

12-94



Zero Beat



Hampden County Radio Association, Inc. - our 47th ARRL affiliated year

December 1994

Volume 3 Issue 4

H.C.R.A. Notes.....

Last month's HCRA meeting featured the annual auction. It was exceptionally successful night for our club. Everyone who attended seem to have a good time, and there was plenty of neat stuff on hand. When all was said and done, around 11:00 P.M. the HCRA came up with some pretty good cash to add to our fund raising efforts. A special thanks go out to all who stayed and helped to clean up. It was very thoughtful, considering the lateness of the hour. Thanks also go out to those of you who donated items to be auctioned off. This helped our club extensively.

It is also the final time you will be able to renew your membership before your Zero Beat's will be cut off. This only applies to those of you who have not renewed of course. (check your membership label) You will find an application on page 3 of this issue. This will be the last month this application will be in Zero Beat. We regret it has been in there so long, but we would like everyone an opportunity to renew who has not done so. For the first time in many years, due to



This month will feature the popular annual Holiday Social. Be sure to attend! Food and drinks are compliments of the HCRA!

increased costs, the HCRA was forced to increase dues this year to \$13.00. In addition to renewing yourself, consider telling a friend about our club and bring them to an upcoming meeting. The HCRA would like to continue to grow even more. Please try and get your application in as soon as possible. Upcoming meetings for 1995 include: Radio Astronomy, and scheduled for January will be a meeting on the meteors that struck Jupiter this past summer.

See you at the December social!

Next HCRA Meeting.....

The next Hampden County Radio Association meeting will Take place on Friday night December 2, 1994 and will feature the popular HCRA's annual Holiday social and show & tell. This meeting is always quite a bit of fun for all who attend. It is an excellent opportunity to socialize with your fellow hams and enjoy some good food at the same time. Don't forget, food and beverages will be compliments of the HCRA this year, so be sure and bring an appetite. You are also encouraged to bring an XYL or perhaps a friend along who might be interested in ham radio. Feel free to bring along a piece of your favorite ham gear or a rare QSL card, etc. to show to the group in attendance. It should be an entertaining evening. Doors will open at 7:00 and the social will begin around 7:30 P.M. (Or when ever you arrive!!) We hope to see you there!

**Feeding Hills
Congregational Church
JCT of Routes 57 & 187
Feeding Hills, Massachusetts**

Last Chance!! — Last Chance!

HCRA Book Sale - (Circle Book Desired)

Get a great deal on a League Book through the HCRA - Excellent Discounts!

1995 Handbook - <i>New Edition, re-edited, soft cover-</i>	Reg \$30.00 Sale \$25.00
New Edition antenna book with modeling software -	Reg \$30.00 Sale \$25.00
Operator Manual - Excellent for new ham or veteran -	Reg \$18.00 Sale \$15.00
1994-1995 Repeater Directory - a <i>Must have</i> for travel-	Reg \$6.00 Sale \$5.00

Use this form to order books. Payment may be cash or check, Made out to the HCRA. This is the last chance, you will receive the books at the January meeting. If you need them by the Holiday's, talk to Barry at the next meeting. Mail payment to the club address, or bring along to the December Social.

Name - Call: _____
 Address: _____
 City State Zip: _____
 Phone Number: _____

The next board meeting will take place on December 8th, 1994 and will be at Adam Olson's QTH. If you are interested in attending, please ask Adam N1GVV for directions at the next meeting. Remember, anyone can attend the board meetings.

Happy Holidays!!



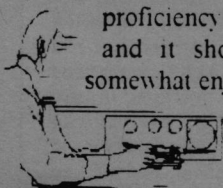
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How to achieve 25 WPM Code Painlessly (Almost)....

The following ideas are what may appear to be relatively unorthodox methods to achieve code proficiency. They are not intended to be shortcuts and may not work for everyone. However, when all else fails, they may be of some reinforcement when used with some of the more accepted methods of achieving higher code speed.

Many hams (and prospective hams) regard code as a major stumbling block; whether to get an HF privilege license, upgrade to a higher class license, or just increase code speed. Morse code should be perused as a challenge rather than a chore. Regardless of the method used, a positive attitude toward code proficiency must be maintained and it should be considered somewhat enjoyable.



The first method is based

on my theory that there is no need to copy a transmission letter for letter during the course of a normal QSO (except for handling traffic). Just as a college student must learn to listen to a lecture and learn to take pertinent notes, the ham can do the same: copy the text in your head and make notations as necessary. Which brings us to the code tests the FCC puts out that asks questions in a typical "QSO" format.

Your biggest fear is letting go your pencil when it comes to copying. Like the first time on a bicycle, you know you'll learn how to do it, but that first push off the ground and neither foot on the ground does nothing for the blood pressure. So, let's take a more relaxed approach to this method. Turn on your receiver and find someone who is sending just a little faster than you can receive. Impossible as it may seem, try to find someone with a good fist.

Put your pencil down, fold your hands on your shack desk, and put

your head down and close your eyes. Don't go to sleep!! Listen as he or she sends. At first you'll probably only pick up a character here or there. Don't get discouraged - you won't be proficient in just one session. Gradually the characters will turn to words and somewhere down the line, you'll be able to copy the whole transmission. Now you're listening to a conversation - not scribbling feverishly to copy everything and trying to decipher it all as he or she sends "HW? WINY DE K1HAM K." When you can copy this way at the speed you wish to achieve, it shouldn't be much trouble at all to make notations on the signal report, name, QTH, etc. The crux of this method is you only write down pertinent information, leaving out words such as and, the, here, etc.

For most of us, the goal is to pass the FCC test for the class license we desire. When you take the test, just listen to the one minute practice tape instead of

writing it down. It will allow you to get used to the pitch, speed, and not to be all tensed when the test portion is sent. The test is a simulated QSO and you only have to answer questions on what was sent. For example, the test may be: I teach psychology at UMASS and live in Springfield, Mo. It may not make sense, but copy what was sent. They may ask you what his or her profession is and your choices might be: psychology teacher, psychiatry teacher, philosophy teacher, or philanthropic teacher. The underlined words are the pertinent words and should be what you write down.

"How do I know what to write down?" you might ask. By now you should be able to copy a word or two behind what is sent, which brings us to my theory of not writing down what is not necessary.

If the above method offends you or you don't wish to put down your pencil, the following may help you increase your code speed. Try chasing DX. Not only will your code speed increase, but you'll learn to pick one signal out of a myriad of others. Maybe you'll even snag that exotic country that you didn't even know existed. DX QSO'S are pretty much formatted with information such as call, and QTH repeated at least two times. Even though you know the format of the transmission, you really can't anticipate the actual contents of the text, you'll have each word repeated. After a short while of operating, don't be surprised if you're working stations sending 20 to 25 WPM.

The above are what I call "learning by osmosis" i.e. you become proficient at what you enjoy. So... relax a little and enjoy CW, have conversations instead of exercises in writing letters and numbers on paper. Don't forget to practice your sending (not on the air). You are judged by your fist. Good luck and QRQ!

Gent Lam WA1CQF

Editor's Note: This article was republished from Zero Beat, on January 1983 with minor revisions to update the present.

1994-95 H.C.R.A. Board of Directors



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Hampden County Radio Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 482
West Springfield, MA 01090-0482

Application for Membership

Call Sign: _____
New: _____ Renewal: _____

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ - _____ Listed: Yes: _____ No: _____

License Class: (Circle your answer)

Studying Novice Technician Tech+ General Advanced Extra

ARRL: Life Member: _____ Member: _____

VE: (Circle answer) Advanced Extra General Expiration: _____

If you are a VE, would you be willing to participate in the HCRA's VE program?

Yes: _____ No: _____

List Family Members Here:

Regular HCRA membership is \$13.00 The cost of the membership is used for items such as *Zero Beat*, the meeting hall, and insurance. Additional family members are FREE at no additional cost. Just mark these people in the place marked above. If you are under 18 years of age, dues are only \$5.00. Please consider including a donation to help the HCRA in future endeavors. All donations are tax deductible to the extent of the law. Please fill out this form and make a check payable to the Hampden County Radio Association, INC. to the address listed above, or bring the form along to any club meeting. The HCRA appreciates your support!

Membership Dues: \$ _____
Donation: \$ _____
Total Enclosed: \$ _____



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December Meeting: Annual Holiday Social



Friday December 2, 1994

Doors Open at 7:00 P.M.

Social will begin around 7:30



Food & Fun! - Annual Show & Tell night

Attention HCRA Members:

This month is the last opportunity you will have for renewing your membership before your Zero Beat will no longer be sent to you! Please renew, if you have not already done so, in order to keep abreast of all of the activities of the HCRA in the upcoming months. Please complete the membership application on page 3 and turn it in as soon as possible. You can either mail it to the club's P.O. box or you may simply return it with your payment at the next meeting.

Amateur Radio Specialties

76 Ogden St.

Indian Orchard, Mass. 01151

Antennas and Amateur

Related Accessories

Stan Bates N1INB

(413) 543-5654

Editor: Kevin S. Hilinski NR1L

THIS MAY BE YOUR LAST ZERO BEAT - CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL

Hampden County Radio Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 482

West Springfield, MA 01090-0482



First Class Mail

Forwarding + Address correction requested

WE DELIVER 011 SPFLD MA DCR #2

