



Squelch Tales



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association for May 2017



Spring is upon us

Editors Note

After a long hard winter for those of you that suffered through it, I suspect you are very happy to see the grass turning green and watching the tulips and daffodils popping out of the ground. The XYL and I hope to be back in Maine the second week this month doing house and yard chores.

In addition, this is the time of year we Hams do our annual antenna maintenance and get ready for another spring, summer and fall of contesting, DX hunting, flea-markets and other fun ham radio activities. I for one am looking forward to a season of 6-meter band openings and chasing DX. My winter DXing success at my California QTH was nothing to brag about. Even though I managed to make a few western Pacific DX-position QSOs I only worked into Europe once. What DX I worked was mostly from South America and the Caribbean.

It will be nice to be back in Maine with my good antennas and Ham friends. QRZed DX!

73, Bruce, W1ZE

(Motorola format) system adopted by hams. I think it's certainly a very useful system if you want to make good use of the frequency spectrum. It does things the other digital modes, including FM cannot do. Transceivers (HT & mobile) are easily available, relatively inexpensive and operate on the VHF and/or UHF bands. You can spend \$125 to \$250 or even more if you are a mind.



As you may already know DMR has becoming one of the most popular digital modes here in Maine, but followed closely by Yaesu's C4FM System Fusion and Icom's D-Star.

DMR here in Maine is almost exclusively on the two-meter band but across the country it is popular on the 70cM band too. I am a snowbird and spend the winter months in southern California. DMR is very popular from one end of the state to the other but almost all the DMR repeaters/nodes are on the 70cM band. I can only find two 2M DMR repeaters listed and they are in the Los Angeles area.

If you want more information on DMR, check out M0PTZ's article at:

<http://www.m0pzt.com/blog/amateurs-guide-to-dmr/>
plus

[www.trbo.org/docs/Amateur Radio Guide to DMR.pdf](http://www.trbo.org/docs/Amateur%20Radio%20Guide%20to%20DMR.pdf)



Amateur's Guide to DMR

Report from W1ZE

DMR is one of the digital modes in use around the world these days. It's a rival to Icom's D-STAR and Yaesu's System Fusion. It is a commercial



Ham dealers taking deposits on new ICOM transceiver



Hams are getting in line for the soon to be released ICOM IC-7610 HF+50MHz Transceiver that was introduced at the Tokyo tradeshow. Several US Dealers have a reservation program for the new rig requiring a \$50 deposit while the radio is being type accepted by the FCC. As soon as transceiver gets acceptance, dealers will start sales to hams that made the deposit so they can be the first kid on their block to have one.

This all-mode Direct Sampling (SDR) transceiver sports the latest technology

that includes:

- * Direct-Sampling SDR design
- * High definition real-time TFT display
- * Connection for external display
- * Dual Real-Time Spectrum and Waterfall displays
- * Dual Watch (with Spectrum/Waterfall displays)
- * Touch interface (LCD touch-screen)
- * HF+50 MHz
- * 100 Watts RF
- * Built-In Antenna Tuner

For a YouTube view of the IC-7610 go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUk6kMhW6Gg>

We are looking forward to the initial performance reviews.



FLdigi 4.0.1 Now available

DX Zone announced on March 29th that Fldigi, the popular and versatile free modem program for most of the digital modes used by radio amateurs today: CW, PSK, MFSK, RTTY, Hell, DominoEX, Olivia, and Throb are all supported.

Fldigi can be executed on Windows, MacOSx, Linux, and control most popular amateur radio transceivers.

You can download the free revised FLdigi 4.0.1 from the [Source forge](#) web site.



MARA Members hold seminars at Andy Hamfest + two members win prizes

Leweston: Two talented members of the MARA gave talks at this year's Andy Hamfest/ARRL Maine State Convention at the Ramada Inn. DR. Steve Kercel. AA4AK's talk was titled, "How Ham Radio Saved My Life," a presentation he made at the ARRL New England Convention in Foxboro, MA this past Fall.

May 6th and 7th is the New England QSO Party



By Tom Frenaye, K1KI

The NEQP is a great time to check out antenna systems and offers a moderately paced opportunity to work new states and countries. You'll find a wide variety of participants, from newcomers to experienced contesters, all interested in making contacts with New England stations.

We're working to make sure that all of the New England counties are active again this year and would appreciate your help. Get on for at least an hour or two and join in on the fun. Please let me know if you can put in any time at all so we can work on activity from the rarest counties. Will you be QRV? Let us know which county you'll be on from with a message to info@neqp.org

Oh yes, the NEQP is also lots of fun when mobile. Every time you cross a county line the action starts over again. It's amazing what a 100w radio and mobile whip can do.

The QSO Party is 20 hours long overall, in two sections with a civilized break for sleep Saturday night. It goes from 4pm Saturday until 1am Sunday, then 9am Sunday until 8pm Sunday. Operate on CW, SSB and digital modes on 80-40-20-15-10



DR Steve, AA4AK doing his presentation

Dave Hawke, KQ1L, a mover and shaker in all things Ham Radio in Maine, delivered a very informative talk on DMR, the VHF/UHF digital mode that is growing in popularity here in Maine and across the country.



Dave, KQ1L exchanging info with the seminar attendees.

In addition to the two excellent talks, MARA President Harry McNelley, N1TTT was a recipient of one of the generous door prizes followed by Dan Lindsley, N5AGG winning the Hamfest's Grand Prize, an XIEGU X108G HF transceiver. Kudos to all four MARA members for their participation and darn good luck.



meters. For each QSO you'll give your callsign, a signal report and your county/state. Top scorers can earn a plaque and everyone who makes 25 QSOs and sends in a log will get a certificate.

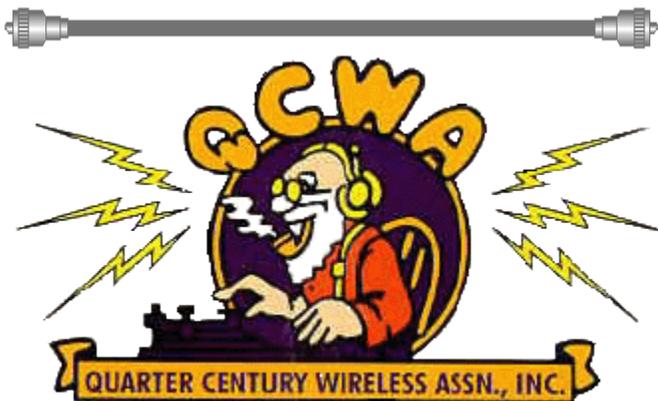
Last year we had logs from 179 New England stations and 300 more from around the country and world.

The full rules are here, <http://www.neqp.org/rules.html>

The 2016 results were posted over the weekend and the results since 2002 are also available at, <http://www.neqp.org/results.html>

It's just a few days until the 2017 NEQP. Please make some QSOs even if you don't want to send in a log.

73, Tom/K1KI



Did you have a Ham License prior to April 1992?

If you did and have been a ham for 25 or more years you are eligible to be a member of the QCWA.

Maine has the QCWA Pine Tree Chapter and we encourage you to check it out and

join the National organization and the Maine chapter.

If you want more information about the QCWA you can go to:

<http://www.qcwa.org/qcwa.php>

For more information on how to join up, the following Maine Hams and chapter members can help you:

Bill Woodhead, N1KAT N1KAT@arrl.net

Bill Mann, W1KX W1KX@arrl.net

Dan Lindsley, N5AGG lindsleydaniel@yahoo.com

Bruce Randall, W1ZE W1ZE@arrl.net



ARRL Award QSL Verification at NEARfest

DR Steve Kerel. AA4AK, the ARRL's Official Award QSL Checker in Maine, will be at NEARfest on Friday, May 5th from noon to 3pm to check QSL cards for folks seeking DXCC, WAS, VUCC contact verification. To coordinate with Steve prior to the event, email him at: aa4ak.1@gmail.com

