

The Maine Telegraph
NEWSLETTER

March 2021

Statewide Newsletter for Maine Amateur Radio Operators



Submit Articles to: Cory Golob - KU1U by emailing ku1u@arrl.net

Repeater Support

Contribution By: Bob Goud (N1WJO) Section Manager

Well, we have had a couple days in the upper 40's, so I think we have made it through the toughest part of winter. In Maine though there is always a chance for spring snowstorms.

With the weather change it is time for repeater work or replacement to come to the front of things. We all take for granted the presence of the repeaters and tend not to think of the cost involved to operate one. Operation is really the inexpensive part. The expensive part is when one needs replacement. The use of old equipment is becoming a thing of the past as space is getting difficult to obtain, or retain, in some locations. New modern repeaters are much smaller and more energy efficient, so replacement tends to be the new normal.

I ask all HAM operators to please consider supporting your local repeater, repeater owner or trustee. This can be by joining a local club or donating money. Sometimes workdays can be planned for site maintenance for such things as trimming brush or painting a building. There are many local groups, clubs or organizations that help repeater owners or trustees. These groups, clubs or organizations are sometimes tax exempt and allow you to use your contribution as a tax deduction.

If you have the funds or time available to help, please consider doing so. We need to keep our hobby enjoyable. Do not let all the financial needs rest on the shoulders of just a few people.

Thank you,

Bob Gould – N1WJO

MAINE VIRTUAL HAMFEST - SATURDAY MARCH 6 FROM 9-4



We are less than a week away from Maine's Virtual Hamfest! Conference talks will be held using the Zoom platform. Attendance for Zoom conference talks will be limited to 500 people. There will be other virtual rooms available for people for "Eyeball" QSOs where hams can get together and chat with one another. We will have a Buy/Swap/Trade room for people to showcase their items and items can also be listed on the subpage of the Maine Virtual Hamfest site. If you have any items that you are interested in selling, please email kulu@arrl.net with a description of your item, price and contact information. If you have a picture of said item, we can upload that to the site as well.

If you know somebody who does not have a computer or internet we will be listing call-in phone numbers for the different conference rooms on various nets throughout the week. We will also list the phone numbers on the Maine Virtual Hamfest website this week.

You can obtain more information about the Maine Virtual Hamfest by visiting www.mainearrl.org/MVH

[Maine Virtual Hamfest Registration Form](#)

73 DE KU1U & W1SK
Maine Virtual Hamfest Co-Chairs

Meet Maine's New Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC)



I would like to thank Steve Jordan, KD1OM, for accepting the position of Section Emergency Coordinator. Steve comes from a background that knows about the need for good emergency communications. Steve is retired from law enforcement and is currently in the medical field. Both of these fields are ones where wrong or delayed information could lead to catastrophe.

Please welcome Steve to the position when you talk to him on the air or see him in person.

73, Bob (N1WJO)

****As a reminder: ECs and DEC's should send Monthly EC/DEC reports to Steve Jordan (KD1OM) no later than the 5th of every month****

A New Path for Interoperability

The MARS – NTS/RRI Link

Steve Hansen KB1TCE
Maine Digital Traffic Station/Winlink-RRI Liaison Coordinator

Background

Most of the ham community is aware of the interoperability aspect of the 5 channels on the 60 meter band. On these channels, hams may work with FEMA, MARS and SHARES stations and regularly scheduled exercises take place on the band. Less well known is the ability of federally licensed stations to seamlessly interoperate with amateurs via the Winlink system. The cross-over occurs in the Common Message Server (CMS) web cloud. This has been exercised in, for example, the Maine “Weekly Winlink Message” where amateur stations send Winlink messages to a designated DHS SHARES station. Additionally, from time to time, a Maine MARS operator will switch hats and check into the Maine Emergency Communications Net and ask for county weather condition reports. This is done as part of periodic MARS exercises.

In the course of 2020, Army MARS began exploring another pathway for interoperability. This was based on linking to the traffic networks of NTS and RRI.

The MARS effort was aimed toward a test occurring during the month long October 2020 COMEX. For this, a specific message format would be used, based on the FEMA ICS 213 General Message form. All ARES/RACES operators should be very familiar with this form. It is essentially a formatted interoffice memorandum. The ICS 213 has ten sections that include the incident name, recipient and sender information, subject line, space for the message text, a section for a reply and places for signatures and dates. One important point is that the ICS 213 is a standard that defines the minimum accountability information and organizations may add additional information as necessary. For example, MARS has an internal version of the ICS 213. Intended for transmission by radio or other electronic means, it includes the standard elements plus other information for accounting and tracking. Likewise, if a 213 is sent by email, there is a significant amount of valuable additional information that gets added in the process of sending an email. This would include the sender (often not the originator), sent time, contact information and so forth. Reference [1] has some further perspectives on the ICS 213.

On the amateur side, the radiogram format provides a significant amount of information for accountability and tracking. Most of this is in the preamble while other pieces may be in the OP NOTES as well as the address and signature sections. However, there is no direct correlation to the ICS 213 elements.

Over the years a number of ARES and other EmComm groups in the amateur service have created various flavors of ICS 213 radiogram. This has generally consisted of the elements of the FEMA form plus the radiogram preamble. Several years ago, RRI defined a radiogram implementation of the ICS 213. However, no one showed interest so it lay dormant until MARS came along with their proposal.

Overview of the Initiative

There were two tracks for the COMEX effort. One was focused on voice transmission to a traffic net. This followed guidelines that were implemented by NTS [2]. The other path was to transfer the message into the traffic system using a Winlink Express formatting template through a liaison process that is very similar to that which was described in the January 2021 issue of this newsletter. During the COMEX, about 80 messages were originated by the Army MARS Chief. Most of these were addressed to ARRL officials around the country.

With regard to Maine, we worked with Ron Tomo, the Army MARS Region 2 Operations Officer. The development of the Winlink template commenced in September and by October we had a functional 213 radiogram included with the standard template pack in Winlink Express.

Rather than making this a one-off effort, Ron has made the 213 radiogram as part of his team's ongoing training and practice. The addressees are, for the most part, the Maine county EMA directors. The following sections depict the message flow and formats on the MARS and ham sides of the process.

MARS Message Initiation

The process begins with an order from the Operations Officer to the Training Net. The order includes the party to whom the messages are to be sent along with full contact information. Also included are guidelines for message content. Each message contains a question for the recipient such as the location or distance to the nearest hospital from the EOC. Finally, it includes contact information for the reply.

All of the intra-MARS communications are via their internal encrypted system. One operator will format the message in their ICS 213 format. Here is an example (obviously not encrypted). Clearly visible are the section links to the ICS 213 format along with the required MARS information.

VZCZCMMM999
RR AAT2BC DE AAR2SE #0123 0270017
FM MARS STATION AAR2SE
TO UHEHBNY/MARS STATION AAT2BC
BT
UNCLAS EFTO
TRAINING MESSAGE
ICS-213
1. ICS/NTS/RRI TRAINING MESSAGE
2. EMILY KASTER/ACTING DIRECTOR CUMBERLAND CTY EMA
2.1 22 HIGH STREET, WINDHAM, ME 04062, 207 329 3638,
KASTER@CUMBERLANDCOUNTY.ORG
3. WAYNE F GEARING - K2WG/ARMY MARS MEMBER
3.1 11 REAL VIEW DRIVE, EAST CHATHAM, NY 12060, 518 610 1929,
WAYNEG1231@FAIRPOINT.NET
4. TRAINING MESSAGE ARMY MARS INTERFACE WITH NTS AND RRI
5. 01/26/2021
6. 1910L
7. Thanks for assisting with this project. Do you have an Amateur
Radio License? If so, what is your call sign? If you need more info
about Amateur "Ham" Radio please refer to arrl.org. Please reply to
this message via email address above with cc: Ron@RonTomo.org.
8. W.F. GEARING/ARMY MARS MEMBER AAR2SE
BT
[DIGEST:2093BFDEB939F6937EE70A3B752D4693]
TRAINING MESSAGE TAKE NO ACTION
NNNN

This message will make its way to the operator that will act as the interface to the amateur system. **Formatting as a Radiogram**

As noted above, the MARS operator that submits the radiogram to the traffic system can either check into a traffic net using his amateur call sign or he can send the message to a Winlink-RRI Liaison station via Winlink. The Winlink process will be discussed in the following.

The MARS operator will open the "RRI ICS213" in Winlink Express. As with the standard radiogram format, this template has numerous help and correction features. It is laid out like the ICS 213 and produces a text output in the message pane. Here is the resulting formatted message as transmitted during December 2020.

17 R HXC K2WG 45 EAST CHATHAM NY 1734Z DEC 10
TO
EMILY KASTER ACTING DIRECTOR CUMBERLAND CTY EMA
22 HIGH STREET
WINDHAM ME 04062
207 329 3638 KASTER ATSIGN CUMBERLANDCOUNTY DOT ORG
FROM

WAYNE GEARING ARMY MARS REGION 2 MEMBER
INTEROPERABILITY MESSAGE 1240
BT
TNX FOR SUPPORTING THIS TRAINING
EFFORT X DO YOU HAVE
AN AMATEUR RADIO OPERATORS LICENSE
QUERY IF SO WHAT IS
YOUR CALLSIGN QUERY PSE EMAIL
ME TO ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF
THIS MESSGAE WAYNEG1231 ATSIGN FAIRPOINT
DOT NET WITH COPY TO
AAT2BC ATSIGN RONTOMO DOT ORG
BT
AR

While this duplicated the order of the ICS 213 elements, it was confusing to traffic handlers in that the sender information is located right after the recipient section instead of after the second break. The “TO” and “FROM” lines were added to lessen the confusion but a better solution was needed.

During the latter part of December we revised the template to produce an output that put the elements in standard radiogram order. The template kept with the ICS 213 order but when the completed message was submitted, the ordering was revised. We also added the sender’s preferred contact information. Here is an example in the new format:

231 R HXC KC2FII 35 BELLPORT NY MARS 1832Z FEB 3
ANDREW SANKEY DIRECTOR COUNTY EMA
50 STATE STREET SUITE 4
ELLSWORTH ME 04605
207 667 8126 EMA ATSIGN CO DOT HANCOCK DOT ME DOT US
MARS INTEROP 202102031834Z
BT

PLEASE INDICATE THE CLOSEST HOSPITAL
FROM YOUR LOCATION AND PROVIDE
THE DISTANCE AND BEARING FROM
YOUR LOCATION X EMAIL INFO
TO ABC1010 ATSIGN JUNO DOT
COM AND TO OPERATIONS OFFICER
RON ATSIGN RONTOMO DOT ORG
BT
JOHN LAZAR STAFF US ARMY MARS
ABC1010 ATSIGN JUNO DOT COM
KC2FII / 202102031834Z
AR

This appears to satisfy all requirements for MARS 213 radiograms.

Summary

For the ongoing MARS training, all messages are being sent to the RRI-REGION1 tactical address. Once received, I have been forwarding the messages to the appropriate county EC. Most go by Winlink and some have gone through the Sea Gull Net.

During the months of January and February, MARS messages have been relayed to the directors of the Cumberland, Penobscot and Hancock EMAs. Reports back from MARS have been very favorable. We will continue through the list of EMA directors with several messages to each over the course of the coming months.

I want to give my thanks to the ECs and directors that are participating in this effort. Also, Maine ARES/RACES members should consider using the 213 Radiogram format for agency support.

I'll conclude with a quote from Ron Tomo: "The Region Two Army MARS Members have found that working with the RRI Team, the Winlink stations on air, and the Maine EMAs has been an extremely important and quite a rewarding experience. The training that all participants are getting is invaluable in our pursuit of interoperability relationships being established and expanded. The more we train and work together as a cohesive team, the more we all become better prepared for any Bad Day Scenario."

References

1. <http://radio-relay.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Dispelling-Mythology-ICS213-NIMS-Standard.pdf>
2. <http://www.arrl.org/files/file/MARS%20NTS%20exercise%20ICS%20213%20to%20radiogram.pdf>

An Invite to Join the Weekly Winlink Message List

Steve Hansen KB1TCE

For well over 3 years I have been sending a weekly message to all known Winlink users in Maine (and a few outside the state). At the outset the list was just over a dozen. Now it's over 50 and still growing. I'm sure that there are more Maine Winlink users out there.

The process is very simple. Each Sunday I send out a message to the list. It includes a recap of responses to the previous week's message and generally includes some sort of relevant practice assignment. This could include retrieving a weather report, participating in a FEMA exercise, sending a practice message during the upcoming (May 8) Red Cross EmComm Radio Drill, sending a check in form to California emergency services, initiating a radiogram and so forth. Recently, the task was to find a vessel at sea from the winlink.org position reports page and sending a message to the ham on the boat requesting a reply.

If you would like to be on the list, send a Winlink message to KB1TCE or an email to kb1tce@belljar.net.

Repeater Status
Contribution By Bart Newhouse (N1UB)



Sidney - N1UB 146.625, Minus Shift, 0.6 MHz Offset, T-SQL 114.8 , runs in FM and C4FM digital (Yaesu system). The repeater is linked to Wires-X room 62148 "UFB New England", and bridged to reflector

FCS 003 39 under the same name.

Newport - KC1DLN 147.015, Plus Shift, 0.6 MHz Offset, DCS 432. Linked in digital mode via Wires-X (Yaesu system).

(*FUTURE*) Morrill - N1STN, 146.715 Minus Shift, 0.6 MHz Offset, T-SQL 118.8. This repeater will be online early spring as soon as they can get an antenna up, it will also be linked via Wires-x (Yaesu system).

All 3 repeaters will be linked in digital mode, and stand alone when switched to FM. They will all be on Wires-X room 62148 "UFB New England" and also the FCS 003 39 reflector for those that use MMDVM hotspots. We would also welcome other local Yaesu Fusion repeaters to link with us via Wires-X, and create an expanded System Fusion linked system if they are interested. Please email bartnewhouse@gmail.com for more information regarding this initiative.

73, Bart N1UB

Net Control Opportunity - Maine Emergency Communications Net (MECN)



Are you interested in getting some Net Control experience? Come be a part of the Maine Emergency Communications Net on 3940, Sunday at 4:30 PM during the Winter (5:00 PM after the time changes back in the Spring). The Maine Emergency Communications Net is a weekly net that offers EMCOMM related discussion. If you are interested in being a NCS once a week, please contact Jose Douglas (KB1TCD) by email at kb1tcd@gmail.com This is a great opportunity to learn how to manage a radio net, delegate passing traffic and handling formal communications.

EMCOMM NETS in Washington County



Washington County ARES Net Mondays 1900 (7pm) on the W1LH Cooper Mountain Repeater
147.330+ (PL 118.8)

Downeast Simplex Net Tuesdays at Noon on 146.595 Mhz (Based out of Milbridge)

****SPECIAL OPERATION** MARCH 21 at 10 AM 7262 kHz to test HF propagation on
Maine's backup coordination frequency. Please check in with W1KMG****

59 IS NOT ALWAYS FINE

Contribution By: Cory Golob (KU1U)

If anyone has ever listened to GHRT (George Hale Rick Tyler) talk radio show, they have a segment in the morning called ‘What Tees You Off’. It is a chance for listeners to call in and say what is on their mind that makes them mad. If this was an audience of ham listeners I would be tempted to call in vent about the over-reliance of hams using 59 as a signal report. Call it history, or “that’s how we have always done it”, but none-the-less it doesn’t make it right. I cringe when I am hearing a pileup on 20 meter phone and somebody responds back “You’re 5-9... what is your callsign again”. For those not familiar with the RST system it stands for Readability, Signal Strength and Tone (tone applies to Morse Code not Phone operation).

Readability ranges from 1-5:

1--Unreadable

2--Barely readable, occasional words distinguishable.

3--Readable with considerable difficulty.

4--Readable with practically no difficulty.

5--Perfectly readable.

Signal Strength ranges from 1-9:

1--Faint signals, barely perceptible.

2--Very weak signals.

3--Weak signals.

4--Fair signals.

5--Fairly good signals.

6--Good signals.

7--Moderately strong signals.

8--Strong signals.

9--Extremely strong signals.

In my opinion, the only relevant part of RST is the Readability. Without readability you have nothing. What good is a strong signal if you do not/cannot understand the message being delivered!? Readability is Reliability.

On the topic of Signal Strength. I can see how it can be useful in some situations. It is nice to know how well your signal is permeating throughout the globe, however, I still take it with a grain of salt. Signal strength can be manipulated. If I was listening to an hf signal and pressed the ATT button on my Icom 706, it would greatly reduce the receive signal as it would enable 20 decibels of attenuation. Another way a receive signal can be manipulated is by having a different type of antenna: receiving on a horizontally polarized antenna when the other station is transmitting with a vertically polarized antenna (or vice-versa). A last way the receive signal can be altered is in how the receiving antenna is oriented. Think about fox hunting (radio direction finding). How do most people win a fox hunt? By seeking the strongest signal reading. Some people use the opposite tactic, finding a null in the signal (lowest signal reading/no signal strength).

As somebody desiring a signal report, why should I be penalized for somebody with an antenna system that is not up to par or may have technical problems that could hamper performance at the receiver's end? I shouldn't. We have to go by what they tell us the signal is. Like I said before, I take it with a grain of salt and concern myself with readability, everything else is just a formality.

The 59/599 culture is everywhere. It becomes a bad habit because people want to move on to the next contact and not waste time giving an accurate depiction of how the signal is being received. We have become desensitized to signal reports and continuously march to the beat of what everyone else gives for a report. Working DX pileups in CW, the stations have a reply queued, ready at the press of a button. UR 5NN TU (You are 599 Thank You, Next Station?). And they are off to the races with more stations in the pileup.

Strive for readability and make the best of signal strength as it is given to you.

Barney Price, KK5RR SK

Contribution By Candy Price

Picture From QRZ.COM

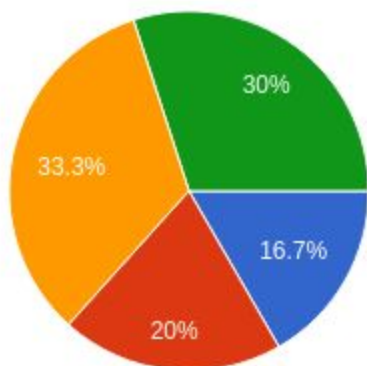


Barney Price, known to family and friends as "Dallas" was born in Dallas, TX on 6/26/1951. For most of his adult life, he was a long haul truck driver and met his wife Candy while delivering goods to Falcon Rule in Auburn where she was a sales manager. They were married on December 5, 1992. Candy got a job with Sam's clubs as a marketing consultant and they traveled to Texas, Illinois, Pennsylvania and Tennessee with Sam's before moving back to Maine. Barney and Candy lived in Harpswell, Pittston, West Gardiner and Chelsea here in Maine since their return in 1998. Barney was diagnosed with cancer in 2014 and after a 7 year fight, he passed away on February 5, 2021.

Barney is survived by his wife Candy and stepchildren, Tiffany and T.J. Tigerman along with 2 grandsons.

FEBRUARY POLL QUESTION: HOW OFTEN DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN CONTESTING?

Contests Per Year	Results
>6	5
3-6	6
1-2	10
0	9



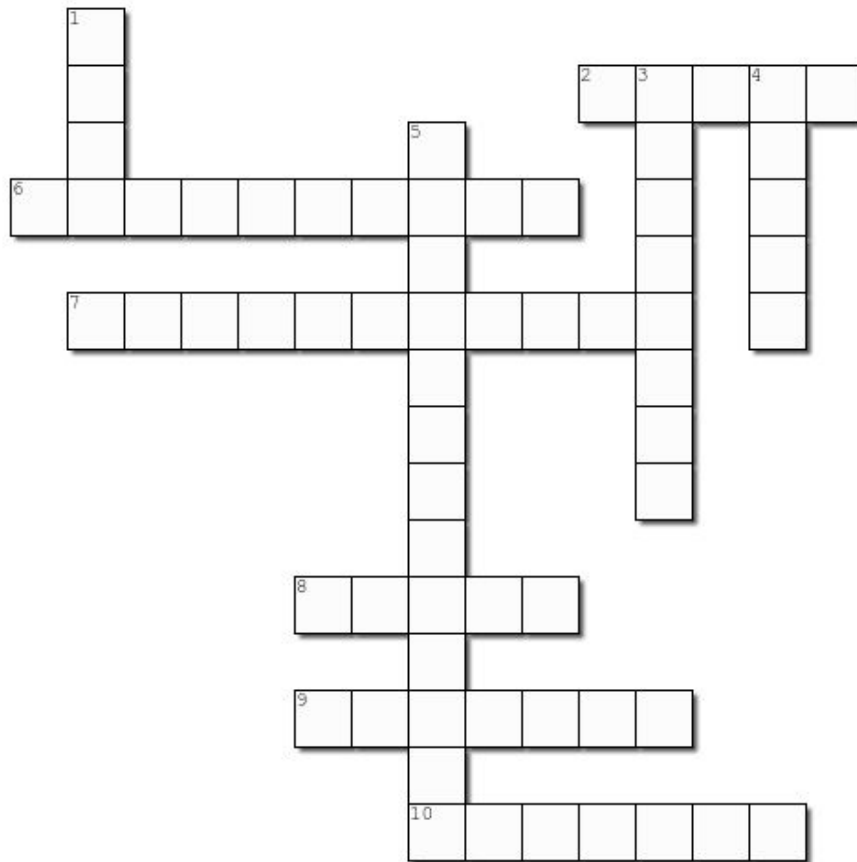
- I frequently participate in contests (more than 6 per year)
- I occasionally participate in contests (3-6 per year)
- I rarely participate in contests (1-2 per year)
- I do not participate in contesting

[CLICK TO PARTICIPATE IN MARCH POLL](#)

Name: _____

March Telegraph Crossword

Complete the crossword puzzle below



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

- 2. PREFIX OF 10 TO THE -3 POWER
(DON'T BLAME IT ON THE RAIN)
- 6. IF YOU OVERDO THIS, YOUR AUDIO
GETS DISTORTED
- 7. GRAPHICAL CALCULATOR TO ASSIST
IN SOLVING PROBLEMS WITH
TRANSMISSION LINES AND MATCHING
CIRCUITS (2 WORDS)
- 8. PUBLIC SERVICE ____ ROLL, 70
POINTS TO QUALIFY
- 9. A DEVICE THAT CONVERTS
CHEMICAL ENERGY INTO ELECTRICAL
ENERGY
- 10. ANTENNA ARRAY USED BY ART
BELL (SK), THINK DIAMOND

Down

- 1. HALF WAVE ANTENNA THAT DARE I
SAY MAY BE ANGELIC
- 3. WHAT YOU MUST DO EVERY 10
MINUTES IN AMATEUR RADIO
- 4. VOICE SIGNALS BELOW 30-METERS
USES THIS SIDEBAND (EXCEPT 5 MHZ)
- 5. DETECTOR USED IN SOME FM
RECEIVERS AND NO, NOBODY IS
PICKING ON IT

February Crossword Answers

1. ANCHOR, 2. OFFSET, 3. INCREMENTAL, 4. DISTORTION, 5. SUMMITS, 6. VACUUM TUBES, 7. LOBE, 8. GREENWICH, 9. MOBILE, 10. SCHEMATIC

March Wordsearch

K	R	M	A	R	D	I	G	R	A	S	S	I	A
N	R	Y	P	S	D	S	T	C	E	S	S	E	S
I	E	I	I	A	R	P	E	N	G	D	H	B	H
S	C	L	O	V	E	R	E	I	N	K	A	Y	W
W	S	S	A	R	D	I	F	N	A	C	M	A	E
O	T	G	H	O	D	N	S	L	H	I	R	D	D
B	T	R	T	R	M	G	D	V	C	R	O	S	N
N	A	E	E	H	R	S	Y	S	E	T	C	E	E
I	B	E	D	I	N	R	M	Y	M	A	K	U	S
A	E	N	B	S	D	R	I	B	I	P	D	T	D
R	R	A	A	S	E	A	N	N	T	T	T	T	A
E	I	E	H	A	I	H	T	A	N	S	F	A	Y
T	E	S	A	S	K	E	R	V	E	T	R	F	N
T	T	F	E	E	B	D	E	N	R	O	C	C	K

RAINBOW
SPRING
CLOVER
SHAMROCK
BIRDS
TIME CHANGE
CORNED BEEF
MARDI GRAS
FAT TUESDAY
GREEN
ASH WEDNESDAY
ST PATRICK

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/2052172/>

<https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/2052172/march-wordsearch/>



\$wap \$hop

Amateur Radio Equipment For Sale or Trade

For sale - Kenwood TS- 940s, very clean condition, built in power supply, auto antenna tuner and 24 hour clock, Hand mic included. \$400.

Contact Rex - K1PN by email: cqdek1pn@gmail.com

Hygain tri-band TH6DXX, new traps, in great condition all down and ready to go to a new tower.

Asking: \$250

Contact: Rick Smith, N1SGL/207-431-4776/ rksmth88@gmail.com

[CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT SWAP SHOP ITEM](#)

VE TEST SESSIONS

Monday, March 22nd 4 pm Henry D. Moore Library, School Street,
Steuben No Walk-ins / Pre Registration is required by email.

Limited to five examinees so register now Test fee is \$15

Applicants must first obtain a FRN (FCC Registration Number) in advance. Check the web page - fcc.gov - at no cost, Bring that number and legal photo ID to the test session. Face masks required. For more information and to pre-registration please contact Phil Duggan, n1ep@yahoo.com

Saturday April 24th 9 am Warren Sanitary District -
pre-registration is required 442 Cushing Rd (Rt 97) Look for sign at entrance Warren ME 04864 No Walk-ins / Pre Registration is required either by phone or email. Sponsor: PBARC Contact: Joseph G. Devonshire 549-0061 trainbee@aol.com

The SJVARA club is looking to do some online classes. Email Joy K1SEW@arrl.net for link or go on the ARRL Maine Section Web

[Class Interest Poll Click Here](#)

If you are interested in the **video-supervised** online exam sessions. Contact: Amanda Grimaldi, N1NHL ARRL VEC Assistant Manager agrimaldi@arrl.org