot more out of it.

When he's not down in his shack, working with a friend on yet another amateur radio project, Dan writes amateur radio study guides. You can find them on his website at www.kb6nu.com/tech-manual. Make some time to e-mail him at cwgeek@kb6nu.com.



FCC Terminates Proceedings Affecting the Amateur Radio Service

The FCC issued an [Order](#) on November 1 that terminated hundreds of proceedings, including six proceedings that members of the public, including the ARRL, had asked not to be terminated. Two of these six proceedings involved the Amateur Radio Service. This follows a June 2011 [Public Notice](#) that sought comments on whether or not it should terminate [approximately 800 docketed proceedings](#).

On July 20, 2011, the [ARRL filed comments with the FCC](#) on this matter, explaining that it had no objection to the termination of the proceedings in the *Public Notice*, save for one item: The ARRL’s *Petition for Rulemaking (RM-10165) Amendment of Parts 2 and 97 of the Commission’s Rules Regarding the 2300-2305 MHz Band*. In this *Petition*, the ARRL requested that the FCC change the Amateur Radio Service’s allocation in that band from Secondary to Primary. This *Petition* was one of the six items to be terminated.

RM-10165

The ARRL’s *Petition* was filed May 7, 2001 and on July 2, 2001, it was placed on *Public Notice*. In October 2002, the Office of Engineering and Technology ([OET](#)) issued an *Order* dismissing this and

two other petitions pertaining to the 2300-2305 MHz band. The ARRL noted in its comments July 2011 that “the *Order* did not finally resolve the issue of the allocation status of the Amateur Service in the 2300-2305 MHz band, or the ARRL’s request for a Primary allocation. Rather, the Commission merely *postponed* a decision with respect to the allocation status of that band until some unspecified future time.”

The ARRL maintains that the status of the Amateur Radio Service allocation at 2300-2305 MHz remains relevant because of actions taken by the Commission, with respect to an adjacent band at 2305-2320 MHz and because the ARRL has filed a *Petition for Reconsideration* regarding the actions taken in the 2305-2320 MHz band, as well as other unrelated proposals for use of the 2300-2305 MHz band, including Medical Body Area Networks.

“Regarding the 2305-2320 MHz band, in May 2010, the Commission issued an [Order](#) that amended certain rules governing the Wireless Communications Service ([WCS](#)) to enable WCS licensees to provide mobile broadband services,” the FCC stated in its *Order*. “In doing so, the Commission acknowledged that out-of-band emissions that could result from expanded use of WCS mobile devices in the 2305-2320 MHz band have the potential to increase interference to amateur radio

operations in the 2300-2305 MHz band. During the course of the WCS proceeding, however, ARRL did not file any comments raising the issue of whether the Amateur Radio Service allocation status in the 2300-2305 MHz band should be modified. Although ARRL filed a *Petition for Reconsideration* of the *WCS Order*, it did not request a change in the status of the Amateur Radio Service allocation at 2300-2305 MHz in that filing. In its *Reply Comments to the Opposition* to its *WCS Petition*, ARRL specifically stated that it was not asking the Commission to revisit any aspect of its past decisions regarding that status.”

The FCC stated that it believes that the RM-10165 proceeding concerning the ARRL’s request to change the status of the Amateur Radio Service to primary in the 2300-2305 MHz band should be terminated, “since its request was dismissed and ARRL did not file a *Petition for Reconsideration* of that dismissal. Although the Commission’s dismissal of RM-10165 left open the possibility that the allocation status for the Amateur Radio Service in this band could be considered again when the reserve status of that spectrum is evaluated, there has been no activity in that proceeding since October 2002. Furthermore, although [ARRL raises a concern](#) that a 2009 *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* proposed a secondary allocation in the 2300-2305

MHz band for Medical Body Area Networks, in that proceeding, the Commission did not seek comment on or propose to modify the Amateur Radio Service allocation in the 2300-2305 MHz band. In addition, we do not believe that the issues ARRL has raised on reconsideration in the WCS proceeding warrant holding open the RM-10165 proceeding. If ARRL still desires a change in the Amateur Radio Service allocation status in the 2300-2305 MHz band, it can file a new petition for rulemaking. Accordingly, RM-10165 is terminated.”

Nickolaus Leggett, N3NL

Nickolaus Leggett, N3NL, of Reston, Virginia, requested that the FCC keep Docket No. [RM-10412](#) open “to allow various parties to submit additional comments on regulatory steps that would enhance certain aspects of the Amateur Radio Service.” On April 15, 2004, however, the [FCC released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Order](#) that specifically denied RM 10412. Since by this action, RM-10412 should have already have been closed, the FCC rejected Leggett’s request to keep it open

According to the FCC, the termination of these proceedings “furthers the Commission’s organizational goals of increasing the efficiency of its decision-making, modernizing the agency’s processes in the digital age and enhancing the

openness and transparency of Commission proceedings for practitioners and the public.” Upon publication of this *Order* in the *Federal Register*, these proceedings will be terminated in the Electronic Comment Filing System ([ECFS](#)). The record in the terminated proceedings will remain part of the FCC’s official records, and the various pleadings, orders and other documents in these dockets will continue to be accessible to the public, post-termination.



MARA
2011 Holidays Dinner
set for December 3rd

As in the past several this years This years holidays dinner will be held at the Kennebec Tavern at 119 Commercial Street on the waterfront in Bath on Saturday December 3rd at 6:00 PM.

Again we will be seated in the dining room area and everyone can order from the restraint menu. Mark your calendars; grab the better half or significant other, invite a ham friend or Ham want-to-be and join us for an evening of good conversation, good food and good drink. We hope to see you there.



W1AW 2011/2012 Winter Operating Schedule

Morning Schedule:

Time	Mode	Days
1400 UTC (9 AM EST)	CWs	Wed, Fri
1400 UTC (9 AM EST)	CWf	Tue, Thu

Daily Visitor Operating Hours:

1500 UTC to 1700 UTC-(10 AM to 12 PM EST)
1800 UTC to 2045 UTC- 1 PM to 3:45 PM EST)
(Station closed 12 PM to 1 PM EST)

Afternoon/Evening Schedule:

2100 UTC (4 PM EST)	CWf	Mon, Wed, Fri
2100 "	CWs	Tue, Thu
2200 " (5 PM EST)	CWb	Daily
2300 " (6 PM EST)	DIGI.	Daily
0000 " (7 PM EST)	CWs	Mon, Wed, Fri
0000 "	CWf	Tue, Thu
0100 " (8 PM EST)	CWb	Daily
0200 " (9 PM EST)	DIGI.	Daily
0245 " (9:45 PM EST)	VOICE	Daily
0300 " (10 PM EST)	CWf	Mon, Wed, Fri
0300 "	CWs	Tue, Thu
0400 " (11 PM EST)	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 CWbulletins.

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 2330 UTC (6:30 PM EST), 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 0100 UTC (8 PM EST) Thursdays and 0100 UTC (8 PM EST) Fridays.

Audio from W1AW's CW code practices and CW/digital bulletins is available using EchoLink via the W1AW Conference Server named "W1AWBDCT." (The 9:45 PM ET phone bulletin is currently unavailable via W1AWBDCT.) The CW/digital 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 these 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.

All licensed amateurs may operate the station from 1500 UTC to 1700 UTC (10 AM to 12 PM EST), and then from 1800 UTC to 2045 UTC (1 PM to 3:45 PM EST) Monday through Friday. Be sure to bring your current FCC amateur radio license or a photocopy.

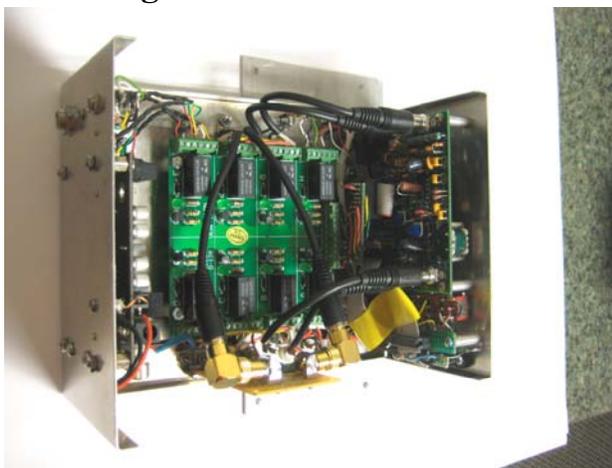
The W1AW Operating Schedule may also be found on page 88 in the October 2011 issue of QST or on the web at, <[Http://www.arrl.org/w1aw-operating-schedule](http://www.arrl.org/w1aw-operating-schedule)> .



Program for November Meeting

By Steve Kerchel, AA4AK

Below is pictured a “Space Perception Filter.” What is that? You might ask.



It is a device that splits the same signal into a high pass and low pass component, and runs each part through a separate headphone. Subjectively, it is experienced as the signal passing through the head, moving from one ear from the other as you tune through it. It has to be experienced to be appreciated.

As the November MARA meeting, the program is Steve’s (AA4AK) hands on (ears on) demonstration of the space perception filter that he recently constructed.

Come experience it for yourself.

73, AA4AK



New Battery for the Red Cross



As most members know, we have been doing Field Day at the Red Cross since 2005, and every year, we run their generator to get the Field Day bonus points. In addition, one of the services that ARES provides the Red Cross is running the generator from time to time.

For some while, the battery in the generator has had a dead cell. We have remedied that. Thanks to our SEC, John Goran, K1JJS, we have obtained a new battery and been able to donate it to the Red Cross. Our thanks also to Dan Lindsley, N5AGG (pictured above) installing the new battery in the generator.



ARRL 10 Meter Contest, Give it a try!

Back in 1980 just after the MARA was formed, two founding members, Dana McCurdy, KB1CV and Mike Everingham, KA1OR combined their efforts and entered the December Ten Meter contest from Dana's station in Bath. When it was all said and done they had taken first place in Maine.

To our recollection there has been no real serious participation by Association members. Bruce Randall, W1ZE has participated in the contest in the early 90s but with low sunspot activity the contest for those of us up here in the northeast has been a bust.

Things have changed and sunspots have increased to a point where the ten meter band is alive with activity all day and into the evening hours. For this reason this may be a good year to have a club effort during the contest.

The contest is held from 0000z on December 10th until 2359z on December 11 (Saturday & Sunday). There are awards issued by ARRL section for the top scores in each category. Check out,

<http://www.arrl.org/10-meter>

For more information about this contest and the possibility of MARA participation, contact Bruce, W1ZE at w1ze@arrl.net or Steve Kercel, AA4AK at aa4ak.1@gmail.com



Heads Up!

The November MARA meeting will deviate from the normal last Thursday of the month (24th) to the third Thursday of the month (17th). As usual the ARES meeting will start at 6:00pm followed by the MARA monthly meeting at 7:00pm.

As an additional reminder, There will be no MARA meeting on December 29th. The year end Holidays dinner on Saturday December 3rd will take it's place.



Seasons Greetings

The Merrymeeting

Amateur Radio

Association Executive

Board & officers

including the Midcoast

ARES EC and AECs &

Newsletter Editor want

to wish all of you and

yours a happy and

peaceful Thanksgiving,

Hanukkah, and

Christmas season plus a

Very Happy New Year

