



Squelch Tales



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association for October 2009

Dan Michaud Memorial had small turnout

The last bike ride of the summer season, the Dan Michaud Memorial, was met with very rainy weather that dampened the turnout. Only dozen bike riders arrived at the Gazebo on the Brunswick town mall to participate. There were almost as many ham radio volunteers as there were bike riders.

The event organizers, Maine Hospice, made the decision to cut the route short and only travel the route in Brunswick due to low turnout and wet streets. With that decision the MARAs event coordinator John, N1OIG made the decision to let several ham volunteers go home and watch the rain from inside their warm QTHs. Six hams stayed and did the event that was finished by late morning.

The event organizers were very pleased with the MARA support and flexibility. They wanted to pass on their appreciation to all the hams that volunteered to help and those that did help. They are look forward to next year because they know they can count on the MARA to make it a success.



NEAR-Fest VI

It is going to be a long winter so here is your chance to attend the last ham radio flea market until Winterfest in February.

Friday and Saturday, October 16th & 17th at the Fairgrounds in Deerfield, Hew Hampshire. For more info go to:

<http://www.near-fest.com/>

Hope to see a lot of you there.



No evidence of significant crash risk while operating mobile says NSC

ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, wrote a letter to National Safety Council President Janet Froetscher in July expressing the ARRL's concerns that Amateur Radio not become an unintended victim of the growing public debate over what to do about distracted drivers. Froetscher replied, saying the NSC does not support bans or prohibitions on the use of Amateur Radios while driving.

Noting that there is significant evidence that talking on cell phones while driving poses crash risk four times that of other drivers, Froetscher observed that the NSC position calling for bans on the use of cell phones while driving is grounded in science. "We are not aware of evidence that using Amateur Radios while driving has significant crash risks," Froetscher wrote in her August 24 letter. "We also have no evidence that using two-way radios while driving poses significant crash risks. Until such time as compelling, peer-reviewed scientific research is presented that denotes significant risks associated with the use of Amateur Radios, two-way radios or other communication devices, the NSC does not support legislative bans or prohibition on their use."

Froetscher said, "the specific risk of radio use while driving is unmeasured and likely does not approach that of cell phones, there indeed is some elevated risk to the drivers, their passengers and the public associated with 650,000 Amateur Radio operators who may not, at one time or another, not concentrate fully on their driving." She points out that the "best safety practice is to have one's full attention on their driving, their hands on the wheel and their eyes on the road. Drivers who engage in any

activity that impairs any of these constitutes an increased risk."

ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, said the ARRL "appreciates NSC President and CEO Janet Froetscher's clear statement that the NSC does not support legislative bans or prohibitions on the use of Amateur Radio while driving. We applaud the NSC for taking positions that are grounded in science. At the same time, all radio amateurs should heed her call to concentrate fully on driving while behind the wheel. It is possible to operate a motor vehicle safely while using Amateur Radio, but if it becomes a distraction we owe it those with whom we share the road, as well as to our passengers, to put safety first."

On January 30, 2009, the ARRL Executive Committee adopted the ARRL's Policy Statement on Mobile Amateur Radio Operation that states "Amateur Radio mobile operation is ubiquitous, and Amateur Radio emergency and public service communications, and other organized Amateur Radio communications activities and networks necessitate operation of equipment while some licensees are driving motor vehicles.

Two-way radio use is dissimilar from full-duplex cellular telephone communications because the operator spends little time actually transmitting; the time spent listening is more similar to, and arguably less distracting than, listening to a broadcast radio, CD or MP3 player. There are no distinctions to be made between or among Amateur Radio, public safety land mobile radio, private land mobile radio or citizen's radio in terms of driver distraction. All are distinguishable from mobile cellular telephone communications in this respect. Nevertheless, ARRL encourages licensees to conduct Amateur communications from motor vehicles in a manner that does not detract from the safe and attentive operation of a motor vehicle at all times."

In his letter, Harrison explained to Froetscher that Amateur Radio operators provide essential emergency communications when regular communications channels are disrupted by disaster: "Through formal agreements with federal agencies, such as the National Weather Service,

FEMA and private relief organizations, the Amateur Radio volunteers protect lives using their own equipment without compensation. The ability of hams to communicate and help protect the lives of those in danger would be strictly hindered if the federal, state and local governments to not ensure that Amateur Radio operators can continue the use of their mobile radios while on the road."

Froetscher replied that she "appreciate[s] your focus of Amateur Radio for emergency communications during disasters. I encourage ARRL to adopt best practices for the safe operation of vehicles that confines use of Amateur Radios while driving only to disaster emergencies."

The Policy Statement asserts that the ARRL "is aware of no evidence that [mobile] operation contributes to driver inattention. Quite the contrary: Radio amateurs are public service-minded individuals who utilize their radio-equipped motor vehicles to assist others, and they are focused on driving in the execution of that function."



T-5 LPDA system for sale



Offered by Al Sirois, N1MHC

This month I'll have a cherry-picker coming to lift off the entire roof tower/rotor/beam and set it on the driveway about 25 feet away.

I found out during Labor Day Weekend that the roof depressed one (1") under one of the tower legs. So I'm going to do away with using a beam because I have no other location for it on my land here in East Boothbay. I'll have to go back to using wires.

Here are the details:

Model T-5 Tennadyne Log Periodic Beam, \$300, including: 10-ft roof tower, mounting brackets, rotor with controller and 8-conductor rotor cable (approx. 40').

Antenna specifications as follows:

- 13-30 MHz, (continuous)
- 12 ft boom length,
- 5-7 dB gain
- 17 to 25 dB F/B
- 37 lb. weight
- 6.2 SF wind area
- 100 LB wind load @ 80 MPH
- 38 ft longest element
- 5 log elements
- 2:1 SWR of less from 13 to 30 MHz

Anyone wishing to be present during takedown is welcome. If buyer wishes to have the beam sooner and could help me, the beam was installed by haul-up with a rope and could be taken down the same way Over the front of the garage. Note the picture of the installation or call 633-5363, n1mhc@arrl.net in East Boothbay for details. **73, Al Sirois, N1MHC**



MARA Hams take down old tower at old Topsham City Hall



KC6TVF gets top section off

Topsham: On Sunday September 13th a small group of MARA members, consisting of N1TTT, W7LIF, KC6TVF, W1ZE and AA4AK arrived at the old Topsham City Hall to take down the old 60-foot Rhon-45 tower. Previously Al Corderman, W2ZD made arrangements to have the MARA take custody of the two towers



located there. The new owner of the property (The Highlands) said, if the MARA folks took them down they could have

them. Harry McNelley, N1TTT laid claim to the Rhon tower but as of this date no one has requested the 60-foot freestanding tower.



tower crew, AA4AK, W1ZE, N1TTT & KC6TVF

If you would like a 50-60 foot freestanding tower (with rotor plate) let Harry, N1TTT know. Michele Briggs, not shown in the above photo took the photo and did the outstanding parking lot BBQ. As usual, they all ate very well..



EmComm East

Rochester, New York: October 3, 2009

EmComm East is an ARRL-sanctioned Amateur Radio emergency communications conference, where Amateur Radio operators involved in EmComm can attend training sessions on technical topics, learn from served agencies, obtain VE testing for license upgrades, and interact with other EmComm operators from all

over the area.

EmComm East will be held on October 3, 2009, in Rochester, New York. The featured speaker this year will be ARRL Chief Operating Officer Harold Kramer, WJ1B. Sign up for e-mail announcements or subscribe to an RSS feed, and keep informed of new developments in this exciting opportunity. \$30 pre-registration is required, breakfast and lunch included, and seating is limited. For more information or to register online, visit EmComm East, or send an e-mail at info@emcommeast.org.

