



SQUELCH TALES



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association for June 2024



June First is the Hermon Hamfest

The 36th Annual Hermon Hamfest, hosted by the Pine State Amateur Radio Club. As before it will be held at Hermon High School in Hermon, Maine. Whether you're a seasoned ham radio operator or new to the hobby, this hamfest promises a day of learning, networking, and fun.

- Location: Hermon High School, 2415 Route 2, Hermon, ME 04401
- Sponsor: Pine State Amateur Radio Club
- Type: ARRL Hamfest
- Talk-In Frequency: 146.940 / 136.5
- Public Contact: Jerry Burns, K1GUP
- Address: PO Box 61 Carmel, ME 04419
- Phone: 207-848-3400
- Email: k1gup@roadrunner.com

- Time:

- 7:00 AM for tailgaters; 8:00AM for general admission.

- Admission:
 - \$5.00 per person (free for children 12 and under)
 - Exam fee: \$15.00 (no admission fee required if attending only for the exam)
- License Testing: All classes of license testing at 10:00 AM (pre-registration required via hamstudy.org)

Directions and Additional Information:

- Address: 2415 US-2, Hermon, ME 04401
- Talk-In: Use the 146.940 -0.600 offset and a 136.5 tone for communication during the event.
- Contact: For any questions, contact Jerry Burns at the details provided above.

Rain or shine, the Hermon Hamfest is a wonderful opportunity to connect with fellow amateur radio enthusiasts, gain new knowledge, and enjoy a variety of activities. Don't miss out on this exciting event!



Mini-Contest University

The Northeast HamXposition and New England Division Convention is proud to announce a major addition to its program for 2024.

“Mini-Contest University,” or mini-CTU, based on K3LR’s popular [Contest University](#), has been featured at the Dayton Hamvention since 2007 and has been presented in 15 countries to over 10,000 participants, is a series of contest-oriented talks and presentations offered at HamXposition on Friday. Interested participants may attend free of charge. Registration information and locations will be announced soon. Watch <https://hamxposition> for details.

Door prizes will include gift certificates, courtesy DX Engineering, and an autographed copy of the ARRL’s popular [Amateur Radio Contesting for Beginners](#) book written by Doug Grant, K1DG.

The preliminary mini-CTU agenda for Friday, August 23, 2024, is as follows:

8:30 AM Registration

9:00 AM Introduction – Doug Grant, K1DG, and Tim Duffy, K3LR

9:15 AM Getting started in Contesting – Randy Thompson, K5ZD

10:00 AM coffee break

10:30 AM Station setup for Contesting – Paul Young, K1XM

11:15 AM Antennas for Contesting – Mark Pride, K1RX

12:00 PM lunch break

1:15 PM Eyeball QSO Party – Doug Grant, K1DG

1:30 PM Contest Operating Strategy – John Dorr, K1AR

2:15 PM Choosing the best radio for Contesting – Rob Sherwood, NCØB

3:00 PM Q & A session – all speakers, “Ask me Anything” format

3:30 PM prize drawing

Mini-CTU Outline:

Getting Started in Contesting

Why it is fun

How it helps you become better at ... EmComm, POTA, everything!

How to make a contest QSO

How to submit an entry

Digital contesting

Logging programs

Station setup for contesting

Focus will be on practical issues for small-lot, small station setup

Ergonomic equipment layout

Computer interface and automation

Antennas for contesting

This is the most important equipment in your station!

High band options – beams

Low band options – how to be competitive with simple wires

Feedlines and connectors



Maine Pine Tree Chapter 134 members and friends.

Following the Herman Hamfest at 1:00pm there will be a Chapter lunch-meeting at the Happy

China Chinese buffet restaurant at the Bangor Mall 753 Stillwater Ave. All are invited.

From I-95 take the Stillwater exit head in the direction of the mall.

A nifty App for you WSJT-X FT8 enthusiasts

By W1ZE, N1MRE & WD1F

Several weeks ago I was informed of a very useful program that works along side the WSJT-X digital mode program. Andy, N1MRE told Donnie WD1F about it and he told me. The App is called **Grid Tracker** and it is a Free-Bee you can download from: <https://gridtracker.org/index.php>

The program runs on Windows, Mac and Linux platforms in sync with your WSJT-X program on the same PC or laptop. It tracks your contact activity and shows you on a world map where and who you have worked along with other nifty stuff.

If you are into the WSJT digital modes I think you will enjoy the added features of this app.
73, W1ZE

MARA VOLUNTEERED TO HELP, HOWEVER

By W1TON

I wanted to update everyone on the Miles for Mills we were looking at helping on May 26th. Unfortunately, we heard back from one of the coordinators for the event and they are unable to accommodate us on such a short notice for this year but would like us onboard for the 2025 event.

That being said, we will look forward to helping next year. They did offer us to come and check out this year's event for any club

member so we can see the layout of the event. Myself and Shauna/K1ALZ plan on attending this Sunday, May 26th to check it out. If anyone else would like to meet us there to also check it out, please let me know by Saturday, May 25th.

Thank you for those that previously offered their time for this year's event. We appreciate the thought and hope you "raincheck" for next year's event.

73, Robert/W1TON & MARA Club President.

ASK THE OLD GUY, HE MAY KNOW

By W1ZE

I was ask by a fellow new ham why stations in the United Kingdom (Great Briton) have 2 or three different prefixes in their call signs. It was a good question and here is the answer:

Call sign prefixes in the UK consist of a three-letter country code followed by letters and numbers, just like in the US. Currently, the UK prefixes include M# plus three letters for Foundation holders, 2E# plus three letters for Intermediate (like our old Novice call signs), and M# plus three letters for Full licences. Older long licensed hams may have a G#, GM#, GI #, GW#, etc. as their prefix.

