



SQUELCH TALES



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association for July 2026



Summer Can be an Electrifying Season

By W1ZE

It is July and you just got your General license and went down to the HRO candy store in New Hampshire and plunked down fifteen hundred bucks for your first shiny new highly recommended Icom, Yaesu or Kenwood HF transceiver. Now you can't holdoff stringing up your wire antenna and get on the HF bands and start working the world.

However, you may have forgot that your new radio has some very sensitive components inside that could be FRIED if there was a lightning strike at on near your QTH that could send thousands of electrostatic volts down your antenna and into your fancy state of the art radio. That would be a real BUMMER DUDE.

You may want to consider adding some protection to your station in the form of lightning and serge protection.

Well, if your house electrical system does not have one already you should consider installing a whole house serge protector into your power

panel. This device will help protect expensive things in your house like TV sets, microwave ovens, home computers, refridgerators and oh yah, ham radio equipment when a lightning strikes hits the power lines coming into your house.



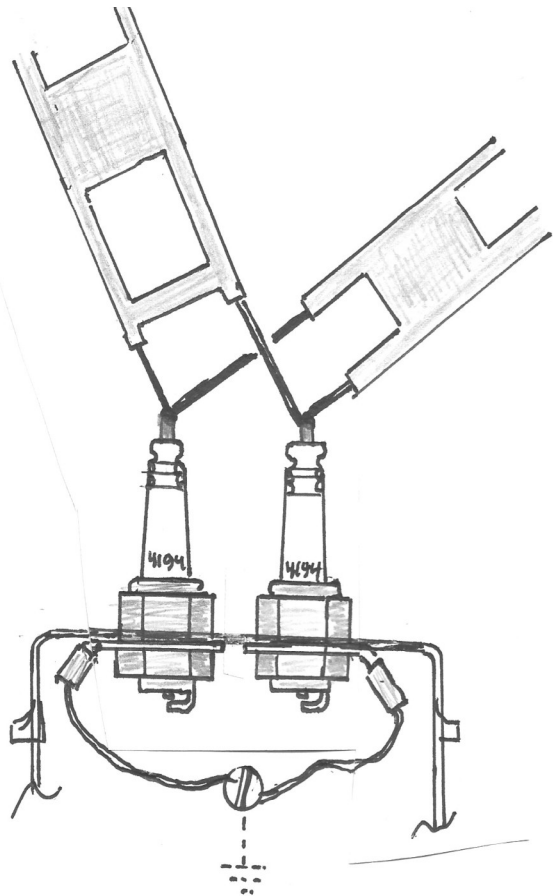
Next is how to protect your shacks RF equipment from a strike that hits near or on your antenna and transmission line.

Installing lightning arrestors in your coax line connected to ground feeding your antennas could do the job.



If put up an end fed wite antenna or 450-ohm ladderline fed doublet (dipole) you may want to consider my "Sparkplug" method which I employ here at my QTH in Phippsburg. The heart of my arrestors are automobile sparkplugs. Two sparkplugs for ladderline and one sparkplug for end fed wire antennas.

The following sketch shows how I assembled them is a small Rubbermaid type plastic food container to protect against the weather.



This type of arrester is cheap to assemble and works nicely. I used cheap sparkplugs I found at Walmart in the auto supply section. I found two large hex nuts at my local ACE hardware that had the correct thread count as the plugs. In the electrical department I purchased the largest size crimp-on ring lugs that would fit around the sparkplug threaded body and that is where I connected the grounding wire.

If you only need to make an arrester for an EFW antenna, just build half of what you see in the sketch.

Have a lightning safe summer.

73, W1ZE



HERMON HAMFEST & FLEAMARKET



**This year it is not
in June, it is in
July!**

Take a ride up I-95 to the thriving matropolis of Hermon. Sell some stuff and/or buy some stuff, and have some fun on July 7th, 2026

Start Date: 07/11/2026 - End Date: 07/11/2026

**Location: Hermon High School
2415 Route 2, Hermon, ME**

Website: <http://n1me.org>

Sponsor: Pine State ARC

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Talk-In: 146.940 136.5

Public Contact: Jerry Burns, K1GUP

PO Box 61 Carmel, ME 04419

Phone: 207-848-3400 / 207-249-97

Email: k1gupjerry@gmail.com

Hope to see you there!



MAINE CONVENTION & HAMFEST

Saturday, August 1, 2026,

at the **Augusta Civic Center**

76 Community Dr, Augusta off Exit 112/112A.

Doors open to the public at 8 AM, goes til noon.

Vendor check-in is 6 AM. General Admission \$10 (Ages 18 and younger are free).

Come join us for a day of buying & selling, talks and VE test 8 -12. Walk-Ins taken. Camping is free, no water hookup, if you need electricity there is a \$50 charge. No tent camping. Campers please check in on Friday no later than 3:00 PM with the front office. Vendors, get your table early. \$20 per table in advance and \$5 vendor admission. Tables go up to \$25 each day of the convention. For More Information visit <http://w1npp.org/convention>



Ham Stuff Stuff for Sale

uSDX QRP Transceiver and
Z-Match antenna tuner.

A complete QRP HF station. Includes wall-wart power supply microphone, interconnection coax cables and manual.



New but tested and it
all works.

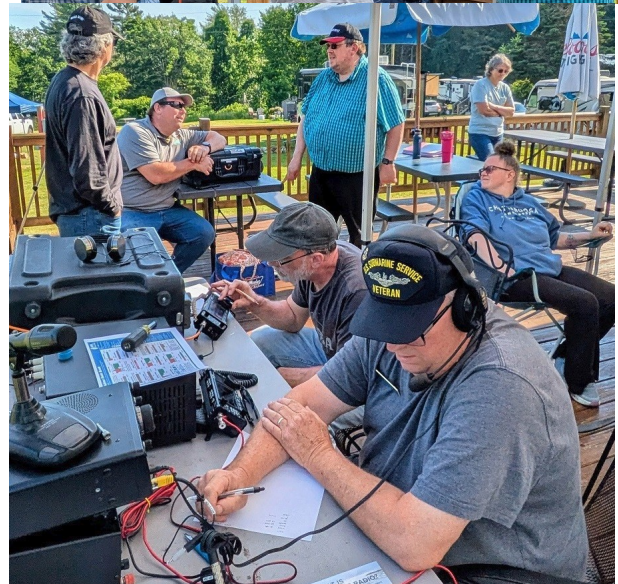
\$100

POC for all the sale items = Bruce, W1ZE
in Phippsburg at
w1ze@arrl.net



CQ FIELD DAY CQ FIELD DAY, THIS IS KS1R FIELD DAY

The following snapshots were taken for the activities by the members and friends of MARA having fun during Field Day at the Meadowbrook Campground in Phippsburg.





Thanks to the generosity of Tom Mixon, W11PJS and the folks at the Meadowbrook Campground for letting us do our crazy ham radio stuff at their lovely facility!

