



SQUELCH TALES



**Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association
for October 2023**



MARA is still looking for a repeater site

We are running out of room on Donnie Dauphin's (WD1F) tower to house all our repeaters. At this juncture we have the 147.21, 444.4 Fusion repeaters, D-Star UHF repeater and the BURG packet stations three antennas (2M, 1.15M & 70cM).

It was discussed at the last MARA meeting that at a minimum we would like to relocate the KS1R/R 444.4 repeater to a different location to free up tower and antenna space. We would even consider taking it off 444.4 and putting that FM/C4FM repeater on two meters and link it to the Phippsburg repeater to increase coverage because of the very low usage of that UHF repeater..

If you know of a site or wish to make a home for this repeater we would be very interested.

73, MARA Technical Committee.

for a lunch following the mid-winter hamfest in August.

Our Chapter President Jerry Burns, K1GUP was honored by the ARRL for his 50 years as Net Manager for the Maine Sea Gull Net at the March 25th Maine State Convention in Lewiston.



ARRL New England Division Director Fred Kemmerer, AB1OC presenting Jerry with the 50 years of service award at Maine State convention



MAINE QCWA NEWS



Since Chapter 134 President & VP would not be available for the Pine Tree Chapter meeting at the Great Wall restaurant in Augusta following the Windsor hamfest, It was decided that we forego the meeting and most likely reschedule

Attendance in the Sunday afternoon Chapter Pine Cone Net has been increasing in attendance. Don't forget that the net gets underway at 2:00pm local time on 3942 Khz. Your participation is encourage.



2 Meter SSB Weekly Net!

Do you have any gear capable of 2 meter SSB? Well, dust it off and plug it in on any Tuesday night at 7:30 PM on 144.225 MHz and join the Pine Cone Weak Signal Net! Net control is Jerry, K1GUP, and he always has a good signal into the midcoast area. There are check-ins ranging from

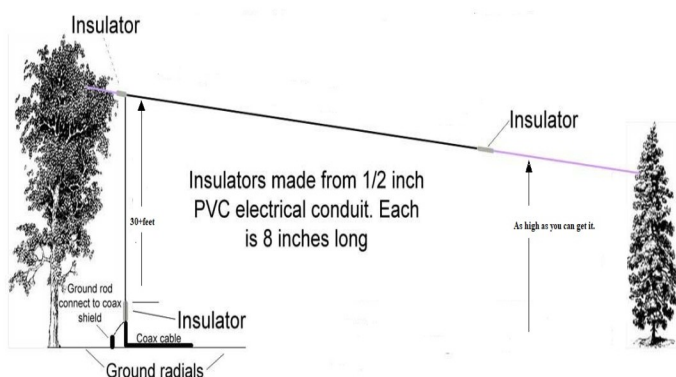
Winter is for 160

By Bruce Randall, W1ZE

It will not be long now and the daylight hours get shorter and the nights longer and colder. One thing about cold winter nights is that the noise level on 80, 75 and 160 meters decreases to a point that you can start hearing stations that are no longer in the noise.

In years past I have written how I like to operate on "Top Band" 160 meters especially during the cold winter months when atmospheric noise drops down to levels where one can hear an S-3 or 4 signal after the sun sets. It would be nice to have a 160 meter inverted "V" dipole or doublet up a hundred plus feet in the sky but I don't. What I do have is a end fed wire in an inverted "L" configuration.

160 meter inverted L



Electrically it is a ground plane antenna. Most 160 meter GP antennas are about a quarter wavelength long fed with coax over a good ground system (screen, radial field or counterpoise). I have the room for a quarter wave, 124-foot long, 160 meter inverted "L"

but my ground system is modest at best. It is about a half dozen wires each 30 to 50 feet long on top of the ground. I installed them years ago to support my old ground mounted Butternut HF6V multi-band vertical.

Knowing I needed to get as much RF out into the eathers as possible I decided to make my Inverted "L" 3/8-wave, about 165-feet long which would add inductance to a point where 50-ohm coax would not match. But the added length would make a super-duper ground system a bit less impotent.

To compensate for higher inductance I installed a high voltage (6KVA) "doorknob" capacitor about 1000pF (.001uF) at the antenna feedpoint in serious with the antenna wire.

Steve Kercel, AA4AK came over to my QTH with his bow and arrow and he shot halyard lines over tall tree limbs and I was able to string up my inverted "L".

With just a little adjustment of the total wire length I obtained a 1.15:1 SWR at 1.860 Mhz. My HF transceiver's internal antenna tuner allows me to operate on the entire 160 meter band.

If you build a +/- 3/8-wave inverted "L" and you can find an old high voltage variable capacitor in the 400 to 1000pf range in lieu of a fixed HV capacitor it would make tuning the inverted "L" easy and could be set to various portions of the 160 meter band.

If you can, give 160 Meters a try this winter, it can be fun.



NEAR-Fest
New England Amateur Radio Festival



NEAR-Fest XXXIV
October 13 & 14, 2023
Deerfield, NH

For more info about NEAR-Fest
go to:
<https://near-fest.com/>



**MARA Breakfast at the
Fairgrounds Cafe' attracts
had a good crowd.**



The second informal breakfast gathering at the Fairgrounds Cafe in Topsham had a good sized crowd in attendance. MARA members, their XYLs and other family members were in attendance. The first Breakfast two months ago was well attended but this one had close to twenty folks.

A good time was had at both events and it appears that this will be a monthly Saturday event. So if you have not attended yet you should try and attend the next breakfast. And by the way the food was good and the staff was efficient and very friendly.





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