

Zero Beat

Hampden County Radio Association, Inc.

President's Comments

The April QST has an editorial by Dave Summer on the proposed new Communicator license. The FCC is proposing to do away with the Novice license when it's approved. The Communicator license would be no-code, provide privileges above 222 MHz, and maximum power would be 200 watts. The exam would consist of 60 questions and be given by three VE's, similar to the current system. The two Amateur exams for Novices would be eliminated. The entire NPRM is published in April QST. I suggest you read it over and comment to the ARRL (before the July board meeting) or to the FCC as appropriate.

The Dove packsat is orbiting, tune in to 145.825 and you will be able to copy its packets. If you have a packet station you can watch as the information is being sent. It is in low earth orbit and appears in the morning between 8 and 12 noon, and in the evening between 6 and 10 PM.

Mike Ludkiewicz, W1DGJ got his picture in QST, as you may remember he has been collecting Ham license plates. He now has them from all 50 states and more.

The HCRA Flea Market will be later in April, plan to come and look at all the ham gear, it will be at the Agawam High School on Sunday April 29th. See Fred N1DPM for more details.

Jim Pierson, N1CXP will be using the club call

(W1NY) on Saturday and Sunday March 24th and 25th, to work the CQ WPX contest. He is planning to work only 10 meters. Hope you had a chance to work him.

See you at the April meeting, Chris, KD2HE will be talking about his DX experiences at some exotic locations.

73 de Yorke, K1BXE

April Meeting

The April meeting will feature Chris, KD2HE, who will give a talk on some of his DXpeditions. Chris is a professional photographer, so he should have some great pictures of his recent DXpeditions to Mellish Reef and Willis Island. The meeting will be hosted by Chris, NO1Z. Hope to see you there!

***Kudos to the MTARA
Fleamarket Team for a
great job in their past
fleamarket!***

Next meeting will be Friday, April 6th, 8:00PM at the Feeding Hills Congregational Church

Next board meeting will be Thursday, April 12th, 7:30PM at WA1EYF's House

Next VE exam will be Wednesday, April 4th, 7:00PM at the Agawam High School

Club Officers

- President—Yorke Phillips, **K1BXE**
- Vice President—Stan Hilinski, **KA1ZE**
- Treasurer—Greg Stoddard, **N1AEH**
- Secretary/Clerk—Jeanette Platanitis, **KA1MEW**

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- Jim Sebolt, **N1DUY**
- Larry Lemoine, **N1EPE**
- Steve Nelson, **WA1EYF**
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- Ed Goldberg, **WA1PLS**
- Fred Stefanik, **N1DPM**
- Frank Potts, **NC1U**
- Bob Lafleur, **N1CQ**

Contact With A Robot In Space by Ned, NB1R

On February 22 at 21:42 UTC I worked Russian satellite RS-10. This was accomplished by using my AMSAT "Quiktrak 4.0" computer program to determine the next "pass" of the satellite. The downlink frequency of the satellite was 29.4043. The fully automated satellite broadcasts a message that reads "CQ DE RS10 QSU 145.820". I responded by uplinking a signal (10 watts) on 145.820 at an azimuth of about 90 degrees and an elevation of about 20 degrees. "RS10 DE NB1R AR K". To my everlasting delight, the satellite responded by sending "NB1R DE RS10 QSL NR 055 OP ROBOT TU USW QSO 055 73 K". (I don't know the meaning of "USW"). You can imagine my excitement!! To confirm my QSO with the satellite I dashed off a QSL to box 88, Moscow. Then at 23:27 on February 22 I was pleased to QSO the satellite again on its next pass, with an assigned number of 059. Incidentally, you can copy your own transmission on the downlink. That in itself is exciting! The robot will acknowledge your call at the same speed that you transmit to it. Neat!

This QSO was actually made possible by a message that Joe, WA1OCK left on the W1NY bbs. In that message he gave the necessary info on frequencies, etc. that allowed me to make the QSO.

This contact can be repeated by most hams having a 10 meter receiver for the downlink and a 2 meter transmitter that is capable of sending CW. The antenna for the uplink, yagi, should be pointed in the correct azimuth and elevation for that particular pass. My receive antenna is a dipole cut for 80 meters! Any ham wishing more info on this simple but exciting QSO can contact me directly (413) 596-4625. If I'm unavailable please leave a message on the recorder.

The above incident is but the latest in a string of exhilarating experiences I have gained by making the decision to get into working the amateur satellites. I can recommend it most enthusiastically to all hams!

Newsletters Wanted

I need your help! I have the most complete set of old Zero Beat issues, but I'm missing some. If you have any of them, I'll photostat and return them to you. Many thanks!

What I'm missing: 1951: December. 1952-1957: All issues. 1958: March. 1962: January, November. 1963: April. 1969: January. 1970: March, April, May, June. 1971: January through November. 1972: September through December. 1973: January through June. 1974-1976: All issues. 1977: January through June. 1988: March through December. 1989: January through May.

I have a complete set of the now defunct Valley Amateur Radio Club newsletter, thanks to Ed White, W1NPL. Any old club newsletter collections that you have I'd be glad to get an archive. I also save old pictures of HCRA events.

Anything you can do to help bring this collection up to date is most appreciated. Send copies of this article to past club members who have moved out of New England and maybe they'll have something to contribute.

Jeff Duquette, K1BE. 18 Anvil Street, Feeding Hills, MA 01030-1530. (413) 786-7856.

HCRA Amateur, Computer, Electronics Flea Market

April 29th, 1990
Agawam High School

Doors open for sellers at 8:00
Doors open for general public at 9:00
VE exams at 10:00

Tables \$5.00 in advance, \$7.00 at the door
General admission \$2.00

NOAA's Space Environment Laboratory Public Computer BBS

by Larry Lemoine, N1EPE

Here's a fairly new service available for obtaining information on very current radio propagation conditions and other info on environmental conditions that may interest you.

Many radio amateurs who own home computers and phone modems are always looking for new ways to put their computers to use. Tapping into NOAA's Space Environment Laboratory Public Computer Bulletin Board System in Bolder, Colorado – just a phone call away – is one such application. On line for about two years now, this service provides you free access to timely and immediately useful information that can help you determine current global HF radio propagation conditions.

What is the Space Environment Laboratory (SEL)? The hub of a worldwide network of sensors based on the Earth and in space, the SEL keeps track of conditions in the space environment immediately surrounding our planet. Conditions monitored at the SEL are intimately connected with ionospheric radio propagation. One of the functions of the SEL is to report these conditions and make forecasts for the world's long-distance communicators.

The SEL BBS HF radio propagation reports – Of all the information available on the BBS, the regularly updated HF radio propagation reports are likely to be the most useful to you. Automatically downloaded from the SEL's mainframe system, these bulletins represent some of the world's most timely indicators of what to expect from the ionosphere.

Getting online – The SEL bulletin board service is free and operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The telephone number is (303) 497-5000. The board's communication parameters are 300/1200 baud, 8 data bits, no parity, and 1 stop bit. The system uses the Bell modem standard. [ed. note: If you subscribe to PC Pursuit, you can use the CODEN/12 dialout to access the BBS.]

The BBS is menu driven and will lead you to its main feature selection menu with a series of instructions. Initial questions on the screen concerning line feeds, etc. can be answered with a

carriage return if you're in doubt on how to respond. Once registered, user are allotted 15 minutes on line per call—more than enough time.

Following is a description of one report the BBS can deliver: **The HF Radio Propagation Report** Summarizes HF radio propagation conditions experienced over a 6 hour period, followed by a prediction of conditions for the next six hours. This report is in 4 parts and includes information on: Solar-terrestrial conditions and their effects on propagation; Summary of solar-flare caused effects on the ionosphere which cause disruptions of HF communications; Data useful to plan communications over the 3 day forecast period is given.

When contacting the BBS the first couple of times, you may find it useful to download the files of interest under the H)elp menu. The HF Radio Propagation Report, Solar & Geophysical Activity Report, and MINIMUF 3.5 MUF Information help files will help you initially.

There is a tremendous amount of useful information available on this BBS and except for the phone call, it's free and consistently changing.

Fleamarket Information

Several years back, the HCRA sponsored a radio and electronics flea market, but decided to discontinue it due to the overly high expenses involved with the flea market site. We are again going to attempt to hold a flea market, but this time it will be at the Agawam High School.

Table space is \$5.00 in advance, and \$7.00 at the door. If you'd like to reserve a table, please send your payment to the HCRA, PO Box 482, West Springfield, MA 01090-0482.

General admission begins at 9:00 on Sunday, April 29th, and is \$2.00. There will be hourly 50/50 drawings, so you could win some cash to put towards that radio you'r dying to purchase!

If you'd like more information regarding the fleamarket, please contact Fred, N1DPM at (413) 786-7943, Tom, WB1FVS at (203) 644-0026, or John, AC1T @ W1NY.

New 220 Repeater

Jack, WC1L, has just placed a 220 Mhz repeater on the air. The WC1L/KA1MHY repeater is on 224.52. Jack has 2m, 220, and 440 remote bases, and soon he'll also have 10m and 6m remote base capability. You'll find this repeater linked to the BEARS Traffic Net at 9:15pm each day, and also to the Mt. Tom information and swap net each Wednesday at 7:30. This will allow novices to check into these nets via 220.

The repeater is located at Jack's QTH in Feeding Hills, and has been found to be accessible from the Amherst and Northampton area, as well as from Hartford and farther south.

By the way, Jack (previously KA1KRJ) has changed his call to WC1L, and Jeanette (previously KA1MEW) has changed her call to WC1O.

VE Exams

Exams are sponsored by the HCRA on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00PM *sharp* at the Agawam High School. VE's are also needed. If you are interested in taking an exam or helping give exams, please contact Jeanette WC1O at 786-1463.

The next exam will be April 4th.

HCRA Meetings

First Friday of each month at
Feeding Hills Congregational Church
Center of Feeding Hills
Intersection of routes 57 & 187
Doors open at 7:30 PM
Meeting starts promptly at 8:00 PM

Local Nets

HCRA 10 Meter Net	Thursday 9:00 PM 28.650
Nutmeg VHF Traffic Net	Daily 9:30 PM 146.28/88
80 Meter Ragchew Net	Tuesday 8:00 PM 3.709 Mhz
WMPN	Daily 6:00 PM 3.937
WMSN	Tuesday & Thursday 7:30 PM 3.713
WMN	Daily 7:00 PM 3.562
WMTN	Monday-Friday 1:00 PM 146.31/91
CPN	Monday-Saturday 6:00 PM 3.965
	Sunday 10:00 AM 3.965
Mt. Tom Information Net	Wednesday 7:30 PM 146.34/94
Mt. Tom Swap Net	Follows Mt. Tom Information Net
Mt. Tom Emergency Net	Sunday 8:45 AM 146.34/94
WMA Tfc Net Cycle 3	Tue, Wed, Thu 4:00 PM 146.34/94
RASON	Daily 9:00 PM 146.13/73
WESCON	Daily 8:30 PM 147.78/18
CN	Daily 7:00 & 10:00 PM 3.640
CSN	Monday-Friday 7:30 PM 3.720
BEARS Traffic Net	Daily 9:15 PM 145.11(-)

Hampden County Radio Association, Inc.

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Editor: Bob Lafleur, NQ1C

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