



DECEMBER 2009

Zero Beat

<http://www.hcra.org>

From the Shack...

Warmest Holiday Wishes from HCRA

Well, Thanksgiving is over and we are deep into the holiday season. I would like to take a moment and pass along best wishes from the KK1W shack. I do hope you have a pleasant holiday and a relaxing time with family and friends. That's what it's all about, isn't it? One of the best presents amateurs are receiving is the uptick in sunspot activity! The current sunspot number is 31 as I'm writing this month's column. I remember not long ago we went for weeks at zero. Could it be Cycle 24 is finally on the move?

Hopefully I'll get to spend some time with everyone at the Holiday Party at Alexander's on the 4th. If for some reason you didn't get your check to us in time we *may* have room for a few additional guests. Call me and I'll do my best to fit you in, even if I have to share my plate with you! The party should be fun and exciting this year. We have a fantastic door prize and as well as other surprises for our guests.

ARRL 10 Meter Contest - only a week away!

The ARRL 10 Meter Contest is December 12th and 13th. With some sunspots we could really have a good time this year. I hope everyone that wants to gets a chance to operate and have some fun. If you don't have 10M capabilities at your shack why not try a multi-op from another hams station. This year KC1V, NOHI or maybe KK1W. (still up in the air here but check with me when we get closer) have announced they will welcome guest operators. George, Mike and maybe others will be happy to let you take a spin on the mic or key. If you're new to HF this is a great way to learn the basics. Most of all get on the air, have fun, and if you submit a log don't forget to put HCRA as the club affiliate. Lets see if we can get 20 entrants from HCRA this year - its possible you know.

Kit Program - V2.0!

Last year we tried a kit program, let's call it V1.0, but it never really took off. Well if at first you don't succeed... Kit Program V2.0 is here and is off to a great start. We have chosen a Rock-Mite transceiver kit from Small Wonder Labs. Available on many frequencies we are going with 80 meters. At least a half dozen folks have signed on to purchase and build the kit. When completed they will have a tiny 80 meter CW transceiver that fits in an Altoids tin. Besides the builders a number of HCRA

members have volunteered to help, both with construction and/or getting the new radios on the air. At least three of the kits are going to new hams - isn't that exciting? It is still possible to

have fun building. You learn a lot about electronics, plus there's nothing like making a contact with that radio you built with your own hands. Much thanks to the builders and the Elmers for their participation - a great example of what HCRA is all about.

Rob Macedo is the featured speaker for January

Our January presentation is all about Skywarn and the National Weather Service. Rob Macedo, KD1CY will be out from NWS in Taunton, MA to talk about all things weather and related to amateur radio. It's been a few years since Rob has visited HCRA. This is a perfect chance for our newer members to see how effective our hobby can be helping enhance public safety during weather emergencies. Although Rob will be talking weather with an amateur radio focus this is a great meeting for anyone interested in weather and public safety. Bring along a friend or family member, I'm sure they'll enjoy it.

Book Sale is over for 2009

We've closed the book (sorry, pun intended) on our first book sale. A number of members took advantage of the offer to save 20% on ARRL books, got their orders in and have their books. We were so successful we plan on offering it again next year. Stay tuned for the dates and discounts.

Don't forget, the January meeting is the 8th.

Not the 1st!

Because the first Friday in January is New Year's Day we have changed the date of the meeting to the following week so you can enjoy the New Year with your friends and family.

'73...and see you at the Holiday Party!

Jim, KK1W



Board of Directors meeting minutes

Wednesday October 7th, 2009

Attendees : Irv Slitzky W6IS, George Collins KC1V, Michael Lavery KB1PKJ, Jim Mullen KK1W, Larry Krainson WB1DBY, Jim Whitehouse K1JAW, Dave Cain AA1YW, Ed KB1NWH

Jim called the meeting to order at 7:11 pm, at Hampden Bank in Longmeadow, MA.

Officer Reports

Vice President - John (in absentia)

Tech classes - First night of class was 10/6/09 Technician/General. Technician class had 5 youths and 2 adults. General class had 5-6 people. There will be one more Tuesday class and a Saturday cram session. The VE exam is on Sunday. (KB1NWH reported to the BOD)

Treasurer - George Collins

Balance - \$3425.80

50/50 raffle raised \$19

\$100 raised by the Auction raffle tickets (120 tickets sold)

Paid member count as of the meeting. 71 regular, 2 life members. 4 new members

Secretary - Michael Lavery

motion was made to accept September meeting minutes - motion was seconded , passed unanimously.

Brought to the attention of the Board that the meeting minutes were being published in the Zero Beat club newsletter before being officially approved and accepted at the BOD meeting. After discussion a vote was taken and approved to skip one Zero Beat publication of the minutes and approve the October minutes at the November BOD meeting. Then publish the Oct. meeting minutes in the November Zero Beat. Following that we will always approve the minutes before publication.

Action item - Renewal of the incorporated status with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts via the mass.gov website. Update 10/2 - Corporate status (Annual Report) for non-profit status was marked as filed with the Commonwealth.

Action item - check on SSC status with the league. No update yet

The Auction raffle tickets were recounted and reported to club Treasurer. One pack of tickets most likely was purchased and not filled out yet. We will make an announcement at the auction to ensure all ticket purchasers turn in their stubs.

Technical - Dave Cain AA1YW

There were a number of requests for technical assistance. Dave helped all of them.

Bulk book buy from the League was discussed. Possible joint effort between HCRA and NoBARC. We will float the idea to the club to gauge interest.

Zero Beat Editor - Larry Krainson WB1DBY

Submit articles to Larry by Oct. 27th

Going forward the printed copies of Zero Beat will be a single sheet of paper printed on both sides. To include next meeting information (date, topic, speaker name), President's corner etc. . Seven (7) printed copies per month.

Membership - Ed LaCombe KB1NWH

Jim (PHW) will not be able to help with refreshments due to other commitments. Ed will buy donuts.

Move around the audience to sell more tickets.

At Large - Irv Slitzky

Questioned the club - How many members attended the meeting last month (approx. 50). Based on attendance the 50/50 raffle had a low take-in.

Program - Jim Whitehouse

April - Ed will ask Jose to present Dx Labs

Hot dogs at the auction and tailgate party. Update - a hot dog cooker has been donated to the club by Jack Bennett K1JAB

The soldering class was discussed. Mike volunteered to be the instructor's assistant.

Old Business

NN1Y has stepped up to organize the Holiday Party. Thank You!

Cost of Holiday party tickets - \$25 per person. No discount for members, early bird or children.

Menu will be Chicken Francaise & Pork Tenderloin. Pasta course will be Ziti and Meatballs. Drinks - buy your own soda or free coffee, tea and water.

BOD date and day of the week will be Tuesday or Wednesday depending on KC1V and Kx1x availability.

New Business

New members in the club - Martin Oppenheimer N2HLA, Larry Dziobek KD1RV, Kenneth Nebel KA1MZE, Norman Gelinias KB1NIE. Board voted to accept new members, accepted unanimously.

George will send the membership database out every month to the BOD.

Vote to change the family membership be removed from the membership form. All members will submit separate forms. Jim (JAW) first motion, Irv seconded. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted on this date - October 17th, 2009 - Michael S. Lavery

Another HCRA offering Club Kit Building Project

The Rock-Mite is a crystal-controlled direct-conversion transceiver available for 80M, 40M, 30M or 20M. It features an on-board 8-pin PIC micro-controller which controls a T-R offset on key-down. A brief tap of a pushbutton control switch reverses the offset to yield a second operating frequency. Pushing and holding on the pushbutton activates the speed adjustment routine for the built-in Iambic keyer. If you'd rather use an external keyer or straight key, there's a 'drop-through' mode which allows use of an external keying source.

You'll note in the image above that the Rock-Mite uses two crystals. The first is used in the local oscillator for transmitter and receiver. The second is used as a receiver front-end filter. This crystal significantly reduces the SWBC energy present at the receiver mixer; as a result, unwanted SWBC reception is dramatically reduced.

The Rock-mite uses one surface-mount part with fairly large spacing. There are no toroids to wind, so assembly should be a snap! The Rock-Mite uses subminiature epoxy-encapsulated RF chokes instead of toroids.

SPECIFICATIONS:-

- Double-sided PCB 2.0" x 2.5", plated-thru-holes, solder masked & silk screened for easy assembly
- 0.5W power output at 12V supply.
- - Supply voltage range 8-15V

HCRA Price

\$30

**Contact: Jim, K1JAW
K1JAW@qsl.net**

For more information



AVAILABLE FREQUENCIES:

3560 kHz* (US Novice/Tech)
3579 kHz (US Novice/Tech)
7015 kHz
7030 kHz*
7040 kHz** (US Novice/Tech)
7122 kHz (US Novice/Tech)
10106 kHz*
14060 kHz*

(*QRP calling frequency)

(**Old QRP "rockbound" calling frequency)

- automatic T/R offset, reversible
- Built-in Iambic keyer, 5-40 WPM
- Built in sidetone, 700 Hz
- Includes assembly instructions and operating tips
- All on-board parts supplied in kit (as pictured above)

I understand it is a fantastic rig!

By Anonymous

1. Ordered K3 for 3-day shipment. Charged to Discover Card. Gave new address (new to Elecraft, that is). Hoped to assemble in time for Field Day. Planned to take 2 days off from work to do it. Arranged to be home when unit arrives in three days.

2. Discover Card fraud detection unit delayed approval of credit card charge until they could get ahold of me. Elecraft emailed me and I called in with different card #. Unit still goes out in time. (I had called Discover Card after I made the order, telling them the sale was legit. Turns out that the Customer Service Dept. does not relay information to the Fraud Unit.)

3. Tracked unit through UPS.com. Elecraft had shipped it brown label in error. I called Elecraft and asked for refund of the "charged for 3 day, got Brown label" difference. Person at Elecraft thought it was quite an accommodation to do that. Finally agreed and also sent me a knife and a tee shirt (Woohoo!) after I said that I needed a reward. Part of reluctance to issue credit due to fact she was told not to issue credits if at all possible, as they cost X%. Or something like that. I had to explain that as Elecraft had paid the brown label rate, I was entitled to be charged the brown label rate. Got the "we're just a small company and can't afford it" line somewhere along in there.

4. Elecraft issued credit to Discover Card, not the card actually used. (Fraud unit did not pick up on that one!) (It's okay, I got the refund!). Tracked shipment at UPS.com. Turns out Elecraft shipped it to my old address. Thank heavens we still live in the same town! Found out it was on truck for delivery. (That's when I noticed that it was shipped to the wrong place.)

5. Drove around town until I found the UPS truck. Got unit. (Showed ID.)

6. K3 is on the back burner. Assembled up to the calibration stage; got frustrated at the instructions, popping back and tweeken manuals; decided I had to learn how to operate the rig in order to calibrate, and I was hoping to get the thing calibrated and THEN learn how to operate it. Still using 746PRO.



111th anniversary of the Loss of the Steamship Portland

November 27, 2009 - Friday - 0800 AM EST (1300Z) - 0500 PM EST(2200Z) - the sea to the North River, closed the old river mouth, and reversed the flow of part of the river. <http://www.hazegray.org/features/1898gale/>

DX QSL via the Bureau via K1WCC, W/K via K1WCC on QRZ.COM with Business sized S.A.S.E.

Watch the DX Summit for W1P Spots - <http://www.dxsummit.fi/DxSpots.aspx?count=50&range=2>

On the evening of Saturday, November 26, 1898, New England was struck by the most destructive storm the region had ever experienced. The gale killed over 200 persons and wrecked or sank at least 140 major vessels. The best-known victim of the gale was the coastal steamer Portland, lost off Cape Cod with 191 people aboard. The steamer gave her name to the storm, and has since been memorialized in New England folklore and legend.

The storm started quietly on the evening of the 26th of November, with a light but strengthening wind. Within hours it had grown to hurricane proportions and was creating havoc all along the coast. The winds raged all through the night of the 26th, all day on the 27th, and did not subside until the 28th, some 36 hours after the storm had started. Winds were clocked at up to 72 mph in Boston, and were probably even stronger along the coast southeast of Boston, especially on Cape Cod.

To call the damage widespread is a vast understatement. Houses were blown over and washed away all along the coast from Cape Cod to Portland, Maine. The coastline was littered with the wrecks and wreckage of dozens of vessels, large and small, smashed or sunk by the fierce winds and seas. In Provincetown harbor alone over 30 vessels were blown ashore or sunk. Damage along Boston's south shore and Cape Cod was probably the worst; telegraph lines were brought down, railways washed out, and even the low scrub trees of Cape Cod were blown away. In Scituate, a small coastal community 30 miles south of Boston, the coastline was permanently altered when mountainous waves cut a new inlet from

Free Ham Radio related Webinars :

Depiction, Inc., makers of the Depiction mapping software that was featured in the November QST, is offering free webinars for Amateur Radio Operators every Thursday. The webinars are hosted by David Friedman, KE7GOY, and Depiction's Kim Buike, a retired U.S. Navy Captain and active Red Cross volunteer. David and Kim will show how to employ Depiction before and during emergencies to enhance planning and response capabilities, and demonstrate David's use of the software in response to disasters around the country. For more information, visit www.depiction.com/webinars/amateur-radio.

**Zero Beat Contributions: Anything of interest is welcome. This is YOUR Newsletter. It's not interesting without YOUR ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS. Please submit your ideas, articles and more to wb1dby@comcast.net. Thank you,
Larry, WB1DBY, Zero Beat Editor**

New England Hamfests

LAST UPDATE 11-1-09 de W1GSL

<http://swapfest.us>

List is normally updated twice a month - look for the latest version

5 Dec Windsor CT VR+C Mus 115 Pierson LN @8AM Indoor John 860 673 0518 W

New England Area Ham - Electronic Flea Market *** DATES *** 2009 P2 of 2

2010 Contact Source

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13 Feb Marlboro MA AARC @MiddleSc [\\$5@9](#) [\\$20/T@6:30](#) Tim KA1OS 978 333 1329 F+

28 Feb Hicksville NY LIMARC @LevittHal [\\$6@9](#) [\\$20@7](#) Richard K2KNB 516 694 4937 +

28 Feb Colchester VT RANV @HamptonInn [\\$8@8](#) [\\$15@6:30](#) Mitch W1SJ 802 879 6589 W+

20 Mar Pomfret CT ECARA Paul KE1LI 860 928 2456 T

21 Mar Southington CT SARA @HS [\\$5@8](#) [\\$20/T@6:15](#) Norm W3IZ 860 584 1403 F

10 Apr Middletown NY OCARC @Wallkill ComCtr Bruce K2ULZ 845 562 4226 A+

17 April Lindenhurst NY GSBARC @FiremanPk John W2HCB 631 669 6321 A

17,18 Apr Wakefield MA Photographica @AmericallCtr ~photo~ John 781 592 2553 F+

18 April Cambridge MA FLEA at MIT Nick 617 253 3776 +
Third Sunday April thru October

25 April Unionvale NY MtBeaconARC @TymorPk Jim K2JIM 845 427 2702 A+

30 April 1 May Deerfield NH Nearfest @FG Mike K1TWF 978 250 1235 R+

NCVEC to Release New Technician Question Pool to Public in January 2010

The Question Pool Committee ([QPC](#)) of the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators ([NCVEC](#)) is due to release the [new Technician class \(Element 2\) question pool](#) to the 14 VECs on December 1, 2009; it will be released to the public in January 2010. Each question pool for the three Amateur Radio license classes -- Technician, General and Amateur Extra -- is reviewed on a four-year rotation. This new Technician class pool will become effective on July 1, 2010.

According to ARRL Assistant VEC Manager Perry Green, WY1O, the QPC reviews the three question pools every four years to ensure that the questions are kept current with the latest amateur practice and technology, as well as addresses information relevant to that particular license class. "In the case of the Technician pool, the question set should provide for the new Technician licensee to be able to establish his station and operate it legally, courteously and safely. The Technician question pool and exam are intended to be the beginning of the journey into the Amateur Radio Service. It prepares the person for the enjoyment of operating, and that of preparing to learn electronics, the cornerstone of the education needed to obtain the further enjoyment that can come with the higher license classes." Green is a member of the NCVEC's Question Pool Committee. Other members of the QPC include Chairman Roland Anders, K3RA (Laurel VEC), Larry Pollock, NB5X (W5YI VEC), Jim Wiley, KL7CC (Anchorage VEC) and Tom Fuszard, KF9PU (Milwaukee VEC).

Green said that earlier this year, the QPC solicited input from Amateur Radio operators concerning the new question pool, accepting input for new question topics and new questions, as well as suggestions for changes or deletions: "The QPC must rely on members of the Amateur Radio community to suggest questions and answers in a responsible manner to preserve a high level of legitimacy for our radio service, so the NCVEC QPC seeks input from the amateur community concerning a revision."

The new question pool will become effective for all examinations administered on or after July 1, 2010, and it will remain valid until June 30, 2014. The current Technician question pool that became effective July 1, 2006 will expire June 30, 2010. The new Technician pool contains approximately 400 questions, from which 35 are selected for an Element 2 examination. This question pool will contain graphics and diagrams, something new for this element. The current [General class question pool](#) was effective July 1, 2007 and is valid through June 30, 2011. The current [Amateur Extra class pool](#) was effective July 1, 2008 and is valid until June 30, 2012.

Page author: awextra@arrl.org

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The Amateur Radio Crossword Puzzler

By Chris Codella, W2PA

November 20, 2009

Signal Makers

Lots of pieces play together to create a signal on the air.

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20				21						22				
			23				24		25					
26	27	28		29		30			31		32	33	34	35
36			37			38	39	40			41			
42					43					44				
45					46					47				
48				49				50	51			52		
				53		54	55		56		57			
58	59	60	61			62		63				64	65	66
67					68						69			
70					71						72			
73					74						75			

Across

1. Ant. meas.
5. Cousin of 38-across
10. Caucasus region prefix
14. Part of DE, on phone
15. Lid like
16. PW1 maker
17. Part of 23 across
18. Eastern zone-36 prefix
19. NA or SA, e.g.
20. Encoder, in a way
22. Last stage, with 62 across
23. Measuring dev.
24. W5LFL's employer, once
26. SDR part
29. Band booking
31. RX starter
36. Prefix with -band
38. Parasitic array
41. Part of a score, maybe
42. Political pundit?
45. Apple spray
46. Theories
47. Lisbon prefix
48. Seminal radio textbook author
50. Equipment seller
52. Homer's neighbor
53. Eastern zone-28 prefix
56. Dir., for one
58. Dit dah doer
62. See 22 across
67. Tea type
68. Dig, so to speak
69. Eight in some circles
70. HS denizen
71. Part of some joints
72. Dayton digs
73. QSL bureau process
74. Put up, as a crank-up, say
75. Lodges

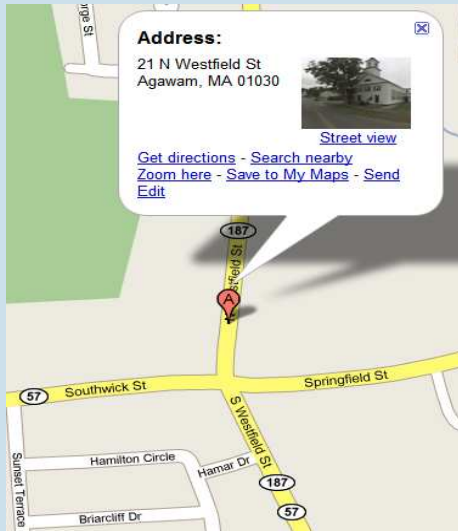
Down

1. DVM predecessor
2. "QSY!"
3. "___ Thing"
4. Q followers
5. JD1 name
6. "Get ___!"
7. It's a gas
8. Probably contains a 41 across
9. W5 sect.
10. KP4 name
11. Harbor vessel
12. Turin prefix
13. Apache or Cheyenne, e.g.
21. Gates' job
22. Hole goal
25. Span's partner
26. Amateur 24 across partner
27. Having two parts
28. RIT button
30. Swindles
32. 90 degrees
33. Illegal lighting?
34. Belfast prefix
35. Cut down
37. School session
39. Ready for firing
40. "Gee!"
43. Kink companion
44. Gut bug
49. MI, MO and MT QP mo.
51. Give in
54. Water walker
55. Bratislava prefix
57. CD followers
58. SB-401, 301, 201 and 101, once
59. EME artifact
60. Y2K part
61. Menu option
63. CPU part, abbr.
64. EP place
65. Take home
66. SM-land rugs
68. Took the cake, say

The answers are downloadable
online on
the HCRA.org web site,
In the Zero Beat section

Meeting Location:

*Feeding Hills
Congregational Church
21 North Westfield St.
Feeding Hills, MA 01030*



Next Meeting:

Holiday Party

December 4th

Happy Holidays To All



The Hampden County Radio Association
P.O Box 562
Agawam, MA 01001



PLEASE HAND CANCEL