



ZERO BEAT

<http://hcra.org>

January 2020

Special points of interest:

Next Meeting:

January 3, 2020—We will learn about the Emergency Operations Center in Springfield.

- [Visit the HCRA facebook page.](#)
- Don't forget to check out hcra.org
- Our section webpage—WMA.ARRL.org
- [Visit Summits on the Air](#)
- [Visit POTA413 facebook page](#)

Hello everyone,

Wow—a new year... hopefully with better band conditions ;-)

As everyone that participated in the 10M contest (and HCRA had 19 members submit logs) the band was noisy, and conditions for dx were short and spotty. I caught one short meteor hit for 3 contacts to FL, the rest were mostly fellow HCRA members. Had more ragchewing during the contest than I hear on the Monday net!

The ARRL has a new magazine out, specifically focused on new hams. Look at the ARRL info page for more about it, and the technical lab that ARRL has.

This month we will be visited by Bob Hassett from the Springfield Emergency Operations Center. Emergency communications is one of the hallmarks of amateur radio—we have a long history of providing help in emergencies. A do not miss meeting for sure!!

Larry W1AST has found a fox hunt for New Years Day—he sent out a group email, Contact him if you are interested, Larry has really been bitten by the fox!!

Several contests coming up— North America QSO Party should be a big one, with pileups all over the contest bands. I may give that one a try! Hope to hear you on the air...

73, John N1JIE

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Win a Honda EU2200i Generator

**Tickets \$10 each
Only 250 to be sold**

**Drawing to be held at
the MTARA HamFest
March 2020 or when
all tickets sold.**



FROM THE SHACK

LARRY KRAINSON W1AST



Happy New Year!!

The 2019 ARRL 10m contest has just ended and the 10m band was not good. Nearly every contact was a challenge at this location. An S7 noise level certainly didn't help at all. CW contacts outnumbered SSB by more than 3 to 1. But even with lousy condition, it was a heck of a lot of fun!

January brings Straight Key Night on New Year Eve, an ARRL RTTY contest, 160m cw contest, North American QSO Party, Winter Field Day, plus lots of smaller contests. There is one for everyone. I hope to participate in at least a few if not all of the ones I listed.

January is a good time to turn on the HF rig and scroll thru the bands and make some casual contacts. It's a great time to ragchew and enjoy this wonderful hobby.

Another January activity is the annual New Years Day foxhunt hosted by the Bears of Manchester. Last year I went with WA1OJN and WM1B and we had an absolute blast! You can learn more here: <https://www.w1brs.com/> It's a good hunt to put those fox hunt antennas and attenuators that you built last April to good use. It's easier with a few people in the vehicle but certainly doable by yourself. Paul, N1TUP the annual fox always has hot soup and snacks at the foxes den. Add in good stories of the hunt, meeting new people and it ends up being a fun few hours. I hope to see you at the starting point!

The January meeting has Bob Hassett from the Springfield Emergency Preparedness coming to talk to us and tell us all about what goes on in that building, what they do, some of the cool electronics they use and how ham radio plays a part in it all. This will be a very interesting meeting and one you do not want to miss! Join us on Friday, January 3rd. Doors open at 7 pm and the meetings starts promptly at 7:30 pm. I hope to see you there!

The HCRA is hoping to do a ham class this Spring. But we are in need of a volunteer to organize and work with instructors in planning and running the classes. Usually the head organizer would find volunteers to teach certain elements of the class, take care of publicizing the class and planning the test at the end. If you would like to do this, please contact myself or anyone on the HCRA board.

I'd like to welcome Paul, NF1G who has volunteered to take over the Secretary duties from Harold, N1FTP. Harold has done a phenomenal job over the past few years and will be missed. Also Bob, WA1OJN has joined the board taking over the empty At-Large position. Both have already attended the last board meeting and are already contributing to the club. It's not too early to start thinking how YOU can help the HCRA. The June elections are just 6 months away and your help is very welcome!

These cold months are a great time to get on the HF. I do hope to hear you on the air and see you at the January meeting!

73,

Larry/W1AST

The North American QSO Party (CW/SSB) is in January

This contest is in 2 parts over 2 separate weekends—one for CW and one for SSB. Actually, there is a 3rd weekend in February for RTTY, but the rules are pretty much the same for all of them. This would be a good one to do a bit of DX collecting—because the world will be trying to contact US!! And it repeats in the summer, so you can get some summer contesting in too!



Some differences from other contests:

- This is a barefoot contest—no amplifiers!! You are either QRP (<5w) or low power (100w). Anything above will be a check log.
- The multipliers are only North America. Now this is much more than US and Canada—don't forget most of the Caribbean... <https://www.ng3k.com/Dxcc/dxccna.html>. These are the multipliers. The rest of the world will still count as a contact!!
- It's a 12 hour format—you can contest and still have a life!! You can only operate 10 of the 12 hours (single operator), breaks must be 30 minutes minimum.
- No spotting software use allowed (for single operators—multi operators have different rules).
- There will be band hopping—so folks with multi band antennas (e.g. G5RV type) will be able to move about quickly to get contacts.

This is a perfect contest for new hams and experienced hams alike. There will be pileups, but it should be manageable. You won't be fighting that guy with a 75' tower and 1500w to break in. And EU and SA will be trying to contact YOU to get the multiplier.

The official web page for the contest is <https://ncjweb.com/naqp/>. Make sure you read the rules and setup your logging program for the contest (I use N3JFP, most use N1MM). Make sure you know your response, and are ready to record the response of your contact, and get on the air. It should be a fun time for each mode, and a good possibility to collect a DX during these trying band conditions.

73,

N1JIE

N1JIE

N1JIE

SCHEDULED MEETINGS AND SPEAKERS:

 <p>September</p>		Everything you wanted to know about Mag Loop Antennas by Ted Robinson, K1QAR
<p>OCTOBER</p>		Rich Collins, K2UPS of the Long Island CW Group & showcase his key collection
 <p>November</p>		The Amazing Transatlantic Feat of 1901 by Marconi – K1ZM, Jeff via Skype as he is in PEI
 <p>DECEMBER</p>		The annual HCRA / MTARA Holiday party
 <p>JANUARY</p>		Bob Hassett Springfield emergency preparedness & EOC facility
 <p>FEBRUARY</p>		Bob, K1YO – ARES and it's recent come back in Western MA
 <p>MARCH</p>		Rob Macedo KC1DY talks all about Skywarn and how important it is for weather tracking
 <p>April</p>		Show & Tell — members bring in their projects and show them off!!
 <p>MAY</p>		Marty Sullaway, NNIC: Team Exuberance – teens and contesting
 <p>JUNE</p>		Elections, Field Day and more?

ARRL STUFF

Things are happening in the world of Amateur Radio. ARRL is our advocate for Government, education and organization. I hope everyone that is a member of HCRA is also a member of ARRL.

On the Air magazine!

New for 2020—a new publication for members of ARRL, specifically focused on beginner to intermediate amateurs. It comes out 6 times a year, and is both online and print. The first issue should be available in mid January 2020. I am looking forward to seeing what is in it—while I have passed my extra test, I'm a new ham, and this will have plenty for me also.

Digital publications of QST and *On the Air* are also available also for Android / Apple / Kindle platforms.

For more information, links to the mobile apps and digital editions of QST and *On the Air* visit the ARRL webpage at <http://www.arrl.org/On-the-Air-Magazine>

ARRL Laboratory

You know those product reviews in each issue of QST? Well, the ARRL Laboratory is much more than that. The lab is also very involved in Radio Frequency Interference (RFI) research and problem resolution, Spectrum Protection of amateur frequencies from commercial products, and a deep pool of technical information for use by members.

Technical advocacy—this is where the lab staff maintain contact within the technical industries to work to fix RFI issues before they get into the consumer world. Membership on committees for IEEE and ANSI for RFI / EMC as well as informal contact with cable, telecommunication and broadband industries.

So, how does that help you with that odd noise that showed up on your radio after the xyl got home from shopping? There are a bunch of resources—look through the past articles, read through the FAQ answers to common problems, and if you are really stumped—there is an email to the Technical Information Service that should get you an answer.

And just about everything that the lab has published is available in the online archives.

Read about all that the Technical Laboratory does for ARRL and it's members. Starting point is <http://www.arrl.org/arrl-lab>

Oh, and yes... you can lookup the ARRL product review and test for that rig you are looking at. Much more detail and less biased than other review sites.

Membership is just \$49/yr, less than a weekly coffee at Dunks...

To learn more about membership, and how it can help you—<http://www.arrl.org/membership>

Clublog update: Clublog can be accessed at <https://clublog.org/league.php> Signup is free, and there are a number of ways to lookup information. Give it a try.

DXCC Leagues
The leagues are rebuilt once per day. Only callsigns active in the last 12 months are included in the league tables. The maximum size of a league is 2000 participants.

Filter by club/continent: HCRA - Hampden County Radio Association

Rank	Callsign	160	80	60	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	6	DXCC	Slots	Range
1	NV1Q-3	26	134	0	178	111	308	256	314	232	256	2	329	1817	40 yrs
2	KK1W-1	124	178	7	283	203	303	289	275	211	231	20	327	2084	43 yrs
3	NF1G	0	126	0	201	230	225	243	209	138	73	14	290	1459	4 yrs
4	W1PY-1	34	105	0	188	83	230	199	237	128	204	3	286	1391	9 yrs
5	K1VOI	5	54	2	103	49	108	138	159	88	142	3	245	917	18 yrs
6	KX1X	38	103	42	155	111	183	94	201	26	191	4	239	1147	22 yrs
7	K1NZ-1 *	108	131	82	153	180	162	111	124	16	54	1	224	1080	8 yrs
8	AB1WT	2	32	1	52	4	123	122	125	82	88	1	211	812	5 yrs
9	W1AST-1	2	50	9	94	23	161	98	120	7	120	7	198	891	10 yrs
10	NT1K-2	3	49	2	102	24	180	44	141	47	123	1	196	710	9 yrs
		160	80	60	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	6			
11	N1FTP	0	7	0	59	0	155	44	117	16	109	1	181	518	11 yrs
12	WD1S-2	49	57	1	115	23	148	40	95	11	98	2	176	830	7 yrs
13	AB1XW-1	0	7	1	75	22	110	42	107	29	94	0	144	487	7 yrs
14	AB1ZJ	0	0	0	14	0	34	0	0	1	0	0	43	49	3 yrs
15	KB1V SX	0	2	0	4	0	27	4	1	0	2	0	30	40	3 yrs

You can link to your club here: <https://clublog.org/league.php?club=189>

This is the clublog with open dates— basically a history from the start of each persons log. As you can see, many of the top members have many years on the air.

Info from 12/2419

DXCC Leagues
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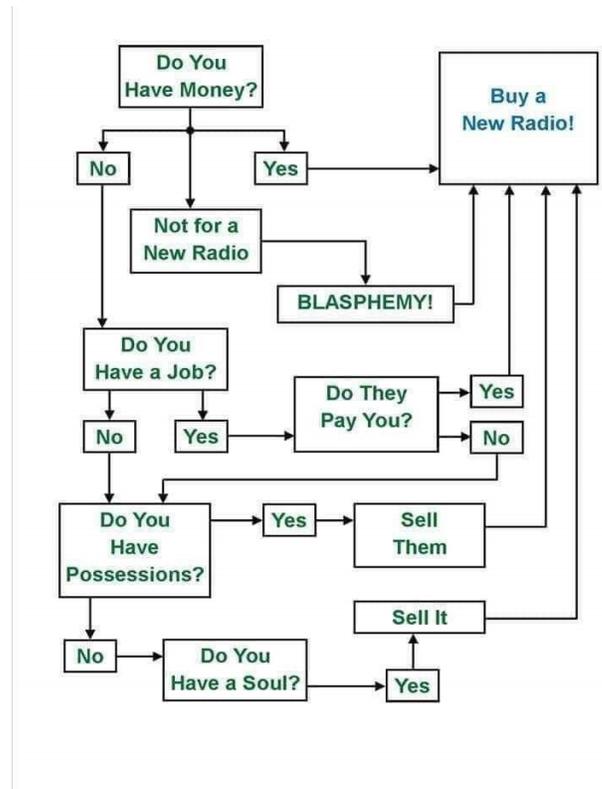
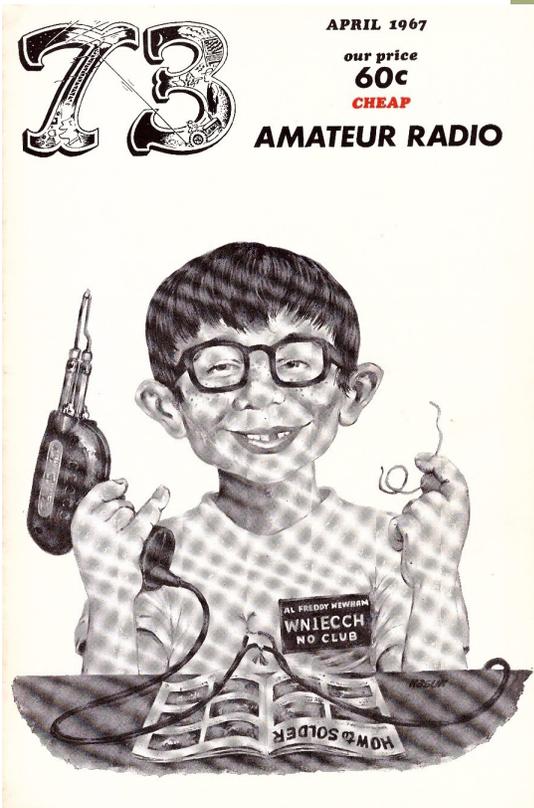
Rank	Callsign	160	80	60	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	6	DXCC	Slots	Range
1	KK1W-1	83	72	0	133	81	115	52	83	6	13	1	216	819	43 yrs
2	NF1G	0	81	0	129	140	128	130	113	48	16	4	207	789	4 yrs
3	K1NZ-1 *	80	101	43	111	114	140	94	97	10	12	1	188	803	8 yrs
4	W1PY-1	0	57	0	117	0	140	0	95	0	13	0	160	422	9 yrs
5	KX1X	28	84	42	119	100	110	72	82	6	9	1	152	811	22 yrs
6	NT1K-2	1	15	0	38	17	103	10	25	3	3	1	113	214	9 yrs
7	W1AST-1	2	27	0	42	4	96	31	40	1	3	2	105	248	10 yrs
8	NV1Q-3	7	32	0	82	17	87	7	27	4	2	0	99	245	40 yrs
9	K1VOI	4	14	0	42	7	83	23	20	1	3	0	89	177	18 yrs
10	N1FTP	0	1	0	7	0	58	2	38	0	5	1	71	110	11 yrs
		160	80	60	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	6			
11	AB1WT	2	8	0	10	0	31	12	17	1	7	1	50	89	5 yrs
12	AB1ZJ	0	0	0	12	0	28	0	0	0	0	0	32	38	3 yrs
13	KB1V SX	0	1	0	2	0	9	0	1	0	1	0	10	14	3 yrs
14	WD1S-2	2	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	3	7	7 yrs
15	AB1XW-1	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	7 yrs

You can link to your club here: <https://clublog.org/league.php?club=189>

This is the clublog for 2019. You can see a different order of participants. But also some newer Hams getting active— awesome!!!

A bit ah humah :-)

shamelessly collected from the internet



DOTS & DASHES:

Things I can't think where to put, but are interesting.

INTERESTING HAM RADIO WEB SITE:

There is a lot of talk (ok... griping and kvetching) about propagation. Experienced hams are often heard talking about the days where dx contacts to Asia were easy. Not so much nowadays... as many heard during the 10M contest. So—what causes changes in radio propagation, and where do we find info? As many have seen on the club FB page, folks (often W1LGU and W1IRL) put up links to solar weather info.

Much of the info comes from NOAA. At least the scientific data. Often other groups make predictions and calculations based upon that.

A good start, of course, is with NOAA—they have a good primer on solar effects on HF—<https://www.swpc.noaa.gov/impacts/hf-radio-communications> that has links to further information, and updates on current predictions. One that has more detail explaining solar effect is <https://www.qrparci.org/resource/FDIM81.pdf>—lots of qrp tips.

ARRL also has information regarding propagation—including some nice little charts of LUF/MUF for each region of the US to various parts of the world—<http://www.arrl.org/propagation>

There are tons of other resources out there—VOACAP has custom modeling from your QTH to anyplace in the world—<https://www.voacap.com/hf/>

So, do a bit of reading—at least if you are having a hard time making those dx contacts that were easy even last year—you will know a bit more about why ;-)

AREA SWAP/HAMFESTS:

Not any listed for our region (New England) for a while. There will be several (including the usual one at Castle of Knights) after the holidays.

INTERESTING “EVENT”

Not a contest, but an activity—Straight Key Night—This 24-hour event is not a contest; rather it is a day dedicated to celebrating our CW heritage. Runs for the entire UTC day of 1/1/2020, Straight key or bug is preferred, no points are scored, and everyone is a winner!! If you are just getting into CW, this may be a way to get on the air, or at least listen in and see if you can hear!

More info at: <http://www.arrl.org/straight-key-night>

UPCOMING CONTESTS (just a few...)

January

Jan 4	ARRL Kid's Day	Lots of fun!	http://www.arrl.org/kids-day
Jan 11-12	N America QSO party—CW	Focus North America	ncjweb.com/NAQP-Rules.pdf
Jan 18-19	N America QSO party—SSB	Focus North America	ncjweb.com/NAQP-Rules.pdf
Jan 25-26	Winter Field Day	International	https://www.winterfieldday.com/

Many more contests listed at: <http://www.arrl.org/contests> or <https://www.contestcalendar.com/contestcal.html>

Don't forget special event stations—<http://www.arrl.org/special-event-stations> These are fun contacts, usually with a special QSL card or certificate.

Local happenings

Sundays: 0845: Western Mass Emergency Net 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R

First Monday: Southwick Regional RACES Drill, 1845, 146.49 Simplex

Mondays: 1930: HCRA 10m Net 28.375

Tuesdays: 1930-2000: 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R - Hampshire County Emergency Net

Wednesdays: 1930: MTARA Info net 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R - includes NTS Net

2000: MTARA Swap net: 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R

2000: MTARA Simplex Net - starts on 146.94 - PL 127.3, then goes to 146.42 direct (simplex) Usually starts immediately following the swap net.

Thursdays: 2100: Weather Net (Roger, K1PAI Net Control), 1st Thursday of every month: 147.090 MHz, All other Thursdays: 147.000, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R

2nd and 4th Fridays: 1200: BB's (Brown Baggers Luncheon) Munich House
13 Center Street
Chicopee, MA 01013

Expect between 6 and 12 attendees every Friday. Good food, great company!

Club meetings & VE sessions

1st Friday of the month 7:30 PM, HCRA Club Meeting, Holyoke Hospital Auxiliary Conference Center, 575 Beech St. Holyoke MA 01040 (no meetings held in July or August.)

<http://www.hcra.org/meeting-location/>

3rd Friday of the month 7:30 PM, MTARA Club meeting, Red Cross building, [150 Brookdale Dr. Springfield, Mass.](#) (no meetings held in July or August)

4th Friday of the month 6:00 PM, Technician, General, and Extra Class License Exams, Holyoke Hospital Auxiliary Conference Center, 575 Beech Street, Holyoke, Mass. Hosted by the Western Mass VE Team (WMVET). Contact: David Cote, w1fab@arrl.net

Second Monday of the month 7:00 PM, Franklin County Amateur Radio Club meeting, Greenfield Community College, East Bldg. Rm 110 (no meetings held in July, August, December—check website) <http://www.fcarc.org/>

4th Monday of February, May, August, November 7:00 PM, FCARC VE Exams, <http://www.fcarc.org/>

Join the ARRL or renew your membership!

ARRL members enjoy:

- QST Magazine
- Members-Only Web Services
- Technical Information Service
- Member Discounts
- Outgoing QSL Service
- Continuing Education
- ARRL as an Advocate
- Regulatory Information Branch
- Public Relations for Amateur Radio
- ARRL Field Organization
- ARRL-sponsored contests
- Operating Awards
- Local Clubs
- Amateur Radio Emergency Service
- Hamfests and Conventions
- Volunteer Examiner Coordinator Program



<http://www.arrl.org/membership>

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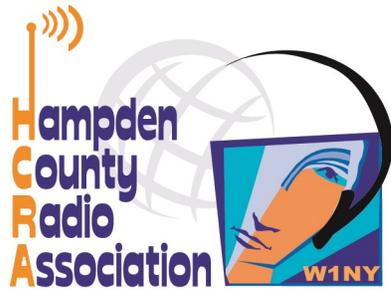
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**Here is your exciting copy
of Zero Beat!**

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