



# ZERO BEAT

<http://hcra.org>

January 2019

*Special points of interest*

Next Meeting:

**January 4, 2019—EZNEC,  
Tech class info, contest talk,  
raffle tix :-)**

[Visit the HCRA facebook page.](#)

- Don't forget to check out  
[hcra.org](http://hcra.org)

**WSJT-X V2.0 is out.  
FT8 will be part of the  
RTTY contest coming  
up. V2.0 has some  
changes, but the biggest  
one is that it is NOT  
back compatible with  
V1.9.  
Also—when download-  
ing and installing—it  
will write over previous  
version unless put in a  
new location.**

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## January Meeting

Najm AB1ZA is going to tell us about EZNEC (<https://www.eznec.com/>) a modeling and analyzing program for antenna experimenting. This program comes in 3 levels—Demo (limited scope, but free), Full (\$99) and Plus (\$149).

Don't forget—raffle tickets are still available for that wicked good IC-7300—Get them NOW!

Hello everyone,

Well, winter is upon us, the Holiday Party has happened, and some good contests are coming up. Dave WM1B is starting a Technician license class, and we will have an opportunity to welcome some new hams after the test, I'm sure!! Contact Dave if you'd like to help out with the class.

And the ARRL 10M contest has happened also. So far, 10 members of HCRA have submitted logs. Looking at the list, I didn't see any other clubs from WMA section. So, contesting is a thing we do!!! This was my first one. I learned a lot, and I am working on understanding logging programs.... I've been a mostly paper guy.

73, John N1JIE

# Win a IC-7300

## Tickets only \$10 each

### Only 250 to be sold

**Drawing to be held at  
the MTARA HamFest  
March 2019 or when  
all tickets sold.**



# FROM THE SHACK

LARRY KRAINSON W1AST



**Have you visited the HCRA website lately?** We've made a number of changes and it is worth stopping more often by to take a look. Sure, some things are the same, but many are different and new.

Find out about past operating Events for the 10m Contest and Field Day. At Membership you can renew your dues online, read the club bylaws, print a membership application and see the list of current members. Are you still on the list? If you are, you are paid up through next September. If you are not, then print the application and send it in.

**We have a new website category: Member Perks.** I've had people ask me "Why Should I Join"? Your \$15 a year covers club expenses such as donations to the hospital for use of the room for the year, the same to the town of Agawam for the Field Day site, supplies for Field Day maintenance of equipment and other expenses. And now even more bang for your \$15 membership. Currently we have three member perks.

1. The club now offers to pool outgoing DX QSL cards with other club members through the ARRL's outgoing QSL Service.. You must be an ARRL member to use this and it will save you at least \$7 per outgoing bundle of QSL cards. Learn more here: <http://www.hcra.org/dx-qsl/>

2. The club now officially offers help to all members that may need it. This help has always been there, but now it's more known within the membership and more private. Ask your question online and it gets emailed to Bob, K1YO who will then decide who is the best person to answer that question (it may be Bob himself). This service has only been up a short while and has already been put to use. No question is too simple. Ask away on any ham radio subject and you will get an email answer and someone to talk with further about the subject. This is another feature *available only to club members*. <http://www.hcra.org/ham-radio-help-for-members/>

3. For a number of years, the club has had a listing in Club Log for HCRA club members. If you chase DX, whether a newbie just starting or an experienced DXer, club log is a great resource for you and a fun way to track your effort and see what your friends are doing too. Taken from the ClubLog about page: Club Log is a web based application that analyzes log files from radio amateurs all over the world. Using the logs, Club Log offers you a wide range of reports for your own benefit, and identifies large scale trends from the sum of all databases.

If you participate (it's free) in Club Log, make an account, log in and upload your computer log. Take a look at what the other members are doing. Click DXCC Leagues and then in the drop down box, filter by club and choose HCRA. Then click on Generate DXCC League. If you just uploaded your log, it may take a day to get your data posted to the HCRA Club Log group. It is a lot of fun to see where I place within the club members. [www.clublog.org](http://www.clublog.org)

League for HCRA - Hampden County Radio Association															
W1AST ranks 7															
Rank	Callsign	160	80	60	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	6	DXCC ▼	Slots	Range
1	NU1O	7	59	0	133	51	215	49	68	16	45	1	229	644	30 yrs
2	KK1W-1	70	103	3	144	73	142	67	68	18	24	6	179	718	42 yrs
3	NF1G	0	52	0	43	56	97	50	70	20	10	4	157	402	3 yrs
4	K1NZ-1	57	77	26	74	99	55	20	18	2	4	0	143	432	7 yrs
5	N1TA-3	31	15	0	69	18	107	7	67	1	3	0	143	318	17 yrs
6	KX1X	8	48	0	108	66	97	52	55	2	15	1	134	452	21 yrs
7	W1AST-1 *	2	17	0	63	7	103	12	42	0	9	1	120	256	9 yrs
8	NV1Q-3 *	5	35	0	45	8	102	17	41	2	14	0	115	269	39 yrs
9	K1VOI	0	15	0	35	3	86	26	40	2	9	0	105	216	17 yrs
10	N1FTP *	0	3	0	30	0	91	1	34	0	7	1	96	167	10 yrs
		160	80	60	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	6			
11	AB1WT	2	14	0	17	0	36	25	24	1	4	0	70	123	4 yrs
12	NT1K-2	0	1	0	9	0	47	0	22	0	1	0	62	80	8 yrs
13	WD1S-2	28	4	0	10	1	22	1	0	0	2	1	44	69	6 yrs
14	N1HM	0	0	0	1	0	14	2	4	0	1	0	19	22	3 yrs
15	KB1V SX	0	1	0	3	0	8	2	0	0	1	0	10	15	2 yrs

Club Log is a great way to check what you've accomplished each year DX wise. Filter it to 2018 and play with the settings. The club offers a certificate to the top 3 finishers each year. If you won last year or past years and again this year, we then take the 3 people below you. Giving others a chance to enjoy being near the top for a change. So far, 1/3 of the way thru December, here are the standings with myself highlighted in green. I do hope to see more of you on the list next year adding to the fun! The final results will be in the next ZeroBeat.

**We have some great meetings** coming up for the next 6 months. Starting in January, Najm, AB1ZA, will explain how to design and model antennas thru software. EZ-NEC has been around a long time as well as other software. Learn more at this not to be missed meeting!

We follow up in February with another excellent presentation by DX Engineering on Grounding and Bonding. The meeting DX Engineering did a few months ago was excellent and the board decided to invite them back again for another presentation. I'm sure we'll all learn something as grounding is such an important piece of all stations.

March has John Ellsworth from the Vintage Communications Museum in Windsor, CT. John always provides us with fascinating stories and information on our communications past.

April is the annual Show and Tell. See what everyone has been building the past year. Get your project ready to be shown and maybe you will win one of 4 prizes being awarded this year. All projects and kits are worth presenting as there is always someone who has an interest in what you are doing. Bring those projects to the April Meeting!

**The board is working on some ideas** for future "*Share the Knowledge*" classes to be held on a Saturday at the hospital. We'll be talking about them at the January meeting and giving you, the HCRA members, a chance to vote on what you'd like to learn more of in a class and even suggest other possible topics. Bring your ideas to the January meeting.

Lastly, if you'd like to attend a meeting or activity but need a ride, please reach out to a member of the board and we'll pair you up with someone in your town that can provide you with a ride to and from the meetings.

There will be lots of activities within the club over the long winter, and many other things too vast to discuss this month. I hope to hear you on the air and see you at the next meeting. Please show your club colors and wear your badges and HCRA Wear.

73,

Larry, W1AST

### **Do You Have Your HCRA Wear?**

HCRA Wear is a new way to look sharp at HCRA meetings and activities and all ham events. This year we've changed the shirt color to one that really makes the HCRA logo stand out. It's a light blue and your club logo looks great on it. You can get a short sleeve polo shirt with the club logo and your name and call too. Or maybe a button down shirt is more your style, we have those too and they look great. You'll notice most of the board wearing the new colors and styles. To help you keep warm we have a new line of warm fleece vests available in either light blue or black or even gray.

You can add the new mini logo to the backs of the shirts or vests upon request. The mini logo is pretty cool with part HCRA and your call. It's very unique and modern. There are also HCRA hats. We can arrange to have the logo embroidered on nearly anything giving you the ability to proudly advertise and showcase your club.

Ordering is done one of two ways. Online the info is at: <http://www.hcra.org/hcra-wear/> or you may place your order with Harold at the monthly meetings. Make sure to neatly print your call, name, size and choice of what you want. Harold has prices as does the web site. It usually takes about 2 weeks for the orders to come in. The embroidery is done at a local East Longmeadow business called Embroidered Images. We're not farming it out to China or across the country. The club is supporting a local business and the quality and quick service is reflected in that choice.

If HCRA Wear clothing is not for you, then perhaps a HCRA name badge? It's just \$12 and shows your call, name, town, ARRL logo if you want and the club logo. The badges can be ordered at club meetings and online. (see sample photo).





## HCRA and MTARA Holiday Party

A few pictures:



## **Scheduled meetings and speakers:**

**January 4, 2019: Najm, AB1ZA - EZ-NEC**

**February 1, 2019: Grounding and Bonding presentation by DX Engineering.**

**March 1, 2019: John Ellsworth from the Vintage Radio Museum.**

**April 5, 2019: Show and Tell**

**May 3, 2019:**

**June 7, 2019: Elections**

**Field Day 2019 (June 22, 23)**

## **NEW Licensing Class!!**

Do you know someone that may be interested in beginning the Amateur Radio hobby? Maybe someone young? Or old? Used to play on CB back in the day?

Put them in touch with our club – Dave WM1B has organized a 6 week Technician License class. It will be held on Tuesday nights starting January 15th at the Holyoke Hospital Auditorium, 6:30 PM. A license test will be conducted at the end of the class. Contact Dave Fant WM1B (WM1B@arrl.net) to sign up to help—powerpoint slides will be available in advance, along with other instructor material—a good chance to pass on your love of radio to new enthusiasts!!

This is a new activity for our club, as we work towards getting the status of being a service club back.



# DOTS & DASHES:

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

## Silent Key

I got to learn a bit about the silent key tradition this last month. Unfortunately, the SK designation in QST is a larger and larger list each month. Last month, the man that encouraged me to enter amateur radio passed away. Our last conversation was me showing him some qsl cards, and telling him about a recent contact in Moscow at 25 watts. No longer able to speak easily, he held up 4 fingers, then 2 fingers. I smiled and told him I made the contact on 20 meters. He nodded and smiled. Looking back, I will treasure that bond of radio that we had. I think he got into amateur radio with his sons as a way to communicate while he was at sea (retired USCG). They all are cw proficient, something that is on my list to do.

The National Silent Key Archive (<http://www.silentkeyhq.com/>) is a way to leave more than a one line listing in QST. There is also a call sign lookup, and you may find info on someone that you knew there. You can create a page for someone you know, information is checked prior to publishing.

You can also contribute to one of the ARRL funds in the name of someone that has been part of your amateur life. ARRL has many methods to contribute to a lasting legacy. (<http://www.arrl.org/memorial-gifts>)

Another idea, share your love of radio with someone. HCRA has the technician class coming up, an ideal way to start someone on their way. Go back and contact (if possible) someone that influenced your love of radio. Don't wait for the keys to go silent to acknowledge someone.

73 Capt. Tyler, WA1WWG, your influence lives on, and I will share it,

## INTERESTING HAM RADIO WEB SITE:

<http://www.hamradiolicenseexam.com/>

OK, the purists may not like it—but to upgrade your license, you gotta pass the test. This is a practice test site. It does have a training section also, that kind of parallels the ARRL book. The practice questions are form the current pool for leach level. This is how I got started—never had the tech book (I do now) I just studied the test. I used this site for each of my upgrades, also used a book for General, and a class for Extra. But this is a great resource to study for your license test.

## AREA SWAP/HAMFESTS:

Jan 19	WinterFest 2019	Whitman, MA	<a href="http://www.walnpo.org/WF/2019Winterfest.htm">http://www.walnpo.org/WF/2019Winterfest.htm</a>
Mar 9	Amateur Radio & Electronics Hamfest	Chicopee, MA	<a href="http://www.mtara.org/">http://www.mtara.org/</a>

### UPCOMING CONTESTS (just a few...)

#### December

Dec 26	Phone Fray (preweekly)	<a href="http://www.perluma.com/Phone_Fray">http://www.perluma.com/Phone_Fray</a>	SSB
Dec 29	RAC Canada Winter Contest	<a href="https://wp.rac.ca/rac-canada-winter-contest-rules-2018/">https://wp.rac.ca/rac-canada-winter-contest-rules-2018/</a>	CW Phone

#### January

Jan 1	Canada POTA (all year)	<a href="https://cnpota.ca/">https://cnpota.ca/</a>	All
Jan 5	ARRL Kids Day	<a href="http://www.arrl.org/kids-day">http://www.arrl.org/kids-day</a>	SSB
Jan 5-6	ARRL RTTY Roundup	<a href="http://www.arrl.org/rtty-roundup">http://www.arrl.org/rtty-roundup</a>	Digital
Jan 19-21	ARRL January VHF	<a href="http://www.arrl.org/january-vhf">http://www.arrl.org/january-vhf</a>	All

#### February

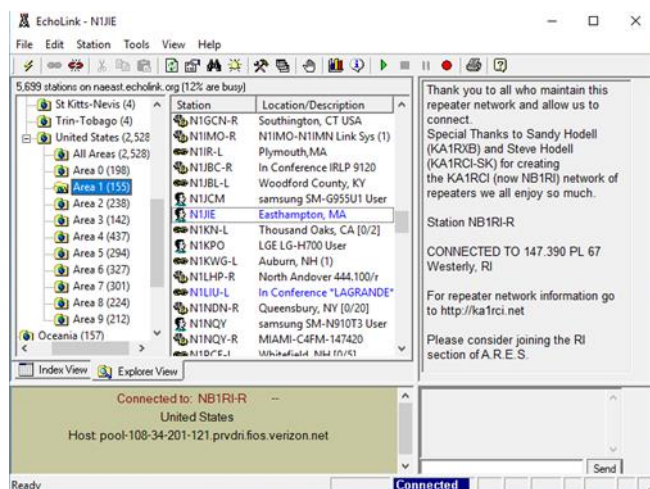
Feb 11-15	ARRL School Club Roundup	<a href="http://www.arrl.org/school-club-roundup">http://www.arrl.org/school-club-roundup</a>	CW Digi Ph
Feb 16-17	ARRL International DX CW	<a href="http://www.arrl.org/arrl-dx">http://www.arrl.org/arrl-dx</a>	CW

## Echolink—a repeater on your phone

So, something I learned about over the last couple of weeks—echolink is a software that will connect you, via the internet, to a repeater and allow you to operate. It's a bit like DMR in a few ways, but very different in others. This was shown to me by the folks at Nashua Area Radio Society during my Extra class. They actually have someone call in on their Sunday net from somewhere in the Caribbean... How cool is that??

I have installed the app on my phone— and made a contact on the Westerly RI repeater, with a ham in Fairhaven MA that was also on echolink. When I open the app, I can choose from a long menu of repeaters to listen on, and if someone is there, make a contact, ragchew, participate in a net, etc. This can also be done the same way with your computer (I have it on my station laptop).

To activate yourself on echolink, you must be a licensed amateur. This is good for Technician level, as repeaters are generally within their operating privileges. After loading the app, you must send a copy of your license (the electronic one you downloaded from FCC) and echolink will send you an activation link. So, any technician level hams, that don't have a radio yet? This will get you onto a repeater!! For more info go to: <http://www.echolink.org/>



Another part of echolink is hosting a repeater. This is done on a computer, that is left on and connected to your 2M rig, and tuned to your local repeater. Our local (MTARA) repeater is not connected right now. This is a bit of a commitment, and would tie up equipment. But obviously other repeaters are there.

This is very different than DMR—the mobile radio / internet trend that some are into. Although many of the echolink repeaters are also DMR repeaters.

Whew, just when I grasp a facet of radio, two more show up to distract me.... This is a good hobby for an ADHD type like me ;-)

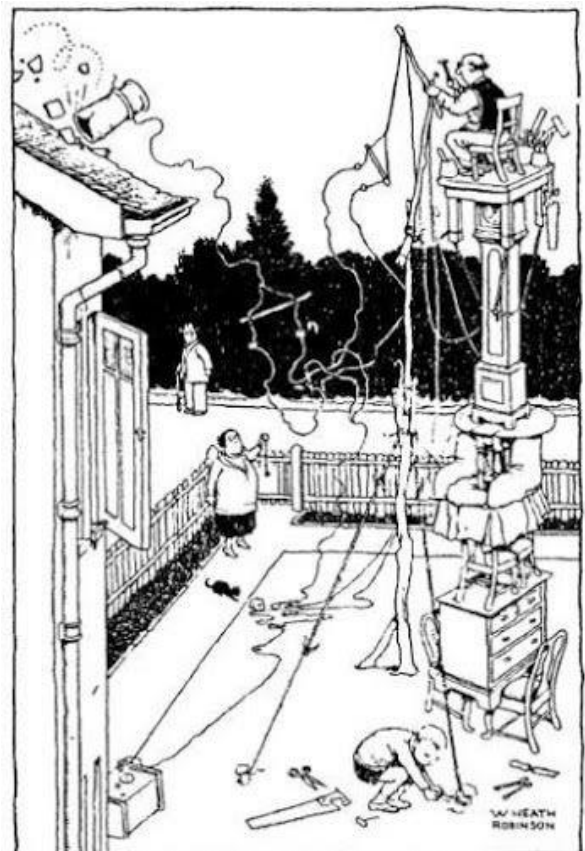
# A bit ah humah :-)

shamelessly collected from the internet



## WHO IS THE MOST DANGEROUS PERSON IN THE WORLD? A HAM WITH AN IDEA, SOME WIRE.... AND A BOW AND ARROW IN HIS HAND!

"Electricity originates inside clouds. There, it forms into lightning, which is attracted to the Earth by golfers. After entering the ground, the electricity hardens into coal, which, when dug up by power companies and burned in big ovens called 'generators,' turns back into electricity...where it is transformed by TV sets into commercials for beer, which passes through the consumers and back into the ground, thus completing what is known as a "circuit".....Dave Barry





# 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

**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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## 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. (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!**

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