ACORN Newsletter

Androscoggin Amateur Radio Club (AARC)
P.O. Box 1, Auburn ME 04212-0001
http://www.w1npp.org

Index

Repeaters

Auburn	Poland Springs
146.610 PL 88.5	147.315 PL 103.5
D-Star 443.300	

Club Officers

President: Tim Bubier WT1A
V. President: Cory Golob KU1U
Treasure: Ivan Lazure N1OXA
Secretary: Dick Knight N1NYW
Trustee: Tim Bubier WT1A
Newsletter Editor:
    Harold Hartley N1LLU

Club Meetings

Wednesday April 6th 2016 1830 EDT
Meeting held in Potvin Room
99 Campus Ave. Lewiston, Me.

ARES/RACES Meeting

Wednesday April 20th 2016 1730 EDT
Androscoggin Unified EMA Office
Basement of Central Fire Station
2 College Street Lewiston, ME

Club Breakfast

Wednesday April 27th 2016 0730 EDT
Held at the Ramada Inn Pleasant Street
Lewiston, Maine

On Air ARES/RACES NET

Weekly ARES/RACES Net is every
Thursday at 1900, on Club 146.610
PL 88.5, plus Weekly Training net
follows. Digital will be part of training
net.

President's Notes
By Tim Bubier WT1A

The Maine ARRL State Convention and Hamfest are now under our belts. This year was one of mixed results in terms of attendance, participation and presentations, but was an overall success. Attendance was down but sales of 50/50 and Club Table items were pretty much at all-time highs. Ivan will give a full report at the upcoming meeting.

So, on to Field Day we go. Cory will be taking the lead this year and I will be supporting in any way I can. We plan on getting started on the discussion at the April Club meeting. Hope to see you all there!

Attention

The Club will be holding Elections for April 6 and all positions are open.

Secretary's Report
By Dick Knight N1NYW

March Report

The Androscoggin Amateur Radio Club held a meeting Wednesday March 2, 2016 at the Potvin Room of the St. Marys Medical Arts Building Lewiston ME. In Attendance: ve1aws, k1wtx, kb2qhr, n1zrl, w1jiw, n1wfo, kb1zlv, kc1amq, kc1aih, n1jd, kb1doi, n1oxa, n1oxe, w1ltx, w1lwt, ku1u and Stanley, kb1zid, wa1skp, kb1iek, n1yiv, w1sab, n1twz and ke6pij.

Walter ve1aws gave a great talk about radio astronomy until 7:15 p.m. The meeting was called to order by Vice President Cory ku1u at 7:15 p.m. Bob w1ltx made a motion to approve the Secretarys' report as published in the newsletter. Motion seconded by Dave n1oxe. Motion Approved.

Ivan read the Treasurers report. Miriam kc1aih made a motion to approve the report that was seconded by Bob w1ltx. Vote: approved.

Cory ku1u told us that his wife Beckie kb1irz thought it would be nice if cards of condolence were sent to the families of a silent keys. Motion to approve was made by Bob w1ltx. Seconded by Miriam kc1aih.

Miriam kc1aih reports that the Trek across Maine is in need of some new drivers. Contact http://action.lung.org/sits/TR?fr id=12920&pg=entry to volunteer.

Pete n1zrl wants to know if the club would be interested in getting his ham equipment if and when he passes on. The answer was yes.

Cory reports that n1ulz is putting up a DSTAR repeater on 145.55. Also n1dot has his System Fusion repeater up and running and connected to Wires X and operating on 442.700 with a pl of 100 hz.

Jerry k1wtx reports that he has signed up four vendors so far. Jerry made a motion that the club buy and give away as the grand prize a DMR radio model CS 81. Seconded by Cory ku1u. Vote Approved.

Bob w1ltx reported on the different items that companies have donated for give away and door prizes for the convention.

Paul kb1qhr has a new Extra Manual that needs a new home. He will leave it on the club table at the convention.

Ivan reported that Tim will be talking to Cindy about Field Day and the repeater rent.

Lee w1lwt and Bob w1ltx told of their use of new a new digital mode.

Jerry k1wtx reports that $ 155 was raised from the 50 /50 at Winterfest and wants us to try to make $ 250 at our convention. We will try something new.

Paul ke6pij is planning a fox hunt Sunday April 17 at Thorncraig in Lewiston. Be sure to bring your equipment.

Bob w1ltx made a motion to adjourn that was seconded by Miriam kc1aih. A vote on adjourning was ignored at 7:56 p.m.

NOTE: Elections for officers will be held at the April 6 meeting.

DX News Notes
By Earl Gilmore N1SVB

The month of February we made 51 DX contacts which represents 40 countries.

VY0ERC, Canada; ON7HJA, Belgium; IV3FMN, Italy; PT7ZT; Brazil; A71AM, Qatar; 9G5SP, Ghana, 5Z4FV, Kenya; LY4A, Lithuania; OH6GHT, Finland; V51WW, Namibia; E77A, Bosnia Herz.; HZ1SK, Saudi Arabia; 7P8C, Lesotho; UA6HBO, European Russia; PD9Z, Netherlands; 4L8A, Georgia; F5MUX, France; EA5IKG, Spain; YT3X/p, Serbia; ZS3WL, So. Africa; ZD7FT, St. Helena Is; HZ1SK, Saudi Arabia; ZV8A, Brazil; LU1ZI, South Shetland Is.; 3XY1T, Guinea; 7X3WPL, Algeria; VP2ETE, Anguilla; J64SLI, St. Lucia; HI0UD, Dominican Republic; XE1YQQ, Mexico; FY5HB, French Guyana; AO5WAP, Spain; TF3JB, Iceland; 4V1TL, Haiti; OK2RJ, Czech Republic; Z370CEF, Macedonia; LZ1KU, Luxembourg; VP8LP, Falkland Is.; FM1HN, Martinique; KL7RST, Alaska

We made No Pacific contacts in February.
There are several DXpeditions taking place in April 2016. Some haven't been assigned a call sign so they will use the listed prefix followed with another call sign.

Apr. 05 to Apr. 09	TBA	Spratly Is.
Apr. 05 to Apr. 11	4W/	East Timor
Apr. 09 to Apr. 10	OJ0W	Market Reef
Apr. 09 to Apr. 16	GP4BRS	Guernsey Is
Apr. 11 to Apr. 24	8R1A	Guyana.
Apr. 12 to Apr. 19	XU7AKC	Cambodia
Apr. 12 to Apr. 22	J88PI	St. Vincent
Apr. 13 to Apr. 18	T88SM	Palau
Apr. 10 to Mar. 26	3W2BR	Vietnam

Apr. 13 to Apr. 19	XU7AKC	Cambodia
Apr. 14 to Apr. 26	8Y/	Trinidad & Tobago
Apr. 15 to Apr. 18	HB0/	Lichtenstein
Apr. 15 to Apr. 20	VK9L	Lord Howe Is.
Apr. 16 to Apr. 21	FH/	Mayotte
Apr. 19 to Apr. 25	5W0XG	Samoa
Apr. 21 to Apr. 28	4L9PL	Georgia
Apr. 23 to May. 02	VK9NU	Norfolk Is.
Apr. 24 to May. 03	V31OK	Belize
Apr. 24 to May. 10	E51DLD	So. Cook Is.
Apr. 26 to May. 06	JD1BOI	Ogasawara
Apr. 27 to May. 06	JD1BMH	Ogasawara
Apr. 28 to May. 01	A91HI	Bahrain

The above DXpeditions are accurate to the 15th of the month. For later additions visit NG3K web page.

Emergency Communications
By Cory Golob KU1U

Let me pose a question to you: *What direction should EMCOMM (emergency communications) take as it pertains to digital (low-speed) traffic?* There are so many digital modes available to us that we can quickly get overwhelmed with them all. Perhaps we should try finding what is best by ruling out what we DON'T want. We don't want anything that is dependent on the internet. Internet is fun and convenient, beyond that it can and will fail or get overloaded. When main communication networks go down, ham radio is looked at as being proficient at operating off-the-grid. How proficient will we be if we rely too much on the internet? At the end of the day we need to know how to communicate when main networks go down (Landline phones, cellular phones, 3G/4G/LTE internet, etc.). One should never forget their roots... there is simplicity in basic techniques and modes. Slow and steady will win the race when your fancy facebook network goes down or cell phone gets overloaded. With internet dependency ruled out, lets cross off PSKMAIL. This program is nifty, but is reliant on the internet to get its information.

What other factors should we rule it for EMCOMM use? How about anything proprietary? When I think proprietary products in amateur radio, PACTOR-III comes to mind. In a world where tons of free modes were readily available at ones fingertips, the company SCS came out with a modem that was proprietary and many people latched on to it. It was like the predecessor of the Apple to Android debate! Instead of somebody simply buying a standard Terminal Node Controller (TNC) to do packet modes, somebody could buy one of these PACTOR-III modems, mind you no less than $1000, to operate this proprietary mode. I just went to price out these modems and they still run anywhere from $1100-2000! The whole club could be retrofitted with soundcard interfaces for the cost of one PACTOR modem. Let's skip by this one for now and look onward.

How about we find something that is affordable! There is a concept. I have always been a fan of of fiscal responsibility. Free is tough to beat. FLDIGI immediately comes to mind. How about something that works cross-platform? Another stellar concept. You mean to tell me that you could be on a windows laptop, another person could be on a Macbook, another ham could be running a Linux machine and we could all communicate together?? Get out

of here. Sorry, that was just a figure of speech, come back! When I think of cross-platform communication, FLDIGI also comes to mind. I am starting to notice a pattern here.

Now that we seem to be on the same page, so I hope, of using FLDIGI, we have another hurdle to overcome. What mode do we use? When you open up FLDIGI on your computer, it may not look like much, but there are 113 possible combinations to use with the modes available. Yikes. I thought we were making progress. FLDIGI is definitely diversified, but how do we know which one we should use? Well the first mode listed is CW (also known as Morse Code). The first digital mode hams have embraced. The problem that can occur with CW is that people with a computer may end up sending too fast for the other station who is most likely doing head copy. RTTY (Radio Teletype) is another classic mode that goes back a long ways, however I find this mode incorporates too much garbage text when idle. MFSK (Multi Frequency Shift Keying) is going in the right direction, but can be difficult to decipher if you enter mid conversation (still a good choice though). The Hell (Hellschreiber) modes are pretty cool and bring back a sense of nostalgia as we can transport ourselves back to World War II, pretending we are Dr. Alan Turing, trying to famously crack the German Enigma code... ok I am back from my daydream.

Let's take a different approach to this. We live in Maine which is faced with rough terrain. We want something that is robust and offers redundancy. I invite you to look at MT63. MT63 is a great mode that works well in high noise levels. I encourage hams to try using this mode as MT63-2000 (this means the mode will occupy 2000 Hz of bandwidth). Do not be alarmed at first, there is quite an extensive delay between when you start hearing the transmission and seeing the text appear. Play around with it and experiment, that is what this hobby is about! If you don't have a soundcard interface to use, one can always use the poor man's interface, hold the microphone near the speaker of the computer when transmitting. Do you have suggestions for a mode, we would love to hear it at the next meeting!