



# SQUELCH TALES



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association  
for June 2025



## KS1R/R heard Downeast

By W1ZE

On May 3rd I took some old west coast childhood friends up to Bar Harbor and Acadia National Park. In the early afternoon we went into the park and went straight up Cadillac Mountain to the parking lot. Unfortunately the view up and down the coast was hampered with cloudy weather but we could see at least a little way out to sea and out across the water east from Bar Harbor. While our guests were taking in the view I went back to the car parked at the east end of the lot. I turned on my 2-meter transceiver on and tuned to our 147.21 Repeater. I keyed the radio and darn if the repeater came up and IDed. I then Identified myself and as luck would have it Mike Adair, N1MA called back and said I was keying up the repeater OK but my not much audio was coming through. After our guests returned to the car I headed out of the parking lot on the west end of the mountain top. I quickly pulled over to the side of the road and keyed up on the repeater again but this time Mike said he could copy me OK that time.

It was fun being able to access the MARA's 147.21 repeater about 110 miles away, as the grow flies. Being up 1500-feet with clear shot down the Maine coast sure helped.

I wonder if the Park Service would let us put a repeater up there? You think?

73, W1ZE



## QCWA Maine Pine Tree Chapter 134, Note to Members & Friends

Summer is upon us now and the start of antenna repair and maintenance season.

This month starts the Pine Cone Net hiatus and that is a good thing. Band conditions on 75 meters at 2:00pm since the daylight savings time, to be charitable, marginal at best. At the next Chapter meeting we may want to consider early fall/spring net start time change to enhance more reliable communications.

A Note from QCWA's VP Chuck Farnham,  
WD6CHC:

*As your Vice President, I am proud to be an officer in our great organization, which will soon be 80 years old! QCWA is unique among amateur radio organizations in its celebration of operators who were licensed at least a quarter century ago and are still licensed today.*



*But the world—and ham radio—have undergone many changes since our founding in 1947, shortly after the end of World War II. There are fewer radio amateurs today, most of us operate manufactured as opposed to homebrew equipment, and digital is replacing analog in many ways. QCWA has to consider how to appeal to newer amateurs who may want different things from our hobby—and from QCWA—when they become eligible to join.*

*Your board is working on a number of new and exciting projects that will bring additional value to your membership. We will be at Hamvention, at Booth 2106 in Building 2 (past the ARRL Expo and across the aisle from FlexRadio). Please come by for a visit so we can discuss some of these ideas on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday.*

*We will be asking some members to join several of our new working committees as we shape QCWA for the second century. These committees will not require a lot of work, but we want to have a member-driven, bottom-up organization—not one driven by the board alone. We also would like to consider broadening our appeal—help us think about that!*

*There has been a change in our board, and as VP, I will be leading QCWA for the time being. For those of you who don't know me, I have been licensed since the late 1970s. I prefer QRP power using AM, SSB, various digital modes including FT8, and satellite. I am also an avid collector of antique communications technology and have hundreds of radios of various vintages. I have attended many QCWA chapter meetings around the country and am President of Chapter 190 in Reno, NV.*

*Finally, if you have any suggestions that would help improve QCWA, please drop us an*

*email at: [ideas@qcwa.org](mailto:ideas@qcwa.org). I—and the board—want to hear from you!*

**Hope to see you in Herman & Bangor.**



## **The 9:1 UnUn EFW revisited**

**By Bruce Randall, W1ZE**

Over the past several years I have written about my experience with the simple non resonant End Fed Wire (EFW) antenna. A good starter antenna for the new ham getting on the HF bands or anyone operating portable with an antenna that can be strung up quickly.

A few weeks back I had to lower my tubular tower to make some repairs to a VHF/UHF vertical that had a defective jumper from the feeder coax to the antenna. After that was accomplished and before I cranked the tower back up in to place I decided to change the length of my inverted “L” EFW antenna.

When I originally put it up and to fit it into my yard I made it +/- 90-feet in length. If preformed pretty well as a backup antenna, especially for the lower HF bands. It tuned nicely using the internal tuners in my trusty Icom transceivers but on a few bands I had to use my external autotuner to get the SWR down closer to 1:1.

Reading several recommendations on the Internet there seemed to be a lot of folks saying that a length of 84 feet made the antenna easy to tune with the transceivers internal antenna tuner.

I cut my EFW back to the 84-foot and cranked the tower back up then secured the open end of the EFW to a tree in my front yard.

Back in the shack I started checking the EFW's SWR on all the bands from 160 to 6 meters. All the readings were about 3:1 or better.

Now using the antenna tuner in the Icom I was able to tune the EFW to 1:1 on all the bands except for the low end of 15 meters where my lowest tuned SWR was 1.2:1. I guess I could live with that. :-).

The a length of 84-feet for an all band EFW was a very good recommendation.

73, Bruce/W1ZE



## ARRL Learning Center Features Two New Emergency Communication Training Courses

ARRL has released [two new courses](#) to train emergency communications (EmComm) operators for volunteering within the [Amateur Radio Emergency Service® \(ARES®\)](#). Both courses are within the ARRL Learning Center.

The Basic EmComm course is designed to get a new volunteer started. It provides basic knowledge and tools for any emergency communications volunteer and contains three modules and 11 topics, including required prerequisites. It's expected to take approximately 10 - 20 hours to complete.



The Intermediate EmComm course builds on the lessons learned in the first course and equips volunteer radio amateurs with the tools needed to thrive in the fast-paced environment of public service communications and to understand the legal rights and responsibilities of working with a served agency, as well as teach them and how ham radio fits into the broader incident command (IC) structure.

The new courses replace the previous EC-001 and EC-016 programs, however, certificates of completion earned for the previous courses are still valid. "Training is not a one-and-done thing. Throughout my firefighting and emergency management career, we were constantly taking new courses to reinforce existing knowledge and introduce new concepts," said ARRL Director of Emergency Management Josh Johnston, KE5MHV. "Engaged volunteers should want to

stay up to date on advances in the science of emergency communications. I'd even encourage veteran operators to take the new courses."

In 2023, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) [revised the Guide for National Emergency Preparedness](#) to specifically include amateur radio. ARRL and FEMA entered into a new Memoranda of Understanding in May 2023 that outlined the importance of trained radio amateurs within the response ecosystem.

"Amateur radio is as important as ever in emergency management," said Johnston. "The new courses will keep hams trained to serve effectively."

The ARRL Learning Center at [learn.arrl.org](https://learn.arrl.org) is a member benefit and features many ways to get the most out of your amateur radio license. The Basic and Intermediate EmComm courses are available to anyone with a free [www.arrl.org](https://www.arrl.org) account. Users must log in to the ARRL Learning Center with this account, and functionality of the site relies on cookies being enabled.

