

THE MAINE TELEGRAPH

NEWSLETTER FOR MAINE
AMATEUR RADIO OPERATORS



Hamfest Season Begins!

WRITTEN BY CORY GOLOB, KU1U

It isn't a new year in Maine until people attend their first hamfest by going to Winterfest at Le Club Calumet, sponsored by the Augusta ARC. Mark your calendar for Saturday, February 12th 8 AM to Noon. The address is 334 West River Road, Augusta.



Admission: \$5

Talk-In on DMR Maine Statewide (MESW) TG3123 or Analog 146.52 MHz.

Contact: George Szadis , K1GDI
Phone: 207-377-2182
Email: k1gdi@arrl.net

VE Test Session - NO WALK-INS (Must Register or Call Ahead)
Test @ 9:30 AM.

Contact: Joseph G. Devonshire (207) 549-0061 or Email: trainbee@aol.com

Maine State Convention April 1-2, Lewiston



The Maine State Convention is set to be held at the Ramada Inn Conference Center, 490 Pleasant St, Lewiston (right off of I-95 Exit 80). Evening talks are scheduled for 8 and 9 PM. The ARRL Forum with New England Division Director Fred Kemmerer AB1OC will be held on Saturday (11 AM).

Doors open at 8 AM Saturday. Vendor tables are \$8 per table if paid in advance, \$10 per table at the door. Contact Ivan Lazure at 207-577-5152 for more information.

If you are interested in giving a presentation or having a room reserved for your club/group/organization to hold a meeting, please contact Cory Golob by emailing ku1u@nediv.arrl.org

If you are interested in reserving a room at the Ramada Inn, it is \$75 + tax per night, be sure to mention the Maine State Ham Convention. Reservations can be made by calling 207-784-2331.

You Never Know When You'll Meet A Ham

WRITTEN BY JOE GRACE, W1SK

Around June of 2008, I was interviewing as a software developer for a small software company that worked on governmental ecommerce software. I had a friend that worked there and recommended that I check out a position that was open. I was a little hesitant because I didn't have any web development experience really, but I decided to give it a whirl anyway.

Although downtown Augusta is not quite as confusing as Boston, it was still confusing to someone like me who grew up in a relatively small town in the western part of the state. I had trouble finding the building where I was supposed to interview at. Thankfully we lived in the age of cell phones (not yet smart phones) and I was able to call my friend to see if he could help me get directions. After trying to get directions, I overheard a voice say "Tell him the talk-in is on .52". My friend had no idea what that meant, but I sure did, and hung up the phone and the person that helped me get to my interview (Todd Tolhurst, WA1M SK) ended up being my boss, best friend and mentor for the next 7 years of my life.

No doubt I was in way over my head in that position. My focus in software development was in systems integration and web development which was not something I knew much about. I think that Todd probably hired me just because I am a ham radio operator.

In September of 2012 I drove from Maine to Chattanooga, TN for a friend's wedding. That stretch of road on interstate 81 from Scranton, PA to around Knoxville is absurdly long and somewhat boring. I ended up driving pretty much the whole way in one go. I was tired, my friend who drove with me was tired and super aggravated because I would not let him chain smoke cigarettes in my brand new car. Somewhere around mid-Virginia while I was in a haze while coming down off drinking a ton of coffee, I noticed a somewhat older car with Ohio amateur radio plates with a W8 callsign.

The person driving the car passed me very slow which is how I ended up figuring out that the car had amateur radio plates. When I saw the callsign I immediately honked out on my horn "73 OM". These days not every ham knows the code, and I figured it was a shot in the dark. I was surprised when he honked back

"QTH?". I promptly sent back "Maine HI HI" and got a good giggle out of the situation. I was really surprised when he pulled off the interstate behind me while I was getting gas and we had a quick chat about radio before going back on our way. It was a pretty funny situation, and the honking woke up my passenger who was sleeping. At least he got some time to smoke his cigarettes.

In my day job, I spend a lot of my time writing computer software locked up in a dark corner of the office. So when the opportunity came up for me to lend a hand at one of the trade shows that my company puts on, I jumped at the chance. The trade show was the "International WorkBoat Show" in New Orleans. I don't know much about maritime-ey things, but it was pretty neat to see. The first day of the show I was walking around and I saw an "iCom America" booth littered with a TON of neat maritime commercial radios. Unfortunately, I was walking around before the show started so there was no one there. I took note to come back after lunch and see who might be manning the booth.

Imagine my surprise when I find out that Ray Novak (N9JA) of Ham Nation (and other youtube radio content channels) fame was exhibiting at our show! I walked up to him, said hello, introduced myself and said that I was happy to have a ham radio celebrity at the show here. His co-worker really got a laugh out of that, and we had a brief chat about the show, about radio, commercial and marine radio and a bunch of other topics.

I asked him if he would mind if I take a picture with him to share with you fine folks on the Maine Telegraph newsletter, and he thought it was a great idea.



Thanks to my friend and co-worker Dave Fournier for taking that picture for me. Ray was pretty cool to talk to and was a good sport for allowing me to take a picture with him.

I think that it's great that we have such a friendly community of hams in our state (and country). I hope that whenever any of you folks meet a new ham that you take some time to help, mentor and welcome new people into our great ham radio community in the state of Maine.

Maine ARRL Leadership - Part 2

WRITTEN BY PHIL DUGGAN, N1EP

Meet Maine's New Section Traffic Manager

The Maine ARRL section leadership positions continue to be filled, with only a few emergency coordinator position remaining vacant.

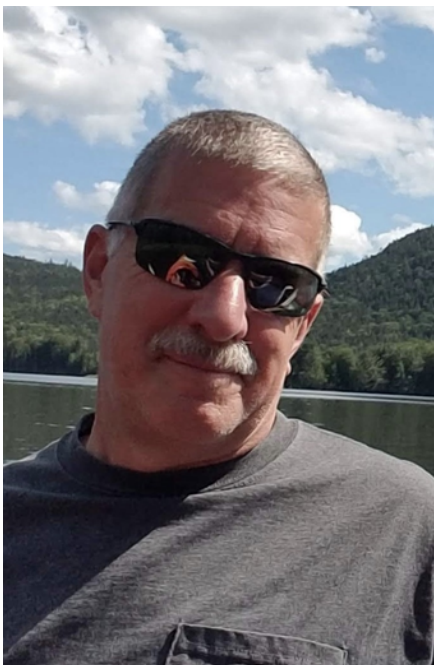


Dennis Bosley, WA1URS, assumed the duties as Section Traffic Manager on January 1, 2022. Dennis had previously served as STM several years ago. If you frequent 3940 KHz plus or minus or the UFB New England Fusion Group linked repeater system, you have probably heard Dennis. He often passes "Through" traffic on the Maine Seagull Net. The photo of Dennis is from a time that he operated the amateur radio station at the National Weather Service Office in Caribou several years ago. Here is Dennis' story in his own words:

I studied for my Amateur Radio License in 1975 while in the USAF stationed at Kadena AB, Okinawa. Classes were held at the KC-135 Flight Simulator Building. I passed my Novice test and received my callsign WN1URS in April 1975.

After three years at Kadena, I was transferred to Hill AFB, Utah. I cross trained into the radio operator career field and was assigned to the USAF Mars Station at the 1881 Communications Squadron. In 1976 I upgraded to General License. I received the callsign WA1URS. I traveled to Rexburg, ID when the Teton Dam burst and sent a wall of water fifteen feet tall and three miles wide down the valley. It wiped out everything in its path. I was sent there to set up Communications for the National Guard. I have been doing EMCOM ever since then. I have taken all three ARRL Emergency Communication Courses. I have taken many FEMA courses. I am CERT Qualified. I have been the District Four DEC since 2009. I also hold ARRL Official Relay Station and Official Emergency Station Qualifications. I have recently been asked to be the Maine ARRL Section Traffic Manager, a position I gladly accept.

Maine Section Emergency Coordinator



Steve Jordan is Maine's Section Emergency Coordinator. He is a retired public safety officer and his present occupation is as a Registered Nurse. Steve is president of the Pine State Amateur Radio Club. Based out of Bangor. He has been a licensed ham radio operator for 30 years. "[My] primary interests are VHF and public service events," writes Steve. "The next big one is the Trek Across Maine. We still need volunteers."

Section Youth Coordinator

Hi, I'm Bradley Brown, KC1JMH. Our Maine Section Manager Phil Duggan, N1EP, appointed me as the Section Youth Coordinator. I am president of the Wireless Society of Southern Maine, a club known for being inclusive of families in our activities; and my wife Amy and I are den leaders for my son's den in Cub Scout Waterboro Pack 306. I work in IT and love to tinker with technology, and I am very passionate about sharing my experience with people of all ages.



It's not uncommon to have children tagging along with their parents at club meetings or seeing them play and explore while we activate a park, summit, or lighthouse. Some will make a contact or two, but most are still too shy – but being around their families while they operate and experiment normalizes amateur radio for them, and perhaps they'll decide that they'd like their own call sign. My son Jordan who is 7 often wonders what call sign he'll end up with once he's licensed.

I frequently bring amateur radio and scouting together: Our club has helped with Jamboree On The Air at Camp William Hinds where several Boy Scouts tried their hand at making contacts – some really taking to it and having lengthy conversations with an operator on the air. I hike and camp with the Cub Scout pack carrying my radios, often trying to activate a summit or connect the camp site with a remote operator. It's not always successful, but they're seeing me with the radios and it's beginning to be a normal thing.

I recognize that what draws people my age to amateur radio is different from the youth of today, but at the same time there are a lot of similarities. My son and I are both techies and loved anything with lots of buttons right from the get-go. As a baby, I couldn't keep the TV remote from him. Now, sure, he's got his tablet and the Messenger for kids that allows him to chat with his school friends and cousins – monitored by Mom and Dad, of course; but he jumps at the chance to say hi to another young voice he hears on the radio. He enjoys turning the dial



knob and bringing in far-away foreign language broadcast stations, and he's very curious about Morse Code, often testing me on what the different letters are. We experiment together. Jordan watched me drill holes and wire up my portable battery box, asking lots ...and lots of questions. We've tuned an SDR receiver into the frequency of his remote-control car to see how it tells the car whether to go forwards, backwards, left, or right. He's excitedly done a few fox hunts with the club, and often finds the fox visually before anybody else.

In short, as Section Youth Coordinator, I'm hoping to bring clubs together with youth organizations, and help clubs discover family-friendly experiences and experiments that will help normalize radio and maybe even intrigue our young people into getting involved in radio themselves.

Youth in Amateur Radio

Maine's Section Youth Coordinator, Brad Brown, Jr, KC1JMH, led a Youth In Ham Radio Summit via Zoom on January 15. There were about a dozen participants that shared ideas on how to paint amateur radio in a light that would interest kids and younger adults.

Most agreed that Maine's ham radio clubs need to become family-orientated in order to get the interests of kids and spouses, something that could influence them to eventually earn their amateur radio licenses. Other key points made include:

- Clubs, EmComm Groups, and individual hams can contact scouts, 4-H, summer camps, and schools to arrange ham radio demonstrations. We must meet the needs of these groups and schools. Have lesson plans drawn up that include STEM (Science Technical, Engineering, Mathematic) themes built within them. Include interesting activities such as soldering, kit-building, fox hunts, digital modes, and space communications. Make sure on-air demonstrations have backups in case of equipment or band failure. For instance have both an HF station and VHF station ready for use. Be willing to undergo background investigation or other indoctrination if required for interacting with children. Be sure your ham radio station and antennas are SAFE so kids cannot be hurt.
- Target people on their 20s and 30s also. They may be better able to afford the gear, and many will have their own kids that they can influence with radio.
- Use remote control planes, boats and other vehicles, robotics. Use SDR to monitor remote control signals. The kids are fascinated by the displays.
- Involve kids in Summits On The Air (SOTA) and Parks On The Air (POTA). Get them outdoors and enjoying radio and nature.
- MENTORSHIP! Be an Elmer. All potential and new hams need mentorship. Answer their questions. Help them get on the air. Follow up more than once! Don't let them slip away.
- Target middle school and high school grade levels.
- SSTV, Satellite comms, SWL, new modes and technologies. Gadgets! DMR, Yaesu System Fusion, keyboard digital modes for the mic-shy kids. Old-fashioned Morse code demos with the kids learning to send their names with a code practice oscillator is often popular with younger kids.

- Strike up a conversation and see what they like to do and relate it to an aspect of amateur radio. For instance, if someone likes geocaching, then tell them about APRS.
- Advertise on school/college campuses, social media, etc. Get positive ham radio press releases in local papers. Schedule events at college campuses.

Recruiting new hams, of all ages, should be a team effort here in Maine. All clubs should be proactive in this effort. It will benefit them, after all. If every Maine ham committed to recruiting two hams into the hobby, what a leap that would be for our community!

Maine MESH Networking Group Meeting

The Maine MESH Networking Group reconvened on January 25th to discuss the status of MESH in Maine. There are currently 4 nodes operating in the Brunswick and Topsham area on 5.8 GHz. We are working on gradually expanding the network and line of site is crucial, which means being well above the tree line, which is difficult for most home users to achieve. Repeater sites would be optimal to use as MESH networking sites, which can also help RF link repeaters together at the same time.

The New England Assistant Director for Spectrum Use and Protection, Rob Leiden, K1UI, was in attendance at this meeting.

Bill Richardson, NG1P gave a wonderful presentation on navigating Ubiquiti web tools which can be accessed by going to <https://link.ui.com>. Bill also gave an overview of equipment that functions with AREDN for those who are interested in experimenting with MESH or eventually getting involved with this project. This website is located here: <https://www.arednmesh.org/content/supported-platform-matrix>

Cory Golob KU1U is looking at using Streaked Mountain as a future site for expanding the MESH network beyond Brunswick and Topsham.

The cost of adding sites was discussed. The equipment is the least expensive part of the process. Having certified tower climbers at two sites who can erect the equipment and align antennas for maximum signal strength is the most costly component to the MESH network.

Automatic Packet Reporting System

What is it, and why bother?

WRITTEN BY BRAD BROWN, KC1JMH



We've all heard about APRS, and probably have jumped to the conclusion that it's only used for sharing our location and perhaps what simplex frequency or repeater that we're monitoring. Prepare to have your mind blown if you share that misperception that I had not long ago.

APRS is a very handy multi-tool to perform the following tasks without direct access to the Internet:

- Share your location and status, for casual communications; and when coordinating large-scale events such as marathons, bicycle rides, search and rescue missions, etc.
- Send messages to another APRS operator or group of operators
- Send cellular SMS text messages and short e-mails to non-ham family and friends
- Look up nearby repeaters in an unfamiliar location
- Look up satellite and International Space Station (ISS) passes
- Retrieve the current and forecasted weather
- Spot yourself for Parks On The AIR (POTA) and Summits On The Air (SOTA) activations where there is no cellular connectivity
- Get notified when there is Winlink mail waiting, and even retrieve and reply to messages

For information on how to do the above, I'm sharing an APRS Commands document that I've printed duplex (on both sides) and keep in an analog information binder which I keep with my radio in case I find myself off-grid. But it's only VHF, and requires the Internet

One may argue that APRS is only available on 2-meters and requires an Internet connection at the node or gateway that's receiving your transmissions. That, too, is incorrect. Yes, APRS is primarily available nation-wide on the FM frequency 144.390 MHz, simplex. Some gateways are connected to the Internet, and some relay your messages to other nodes that are connected.

APRS is also available via satellites and the ISS, and the JS8CALL mode can relay APRS information from HF stations. Use of these methods are meaty topics beyond the scope of this short article, but I offer the following references:

- APRS via Satellite: <http://www.aprs.org/astars.html>.
- APRS on the ISS: <https://amsat-uk.org/beginners/how-to-work-the-iss-on-aprs-packet-radio/>

- APRS via HF JS8CALL by Jason KM4ACK:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qP-stm_UF4A

How do I use it?

APRS is a digital mode that allows the transmission of plaintext data to be transmitted as audio over the airwaves. That audio is typically transmitted by FM at 1200 baud. Some experimentation is being done with FSK at 9600 baud. Baud is measured in bits per second, a single character or letter requires 8 bits. A modem is required to modulate and demodulate the data to and from audio for transmission. This may be built into a radio, a separate TNC modem may be used, or a software program running on an electronic computing device; PC, tablet, cellular phone.

Radios

A handful of radios on the market include a built-in APRS modem, allowing the operator to send and receive messages, coordinates, and information right from the radio. This is by far the simplest method. These include but are not limited to: the Kenwood TH-D72A handheld and the TM-D710GA mobile radio; the Yaesu FT-3DR handheld, the FTM-300DR and FTM-400XDR mobile radios; the ICOM ID-5100A mobile radio; the Anytone AT-D878UVII Plus.

The Kenwood radios may also function as a TNC modem for your computer, should you want to map the coordinates of other operators or enter messages with a more convenient keyboard, or connect to packet radio nodes. Typically, a USB A-to-B cable is required, and the APRS or packet radio software configured to communicate with the radio over a serial COM port. The radio does all the modulation, sending and receiving only the data with the computer.

Some radios will offer a data port, often in the form of a 6-pin DIN port that looks like the old PS/2 keyboard connectors. This allows you to interface the radio with a TNC modem or to a soundcard-based software modem. The Yaesu FT-7800r and similar models include this port.

Other radios may be used such as commercial and emergency services surplus or simple analog handheld radios, but a custom cable would be required to get audio to and from the radio and key the PTT circuit. Many cables are available after-market or can be built from schematics by the savvy amateur radio operator.

There are a few radios on the market that have a USB interface such as the Yaesu FT-991a and ICOM IC-705. These radios are much more expensive, but allow you to easily get the sound, PTT, and CAT control directly from the radio to a computer without additional hardware.

Sound Interface equipment

For those radios with a data port or a custom cable, the simplest way to get them operational on digital modes such as APRS is with a soundcard interface. Here are some options:

- Signalink – This was the first sound interface I learned about. They're now one of the pricier options at \$135 and require a jumper module installed in addition to radio-specific cables to make them compatible with the various radios that you'd connect them to.
- Mobilinkd TNC3 – This is a battery powered Bluetooth KISS TNC. It was primarily built to allow hikers to toss their handheld radios and this device in their pack and use their mobile device to operate APRS. The TNC can be connected just as easily to a mobile radio. There are many aftermarket cables on their site or available via <https://hammadeparts.com/>. Connect to this device with your mobile Android phone running APRSDroid or your computer and a sound modem using Bluetooth. I found this device particularly useful for connecting to APRS and Packet Radio nodes from a warm building while my radio was strategically placed in my car in the parking lot. The extra versatility of this device has it coming in at about \$125.
- DigiRig – These guys popped up very recently on the market, and for the price of \$40-50 plus \$20-30 for customized cables if you wish to use them, you also get CAT control for radios that support it. This allows us to change frequency and filters on radios like the Yaesu FT-817/818nd or FT-857d.
- DINAH – These guys initially built this affordable interface for building AllStar nodes, which allow repeater owners to connect to other repeaters over the Internet. They quickly learned that it was very handy for any digital mode that required modulation, such as APRS and packet. This is the simplest device to connect to a radio with a DIN port, as it too has a DIN port; a simple and cheap DIN cable is required. For other radios, they recommend PAUL which has a serial interface, making it simpler to build and use custom cables.
- I would add that some advanced tinkering in Windows is required to get PTT to work at this time, but it works very well with a Raspberry Pi running Direwolf. In fact, they're building a custom attachment for the Pi Zero for the Appalachian Trail Golden Packet group. More on them later. The DINAH can be purchased as a kit for \$40 or assembled for \$50.

Remember these sound interfaces can be used for other digital modes too, further justifying their cost.

Sound Modems

If you're using a mobile Android phone or tablet with APRSdroid, you can skip this section: the software has a built-in sound modem.

For those who want to connect a computer to the radio with one of the above sound interfaces for use with APRS or packet radio, you'll want to run one of these sound modems:

- UZ7HO SoundModem – This is my go-to recommendation. It is probably the simplest to get working, it runs on Windows or Linux, and you can monitor the packet traffic from its window. The author also provides packet radio software: EasyTerm, Checkers and Chess.
- AGW Packet Engine – This is another great graphical user interface (GUI) based sound modem. Download AGWPE, not the Packet Engine Pro shareware. I found AGWPE worked better.
- Direwolf – This is a console-based application. Setup is done by configuration files. While it's a little more difficult to set up, it's solid and stable.

APRS Software

At this point, you have your radio connected either directly to your electronic device or computer, or you are using a sound interface that is connected between your radio and computer/device. Now you need the APRS software. As usual, there are many, many options.

For mobile, I must recommend APRSdroid. It is simple to set up, and simple to use.

For your Windows computer, I found PinPoint APRS to be the easiest to use and easiest on the eyes. Other options include APRSISCE/32 and Yet Another APRS Client.

What about Apple? I'm afraid that I am not an Apple user, so I'm not able to recommend any personal opinions on the best software or equipment for an iPhone or iPad, MacBook, iMac, etc. If an Apple user has some personal recommendations, I encourage them to submit an article to Cory KUTU.

But how do I set it up?

The answer to that question varies with every option, which is numerous. I may submit future articles that break down some of the methods that I have found effective. In the meantime, I have hopefully piqued your interest!

APRS COMMANDS

Callsign Lookup

Purpose: Retrieve information about an operator by their callsign

TO: WHO-IS

MSG: <callsign> or f <callsign> for full information

Email

Purpose: Send and receive Internet email through an APRS gateway

TO: EMAIL-2 or EMAIL

MSG: <address> <message>

Note: EMAIL gateway messages are limited to the length of a single line, including the email address, roughly 65 characters.

SMS Messaging - <https://smsgte.org/>

Purpose: Send and receive cellular SMS messages through an APRS gateway

TO: SMSGTE

MSG: @<number>? <message>

Note: Add ? to request confirmation

From SMS to APRS: Respond with @<callsign-ssid>? <message>

Repeat - <http://aprs-repeat.hemna.com/>

Purpose: List repeaters nearby your GPS coordinates

TO: REPEAT

MSG: <n[earst]> [Num Stations] [Band] [Filters]

- Num (number of) Stations to list: defaults to nearest 1
- Band format: 10m, 6m, 2m, 70cm, 33cm, etc; omit band defaults to 2m
- Filters: +allstar, +ares, +dmr, +dstar, +echolink or +echo, +irlp, +races, +skywarn, +wires;

WA1GOV-10

Purpose: Receive satellite and ISS pass information

TO: WA1GOV-10

MSG: Send a satellite's name. e.g.: AO-91, LO-19, ISS, etc

Note: Message responses are CC'ed to Twitter @WA1GOV

Weather

Purpose: Request weather forecast for a given area

TO: WXBOT or WXYO

MSG:

- Callsign, Callsign-SSID or object from api.aprs.fi that has a location including AIS ships
- City, ST or 5-digit zip code
- CWOP station id (e.g.: DW6273)
- 4 or 6 character Maidenhead Grid (cn8l, cn8l uh(
- lat/lon using decimal degrees (41.123/-122.1123)
- 4 character ICAO station (KJFK KFSO, etc) returns METAR report
- 3 character IATA station (SFO, LAX, etc) returns METAR report
- today, tomorrow, friday
- 3, 5, 10 (wxyo only)

POTA

Purpose: Spot a Parks On The Air activator on the <https://pota.app> website

TO: POTAGW

MSG: [activator-callsign] [park] [frequency] [mode] [comments]

Notes: Park = K-####

SOTA

Purpose: Spot a Summits On The Air activator

TO: SOTA

MSG: [summit-ID] [frequency] [mode] [call-sign] [comments]

OTHER MSG: /help, /last[/#], /mylast[/#], /time[/zone] (default UTC), /spots[/#], /alerts[/#]

Notes: Brackets denote optional portion of a command. Pre-registration w/ SOTA org is required.

Group messaging

CQ Group

Purpose: CQSRVR marks yourself in a group as looking for contacts

TO: CQSRVR

MSG: CQ <groupname> <message>

Note: Every time you send a CQ groupname message to CQSRVR, it "registers" you with that group so nothing else needs to be done to receive messages from other group members. You may only send one CQ groupname message per 30 minutes. This keeps activity for other members to a manageable rate.

Announcement Group

Purpose: ANSRVR is like CQSRVR but allows you to quietly remain joined to a group. ANSRVR is a great way to send announcements to people interested in the same thing.

TO: ANSRVR

MSG:

- ? - Show all groups (# in parenthesis is number of members)
- ? group - Show member count in group
- D show groups with descriptions, also sending D <group> description text, will supply a description of the group to the server
- L - List groups you are a member of (with member count including self)
- J group - Join group quietly (or create new group)
- K group1 group2 group3 ... - Quietly Keepalive multiple groups (be careful of APRS message length limits)
- CQ group text - Join group and send text to all current members, if the group does not exist it will be created and you will be the owner
- U group - Unjoin group

Group examples: APRSIS32, APRSISCE, BALLOON, CQ, ECHOLINK, FD, ISS, JOTA, ROCKETS, SCOUTS, WSSM

Winlink - <https://winlink.org/APRSLink>

Purpose: Check, send and receive messages over Winlink RMS via the APRS gateway

TO: WLNK-1

First message: Send any character to start login sequence, and answer with character numbers followed by three random characters.

E.g: Your password is CATSPAJAMAS, prompt is "Login [129]" and you respond CAMABA

129RRRandom

MSG:

- H or ? - help
- L - List of messages
- R# - Read message #
- Y# - Reply to message #
- SP - SP [email address, callsign, or alias] [subject]
- Then, anything you send to WLNK-1 other than /EX or the (P)layback command makes up the body of your message. If you mess up and need to start over, just issue a new SP command.
- /EX - exits composition
- P - playback the message
- SMS - SMS [email address, callsign, or alias] [message]
- F# - forward message #
- K# - Kill message #
- G# - Return information about closest active RMS Packet Gateways, # indicates how many results are returned

Bonus: If you desire notification of pending Winlink email just add "WINLINK" somewhere in your station's position comment (or status text) and you'll be notified with an APRS message whenever you have unread mail on the Winlink system. - winlink.org

NTS Op of the Year

WRITTEN BY PHIL DUGGAN, N1EP

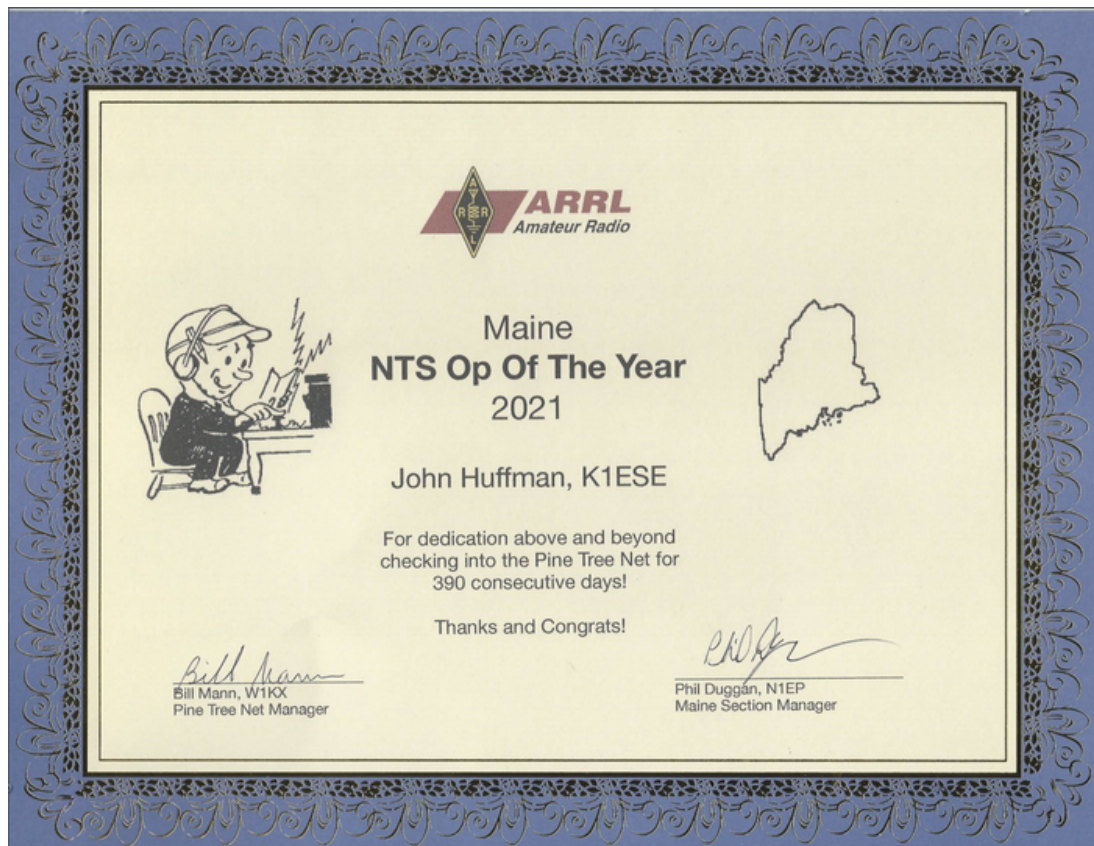
John Huffman, K1ESE, has proven he is a dedicated traffic handler, and especially fond of the Pine Tree Net, an affiliated National Traffic System net. PTN Net Manager Bill Mann, W1KX, recently highlighted John's achievement of checking into the net for 390 consecutive days! That is dedication! John also routinely served as net control station.

The PTN is not the only hangout for John. When he is not contesting, he is routinely serving as a traffic handler for the Maine Seagull Net, taking "through" traffic and making sure the radiograms exit Maine for their intended destinations. He is a former net control for the SGN as well.

Maine Section Manager Phil Duggan, N1EP, recently awarded John with the NTS Op Of The Year for 2021 in recognition of John's exemplary service.

"Without operators like yourself, the National Traffic System would not be able to serve the nation in its role of maintaining a pool of trained communicators who are needed during and after disaster strikes," said Duggan.

The NTS nets within Maine have many dedicated hams supporting them, and K1ESE is among the best!



Winter Field Day 2022

WRITTEN BY PHIL BRAD BROWN, KC1JMH

Winter Field Day was probably a bit of a bust for us. Despite my constant pleas for volunteers and operators, I only heard from the core half-dozen of us. Then WSSM decided to shut down the field operation due to the worsening forecasts as the weekend approached. We didn't want anyone to get stranded as they traveled to or from the EMA bunker in Windham, many of us a distance away; nor did we want someone to get hurt while on the grounds at the EMA due to the wind and whiteout conditions.

I'm not sure how many home operators there ended up being. A few of our club members were running SKYWARN nets. I myself was afraid to operate outdoors and use up our batteries and fuel, expecting to lose power to the house, so there was no bonus. My old G5RV only picked up 10 contacts, 2 of which were PSK, 1 was RTTY. I wish I had more free time to put up a better antenna.

