



# SQUELCH TALES



## NEWSLETTER FROM THE MERRYMEETING AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION FOR AUGUST 2019



### MARA HELPS WITH L. L. BEAN INDEPENDENCE DAY RUN



By MARA Staff Reporter Marjorie Turner KX1I

**Freeport:** Several members of MARA celebrated Independence Day by providing radio communications for the annual 4th of July 10k event, sponsored by L. L. Bean.



Amateur radio operators were stationed at three water stops and three

intersections. They reported the first three runners in each category. The information was then transmitted immediately to the Race Director and Race Announcer.

The fastest man's time was 32:02 minutes, and the fastest woman was 35:39 minutes. The event concluded by 9:30am for awards. It was followed by the Freeport Parade at 10am.

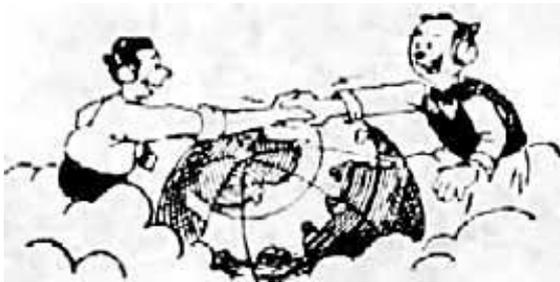
John Goran/K1JJS coordinated the effort. Other MARA members included Don Wakeman/KA1WAL, Marjorie Turner/KX1I, Robert Buckmore/KC1HOH, Shauna Soucy/KC1JBT, Dan Lindsley/N5AGG, and Steve Kerchel/AA4AK. Other HAMS were: Mike Kilmartin/N1GRO, Pete Thuotte/N1ZRL, Eric Emery/KC1HJK, David Lowe/WE1U, John Bogner/W1JLB, and Steve Sidelinker/N1NCC.

Good job team members.

73, Marjorie



## ***Ham Radio Mini-Fest and Rag Chew***



Greetings from the hams at the *New England Radio Discussion Society*.

Plans are underway for a *Ham Radio Mini-Fest and Rag Chew* to be held on Saturday, 10-August at Rogers Pond Park in Kennebunk, beginning at 11-AM.

The free eyeball QSO event is being organized by the *New England Radio Discussion Society*.

Invitations are going out to the *Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association*, the *Portland Amateur Wireless Association*, the *Wireless Society of Southern Maine*, the *Port City Amateur Radio Club*, the *Great Bay Radio Association*, and the *Pine State Amateur Radio Club*. Other clubs are welcome, so please pass this information along. Ditto for family and friends, and would-be Radio Amateurs.

This will be a bring your own food event (no BBQs permitted), dogs are welcome (must be on a leash), and it will be held rain or shine (there is a nifty pavilion with indoor picnic tables on-site).

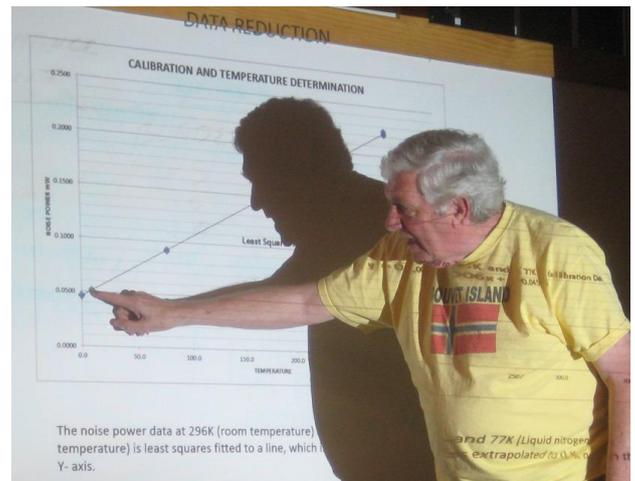
Watch for further notices. Also, feel free to call me at 207-967-8812, or e-mail for further details.

Vy 73, AI2Q, Alex



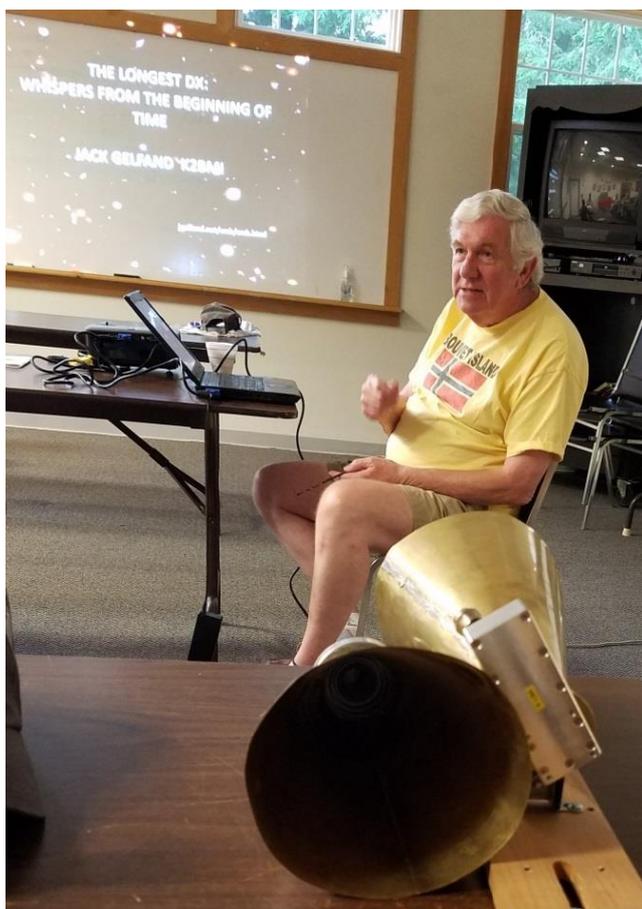
Jack Gelfand, K1BMI does a Big Bang-up Presentation at July Meeting Titled:

## **The Longest DX: Whispers From the**



## **Beginning of time**

**Topsham:** The July 9<sup>th</sup> MARA meeting was well attended due in fact that folks wanted to hear Jack Gelfand, K2BMI make his presentation. Jack has a PhD in Chemistry and was a research scientist at Princeton University. Jack is also an astronomer and became very interested in the background radiation caused by the "Big Bang." His ham radio genes turned his interest into maybe being able to build receiving apparatus at the amateur level that would allow him to detect the signals emanating from the big bang when time began. Jack's hour long presentation gave a short history of how the big bang was theorized and how it could be detected then went into how he went about building his microwave receiving setup.



It was humerus to know that DR Jack obtained many of his parts to make his receiver from eBay and the local hardware store. Jack may have a PhD but he is a true HAM Radio kind of guy. Great Job Jack!



## OH NO, NOT ANOTHER DIGITAL MODE. WHAT THE HECK IS **JS8?**

Yes **JS8Call** is it's name and has taken the robustness of the very popular FT8 mode and layer on a messaging and network protocol for weak signal communication on the HF bands with a keyboard-to-keyboard interface. JS8 is heavily inspired by [WSJT-X](#), [Fldigi](#), and [FSQCall](#) and would not exist without the hard work and dedication of the many developers in the

amateur radio community.”

Several Hams here in Maine, like George Kidder, W3HBM in Bar Harbor have been playing with it on 80 meters with some moderate success.

Unlike FT8 you can actually have a keyboard to keyboard conversation rather than just a quick connection, acknowledgment and another log entry for DXCC.

For more information about **FS8CALL** go to: <http://js8call.com/> and check it out in more detail.



## ARRL Announces "Happy 150!" Hiram Percy Maxim Birthday Celebration

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of ARRL's first president and cofounder Hiram Percy Maxim (HPM), W1AW, born on September 2, 1869. ARRL will hold an operating event to celebrate HPM's legacy, getting under way at 0000 UTC on August 31, and continuing until 2359 UTC on September 8. The event is open to all radio amateurs.

The goal is straightforward: Contact as many participating stations as possible. W1AW and all ARRL members will append "/150" to their call signs during this event (DX operators who are ARRL members may identify as <call sign>/150, if permitted by their country of license.) Participating stations will exchange signal report and [ARRL/RAC Section](#). DX stations will send signal report and "DX." Those taking part may use all Amateur Radio bands, *excluding* 60, 30, 17, and 12 meters.





# Major WSJT-X Upgrade Boosts FT4 into “a Finished Protocol for HF Contesting”

Report from ARRL HQ, 07/16/2019

The WSJT Development Group has announced the “general availability” release of *WSJT-X* version 2.1.0. This major upgrade formally introduces FT4 as a finished protocol for HF contesting. *WSJT-X* version 2.1.0 supplants any “release candidate” (beta) versions, and users should discontinue using any beta versions of the software. The latest edition of the popular digital software suite also includes improvements and bug fixes in several areas, including FT8. The list includes:

- FT8 waveform generated with GMSK, and fully backward compatible
- User options for waterfall and spectrum display
- Contest logging
- Rig control
- User interface
- UDP messaging for inter-program communication
- Accessibility

The WSJT-X Development Group is providing a separate *WSJT-X* version 2.1.0 installation package for 64-bit Windows that offers significant improvements in decoding speed.

A detailed list of program changes since *WSJT-X* version 2.0.1 is included in the cumulative Release Notes. Upgrading from earlier versions of *WSJT-X* should be seamless, with no need to uninstall a previous version or to move any files.

[Installation packages](#) for Windows, Linux, and Macintosh are available.

*WSJT-X* is licensed under the terms of Version 3 of the GNU General Public License (GPL). “Development of this software is a cooperative project to which many Amateur Radio operators have contributed,” said Joe Taylor, K1JT, for the WSJT Development Group. “If you use our code, please have the courtesy to let us know about it. If you find bugs or make improvements to the code, please report them to us in a timely fashion.”

Some users have reported a low audio level to the transmitter when using the 64-bit Windows version, which required greatly increasing the sound card Playback device used to feed audio to the transmitter.

Visit the FT8/FT4/JT9: WSJT 2-Way Narrow Modes for Amateur Radio Facebook page for additional information.



