



SQUELCH TALES



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association for July 2024



Near-FEST moving to New Boston

Reported by Jim McIrvin, N1IPA

Phil Brooks, KA1PXZ, Chief of NEAR-Fest, is pleased to announce that, effective October 4th, 2024, the New England Amateur Radio Festival, known as NEAR-Fest, will be held at the Hillsborough County Agricultural Society Fairgrounds and Youth Center located at New Boston NH, approximately 15 miles west of Manchester.

The reason for the permanent change in venue is due to ongoing scheduling conflicts with other events at the Deerfield (NH) Fairgrounds, NEAR-Fest's home for the past eighteen years.

The hard decision to move the popular New England hamfest was taken by a unanimous vote of NEAR-Fest's Board of Directors on May 17th, 2024.

In endorsing the decision NEAR-Fest's Benevolent Dictator Emeritus, Michael Crestohl, W1RC, aka "Mister Mike" commented:

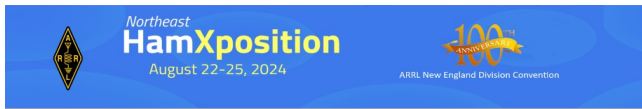
"This was inevitable. The Deerfield Fairgrounds is becoming more and more popular with exhibitors and, as a designated agricultural fairgrounds, they have to give priority to agricultural events. We had a fabulous eighteen-year run. I am confident that Phil and Kelley, along with their team, will take NEAR-Fest forward at our new location for many years to come."



Other than the location nothing else will change. It is still the same NEAR-Fest we have all known and loved since 2007!

NEAR-Fest XXXVI will be held **Friday October 4th and Saturday October 5th, 2024** at the Hillsborough County Agricultural Society Fairgrounds, 17 Hildale Lane, (Route 13) New Boston, NH





This year's program is shaping up to be the best one in years!

More details can be found in the press release below. Other formats can be found here. Please feel free to use whatever format or formats fit your needs.

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ROBUST LINEUP OF VENDORS AND SPEAKERS AT THE 2024 NORTHEAST HAMXPOSITION

For more information, visit:

<https://hamxposition.org>

Plans are shaping up for the 2024 Northeast HamXposition and New England Division Convention on August 22-25, 2024 in Marlborough, Massachusetts.

This year's convention will be held at the Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel & Trade Center, 181 Boston Post Road W, Marlborough, MA 01752. This venue is located off of I-495 on Route 20 west. It offers many amenities and lots of nearby family-friendly attractions and dining options.

The festivities kick off on Thursday evening, August 22 with entertainment

provided by nationally known comedian Juston McKinney. Seating is limited to 250 people. Tickets are just \$35, and also available as part of the "Convention Plus" package.

Join your fellow hams for a delicious DXCC/Contest Banquet on Friday night with Yuri Onipko, VE3DZ, as he recaps his 50 years of DX and contesting activities and shares his operating experiences from a variety of locations around the world.

Steve Goodgame, K5ATA, will present the keynote on Saturday morning. Steve leads ARRL's Education and Learning Department. He has a passion for youth outreach, and works constantly to find ways to engage more youth in wireless technology and help teachers ELEVATE their STEM programs.

The Saturday evening Grand Banquet will feature special guest Dr. Tamitha Skov, WX6SWW. Known as "Space Weather Woman" in social media, Dr. Skov forecasts and analyzes space weather processes - in the heliosphere and exosphere.

Several new vendors will have their wares on display at the convention this year: FlexRadio, Elecraft, and SteppIR Communications Systems. We'll also feature Halibut Electronics, Club Gear Online, Reliance Antennas. Remote Ham Radio, VE2DX Electronics, Gold Medal Ideas, AG Custom Gifts, and others.

New for 2024 is "Mini-Contest University," based on K3LR's popular Contest University. CTU has been featured at the Dayton Hamvention since 2007 and has been presented in 15 countries to over 10,000 participants. Mini CTU is a series of contest-oriented talks and presentations offered at HamXposition all day Friday.

HamXposition is pleased to offer a Parks On The Air (POTA) track featuring presentations designed for both newcomer and experienced POTA operators alike. There will be a functioning portable station operating on the hotel grounds designed to show beginners how to "chase" POTA contacts. In addition, an actual POTA activation will occur in a nearby state park following the prize drawing and closing ceremony.

This year, volunteers will staff a special "Get On The Air" station, W1XPO, to mentor and assist newcomers in making their first HF contact.

Our popular EmComm track will be back for 2024. Veteran emergency communicators will share their knowledge and experience to help others to "up their game." In addition to talks and presentations, convention goers will get to see operational emergency communications vehicles on display in the parking lot.

As always, the Northeast HamXposition will feature a robust flea market, open to tailgaters on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

No major convention would be worth its salt without great prizes. Along with hourly drawings, we're pleased to announce that one lucky person will receive the grand prize-an Icom IC-705 QRP all-in-one transceiver. Second prize will be a Xiegu X6100 QRP HF/6m transceiver. The third prize will be an Icom ID-50A VHF/UHF/D-Star handheld.

Tickets can be purchased in advance by visiting <https://ticketing.hamxposition.org>.

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June Maine State Convention in Augusta turned out to be a lot of fun

The morning of June 15th started up to be a very nice sunny day as we hams here in the mid coast headed up 295 and 95 th the second Augusta exit and the large Augusta Civic Center for the first ARRL sanctioned Maine State Convention. No more cramped quarters as there were in Lewiston in previous years. There was ample walking around room with lots of available table for vendors offering everything from antique radios to current and not so current rigs for sale along with ham supply and parts vendors.



Various clubs and ham radio interest groups were given tables to promote their interests too.



QCWA Maine Pine Tree Chapter held their meeting on the convention floor

At noon door prizes were awarded to a lot of lucky hams with the grand prize, a still in the box new Icom IC-7300 HF+6 transceiver, going to one lucky attendee.

A big thanks goes to Cory Golob, KU1U and the Androscoggin Amateur Radio Club for making this fun event take place. Looking forward to to next year.

Photos provided by Marjorie Tuener, KX1I



WINDSOR HAMFEST BACK ON IN SEPTEMBER

The Augusta Amateur Radio Club's event planner George Szadis, K1GDI has informed us that the Windsor Hamfest at the Windsor Fairgrounds is back on for Saturday, September 7th. The gates open at at 8AM and admission will be \$5.00. A VE session is also planned during the event.

For more information about tailgating overnight camping, etc. contact George Szadis, K1GDI at: grszadis@aol.com



DX'ERS WORD TO THE WISE

By W1ZE

For the past several months and especially in the FT8 digital modes you may see a DX call sign with a D1 prefix (ie D1FF, D1CTT, etc.)

The D1 prefix is not assigned to any country. They are made-up calls by Russians in occupied Ukraine.

I suspect that no Ham organization like the ARRL and eQSL and other county organizations will count this as a country DX contact for their operating awards.

I recommend, don't waste your time trying to contact them.



MARA's Field Day Report

Reported by Shana Buckmore, K1ALZ



Photo provided by KX1I

Saturday the MARA participated in Field Day at the Meadowbrook Campground in Phippsburg and we had a great turnout! Club members operated 3 different radios making us a 3A Maine with close 75 contacts via phone, FT-8, and FT-4. All bands were very busy with lots of pile-ups.



Two transceivers operating at the phone table by Robert Buckmore, W1TON & Tom Boulay KC1QYD

Thank you to those that came out to participate and those that helped with the set-up and tear-down. I'm creating a way to share the photos from the event with our club members. Please feel free to send any photos you took, and I will make sure to include them.



Donnie Dauphin, WD1F & Mike Adair, N1MA doing Digital in Donnie's camper

A big thanks to Tom Mixon, WA1PJS for allowing the club to utilize the Meadowbrook Campground for the Field Day event!

Additional Field Day photos will appear on the MARA's website at WWW.KS1R.ORG

73,
Shauna/K1ALZ

Editors Note: *Even though Field Day is a 24 hour 2-day event the MARA only did half the event to get newer members familiar with the event and avoid heavy rain predicted for day two. It worked out well and everyone learned and had fun.*



WD1F WANTS THESE ITEMS TO GO TO A GOOD HOME

the following items I would like to see go to a good home, proceeds to MARA.

Antennas donated by Mark K1SRE

1. Diamond V-2000 antenna (6M, 2M, 70CM), missing ground radials and mounting hardware. Antenna looks new.
2. Diamond X-50A antenna (2M, 70CM)
3. 2x HYS TC-40UV Dual Band (2M, 70CM)

Donated by WD1F



Functional TRS-80 Model 4, 2x 5.25" floppies, includes some working disks.

Make an offer.

