



Squelch Tales



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association for August 2014

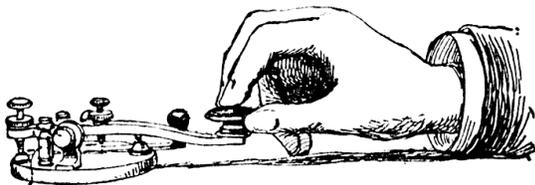
**I found this in the January 1934
Issue of Short Wave Radio.**

Interesting!

By Larry Banks, W1DYJ

A Codeless Amateur License?

No!



ALTHOUGH we doubt if anyone in Government circles is giving the matter any serious thought, there seems to be a lot of noise at the present time about creating a special class of amateur license that will not involve a code test. Considering the numerous and unmatched privileges already enjoyed by the American amateur, it seems to us that any demands for a license class of this kind are ridiculous. Many honest amateurs admit that even the present test is too easy, and is bringing many irresponsible persons on the air. Of course, everyone has to begin some time, so we must forgive the beginner his rotten fist or his hoarse modulation, as long as he stays within band, uses d.c. for plate supply and otherwise conforms to the spirit, as well as the letter, of the Federal Radio Commission regulations.

When you stop to consider that the American amateur is not even required to pay a cent in the way of license fees, that he is permitted to operate absolutely unhampered, and that the Army and the Navy defend him at international

conferences while the highly military governments of other nations try to wipe him off the map, we think it is time to stop biting the hand that feeds us, so to speak. The recent federal economy wave was responsible for a serious reduction in the technical administrative staff of the F.R.C. You can just about imagine the mess that would be created by a lot of unchecked so called "amateurs" who are willing to jeopardize their own freedom by their unwillingness to learn the code, which, after all, is the real language of radio. Why do some people consider the code a stumbling -block? It is really very easy to learn, as 10-year old children and 75 -year old patriarchs have discovered. Besides, a knowledge of the code greatly increases the enjoyment that you can obtain from a short -wave receiver, even if you have no intention of applying for an amateur license.

To many people not familiar with the code, the host of mysterious dots and dashes that sometimes interrupts music are things which should be eliminated by law; but to those with even a slight knowledge of the code, these mysterious interruptions are highly interesting. Airplane, coastal and naval stations, all transmitting information that really makes sense, may easily provide hours and hours of entertainment, especially when you want to get away from the beaten path.

R. H. 28 SHORT WAVE RADIO

Editors note: To quote Yogi Berra, "Deju vu, all over again."



HAM TRIVIA QUESTION

Which of the following musicians is NOT or was NOT an Amateur Radio (HAM) Operator?

- Ronnie Milsap
- Joe Walsh
- Alice Cooper.
- Jim Croce

Answer on last page



Tour de Merrymeeting Bay, another success story



Topsham: Around 7:00pm On Struday August 2nd seven hardy members of the Association assembled at the recreation field on Forside Road to get ready to assist in the annual **Tour de Merrymeeting Bay**, a fifty mile bike ride around Merrymeeting Bay. The event started and ended at the Topsham Rec. facility.

Harry McNelley, N1TTT was this years Net Control and abaily assisted by Steve Kerchel, AA4AK. Jim McIrvn, N1IPA was again this years Sag-Rover on the west side of the route and for the follow-on 25 mile short ride to Bowdoinham and back. Assisting Jim and riding shotgun was Lloyd Wilkins, KC1BSO.

Marjorie Turner, KX1I maned the first rest stop at the Bowdoin Town Landing and managed to



take a few photos of the event. Fran Chase, K1BBJ took charge of the second rest stop on the waterfront in Richmond. ile Bruce Randall, W1ZE stationed himself at the crossroads in Dresden, the start of the ten mile loop at the top of the course then later did follow up sag duties on the east side of the bay. Don Wakeman, KA1WAL maned the Woolwich rest stop until the last rider was through then took over from Bruce as sag for



the rest of the route. Dan Lindsley, N5AGG managed the last rest stop at Waterfront Park in Bath.

As in past years the event was a success with no riders lost or injured and the MARA communications team was well fed at the completion of the event.

Nice job MARA communicators !

PS: Thanks go out to N1ITR and KQ1L for letting the MARA use the 146.70 repeater in Litchfield facilitating good quality communications on the north end of Merrymeeting Bay along the Kennebec river.



147.21 Cavities back up to snuff.

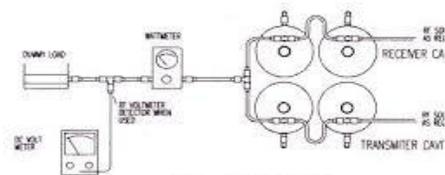


FIG. 5 TUNING SET UP

On Thursday morning, July 31st Bruce W1ZE joined up with Bill, K1MNV on Oak Hill with five shiny new Amphenol "T" connectors that had been purchased from

RF Parts in San Marcos, California in May just before Bruce returned to Maine from his winter QTH in Poway, CA..

As everyone who used the KS1R two meter repeater over the past several years noted, come late June and July when the local humidity got over 80%, the grunge started to rear it's ugly head making communications very difficult with a lot of IMD interference and signal desence caused by close proximity to hill top VHF pagers and other services. It was suspected by Bill and Bruce that moisture was wicking past the old PL-259/UG connectors and into the cavity T-connectors injecting unwanted signals past the filtering action of the cavities.

After standing on a stepladder for over a half hour the old T-connectors were removed, the center pins on the PL-259 connectors cleaned and buffed to clear white metal and reconnected to the new T-connectors. Tests on the hill showed a marked improvement. The signal strength (S-Meter) on the repeater receiver no longer moved when the pager transmitter sent out an RF burst.

The following Saturday during the Tour de Merrymeeting Bay bike ride Bruce, W1ZE used that opportunity to see how the repeater performed from locations around Sagadahoc and Lincoln Counties. He was able to access the repeater with 35 watts from his IC-706MKIIG and dual-band mobile antenna from all locations and with full quieting signals coming back from the repeater. He was also able to successfully access the 147.21 repeater with his 4-watt HT with a quarter-wave mag-mount on the roof of his pick-up truck from those same locations. As should be expected the 4-watt HT just using a runner ducky antenna some far away or shielded (low-lying areas) did not experience optimum 2-way

performance but all high ground locations were successful.

On August 11th Bill, K1MNW installed a pass cavity in front of the receiver to see if the pager grunge could be reduced and first test on that Monday night ARES net did not give the evaluation a good test due to a very light turnout with only very local folks checking into the net. A complete analysis of the receiver and antenna with Bill's station monitor is the next step.



**A Message from
Phil, N1EP,
Maine Section
Emergency
Coordinator**



Dear Maine Amateur Radio Operator:

I hope you are enjoying this fantastic hobby and service as I am. There are so many facets of Ham Radio. There is something to interest everyone, that's for sure. Digital communications, working satellites and the International Space Station, chasing DX, using old reliable Morse code, and checking into traffic and emergency nets are some of my favorite ham activities.

One aspect of Maine amateur radio that would benefit from more participation is the Amateur Radio Emergency Service®. ARES® is an American Radio Relay League (ARRL) affiliated program that brings together like-minded hams to use their communication skills and equipment for the public good. There is no charge to become an ARES member. Only certain leadership positions require ARRL membership due to the resources and expense reimbursements they may receive.

For the first time in many years Maine is close to having active ARES groups in all

16 counties. Kennebec is the sole county without an ARES program in place, although they do have a Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) group. All ARES groups need more members. In time of emergencies, not all ARES members may be able to assist if they, themselves, are affected by the incident, or they have family and work commitments. The more hams in the emergency communications pool, the more likelihood Maine hams will be able to effectively provide backup disaster communications when normal systems fail, as they often do after a major disaster.

You can put whatever amount of time and effort into training and operating with ARES as your situation permits. We all have busy lives; many of us have children, jobs, and other demands on our valuable time. Maine ARES recognizes that fact.

If you think you would be interested in joining ARES and lending a helping hand, and perhaps learn some more interesting and fun modes of amateur radio operations, then fill out the Maine ARES application and send it to me. I will make sure it gets to the appropriate Emergency Coordinator. (If you know hams in Kennebec County, please share this letter with them!)

Thank you for considering my invitation and I hope to meet you on the air and in person soon.

73, Phil Duggan, N1EP
Maine ARES SEC

To find the link the ARES Registration Form (FSD-98), please log onto this ARRL Web page: <http://www.arrl.org/ares>. Scroll down the page just a bit. You'll notice this text: How to Get Involved in ARES

Fill out the ARES Registration form and submit it to your local Emergency Coordinator.

Once you open the PDF file, please print it, and fill it out. Then, mail To:

Phil Duggan, N1EP,
195 Kansas Road, Milbridge, ME 04658 or
email n1ep@arrl.net

-----or-----
ARRL Maine Section Manager:
Bill Crowley, K1NIT
k1nit@arrl.org



H.R. 4969

By Tom Frenaye, K1KI

In the September issue of QST, pay special attention to the editorial on Page 9 from Dave Sumner, K1ZZ, regarding The Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2014 (**H.R. 4969**) that was recently introduced in the US House of Representatives.

This legislation offers Amateur Radio the best chance for us to deal with antenna restrictions in decades. While PRB-1 has been very effective in dealing with local, state and federal restrictions for private property, it did not address the needs of the thousands of licensed hams living in property (~25 million housing units nationwide) restricted by CC&Rs (covenants, conditions, and restrictions) that are usually present in condominium and subdivisions. HR-4969 will open the door to discussions about reasonable accommodation.

Two New England House members have already signed on as co-sponsors, Joe Courtney from Connecticut's 2nd District and Peter Welch, member-at-large from Vermont. There are nineteen other House members in New England that are potential co-sponsors and we should be asking all of them for their support.

Will You Help?

We need two kinds of support in order to get this legislation moving, the first one is for you to take the time to write to your Congressperson and ask for his or her support for HR.4969. A few dozen letters from constituents really sends a message.

Here is a sample letter:

<http://www.arrl.org/files/file/HR%204969/Draft%20letter.docx>

If you are logged into the ARRL web site you can find your Congressperson here:

<http://www.arrl.org/contacting-your-congressional-representatives>

Otherwise, you can look up the email or postal address via:

<http://House.gov>

Make sure to send us a copy of your letter by email to n1nd@arrl.org with the words "HR 4969 letter" in the SUBJECT field of the email or by US mail to:

ARRL

**Attn: HR 4969 letter campaign
225 Main St., Newington, CT 06111**

The second step is to set up meetings with each member of Congress. If you know your representative personally or through professional connections, please let me know. If you have CC&R restrictions on your present ability to put up an antenna, let me know.

House members should be in their home district from now until the end of the first week of September, then will be back in Washington for two weeks. The next few weeks are ideal times to meet with them locally. We can work with you to make sure you have the information needed for a successful presentation.

For More Information

The ARRL Atlantic Division is sponsoring a webinar on HR 4969. New England Division members are invited (encouraged) to attend (I will).

ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay W3KD and ARRL Hudson Division Director Mike Lisenco N2YBB will talk about HR 4969 and what it mean for ARRL members and how we can help effect its benefits. This session will be moderated by ARRL Atlantic Division Director Bill Edgar N3LLR.

This webinar will be held on Wednesday, August 13, 2014 from 9:00pm to 10:30pm ET. To join in, please register as soon as possible at this URL:

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/296315552>

The text of the Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2014:

<http://www.arrl.org/files/file/HR%204969/Kinzi%20Courtney%20HR-4969.pdf>

Additional information on HR-4969 is on the ARRL web site:

<http://www.arrl.org/hr-4969>

Let me know if you have any questions and thanks in advance for your help!

Tom Frenaye, K1KI

New England Division Director

860-668-5444

K1KI@arrl.org



Maine ARES SEC E-Note

August 17, 2014

By Phil Duggan, N1EP Maine ARES/SEC



Maine Simplex Initiative

When disaster strikes, there is a possibility that we will not have use of our beloved repeaters for a period. The Maine Simplex Initiative is an effort to promote simplex communications in order to test local VHF/UHF ranges, promote amateur radio, and entice other hams to join in EmComm activities. Please consider scheduling a simplex event in your area. Give me enough heads up, and I will help publicize the net/event with press releases and amateur radio bulletins.

With positive publicity, we may even interest more members of the public to obtain an amateur radio license, increasing the pool of operators that we can draw from when needed. If all 16 counties scheduled a simplex test in the next few months, we could potentially get Maine ham radio significant publicity and also determine where our weak paths are from potential shelter areas, EOCs, etc so that we can plan on how to overcome these obstacles.

The simplex tests can be on VHF or UHF and can include voice, cw, digital, and other modes of operation.

Northern/Eastern 2-Meter Event on Springfield (Almanac Mountain) Repeater

Heads up to ECs/ARES in Aroostook, Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis, and Washington Counties. I have talked with repeater-owner Hal Welch WA1ZJL, in Lee. He runs the 147.375 repeater (PL-100hz) that is located on Almanac Mountain, at about 1,000 feet elevation. It enjoys a great range covering much of eastern Maine and elsewhere. We would like to get ARES members and other hams to join us for a special net on Thursday, September 18 at 7:00PM, so that we can get a better idea of the repeater's range. We suspect portions of each county listed above have access. Let's find out. Spread the word!

Please share the below ARES recruitment bulletin with your ARES/Ham friends and ask them to do the same. Help spread the word!

Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES)

The Maine Amateur Radio Emergency Service could use your help. The more volunteers that join ARES teams, the more effective we will be, as a group, when we are needed.

“The Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES) consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment, with their local ARES leadership, for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes,” notes the ARRL on their web page.

Maine hams can find contact information for their county’s ARES program on the Maine ARES web site www.qsl.net/me-ares (don’t forget the dash between me and ares!) ARES membership is free. Interested amateurs can also email Phil Duggan N1EP, Maine ARES Section Emergency Coordinator, at n1ep@arrl.net or phone 546-1575. Maine ARES SEC E-Note! August 17, 2014

Packet Radio Nodes/Digipeaters

NBEMS and packet are two key tools that we should be adopting and using across Maine. Wouldn’t it be great to have packet nodes/digipeaters/stations up and running in every part of Maine so that we could more efficiently transmit complicated messages or files from served agencies to the State EOC in Augusta, or to other served agencies? Long lists of detailed items are difficult to relay via voice modes without errors and also it takes a lot of net time, something you do not want to happen in an actual emergency. For example, a ham radio station set up at a local hospital during an event needs to send a long list of medicines and their doses that the hospital needs. It would be far easier and probably more accurate to type it into the computer and then send it via packet or NBEMS.

I am asking all 16 Maine ARES groups to make it a priority to promote to their members and other hams in their area to maintain packet radio stations on 145.010 Mhz to help make this happen. You can usually pickup inexpensive used Terminal Node Controllers (TNC) at hamfests or on eBay. You can also use AGW Packet Engine or the newer UZ7HO sound card modem to run a packet station without a TNC. Perhaps each county’s ARES/RACES/CERT group could operate a packet node?

We now have a full time ARES packet BBS on Owl’s Head, operated by KB1TCE. This also hosts a Winlink RMS and will soon have HF capabilities for those outside of the existing network of packet

digipeaters. Full details at:

<http://midcoastdigiham.belljar.net/OwlsHeadBBS.htm>.

In the Ellsworth/Trenton areas there is the DEAR and DEAR2 BBSs operated by AA1PI.

If hams need technical assistance, they may contact Maine ARES Digital Coordinator Steve Hansen KB1TCE email shansen@belljar.net.

VE Teams

There are frequently scheduled VE exams in most parts of the state. However, there are pockets of rural Maine where exams are rarely offered. As ARES groups, it is in our interest that VE sessions cover as many parts of Maine as possible. When is the last time exams were scheduled in various parts of your county? If not too often, perhaps we can coordinate with VE Teams to schedule an exam in your area. The more lead-time to publicize the exam the better. That way people have plenty of time to study and prepare for the session. VE Team Liaisons should also remember to send Maine ARRL PIC Joy Foss K1SEW exam session bulletin info so that she can post it on the Maine ARRL Section web site and have them read on Maine ham radio nets. Joy’s email is k1sew@arrl.net.

Ham Radio Classes

Maine ARES SEC E-Note! August 17, 2014 Speaking of VE Sessions, if you have the time and help, consider scheduling ham radio classes. Then you can finish it up with a VE exam and promote Maine ARES as well. I have scheduled a Technician Class starting Sep 17 in Harrington. I am aware that classes may be starting soon further Downeast, and in the Lincoln/Lee area eventually.

ARES Roster

I would like to build a Maine ARES roster so that I have a complete picture of the state ARES program, and can send Maine ARES newsletters out to all members from time to time. It would also enable us to create an emergency “Phone Tree” is the state ARES needed to be activated. ECs/DECs, at your convenience, could you please send me your ARES group roster with contact info? It would be greatly appreciated. Probably the best way is to send them to your DEC, who then can send me a compiled roster categorized by county.

MECN

Maine Emergency Communications Net, Sundays at 1700 (5PM) on 3940 Khz LSB!

73 de Phil Duggan, N1EP

Editors Note: In the opening paragraph Phil said, “When disaster strikes, there is a possibility that we

will not have use of our beloved repeaters for a period". In most cases around the state that is true. However, the MARA's two KS1R repeaters that are the primary ham radio communications tools in the Mid Coast ARES/CERT toolbox should continue to operate since they are backed up by a massive battery bank and independent emergency generators on Oak Hill. If power is lost to the repeater site the repeaters will not miss a beat due to parallel power sources.



HAMFEST & FLEA MARKETS FOR SEPTEMBER

Windsor Hamfest

Saturday, September 6, 2014. 8am to noon
Windsor Fairgrounds Includes VE Session at
10:30am Route 32 - Ridge Road, Windsor, ME
04363

SPONSOR: Augusta Amateur Radio Association
Talk-In: 146.67 MHz, 100 Hz
Contact: Bill Crowley K1NIT 512-0312
k1nit@arrl.net

Alexander Hamfest:

Saturday, September 20, 2014 Hamfest at 8 a.m.
VE Exams at 9 a.m.

At the Alexander Elementary School, Route 9,
Alexander

Website:

<http://www.stcroixvalleyamateurradioclub.org>

Sponsor: St. Croix Valley Amateur Radio Club

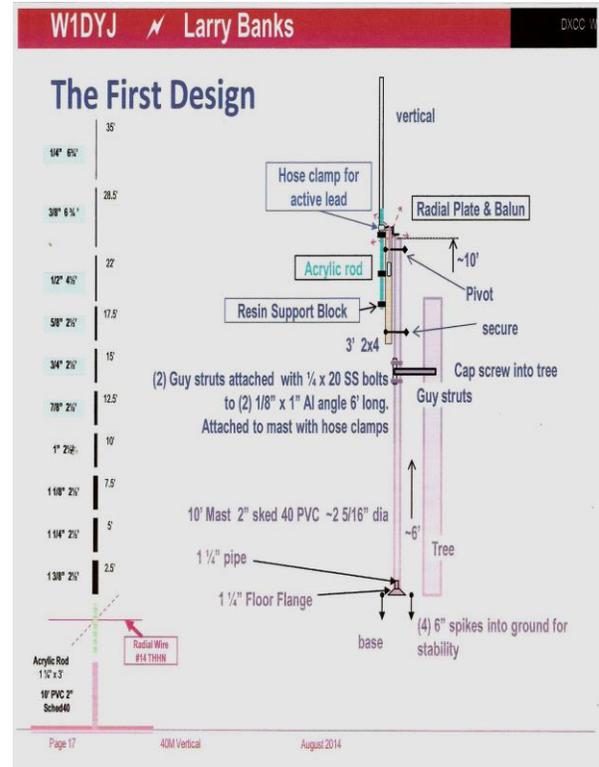


W1DYJ to do a presentation of his 7 MHz Vertical with Elevated Radials

Larry Banks, W1DYJ needed a better 40M antenna for DX and contesting and it drove him to this project.

Experience and analysis with his existing 18' high 80M-40M-20M fan dipole shows it to have decreased sensitivity at low elevation ("take-off")

angles signals. Results of his elevated vertical on both 40M and 15M shows it to be a reasonable approach to a simple antenna that one person can build and raise.



Analysis and design of a homebrew quarter-wave vertical with raised radials will be discussed during my show-n-tell presentation at the upcoming MARA monthly meeting.



The DX Code of Conduct A soapbox issue

Operating standards have been declining. That is no news to any DXer. Even the IARU took notice and published a resolution encouraging operators to "operate to the highest levels of proficiency, with proper consideration for others using the amateur radio bands."

The publication of [DX Etiquette](#) in the March 2010 issue of QST sparked a new world-wide effort to get all hams to operate in a manner consistent with that



Resolution. To that end an international group of DXers have developed a DX Code of Conduct. Since introducing it, hams from all continents

have joined in this effort. You can play an important role in spreading the word. This is one project of which it can truthfully be said, "We are all in this together, and we can all benefit."

Many have also said that the fight against impolite behavior is a lost cause, but we don't agree. We'd like every active HF operator in the world to support higher standards of conduct knowing that tens of thousands of others support him too.

Inconsiderate operating standards are just not in keeping with the high moral standards of our hobby. More to the point, it is counter-productive and simply inconsistent with the aim of our hobby, to have FUN. But if you think it is bad at your end, consider the plight of the poor guy at the other end.

Be proud of your accomplishments but be respectful of newer hams who do not yet have your skills and equipment. They deserve the same consideration you once received when you were younger. Let's do everything we can to promote ethical operating practices and polite behavior amongst the DX community so as to increase the enjoyment of all participants. Everyone who has the ability to generate a signal the DX stations can hear should have the opportunity for a contact without being squashed by impolite hams.

In an effort to restore more gentlemanly behavior to the process, the DX Code of Conduct asks you to aspire to a higher ethical standard. A large number of DX Clubs and national amateur societies have already endorsed the Code and have asked their members to adopt it as their personal Code as well.

This is a successful effort that has worldwide support. The project started not long ago. Over 70,000 hams from all over the world are really excited about improving the conduct on the bands. I'm sure ethical conduct is important to you too and if you are a new ham, welcome aboard. Enjoy the following website and help spread the word!

<http://dx-code.org/home.html>



**Answer to page-2
Trivia Question**
Answer = *Alice Cooper*.

- Ronnie Milsap holds the call WB4KCG,
- Joe Walsh holds the call WB6ACU,
- Jim Croce was WN3QW

