

ScannerDigest Newsletter

ISSUE 37

JUL-AUG-SEP 2006

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A few issues ago we made a request from our readers to submit photos of their shack. Well I was surprised to see that a few brave scanner buffs did indeed send us photos of their communication centers affectionately known as the "shack". I must say that some of the photos received were quite impressive. Here are photos from two avid scanner buffs who also happen to be amateur radio operators. Check it out!

CHESTER COUNTY, PA

STEVE SNYDER

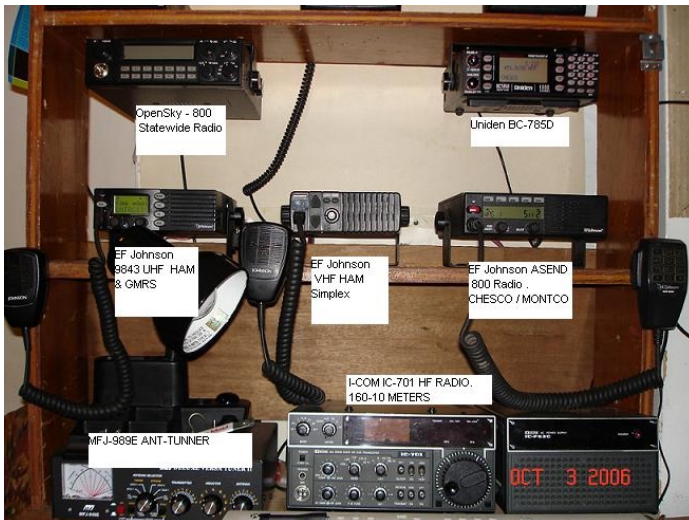


Photo above courtesy Steve Snyder KB3FSR ©2006

The **OpenSky Radio** is a radio used to monitor PA State Police and PennDot, It's also is used for PEMA / FEMA monitoring.

The **Uniden BC-785D Digital P25** scanner is used for just monitoring non-trunked systems. I have Delaware County, Pennsylvania FD/PD and some ham radio repeaters that I have

programmed into the scanner so I don't need to have my main radio on.

The **EF Johnson 9842 UHF** mobile has every HAM repeater in the State of PA, NJ, & DE, along with having a comprehensive listing of dedicated simplex frequencies too. It also has Delaware County Police and Fire Department radio. It has Local Township Frequencies for Chester County Police Department along with some fire company private frequencies.

The **EF Johnson 7186 VHF** mobile is programmed with fire and police frequencies and VHF simplex frequencies for HAM radio.

Then I have the **EF Johnson ASEND Summit Radio** (LTR, LTR Multi-Net, Motorola Astro Smart Zone/Smart Net systems as well as 800MHz conventional) that has Chester County (PA) police, fire, Chester County (PA) CID services and other emergency services. In the same radio is "Bank B" for Montgomery County (PA) Police and fire department and CID For their 800 MHz Radio System.

The **MFJ-949E Deluxe Versa Tuner II** is used for tuning wire antennas for best performance.

Finally there's an **ICOM IC-701 HF** base amateur radio. It covers 160-10 Meters HF radio that will do the following modes: LSB, USB, CW, CW-N and RTTY.

ATLANTIC COUNTY, NJ

ED CIENKI



Photo above courtesy Ed Cienki N2EAC ©2006

On the left side of the computer is the HF side of my set up. I have 2 HF rigs, an **ICOM IC-756PRO** and **ICOM IC-706MKIIG**. I run a **Heil PR-40** into a Behringer mixer in series with a w2ihy 4 band equalizer, a sound card interface and an MFJ-434 memory voice keyer, all footswitch controlled. The 756pro goes into a Kenwood 922A amp and is tuned with a Drake MN-2700 matching network.

SWR is monitored with a DAIWA CN-801H with the primary antenna being an 80m center fed dipole at 60 ft. For CW I have

an MFJ-464 memory CW keyer and use a Vibroplex brass racer into the 756pro. The 706mkIIg runs a Heil traveler headset into an LDG AT-11MP tuner and then into a G5RVjr. I have A switch so that I can run either the 756 or the 706 into the G5RVjr.

On the right of the computer I have my **ICOM IC-910H** using a Heil HM-i mic I have remote antenna switches (RCS-8V's) on both 2m and 70cm and have DAIWA CN-801V. I have an 18 ft vertical dual band antenna for 2m and 70cm FM work and M2 loops for SSB on 2 m and 70 cm

My station power supply is a 45 amp **MFJ-4245MV** switching power supply (with UPS) into a 4012 Rigrunner for distribution. All of my equipment has powerpole connectors.

All radios are computer interfaced and each one is on an **ICOM SP-20** filtered speaker. BTW, on top are a matched Proton 300/301 desktop stereo system.

73, Ed,
N2EAC

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The following was submitted by Alan Cohen of Bensalem PA.

The assumption is made that folks already know what 2-way radios are used for. Since the hey-days of the 2-way industry back in the 70s and 80s, there has been lots of newer technology being developed but the 2-way industry still provides reliable and cost-effective method to communicate amongst other units. This article will hopefully explain.

Why do people use two-way radios?

Two-way radios provide instant communications with people on the move. The two main reasons people use radios are for economic and safety reasons.

Economic reasons:

- Cut operational and business costs
- Improve customer service
- Gain a competitive edge

Safety reasons:

- Quick response to emergency situations
- Keep in touch with people in potentially dangerous situations
- Provide backup support when needed

Two-way radio communications allow for improved control over available resources. Today many of the major manufacturers have full-featured models available in portables or as a mobile at relatively low prices. Conventional radios systems can be designed in such a way to provide the user with a lot of versatility.

Do I need a license to operate two-way radios?

Yes, a Federal Communications Commission www.fcc.gov license is required before you may use two-way radio equipment. Businesses need to obtain a license and may also need to go through a frequency coordination committee prior to being officially licensed. Aircraft, marine, business, GMRS, amateur radio, public safety and local governments all need appropriate licenses to operate on their respective frequencies

How do I choose the proper frequency?

Some services may already have frequencies available in specific bands. Amateur radio operators can "work" a wide variety of bands under their licensed privilege. The answer to this question depends on where you are located and the area you want to cover. For rural areas we recommend the frequencies in the VHF or **Very High Frequency** band. These frequencies provide excellent range with minimal susceptibility to noise interference. Noise interference is electromagnetic noise generated from machines and engines.

UHF or **Ultra High Frequency** is recommended for urban and city areas. Frequencies in this band have excellent range characteristics because their signals can bounce off, or penetrate buildings.. Noise interference within this band is virtually nonexistent.

Common Radio Bands

25 - 50 MHz Referred to **Low Band** (which is actually the lower part of the VHF band 30-300MHz)

136 - 174 MHz Referred to **High Band** (which is actually the middle part of the VHF band 30-300MHz)

403 - 512 MHz Referred to **UHF Band** (which is actually sub divided into sections within this band. 470-512 is known as T-Band because it collocates with the TV broadcast band in areas not using UHF TV channels 14 through 21)

806 - 821 MHz & 851 - 866 MHz Referred to as the **800MHz Band**

896-901 MHz & 935 - 940 MHz Referred to as the **900MHz Band**.

What is coded squelch?

The two most common types of coded squelch are called CTCSS (Continuous Tone Coded Squelch System) often referred to PL (Motorola Trade Name) Channel Guard (GE trade name), Quiet Tone (Kenwood trade name), etc.

or DCS (Digital Coded Squelch) It is important to remember that while coded squelch eliminates the annoyance of listening to other transmissions, they do not provide privacy.

How can I increase range?

Antenna height and location are vital factors to increase range. This is because the range of a radio system is theoretically limited to the radio horizon as seen by the radio antenna. The general rule of thumb is; for every ten feet of increased elevation gives one mile in increased range. Noise is a factor that can decrease range. As a radio moves away from the base station antenna it eventually receives too little energy for effective communications reception. Noise problems at these limits of the coverage area, called fringe areas, can be severe. The radio signal is simply too weak compared to the noise signal. A device called a repeater can help to solve this problem.

What is a repeater?

A repeater is a device that can transmit and receive at the same time. A repeater works by receiving a signal on one frequency and transmitting that same signal with a more powerful one on a different frequency. A repeater should be placed in the middle of the area that you want to cover. The following is a common example on how a repeater is set up.

Frequency *TPL* or *DPL* Code Receive 469.5500 103.5 (1A)
Transmit 464.5500 103.5 (1A)

How can the antenna affect range?

The type of antenna selected for use in a radio system can greatly affect the coverage of the system. It is important that you have a general understanding of antennas and their characteristics. The gray area on each picture illustrates the coverage area for each antenna.

Omni-directional antennas radiate the radio signal in a 360 degree pattern. Omni-directional antennas are used when the antenna can be located near the center of the coverage area. With this type of antenna, the range will be about the same in all directions.

*Cardioid, unidirectional, and **bi-directional* antennas increase coverage in one direction while reducing coverage in all other directions. Radio signals being received from other directions tend to be rejected. Thus, reducing the amount of interference and unwanted signals.

Cardioid antennas produce a heart-shaped radiation pattern that is concentrated in one direction, allowing a longer maximum range. Cardioid antennas are used when the antenna will be located near the edge of the coverage area.

Unidirectional antennas generate a focused radiation pattern which aims the radio signal in a narrow band in one direction. Unidirectional antennas are used when a narrow strip, or corridor area, requires coverage.

Bi-directional antennas increase coverage perpendicular to the plane of the antenna. Bi-directional antennas are used to cover a long strip of highway or a railroad right of way.

Battery Care Tips

- Charge your new battery overnight (14-16 hours) before using it. This is referred to as "initializing"; doing so will allow you to obtain maximum battery capacity.
- When using a rapid charger, leave the battery in the charger for an additional 1-2 hours after the green light appears.
- DO NOT leave your radio and battery in the charger when charging is not needed. Continuous charging will shorten battery life.
- Charge a battery only when it has been fully discharged.
- DO NOT return fully charged batteries to the charger for an "extra boost". This action will significantly reduce battery life.
- Allow the battery to stabilize to room temperature before charging. Charging below 40° F and above 104° F will decrease battery life.

Battery Storage Information

- New batteries can be stored up to two years without significant cycle loss.

- Store new batteries at room temperature, in a cool dry area.
- Batteries which have been in storage should be charged overnight prior to use.

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Sorry no column this issue.

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Let's try something different this month. I will start off with a couple of questions.

1. What frequency does Hanscom AFB public works use?
2. Does anyone have any of the freqs used by the National Wildlife Refuges in Massachusetts? Such as Parker River in Newbury and Concord River in Sudbury?
3. Does anyone have the security frequency for the Prudential Tower in Boston? (It might be 472.0625 but I am unable to confirm that).
4. Some courthouse has maintenance guys on 453.075R. It is a highrise with close to 15 stories. Anybody know if this is Pemberton Square or East Cambridge?
5. There are maintenance men ("E" units & "L" units) on 167.885R. My guess is that it is a VA Hospital. Anyone know which one?

Just wondering! Now for the goodies:

451.875R - 07 Oct 2006 - this appears to be the new security channel for Melrose Wakefield Hospital - (R = repeater output channel) - since we all know that the repeater output channels are 5 Mhz lower than the repeater input channels in the 451 Mhz to 470 MHz range, then the input to the 451.875 repeater is 456.875.

154.430 - still used by Plymouth FD for station alerting

452.900 - relay of mobile comms from North Berwick Maine PD on 159.090

151.175R - Cohasset FD is still using this channel as of 07 Oct 2006

452.6000R - some ambulance company that has a station in Woburn, and primarily handles calls from the Winchester Hospital

166.0750R - Jamaica Plain VA Hospital ran a disaster exercise on this freq on 05 Oct 2006 - units heard were "OR" "Dr Lieberman" "Command Post" "Labor Pool" "Operations" "Command Center"

Worcester has re-banded their TRS with all new 800 MHz channels

470.7375R - 03 Oct 2006 Tuesday at 1030AM - Dover PD Control ran a radio test on the "BAPER West District Channel" - some of the PDs tested were - Foxboro, Lincoln, Medway, MEMA, Millis, Natick, Needham, Norfolk, Norton, Plainville, Sherborn, Wayland, Wellesley, Wellesley College, Weston, & Wrentham. These communities are located in Norfolk County, Bristol County, and Middlesex County.

Boxborough FD still operates on 46.500. Acton FD still has this freq in all of their rigs still.

451.3250R - operations in some highrise bld of at least 18 floors

Faulkner Hospital in Boston might be adding 462.1500R to complement its 464.6250R channel.

Bourne PD has reportedly rebanded to 857.4125 : Sandwich PD to 855.1125 : Mashpee PD to 854.9375 : as of Sept 25 2006. DPL for all 3 is "445". Does anyone know why it was necessary for them to reband?

Boston University Police is reportedly using digital P25 radios on 472.1625R as of Sept 2006.

Mass State Police are using 154.9125 in the Wales area with a PL of 141.3 to patch transmissions from the C Patrol talkgroups.

Wales FD reportedly uses 151.82 with a DPL of 073 for fireground traffic. Dispatch traffic is on 33.46 with PL131.8. Wales PD was heard on 44.74 using PL141.3.

Lancaster FD is starting to use 453.2250 with PL110.9. The dispatcher is simulcasting onto 33.100.

Thats all for this month - take care - Peter S

SOUTHEASTERN NEW YORK

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Any regular user of scanning related Internet bulletin boards has to have noticed that some members who post messages like to list their monitoring equipment roster in their signature lines. Continuing in that tradition, here's some of what's in my stockpile:

Base scanners:

- Uniden Bearcat BC950XLT (with CTCSS board) *
- Uniden Bearcat 800XLT *
- Uniden Bearcat BC145XL

* Both scanners are equipped with a Radio Shack Indoor Scanner Antenna (model 20-161) and Radio Shack Extension Speaker (current model 21-549).

Portable scanners:

- Radio Shack PRO - 97 * (supported by StarrSoft.com's Win97)
- Radio Shack PRO - 94 (original version) *

* I use a 9 volt / 300 mA AC-to-DC power adapter (Radio Shack model 273-1767), with appropriate adaptaplugs, to recharge the ni-cad batteries.

Recoding Equipment:

- Emerson model PD6870RD single deck cassette recorder / AM - FM radio / Compact Disk player
- Sony model CFS-720 Radio Cassette-Corder (dual deck)

In addition, I have an Optoelectronics 1300H/A frequency counter with Radio Shack center-loaded telescoping whip antenna (model

20-006). The 1300H/A was my primary means of sniffing out frequencies during field spectrum surveillance missions until the Signal Stalker equipped PRO-97 joined my fleet; it's now in reserve status.

**Then there are the contents of my proverbial "junk drawer."
Some of the stuff in it:**

- A homebrew mag-mount VHF-low band two-way base radio antenna that I use when I'm focused on monitoring the VHF low band.
- Another Radio Shack center-loaded telescoping whip antenna (model 20-006) and a Radio Shack 800 MHz Scanner Antenna (model 20-283) for use on the PRO – 97 or PRO – 94, again, depending on what frequency band I am focusing on.
- On occasion I take my portable scanners in the field. Depending on where I need to blend in I have available a set of iPod style ear buds and a set of cellular telephone style earpieces for each of my PROs, for discrete monitoring.
- A pair of Panasonic XBS headphones; for those rare days when even a closed door to the "Radio Room" doesn't satisfy an annoyed wife...
- Assorted spare parts (i.e.: belt clips) and stock antennas salvaged from junked scanners. You'll never know when you might break something and need to press into service a quick replacement.
- Adaptors of various types (antenna, feed cable, etc.)

Lastly, on the bookshelf there's...

- Scanner Master's New York Metro / Northern New Jersey Communications Guide, 7th Edition (with editions one through six in storage)
- Radio Reporter Emergency Frequency List by Bruce Williams
- Scanner Master's Southern New England Communications Guide, 10th Edition
- Scanner Master's Monitor America, 3rd Edition
- Registry of U.S. Government Radio Frequencies, 8th Edition by Tom Kneitel
- Scanner Master's Greater Philadelphia / South Jersey Pocket Guide, 3rd Edition
- Master Frequency File by James E. Tunnell and Robert Kelty
- Radio Shack's Police Call Frequency Guide, 2004 Edition
- VHF Marine Radio Scanning Guide by Everett L. Slosman
- Fire Department of New York – an Operational Reference by James S. Griffiths
- New York City Fire Alarm Assignment and Reference Guide, 1st Edition by Eagle Enterprises (for the Box location lists)
- Hagstrom atlases for the entire New York metropolitan area
- Assorted local telephone directories
- Current and back copies of Popular Communications and Monitoring Times magazines
- Scanner Master's New York Metro / Northern New Jersey Pocket Guide, 2nd Printing (for historical purposes)

I encourage all readers to e-mail me with any comments or news regarding goings-on in the counties of Sullivan, Ulster, Orange, and Rockland on the west bank of the Hudson Valley; Dutchess, Putnam, and Westchester on the east bank; New York City; and Nassau and Suffolk on Long Island.

That's all I've got for this calendar quarter. As the AAA bumper Stickers read: School's Open. Drive Carefully.

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

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Sorry no column this issue.

EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

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Hello everyone!! Typing this edition and the temperature is around 72 and yesterday we had a high around 77 and this would be October 10th. Hard to believe winter is around the corner.

I asked Lou about adding a Co-Column editor for Eastern PA so this would be my plea, anybody interested in this position please contact myself or the Publisher. We would take turns submitting columns. I would like to see someone from outside my monitoring area in the Wilkes-Barre area or West Harrisburg region.

Over the summer we took a trip to Ashland, Pa. which is Northern part of Schuylkill County. We toured the Pioneer Tunnel Coal Mine & Steam train which was very educational. After the tour we took a short ride to a town called Centralia, Pa. just north of Ashland in Columbia County.

Centralia, Pa. is NOT A TOURIST destination in fact most maps will not even publish the town's location. Going North on Rte.61 past Ashland you will go up a hill and at the top you will see a detour that now takes you threw the town. Rte.61 is CLOSED due to a buckle in the middle of the road.

Some of you might know the story, sometime in 1962 along the outskirts of town trash was burned in and abandoned strip mine which was connected to a coal vein running near the surface. The burning trash caught this vein, even though they believed the fire to be out it wasn't. The fire expanded under the vein burning the coal underground along the way. This fire still burns today; you can see numerous locations in town with smoke coming out of the surface of the earth.

Most of the town's residents have moved, however a few still live in the town. Monitoring devices check the air quality numerous times a day.

This actually brings us to the reason for this article. After checking out the town we came across Borough Hall located on Rte.54 just north of Rte. 42 intersection. Located in the garage is a fire truck and one ambulance ran by two families still living in the area. Unfortunately they do not like to be interviewed. I was able to contact some one and they told me they average 30 calls a year most highway incidents or medical emergencies like other departments. Mt.Carmel is the Paramedic unit for the squad. The town has about 10 families still living in the borough. They are dispatched by Columbia County. Located is a picture of the Borough Hall you can see the engine and ambulance.

AGAIN WARNING AND DANGER SIGNS ARE POSTED AROUND TOWN!!! USE CAUTION AND AT YOUR OWN RISK... For further information check out:

<http://www.offroaders.com/album/centralia/2005-photo-doc/index.html>

Now on to other news, with approach of winter time scanner monitors tune out summer time frequencies and update scanners with public works and utility frequencies. Anyway I do.

First Energy – MetEd operates a 800Mhz EDACS system that covers numerous locations. The following is the system layout:

Ch.01	856.3875	Ch.02	857.3875
Ch.03	858.3875	Ch.04	859.3875
Ch.05	860.3875		

Berks – Lebanon Area:

# 0610 Reading Line	# 0611 Reading Construction
# 0612 Reading – Meter Readers	# 0620 Boyertown Line
# 0584 Lebanon – trouble Desk	# 0621 Hamburg Line

Other talk group id's are coming up but unknown use as of yet.

Pennsylvania Power & Light Company or PPL is still using Lo-band frequencies for most communications. The primary Lehigh Valley frequency is 037.7000 with PL146.2, Most units call into the Allentown Dispatcher on this frequency. The headquarters in Allentown has 451.2000 PL146.2 and 451.6750 PL146.2 for operations. Other frequencies licensed but used in other areas:

037.4600, 037.4800, 037.6200, 037.6600, 037.7400, 037.7600, 037.8200, 037.860MHz

037.6000 Pocono Area 159.5100 Allentown Area

Well that should do it for this issue, Again keep on scanning and send me your input, or suggestions. We could have a lot more to talk about but with winter at the back door step and trying to get things ready computer sit down time is not that easy. Hope to hear from you. As always Be Safe & Take Care.

Steve Bower, Jr.

VERMONT

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Hello again from the Green Mountain state, soon to be covered with whiteness. Let's get right to this issue's tidbits.

Burlington Air Show

I attended the air show and Vermont Air National Guard open house last August in Burlington. Let me tell you, this was one great event! The flying was terrific on Saturday and even though it absolutely poured during the open house on Sunday, it didn't dampen the spirits of those who attended; we just tucked our radios under our rain parkas. Air shows are radio hot-spots offering a wide variety of listening opportunities and no matter what your monitoring interest, there was something interesting to which to listen constantly; in fact, at times, almost too much to try to follow. These frequencies were heard in use either at the Burlington airport or on the waterfront over the course of the two day event.

122.7750 - performer's air-to-air
123.4000 - Alternate command post at the airport

123.4750 - Golden Knights parachute team
125.1250 - air boss at waterfront
135.1250 - performers air-to-crowd
137.3750 - unided in FM, heard at airport
140.4000 - flight line at ANG base
143.4250 - security at ANG base
143.8750 - "director"; event coordination at waterfront
148.5875 - ANG maintenance
157.0500 - US Coast Guard
157.1750 - US Coast Guard Auxiliary
165.1125 - ANG fire at the airport
168.3500 - Civilian VIP security detail
396.8750 - Civil Air Patrol personnel
413.2750 - Thunderbirds ground support at airport
460.5000 - Police security

Vermont State Police Deploys MDTs into Cars

If you're hearing fewer 10-27s and 10-28s being run through your local Vermont State Police (VSP) dispatcher lately, it's probably because new data terminals have been placed in some VSP cars as of this writing and troopers can now obtain license and registration information right in their cars.

Berlin PD Scrambles

Berlin PD has started using voice inversion technology on their operations frequency, 461.6500. When they use it, they cannot be understood at all so it's quite effective at preventing citizens from eavesdropping.

New Security Frequency at Vermont Technical College

Vermont Technical College's security in Randolph Center has started using a new frequency for their repeater output. You can hear them now on 155.6700. They appear to have abandoned their old frequency of 154.1000.

Civil Air Patrol Update

Over the summer, I had a chance to attend an event that was also attended by the Civil Air Patrol and it appears there have been few if any changes to their frequency line-up in the past year. Their main statewide repeater frequency is 148.1500 and I've caught flights this fall working 122.9000 as an air-to-air.

Newport PD Hear Unencrypted

During a recent trip to Newport, I noticed that Newport PD's dispatch was heard in analog. The cars are still using P-25 digital voice. Last spring when I was in Newport, their PD was running 100% encryption on their dispatch frequency. For monitors in the Newport area, a change like this, even if only temporary is a welcome change.

And that's it from Vermont for this issue. If you'd like to contribute to the Vermont column; drop me a line at the address shown above, please.

PHILADELPHIA METRO

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Sorry no column this issue.

MAINE

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Here's a picture of the MSP Coogan's Bluff microwave link.



MONMOUTH -- Switching emergency dispatch service from Winthrop to the county has pleased local public safety directors, but they're also eager to work out some bugs that have, at times, jeopardized communications. The town recently switched its dispatch service, which coordinates response with emergency personnel, from its Winthrop base to the Kennebec County Sheriff's Office. But technical problems have arisen in cases when all three branches -- police, fire and medical -- respond to an emergency. County dispatchers have said that sometimes the signal cuts out, and first responders cannot be heard. Monmouth Fire Chief Andre Poulin said the intermittent sound holes are most likely linked to the hardware. "Which is very, very difficult to isolate," he said. Over the weekend, a problem was discovered with a county radio that may have been the culprit. Since its repair, such dead spots have not come up nearly as much. "We're in the hopes that we found the issue," Poulin said. In May, town officials claimed that residents would save money and have access to better technology by joining county services. Monmouth paid about \$36,000 a year to Winthrop for its 911 dispatch center. This year, residents are projected to pay the Kennebec County Sheriff's Office about half that. "It's a new system. It's going to have bugs," said Monmouth Police Chief Robert Annese. "It's going to take time to work these out." One issue being worked out is how to get police away from sharing the same signal as fire and medical responders. "It simply is jammed," Poulin said. All of the police departments Annese has worked for have been separate, he said, and usually work in unison with other local police agencies. "It is more advantageous for us to be on a police frequency," he said. Once the problems are solved, police officers will have mobile access to state and national crime records through their cars' laptops. Such a service would not have been provided with Winthrop, Poulin said. "We're going to have a better

dispatch center when it's done," he said. "It's a fairly sophisticated system." Calls to the Monmouth Rescue Association were not returned, but according to Poulin, the local and county agencies have been meeting almost every other week to help coordinate the adjustment. "You get a new system, and people have to get used to it," said Annese.

In 2005, there were approximately 587,000 911 calls received by Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) in the state of Maine. Many of these calls were requests for emergency medical assistance. Over 700 public safety telecommunicators provide an incredible service to our state by receiving, processing, and dispatching such calls. Emergency Medical Dispatchers become the "first" first responder; turning sometimes panicked callers into conduits of First Aid and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR). EMD has been used for many years in parts of Maine, across the country, and around the world. It is credited with saving the lives of innumerable victims as well as protecting emergency responders. Many areas of the United States are still not provided EMD services, however, and an estimated 38% of PSAPs in Maine were not providing Emergency Medical Dispatch at the outset of this project. Even where EMD has been undertaken, it can be improved, especially with greater attention to quality assurance.

To address these gaps in Maine, Stephan Bunker of the Emergency Services Communications Bureau (ESCB), along with Maine Emergency Medical Services, the Maine chapter of the American Heart Association, and other collaborators, put forward legislation that was enacted in the 2005 state legislative session. This law mandates, with funding support, the statewide implementation and ongoing evaluation of Emergency Medical Dispatch commencing on January 1st, 2007.

The state needs to be extremely cautious before they take yet another "job" away from local agencies. Towns/cities with any real-sized populations, such as Waterville, are well-served by their dispatch/911 call centers (a.k.a. PSAP's.) The good folks in Waterville know their own residents, and the nuances of their city, far better than a dispatcher located down in Augusta. Proponents talk about "monetary savings" by going to more regional PSAP's. Where does our society draw the line between a faceless bureaucracy and a personalized, up close and personal service as rendered by Augusta or Waterville dispatch centers? One is also reminded of the adage "Don't put all your eggs in one basket." What happens (heaven forbid) if the Augusta "SuperMax" Dispatch Center goes offline? What then? Will we hear the Hurricane Katrina/Ray Nagin mantra that "it wasn't my fault"? As of now, all agencies in Maine have the ability to communicate with the various different dispatch centers via a frequency known as StateWide Car to Car (154.695 MHz.) Additionally, each Trooper and Deputy Sheriff has the major radio repeaters programmed in their radios in the event one of the dispatch centers goes down. Redundancy of communications is CRUCIAL in an emergency. All one has to do is read the after-action report on the catastrophic communications failures experienced by public safety agencies in Louisiana. The FCC was highly critical of the lack of interoperability between the agencies and jurisdictions. This is a matter of very public record. The folks at the Kennebec County Sheriff's Office do a fantastic job on all fronts, to include dispatching. Will the next move on the part of the "all-knowing" state of Maine be to attempt to roll the Sheriffs' Departments under the aegis of the Maine Department of Public Safety? Let us not forget that Sheriffs' Departments in Maine have been serving since the 1790's, with the leadership being

voted in or out of office every four years. This is not to take anything away from the other squared-away agencies protecting our citizenry, either. If the only reason to swap horses in midstream, so to speak, is a monetary one, are we forgetting another adage: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!"

A fool and his money are soon parted. Enough said there.

Another good link:

http://www.maine911.com/laws_rules/chapter1.htm

Regional 911 dispatch plan is criticized

Waterville Police Chief John E. Morris is angry about a state plan to eliminate the city's 911 dispatch system and have 911 calls taken by dispatchers at the Central Maine Regional Communication Center in Augusta.

Morris says the change would cost taxpayers more money, and precious time will be lost during emergencies because the 911 calls will go to the regional center and then be transferred back to Waterville dispatchers.

"Not only is the 911 center being forced out of Waterville, we are now going to have the privilege of being charged a per capita cost to use 911," Morris said. "The people who are going to have to pay the cost are the homeowners and the business owners, in increased property taxes." As part of the plan, the state is mandating that only the 911 calls be taken by the regional center. Law enforcement agencies whose Public Safety Answering Points, or 911 centers, will be required to close may maintain dispatch centers for taking other, non-911 calls or have the regional center handle them. Albert Gervenack, director of the Emergency Services Communications Bureau, which implements and operates E 911 services, disputes the claim that communities will lose money using a regional center. He said such centers work well all over the United States. "It's a good thing because it can save the community a lot of money," Gervenack, whose office is in the Public Utilities Commission, said Friday. "Many of the places that have consolidated in the past have saved money. Orono closed its PSAP and dispatch center and went to the Penobscot County Regional Center. They paid their fair share and saved \$100,000 because they didn't have to hire 24/7. It takes 51/2 people to cover that time frame."

The Utilities Commission staff recommended that Waterville police and Kennebec County Sheriff's Office 911 systems be closed. The Gardiner police Department answering point has already changed to the regional center and Augusta Police Department and Winthrop Communications Center are discussing using the regional center, according to Utilities Commission documents. Morris and Kennebec Sheriff Everett B. Flannery Jr. in June sent letters to the state explaining why they oppose the plan. Flannery said Friday that he thinks consolidation is a great idea if the work can be done with equal or greater efficiency than is currently in place, and he is starting to negotiate with the regional center to see if it would work for the 13 communities for which the sheriff's office dispatches. He hopes it will work out, he said. "The last thing you want to do, in my opinion, is combine these (answering points) for the sake of combining (them) when you are reducing services to the public," Flannery said. Morris and Flannery are the only two who said 'no,' out of the entire state. Currently, there are 46 answering points in the state. The state Legislature mandates that that number be reduced to 26 by Oct. 1, 2007.

Morris says the Waterville center handles an average of 32 911 calls a day and last year, took more than 35,000 calls for service

from the three communities, as well as from Delta Ambulance Service. "The removal of the PSAP capabilities from Waterville is not prudent and threatens the immediate response time to northern Kennebec County residents who are in distress or danger," Morris' June 15 letter to Kurt Adams, chairman of the Utilities Commission. Winslow Police Chief Michael Heavener also said he is concerned about having 911 calls directed to Augusta, costing his town more money and possibly resulting in decreased services. Heavener represents the Maine Chiefs of Police on the Maine Communications systems Policy Board (Flannery also is a member), which establishes policies regarding the regionalizing of dispatch centers. The committee has always promoted the idea that participation should never be mandatory, Heavener said. "Waterville PD provides a service (to Winslow) and we've been happy with that," he said. **POTENTIAL COSTS**: If Waterville decided to have both 911 and non-911 calls go through the regional center, the cost to the city, per capita, would be \$22, for a total of \$343,310, according to figures issued by Gervenack's office. The population of the city is listed at 15,605. Morris said the city's communications or dispatch center budget, including 911 calls and other services, is now \$338,610, but \$80,000 of that comes from Winslow and Oakland, as well as Delta Ambulance, who pay fees to the city. In the long run, the city would pay more to use the regional center, according to Morris.

"It's not going to save us any money," he said. Winslow's annual cost, per capita, for dispatching services at the regional center would be \$8 per capita, for a total of \$61,944. The town's population is listed at 7,743. Winslow currently pays Waterville \$30,000 for taking 911 calls, and for after hours-calls. Gervenack said he does not know what, if any, fee will be charged to communities to take non-911 calls. If Waterville's 911 dispatch center closes, dispatchers would still have to be employed to take walk-in and other calls, monitor software systems, manage fire box alarm calls and handle direct lines with emergency rooms -- all at added costs, according to Morris. He said he questions the state's intentions. "I sense that forcing us to give up our 911 calls to the (regional communications center) is just the beginning of the manipulation to get all dispatch centers into the (regional communications center)."

Rumford, Dixfield sign up to dispatch from county center

RUMFORD - The last two remaining fire departments in the county that don't receive dispatching services from the Oxford County Regional Communications Center in Paris will sign on Sept. 1. At least 1,000 additional emergency calls will be fielded annually when the Rumford Fire Department and the Dixfield Fire Co. tie in. At least one additional dispatcher will be hired to join the 11 dispatchers now serving the communications center. The county answers calls for every police department in the county except 12 hours a day for Rumford.

John Woulfe, Rumford fire chief, said the decision to go with the county came to a head after a visit by the state Fire Marshal's Office last winter. After that visit, nearly a dozen volunteer firefighters were barred from responding to emergency calls because of lack of approved training. That action resulted in more responsibility falling to the full-time firefighting staff. Now, one of the four on-duty firefighters is assigned to the dispatch desk. Once such calls come through the county, all four firefighters will be available to respond to emergency calls. "This will provide a better level of service to the town," he said. The only changes that must be made within the system in Rumford include tying in the 100 or so call boxes posted throughout the town and in several businesses, such as the local paper mill. Woulfe said his

department is looking into the options for making the tie-in. The county service will save the town money because the communications center has the necessary equipment to complete the tie-in. Woulfe also wants any business that has a self-dialer device to notify the department so those can be tied-in, as well. The Dixfield Fire Co. has contracted with the Rumford Fire Department for the past two years for dispatching services at an annual fee of \$600. With Rumford going with the county, then Dixfield must, too. Dixfield Fire Chief Scott Dennett said his department will need about \$4,000 to purchase updated pagers so they can be hooked into the county dispatch center. The money is not in the department's budget because he did not know that Rumford was planning to change to county dispatch prior to the annual Dixfield town meeting in June. "We may have to go to the town for money from reserve accounts or come up with something else," he said Wednesday afternoon. "We'll be ready for the change one way or another." He said receiving dispatch services from the county wouldn't make a difference. "It's comparable to what the Dixfield Fire Co. has been doing, just a different way of doing things," he said. Woulfe said from a resident perspective, the change in dispatchers will be seamless. The added dispatching service to both towns will not cost either more money. County tax covers the costs.

Knox County updates:

KNOX RCC-Knox County Fire and EMS primary communications frequency. Used to send tone alarms (page-outs) to fire and EMS departments and for general communications. Repeater located on Ragged Mountain. 153.9725R 141.3 PL

KNOX EMS-Knox County Fire and EMS tactical working frequency. Used for multi-jurisdictional responses to major incidents and as backup to the primary KNOX RCC. May be used by law enforcement when required. Repeater located on Benner Hill. 155.3850R 103.5 PL

KNOX TAC-Knox County Law Enforcement tactical frequency. Used for incident command in a multi-jurisdictional response scenario. Repeater located on Ragged Mountain. 154.2200R 151.4 PL

KNOX LAW-Knox County Law Enforcement primary frequency. Used for dispatch purposes by Knox County Sheriff's Office (SO), Rockport Police Department, and other law enforcement agencies. Repeater located on Ragged Mountain. 158.8800R 141.3 PL

Waldo County updates:

WALDO North: Waldo County RCC. Used to send tone alarms (page-outs) to fire and EMS departments and for general communications in Searsport, Liberty, Palermo, Belmont, Morrill, Montville, Freedom, Brooks, Monroe, Thorndike, Jackson, Unity, Troy, Burnham. Located on Mt. Waldo 153.950R 123.0 PL

WALDO South: Waldo County RCC. Used to send tone alarms (page-outs) to fire and EMS departments and for general communications in Belfast, Northport, Searsport, Waldo, Swanville, Stockton Springs, Prospect, Winterport. Lincolnville, while in Waldo County, is paged by Knox RCC. Located on Mt. Ephraim 159.135R 123.0 PL

Maine State Police Zone #2 dispatching updates:

Augusta Regional Communications Center (RCC) of the Maine State Police now dispatches the following towns for fire/EMS and also Gardiner PD: Gardiner, West Gardiner, Farmingdale, Pittston, Randolph, Litchfield, Windsor and Palermo. One long-

time and seasoned RCC dispatcher recently made a passing comment that Kennebec County SO would, most likely, eventually be included in the dispatching responsibilities of the Augusta RCC. *Editor's note: this seems highly improbable, given the different municipalities that KSO handles; to include the autonomy KSO exercises and enjoys. Additionally, each Sheriff's Office is situated, both figuratively and literally at the seat of each County government. This includes maintaining a penal facility of some sort.*

Lincoln County COMMUNICATIONS 9-1-1 CENTER

The Lincoln County 9-1-1 Communications Center is staffed by a Director, Deputy Director, 7 Full-time and 9 Reserve Communications Officers. There are two Communications Officers on duty at the Center 24 hours a day. These dedicated individuals are ready to take Emergency and Non-Emergency calls that are received on (22) twenty-two 9-1-1 lines, as well as (7) seven business lines. The Communications Officers have the capability to dispatch and tone out Police, Fire or EMS on 9 radio frequencies. The Communications Center has the capability to page out all 18 Fire Departments within the county, 4 Ambulance Services and 5 Law Enforcement Agencies. The Center continuously work with all area departments, as well as the Maine State Police, Maine Warden Service, Marine Patrol, Forestry and the local United States Coast Guard Station in Boothbay Harbor. All full and part time Communications Personnel are certified on the Teletype System. A one week school at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy must be attended by all staff within one year of hire, and are re-certified every two years. This school certifies the Communications Officer to run registration and license checks, enter lost or stolen items into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), check for missing or wanted persons. The system also has the capabilities to check registrations on snowmobiles, boats, boat trailers, ATVs, airplanes, enter wanted or missing person, monitor the weather nationwide, and can run hazardous material information. Communications Officers are professionals, functioning as "First Responders", to every call, whether for Police, Fire or Emergency Medical Services. They serve as the eyes and ears, although never physically present at the emergency scene. Few people are aware of the complexities of the job and the dedication that it takes.

Enhanced 9-1-1 is coming soon to Maine and Lincoln County hopes to be one of the first to have this technology. It will enable Communications Officers to see the physical address of the caller on their computer screen, as the 9-1-1 call rings in. This will save time, and time saves lives. This informative screen will give the name of the caller, the physical address, and the telephone number. The Communications Officer will confirm this information and send out the appropriate response, whether for Police, Fire or EMS. This will make the job of the Communications Officer more efficient and certainly faster. Here is a "neato-keen" link to a phone number contact list for the LSO:

<http://co.lincoln.me.us/depts/cardyel.pdf>



Get past issues of the Scanner Digest Newsletter. Issues 1 through 21 are in printed format. They're shipped out first-class mail post-paid for \$2.87 each. Check with us for availability for issue number requested.



Issues 22 through to 37 are in an easy-to-read PDF format. These electronic versions of the Scanner Digest Newsletter are available for free! Just send us your email address and you'll be placed on our distribution list to receive future issues of the newsletter.

National Weather Service updates for Maine:

<u>COUNTY-CITY - AREA</u>	<u>SAME #</u>	<u>NWR XMITTER</u>	<u>FREQ.</u>	<u>CALL SIGN</u>	<u>PWR</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
Androscoggin	023001	Dresden	162.475	WSM60	300	East
Androscoggin	023001	Falmouth	162.550	KDO95	500	SOUTHERN 1/2
Androscoggin	023001	Holderness, NH	162.550	WNG545	300	
Androscoggin	023001	Sugarloaf Mtn	162.450	WNG547	300	North 1/2
Aroostook	023003	Caribou	162.525	WXM77	500	
Aroostook	023003	Frenchville	162.475	KHB55	300	N
Aroostook	023003	Springfield	162.500	WXN28	1000	S
Cumberland	023005	Falmouth	162.550	KDO95	500	
Cumberland	023005	Holderness, NH	162.550	WNG545	300	
Franklin	023007	Holderness, NH	162.550	WNG545	300	EXPT N
Franklin	023007	Sugarloaf Mtn	162.450	WNG547	300	
Hancock	023009	Ellsworth	162.400	KEC93	1000	
Kennebec	023011	Dresden	162.475	WSM60	300	
Kennebec	023011	Falmouth	162.550	KDO95	500	SOUTHERN 1/3
Kennebec	023011	Holderness, NH	162.550	WNG545	300	
Kennebec	023011	Sugarloaf Mtn	162.450	WNG547	300	North 1/2
Knox	023013	Sugarloaf Mtn	162.450	WNG547	300	Northwest
Lincoln	023015	Falmouth	162.550	KDO95	500	W
Lincoln	023015	Holderness, NH	162.550	WNG545	300	
Oxford	023017	Falmouth	162.550	KDO95	500	FAR S
Oxford	023017	Holderness, NH	162.550	WNG545	300	
Penobscot	023019	Caribou	162.525	WXM77	500	N
Penobscot	023019	Ellsworth	162.400	KEC93	1000	S
Penobscot	023019	Milo	162.450	KHB54	1000	
Penobscot	023019	Springfield	162.500	WXN28	1000	
Penobscot	023019	Sugarloaf Mtn	162.450	WNG547	300	Northwest
Piscataquis	023021	Greenville	162.425	WNG542	300	
Piscataquis	023021	Milo	162.450	KHB54	1000	
Piscataquis	023021	Sugarloaf Mtn	162.450	WNG547	300	S 2/3
Sagadahoc	023023	Dresden	162.475	WSM60	300	
Sagadahoc	023023	Falmouth	162.550	KDO95	500	
Sagadahoc	023023	Holderness, NH	162.550	WNG545	300	
Somerset	023025	Greenville	162.425	WNG542	300	Central
Somerset	023025	Holderness, NH	162.550	WNG545	300	EXTRMSW
Somerset	023025	Milo	162.450	KHB54	1000	Extreme SE
Somerset	023025	Sugarloaf Mtn	162.450	WNG547	300	Southern 2/3
Waldo	023027	Dresden	162.475	WSM60	300	Far SW
Waldo	023027	Ellsworth	162.400	KEC93	1000	SE
Washington	023029	Ellsworth	162.400	KEC93	1000	W 1/2
Washington	023029	Jonesboro (Marine)	162.450	WNG543	1000	
Washington	023029	Meddybemps	162.425	KHC47	300	
Washington	023029	Springfield	162.500	WXN28	1000	
York	023031	Concord, NH	162.400	WXJ40	330	SW
York	023031	Deerfield, NH	162.450	KZZ40	300	Southern 1/2
York	023031	Falmouth	162.550	KDO95	500	
York	023031	Holderness, NH	162.550	WNG545	300	

Interesting article:

http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/docs/State_Interoperable_Communications.pdf

Here's a link to FEMA firefighter "requirements" which will directly impact many small departments in Maine:

<http://www.bangornews.com/news/templates/default.aspx?a=138723&template=print-article.htm>

Potential Civil Air Patrol changes to P-25: EFJ, Inc. (NASDAQ: EFJI) announced today that its EFJohnson subsidiary has received an order from the Civil Air Patrol (CAP). The order, valued at \$4.4 million, calls for EFJohnson to provide CAP with its Project 25 compliant radios and accessories. "CAP has a unique role working with the Air Force, emergency response and law

enforcement agencies at the federal, state, and local levels," said LtCol Paul K. Reid, Jr., Civil Air Patrol Communications Program Advisor. "For this reason interoperability is critical to our communications planning. The EFJohnson P25-compliant equipment helps us address our interoperability needs as well as our mandated transition to FM narrowband."

"We are proud that the Civil Air Patrol, which is the official civilian auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, has again chosen EFJohnson to supply interoperable communications solutions for their mission," said Michael E. Jalbert, chairman and chief executive officer of EFJ, Inc. "CAP has been a customer for more than three years, and we are pleased with their continued confidence in our solutions."

Our governor, John Elias Baldacci, is now KB1NXP.

Click on the link:

<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2006/09/07/102/?nc=1>

We here in Augusta are voting for Chandler Woodcock this November, and he has yet to get an amateur callsign...

Until next time, GET OUT AND VOTE, and obey Acts 2:38! See you on SCAN-ME at Yahoo! Groups. **GOD BLESS AMERICA** as we **SUPPORT OUR TROOPS**. Best to all! Loren

OREGON

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Sorry no column this issue.

ScannerDigest Newsletter

Welcome to the Scanner Digest Newsletter! We're currently publishing a bi-monthly e-magazine containing information for the scanner hobbyist. If it can be monitored on a scanner, we'll attempt to cover it from 30 to 1300 MHz and beyond!

Our purpose is to produce a newsletter to facilitate the exchange of information pertaining to the various services covered by a typical scanner radio. Dedicated regional column editors make up the heart of this publication.

The Scanner Digest Newsletter is not responsible for the accuracy or consequences incurred regarding the use of information listed in this publication. Since the purpose of this newsletter is to provide a platform for the submission and exchange of radio communication information, it thus becomes impossible to deem all contents as accurate. The very nature of radio licensing and usage makes it difficult to verify the accuracy of the information contained within. Generally information listed within the pages of the newsletter are derived from multiply sources including current FCC files, hobbyists and those directly involved with various public safety agencies.

Scanner Digest's policy has been not to limit or edit the individual columns submitted, unless we deem the information sensitive in nature which may jeopardize the safety of the parties involved. Only in this case will we edit out this type of input. (Example: We will not publish the frequencies used by a law enforcement surveillance team.)

Naturally the comments of the various column editors are not necessarily the views and opinions of the Scanner Digest Newsletter. All materials, maps, information, photographs submitted to a regional column editor or to Scanner Digest directly, become sole property of the Scanner Digest Newsletter. We encourage and will make every effort to give proper credit to all submissions. All contents within are copyrighted. ©2003-2006

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