



ZERO BEAT

<http://hcra.org>

September 2019

Next Meeting: **Sept 6**

September Meeting

Magnetic Loop Antennas

Fox Hunt Alert!!!

We (HCRA) will be holding a Fox Hunt training session on Sunday 9/8/19 at 10am.

Look for Larry's little blue truck at the parking lot where we hold our meetings at Holyoke Hospital—towards the back of the lot.

Bring:

- 2m HT (full battery)
- Antenna adapter to go TO BNC from your HT
- Fox Hunt antenna
- Attenuator from the build class.

RSVP to W1AST@arrl.net

Welcome Back!! So, did you try anything new this summer? I saw on FB a few folks setup remote / mobile, a few folks did the SSTV with the space station.

September Meeting: This month we have a guest speaker that's going to tell us about magnetic loop antennas. Now, I'll be truthful—these things are like magic to me, so I am looking forward to an explanation that will fit my brain!! For folks in limited space (apartments, condos), portable use, low band, high band, etc. It seems there is a magic loop antenna for just about anything. QST had a big one in the antenna design contest winners a few months ago. As usual, we have been getting some amazing technical info at our meetings. We just had a big tutorial on grounding and bonding, then DMR, now loops. If you ain't here learnin, you ain't getting better ;-)

The Swap / Sell table is back in action!— Bring your old stuff, get some new to you stuff. Check in / mark your stuff when you get to the meeting.

Boxboro is coming up (ok, HamXposition) September 6-8.

Lots of special event stations going on. Hiram Percy Maxim's birthday event / contest is a 9 day run celebrating one of the founders of ARRL. I know the band conditions have been miserable, but there are still contacts to be made!!

Sorry the ZB is late, short and not as entertaining as I try to make it. Had some stuff come up over the last month that has kept me busy. It will continue for another month, and I hope I get all taken care of before cold weather, so I can get back on the air, and out with my fellow hams.

73, John N1JIE

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Hey—if you are going somewhere in radio world—whether it's to HRO in Nashua, ARRL headquarters, Boxboro or field day, and you have room for a passenger—let folks know on the FB page or Larry W1AST has agreed to be a clearinghouse via email (W1AST@arrl.net) for rideshares. If you are looking for a ride—the same applies. If ya don't ask, ya don't get ;-)

Let's look out for each other, and help others participate in our hobby. Thanks Larry for helping by being a contact point.

FROM THE SHACK

LARRY KRAINSON W1AST



Welcome back to the start of another exciting HCRA year!

At the June meeting, the excitement was building for Field Day weekend and what a fun weekend it was. We again were at the School Street Park in Agawam, MA. We set up to operate 3 main stations with 3 temporary towers with a beam atop each one. There were 2 SSB stations and one CW station.

The setup crew did a fantastic job led by Chris; W1TRK and Rockwell; WW1X. Under their guidance the antennas went up quickly and worked great! Three tents were set up with a station in each tent. We had some strong wind Saturday challenge the tents a bit, but they were re-staked down and operations continued. Luck was on the HCRA side and the storms stayed away. See the score summary elsewhere in this ZeroBeat. The Workers raffle was won by Paul; NF1G. Congrats Paul!

Barely a week later four HCRA members participated in the 13 Colonies Special Event operations. This is the original 13 states plus 3 special activators too. I was both a chaser and worked everyone and an activator for MA running the K2H call sign. The HCRA operators were: KC1AEO, K1NZ, K1VOI & W1AST. All together we four worked 3772 of the 9868 Qso's the whole state made. We were just 4 of 13. I must say being on the receiving end of some huge pileups was amazing. The whole 13 Colonies operating event made nearly 170,000 Qso's! All over the first 8 days of July. It's pretty amazing considering the state of the solar cycle. That number is up 40,000 over the prior year! Who says activity on the HF bands is down?

How did you spend this summer with ham radio? Did you work the 13 Colonies? Did you work some Satellite? Maybe DMR or D-Star? IF you're thinking of getting a DMR radio, check out the new DMR page on the HCRA website. There's lots to help you there including some code plugs for popular radios. Here's the link: <http://www.hcra.org/dmr/> But you owe it to yourself to check out all the changes and additions the HCRA.org web site. There have been many and we're working on getting more interesting and useful content up there.

September means it's time to renew your dues. The years go by so quickly don't they? For years now I pay two years at a time. For me paying every other year is just easier. It might be something for you to think about too? Either way, for the September 7th meeting, please bring your \$15 renewal. We're hoping to get everyone re-upped much more quickly than usual. Please try to remember and bring your dues or go online and pay online on the web site: <http://www.hcra.org/membership-payment/>

We have some excellent meetings planned for the rest of 2019. You're in for a treat with some very interesting topics and discussions coming up. Check out the list elsewhere in this ZeroBeat.

If you are new to ham radio and want to experience HF operations or any other mode or need help with antenna design or need help with anything, the HCRA has a great mentoring program in place. You don't have to wait for a meeting to ask, you can do so thru the Ham Radio Helpers page on the HCRA website: <http://www.hcra.org/ham-radio-help-for-members/> From there, your inquiry will be either answered immediately or forwarded to someone more familiar with your question to get right back to you. The system works great and is there for you. Put it to good use. No question is too simple.

FROM THE SHACK CONTINUED

In March of this year, I surpassed my 42nd year being a ham radio operator. The excitement is still there. The fun is still there. The people I meet and my closest friends are all hams. Every time I talk to someone on the air, the excitement of making that contact is still there. Every time I get a confirmation in LOTW (Logbook Of The World) or especially receive a Qsl card, I still feel like a little kid with the pang of excitement. Ham radio is so much fun! I do hope you are feeling some of the same? There's so many modes, so many things to do, so many contacts to make, so much to constantly learn.

For example, while spending a week on the Cape in July, I took a friend to the Chatham Marconi Maritime Museum. I've probably been here 6 or 7 times since they opened. It's always interesting and they're always showing something new. This year it's the Enigma Machine which the Germans used in WWII to encrypt their messages. To have it shown to us and them explained fully I found out how really fascinating it is and how amazing that something like that was invented back in the 40's.

We're working on a possible bus trip to the Cape for next Spring. This would be a great day trip to bring your spouse, enjoy everyone's company on the bus, tour some fascinating sites and enjoy a seafood dinner before returning home. It's in the very beginning of planning right now, so watch here for more info.

Way back in May, Steve, AA1HF and myself went to the Dayton Hamvention. We left on a Thursday and returned the following Monday. Two travel days and 3 days of the Hamvention and a museum stop. I kept hearing murmurs that attendance may have been around 30,000. It sure seemed that way as the crowds were large. This was my first time to Xenia and it didn't disappoint. New vendors were in over 7 large buildings plus a very large flea market. Different from past years is there was lots of food trucks with nearly any kind of food or drink you can think of. It was also pretty hot and lots water and Gatorade was being consumed.

Nearly any vendor you can think of was there from the big players to smaller one. Kenwood, Yaesu, Icom, Flex, Elecraft and smaller HF radio manufacturers. Plus nearly any accessory you can think of from keys, paddles, antennas, speakers, and many, many station accessories, tools, wire, whatever. If you were shopping for something you could talk to the designers, the engineers, the manufacturers and the resellers. Clubs, classes, seminars were on going. Some were interesting and as we found out. Some were like watching paint dry. Those we didn't last very long at. If you have never gone, you owe it to yourself. Just remember to wear very comfortable walking shoes.

The Saturday after our September meeting is the Boxboro Hamvention which is now called the Northeast HamXposition. While it's no Dayton, it is a fun ham radio place to start your fall. I'll be there on Saturday, September 8th. If you see me, say hi. You can learn more at: <https://hamxposition.org/> you can't miss me with my orange backpack and light blue HCRA club hat.

The long search and poll for the next BIG HCRA raffle prize has ended. The item with the most votes is the Honda Generator. Tickets are just \$10 each for this prize valued at \$1000. We hope to have tickets on sale at the September meeting.

There is so much going on and so many great things that the HCRA board is planning for the upcoming year. We have some fabulous guest speakers and our schedule is booked thru June of 2020 already. We'll be announcing some Share the Knowledge sessions soon, the previously mentioned Spring Bus Trip, a General Upgrade class, a club kit build and more. It will all be mentioned here and on the email list and FaceBook page as well as at the meetings.

I hope to see you at the meeting on Friday, September 6th. We have a special guest, Ted Robinson; K1QAR talking to us about Mag Loops. Come see his presentation, bring your questions. It should be a fascinating meeting for a really interesting antenna type. Bruce will have his donuts and coffee available for all. We ask a dollar donation each to cover the cost for your enjoyment.

SCHEDULED MEETINGS AND SPEAKERS:



Everything you wanted to know about Mag Loop Antennas by Ted Robinson, K1QAR



Rich Collins, K2UPS of the Long Island CW Group & showcase his key collection



The Amazing Transatlantic Feat of 1901 by Marconi – K1ZM, Jeff via Skype as he is in PEI



The annual HCRA / MTARA Holiday party



Bob Hassett Springfield emergency preparedness & EOC facility



Bob, K1YO – ARES and it's recent come back in Western MA



Rob Macedo KC1DY talks all about Skywarn and how important it is for weather tracking



Show & Tell — members bring in their projects and show them off!!



Marty Sullaway, NN1C: Team Exuberance – teens and contesting



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.

Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES):

A couple of years ago, there was a huge hurricane that devastated the US territory of Puerto Rico. Power was out, communications was down. It is a tropical and mountainous island, and all supplies and support have to be shipped or air-lifted in. ARRL sent about 50 volunteer, trained operators and equipment down for 3+ weeks, and these ARES volunteers provided much needed communications between PR and the mainland US, freeing up military communications and providing another avenue for civic and civilian help.

Well, this week, another hurricane is going to hit Florida. And the ARRL, and its ARES trained volunteers are staging to help. The Florida ARES coordinators are accepting volunteer applications, for those that have met specific training requirements, to provide communications support if needed for emergencies and civic support.

This is one of the reasons that our FCC license is probably the only thing you can get issued by the government for free. Because amateur radio is partly regulated and setup for emergency service.

ARRL Licensing:

Volunteer Examiners are just that—they help administer the licensing exams, as volunteers. There is a book to study, a test to take and send in to the ARRL, and a bit of paperwork. But each exam requires a minimum of 3 VEs, at the level being tested. So if someone wants to take an Extra level test, 3 Extra level VEs must be there to grade the exam. As you know, there is an exam every month at the same place as our meeting. Also, Jeff NT1K and his group do quarterly (free exams). And think of all the other locations—each needing VEs to proctor, grade and process the exams.

There is even a list of top VEs, by how many sessions they have participated in. One of our members, Jim Mullen, KK1W, is on the ARRL VE Honor Roll for New England (323 sessions and counting). Another local, Stefan Radowicz, N1SR from Chicopee is on the list.

So that license you got—well, several people, generally all ARRL members, volunteered to help. Now that you have the ticket, think about helping someone else go for the ride!!

ARRL Magazine—QST

So, what do you get with ARRL membership? QST magazine, both print and electronic. Loaded with articles, equipment tests, updates on legislation, dxpedition reports, contests, product testing and reviews and lots more. Yes, there are ads from many of the radio vendors, and while many are big multi page ads, there are smaller ads from the little guys. Want to know who to contact for your division or section about something? But you forgot who it was? —well all the contact info is there. Antenna designs are another big topic—usually with instructions, parts lists, and testing to prove that it works. Did you know that ARRL conducts an antenna design contest each year—results are in QST, with plans and testing. You ain't gonna find that on the magic antenna you saw on ebay!!

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

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

DOTS & DASHES:

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

INTERESTING HAM RADIO WEB SITE:

<https://qrpguys.com/>

Larry W1AST put this up on the web page, and I have been fascinated by this site for a while...

Here we are in some of the worst band conditions in years, and what is getting interest? —QRP— low power operation. We have a few members that work CW / QRP with nice Elecraft radios. And make good contacts!!

These guys have a bunch of kits—inexpensive, good reputation for assembly, and that work. Transceivers, antennas, tuners, just about everything. So as we get past summer, and get into winter, this is kit building season!!

Give it a look, see if there is anything you want to try. And don't forget—We have our annual Show and Tell meeting in April—build something and tell us all about it!!!

AREA SWAP/HAMFESTS:

Sept 6-8	Northeast HamXposition @ Boxboro	Boxboro Regency Hotel	http://boxboro.org/
Oct 11-12	NEARfest	Deerfield, NH	https://near-fest.com/

UPCOMING CONTESTS (just a few...)

Ongoing (all year)

Jan 1-Dec 31	Canada POTA (all year)	https://cnpota.ca/	All
Jan 1-Dec 31	US Islands 25th ann (all yr)	http://usislands.org/	All

September

8/31-9/8	Hiram Percy Maxim 150th Birthday	http://www.arrl.org/hpm150-birthday-celebration	All
Weekends	State / college QSO Parties	10 Different QSO parties	CW Ph
9/21-9/22	ARRL 10GHz and up	www.arrl.org/10-ghz-up	All

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!

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>

HCRA contact list

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The Board members in **Bold** are filling in, and will stand for election at the June Meeting.

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/>



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

**Hampden County Radio Association
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