



Zero Beat

A Publication of the
Hampden County Radio Association
[HTTP://WWW.HCRA.ORG](http://www.hcra.org)

DECEMBER 2006

Annual Holiday Party Friday, Dec. 1, 2006 7:00 pm

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Mark your calendar now and start the holiday season off right this year. Our holiday party will be held as usual, at our regular meeting place, the Feeding Hills Congregational Church. The party is free to every HCRA member and one guest. Preparations for the event are being led this year by Ed, KB1NWH. Details are still being worked out but rest assured - the dinner will be good and the fun even better!

Back again for a third year will be 'HAM JEOPARDY'. Are you ready for some fun again, and a chance to win prizes too! Start brushing up now on your ham trivia and be prepared to have the time of the season!

The club will be supplying your entree and some dessert. Baked chicken, pasta, and sausage & peppers. Anyone that would like to bring additional dishes (your favorites?) to round out the selection is welcome to do so. This year

to round out the selection is welcome to do so. This year marks the 60th anniversary for HCRA and we want to celebrate in style.

I can be reached at:
kb1nwh@comcast.net or 413-786-8215 home
413-250-3137 cell
Please call between 1800 & 2100 at the home number or leave a message on the cell.
73,
Ed—KB1NWH



SWL Resource

The *NASWA WWW Shortwave Listening Guide* was originated by John Figliozzi, author of the book *The Worldwide Shortwave Listening Guide*, last published by Universal Radio in 2001. Since October, 2005, the database has been maintained by Ralph

Brandi, NASWA webmaster, with assistance from John and from NASWA *Easy Listening* columnist Richard Cuff.

Listings in The *NASWA WWW Shortwave Listening Guide* are developed principally from material provided by the stations themselves

and the author's observations of current activity on the shortwave bands.

<http://www.naswa.net/swlguide>

Meeting Location:

Meetings are held at the Feeding Hills Congregational Church, 21 North Westfield Street, Feeding Hills, MA 01030.

The church is located right next to a Dunkin Donuts and across from a gas station.

Parking is in back of the church. Access is HP accessible.

Talk-in is available on the 146.94 repeater.

HCRA Board Meeting

November 9, 2006

Held at corporate boardroom of Rocky's ACE Hardware, Springfield, MA.

Members present: John KI1A, Dave AA1YW, Greg N1AEH, George KC1V, Jim KB1JVF, Jim KK1W, Eric KB1JVI, Larry WB1DBY and Ed KB1NWH Holiday Party Chairman.

President John, KI1A:

The attendance at the November auction meeting was good. Information on coffee mugs with the HCRA logo was passed around for review. John will try to obtain samples for the next board meeting.

Vice President Dave, AA1YW:

The raffle prizes are all set for the December Holiday Party meeting.

Treasurer Greg, N1AEH:

Greg reported that the current club balance is \$5293. A deposit of \$1675.00 was made for November. The November raffle grossed \$471, ten membership renewals and \$35 in donations were received. Club income from the auction was \$1063, of which \$964 came from donated items.

Secretary George, KC1V:

Nothing to report this month: Received 10 Membership renewal forms from N1AEH for recording.

At Large Jim, KB1JVF:

Coffee and donuts are going well. Extra coffee was required for the auction meeting.

Program Jim, KK1W:

Gary, AA1UE, is confirmed as the speaker for the April meeting. The February speaker is still open.

Membership Eric, KB1JVI:

Eric attended the VE session on October 12 to speak with prospective members.

Zero Beat Editor Larry, WB1DBY:

The deadline for the next ZB is the November 20. Nothing has been received yet for the December issue. Photos of the auction by Mark, W1MRB, are expected for the upcoming issue.

Technical John, N1JIO:

Not present.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

December Holiday Party: Ed, KB1NWH has volunteered to be the chairman for the Holiday Party and was approved by the board. A check for \$600 was written to Ed for the dinner costs.
Board of Directors Meeting: The next board meeting will be held on December 8 at Rocky's.

Respectfully submitted,
George Collins, KC1V, Secretary.

Wear it Proudly!
HCRA Name Badges

HAMPDEN COUNTY
JIM
WA1ZUH
RADIO ASSN.

Only \$6.00. Available for order at any club meeting, or call or drop an email for immediate service!
Show the world you belong to the oldest club in the Pioneer Valley.

Jim, WA1ZUH: jmullen@rockys.com or (413) 245-3228

Dr. DX

Mike DeChristopher, K1KAA



December is here! The holiday season is upon us, and though the sea isn't full of DXpeditions, you can still expect a strong showing from a few select groups. In the wake of the 5A7A Libya expedition, there are a few "tailgate" expeditions scattered around the globe for your operating pleasure.

Speaking of 5A7A, I managed to work them on 20, 40, 80, and 160. I hope everyone else had as much fun working them (or trying to work them) as I did. Hopefully, we'll see this entity lit up more as time goes on, especially with the reception they have received from the ham community. If you have not had a chance to work them yet, they departed at the end of November, but expect there to be more 5A prefixes on, soon.

This month's DX are the remaining stations from CQWW CW. Therefore, expect a lot of CW work. I am sure some SSB will be around (and after CQWW, I would be anxious to give my wrist a rest, too), so keep your eyes to the cluster. The list for this month looks like:

Start	End	Entity	Callsign	QSL via	Notes
Dec 11	Dec 12	French Guiana	9Y4/N1DL	N1DL	By N1DL fm Isle Diablo (SA-020); QSL OK via Buro or direct
Dec 14	Dec 14	Barbados	8P6/N1DL	N1DL	By N1DL fm (NA-021); QSL OK via Buro or direct
Dec 14	Jan 08	Tonga	A3	JA7GAX Direct	By JA7GAX fm OC-049 OC-169 (1 week) OC-064 (1 week)
Dec 15	Dec 15	Dominica	J7	N1DL	By N1DL as J7R and J79DL fm (NA-101); QSL OK via Buro or direct
Dec 17	Dec 17	British Virgin Islands	VP2V/N1DL	N1DL	By N1DL fm Tortola (NA-023); QSL OK via Buro or direct
Dec 18	Dec 19	Dominican Republic	N1DL/HI9	N1DL	By N1DL fm (NA-096); QSL OK via Buro or direct
Dec 20	Dec 22	Guam	KH2	JM3PIT	By JM3PIT
Dec 25	Jan 03	Tonga	A35GN	VK2GND	By VK2GND fm OC-049; check 7050 14195 14273 kHz
Dec 28	Jan 01	Puerto Rico	KP4	DL3VFN Buro	By DL3VFN as KP4/DL3VFN fm Vieques Is (NA-099)

Dr. DX Continued



In the meantime, I stumbled upon a list of pileup "busting" techniques I had [somewhere along the line] compiled and saved. Hopefully, they will aid you in catching that rare A3!

1. Complete callsign: The DX op will *always* try to catch the most complete callsign on the first call. Don't be tempted by others in the pileup to say the last two letters of your call.
2. Tuning patterns: It is not rare for a DX op with a big pileup to tune up or down .1 or .2, just to see who he can hear well. Often, they do this in patterns. Learn the pattern; don't be afraid to listen to five or six other stations do the same. He might go up two, then down two, or down two and then up two. It depends on the op.
3. Timing is everything: The greatest tools we have are our own callsigns. This is truly a "master class" skill. Experienced operators know enough to give a slight delay, and then call in to make their callsigns stand out. This takes time, practice, and patience, but is the most effective technique.
4. No DX cops: Bad operators are all over the place. Don't try to fix them, especially in the middle of a pileup. Stay quiet, and please don't contribute to the noise. Likewise, don't respond to anyone exhibiting such behavior. The DX is equally aggravated, and you can bet that station is at the bottom of his list to call.
5. The DX is the boss: If the DX station decides he wants to go by numbers, follow his commands. If you are a "1", go *only* after he asks for the "1" calls. If he decides to listen up, tune your transmitting VFO up and call him there. Again, he is the boss!
6. Let the big gun stations work him on the first call: Just because the DX hasn't chosen you, yet, doesn't mean he hasn't heard you. It makes more sense for him to get the guys with the big signals out of the way so he can hear you. Let him work the big guys, and don't get frustrated. It might take a little pistol or a medium-sized station three, four, or twenty-four calls. Patience is the key!
7. It is his job to say his call: Don't ask "your call?" during a pileup. Say your callsign. If he works you, ask him his callsign then. Spouting out questions in the middle of a calling period just adds to the noise. During a contest, if you want to know if he is a duplicate or not, work him anyway. They don't hurt your score, and often just calling in once (especially if he has already heard you) is much shorter than having to say "your call?" two or three times.
8. Work split: Don't be intimidated by split. It is a much desired skill, and one that is, truly, not that difficult to learn. Read the manual for your radio. The juiciest 40 meter DX likes to hang out just under your band edge!

Also this month, the ARRL 10 Meter Contest. This is a great contest that is easy to operate, but still a blast. We will be operating multi/single from here, just to generate as many points as we can for the club. I hope to hear you on, even if you are just there to make one or two QSO's. Submitting your log is easy, and instructions can be found on www.arrl.org/contest. Every point will help HCRA stay competitive!

Get on and make some QSO's! The DX won't work themselves!

73', es gud DX de
Mike DeChristopher, K1KAA

Happy Holidays from the HCRA Board of Directors!

Questions, Comments, and Suggestions
Can Be Directed To:

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Words from our President

Hi Everyone!

As we sit around our shacks with our bellies full of turkey...

We had a great turnout at our annual auction! And we saw some really great stuff pass though the auctioning block as well! Thank goodness there weren't nearly as many 200lb computer monitors!!!

A special thanks to Rick, N1RL and Gary, AA1UE, along with a few others for their generous club contributions! It's because of contributions like that (along with your club dues) that help to finance things like Field Day and the Holiday Party!

Speaking of the Holiday Party... Another special thanks is due to Ed, KB1NWH, for volunteering to be our Holiday Party Chairman! While I'm typing this, Ed is hard at work getting everything together for the party, which by the way, will be our December Meeting on Friday, December 1st at 7:00 pm. The party is free for each member and one guest. As usual, we'll have great food, Ham Jeopardy and great conversation with all the usual suspects! The Hampden County Radio Association Board of Directors are all looking forward to seeing you all there, and wish you the very best to you and yours for this holiday season!

73!

Johnny Lenville, KI1A

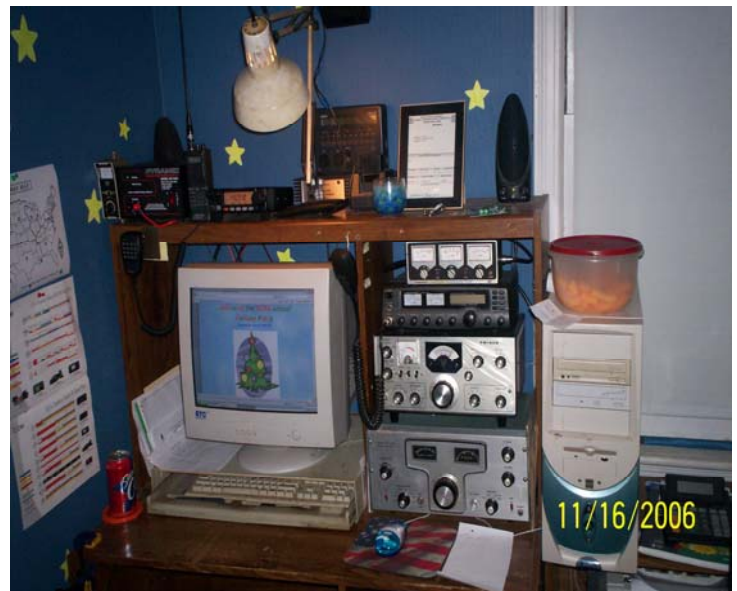
HCRA Ham Shacks

HCRA Ham Shacks is a new feature of Zero Beat. Each month we hope to showcase ham shacks from our members. If you would like to submit your shack, please do the following: take a digital picture so you or someone you know can email it, write a description of the shack with equipment, model numbers, etc. Plus a comment on the type of operating that you prefer. Don't forget your name and call, email address (if you have one) and web pages or other interesting information. Please send it all to: wb1dby@comcast.net and put the email subject as ham shacks or similar.

Ed—KB1NWH's Shack

HERE IS A PIC OF MY SHACK WITH:

- REALISTIC PRO-44 HAND HELD SCANNER
- YAESU FT-2800-M (TUNED TO 94)
- PYRAMID PS-12KX
- VALANCO METER
- UNIDEN MR8100 MOBILE SCANNER
- BATTERY CHARGER FOR HT
- TRI GAUGE FOR 11 MTR
- CHEROKEE CBS 1000 10/11 MTR
- YAESU FR-50-B HF RECEIVE
- LAFAYETTE HA-350 HF RECEIVE
- HOME BREWED PC



WE NEED **YOUR SUGGESTIONS**

We are asking for your suggestions and ideas for future HCRA meetings. The recent success of HCRA has been, in part, because of its interesting and timely key speakers and topics.

If you can help, please contact Jim, KK1W at jmullen@rockys.com or (413) 245-3228

HCRA 10m Net

Join NCS, Tom Doyle (n1muv),
each Monday night at 7:30 PM (local) on

28.375 MHz

Get the latest local word, join good friends,
take part in good conversation each week!!!
Anyone can join in, don't be shy!!!

ARRL 10 Meter - Contest Are You In ???

The contest dates this year are 0000 UTC December 9th to 2400 UTC December 10th. Adjusting for local time this means the contest starts at 7:00 PM Friday evening December 8th and ends at 7:00 PM Sunday evening December 10th. During this 48 hour period the idea is to make as many contacts on 10 meters, in as many states or countries as possible. Contacts may be made on either phone or CW. But I guess the big question is, why would you want to participate in the first place?

Well, how about its fun? Is that a good enough reason? There are lots of others, including working on your WAS (Worked All States), DXCC (DX Century Club), learning how to be a better operator, testing station improvements, winning awards.... I'm guessing FUN is the operative word here though.

One neat thing about this contest is it allows you to participate as an individual and HCRA to submit scores as a club. All you need to do is indicate your club affiliation when sending in your log and both you and HCRA get credit. Over the last five years between six and twelve folks have participated in putting HCRA on top in Western Massachusetts. Wouldn't it be great to be back on top again this year? All it takes is a little effort on your part (effort = fun) and we can do it again.

Because we are at the bottom of the sunspot cycle this is a contest that won't take anywhere 48 hours. But that doesn't mean there won't be good DX. If you have a beam try following the sun across the sky and see who you can work. The process is simple. Listen for a station calling "CQ contest" and give them a call. They will come back to you with your signal report and their location. When you answer simply give them back their signal report and your state. For a station in Massachusetts you might say, "AA1YW this is KK1W, 59, Massachusetts (Mike Alpha)". That's all there is to it. Write it down in your log and move on to the next contact. It is fun, and can also become a little addictive too.

There is a very nice write-up in November QST on page 105 or visit the ARRL web site at: <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2006/10-meters.html> for all the details. Scores for our club can be found on the HCRA website. If you are new to contesting or HF and want to give the contest a try but have more questions please drop me an email and I'll do my best to show you how to have fun this December.

I'll be looking for you to be 'on the air' December 8th!

Jim, KK1W

FCC "Omnibus"

Amateur Radio R&O Takes Effect December 15

When I first heard about the Omnibus Amateur Radio *Report and Order (R&O)*, I didn't expect to have to worry about any changes for at least a year or so. Wrong! The FCC surprised me by publishing a revised version of the R&O in the *Federal Register* on November 15, making the effective date for the R&O changes this December 15. So I thought I had better see what this is all about and how it might affect my operating activities.

I decided the easiest way to see what was changing was to compare the new band allocations to the current ones as shown on the *ARRL US Amateur Bands* chart (see links below). Checking the League Web site, I found they already have a new chart available that shows the band layouts effective on the fifteenth. Comparing the two charts made it easy to see where the changes were occurring.

Looking at the changes, band by band, let's see who the winners and losers are:

80 Meters: The phone sub-band moves down to 3600 kHz for Extras, 3700 kHz for Advanced and 3800 kHz for General class licensees, giving the Extras an additional 150 kHz of phone space, the Advanced 75 kHz and the Generals 50 kHz. Novices now have the same cw sub-band as the Advanced and Generals; 3525 to 3600 kHz and the Extras retain their exclusive bottom 25 kHz on cw.

40 Meters: The phone sub-band moves down 25 kHz to 7125 kHz, giving Extras and Advanced class ops 25 kHz more phone space, while Generals gain 50 kHz, with their sub-band moving down to 7175 kHz. Novices, Generals and Advanced ops all have 7025 to 7125 kHz for cw only and the Extras retain their 25 kHz, bottom of the band segment.

15 Meters: Here the Novices and Generals make some more gains. The General phone band is increased by 25 kHz, down to 21,275 kHz and the Novice cw band is extended down to 21,025 kHz, adding 75 kHz and making it the same as the Advanced and General sub-band.

10 Meters: The Novice operators gain 100 kHz of cw space on this band, with the cw sub-band being extended from 28,300 all the way to 28,000 kHz. The Novice phone allocation of 28,300 to 28,500 kHz remains the same.

All the other bands remain unchanged and, as is the current rule, Technicians with 5-wpm code have the same HF privileges as Novices.

As far as winners or losers, I'll let you make that call. Although I spend most of my HF operating time on cw, I don't expect the "loss" of some cw only spectrum to have much impact on my operating, almost all of which is in the bottom 75 kHz of the bands. It does mean that there will be less

space for RTTY on 80 meters, which may impact both RTTY and cw ops alike. I like the Novice expansion, but think it came years too late and really won't make much difference.

There is much more to the Omnibus Amateur Radio R&O and we should all have a look at the details, which are available to everyone on the ARRL Web site. Those interested in HF digital modes especially should have a close look at the new allocations. Here are some links to the League Web sites.

The current band chart is at:
<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/bands.html>

The new chart, effective December 15, is at:
http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/wt04-140/Hambands3_color.pdf

The full story can be found at:
<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2006/11/15/100/?nc=1>

See you on the bands, maybe in some new spots.

Vy 73, George, KC1V

*Have you
tried IRLP yet?*

IRLP is the Internet Radio Linking Project, connecting radios over the Internet. With your 2m radio, you make contacts all over the world. HCRA sponsors an IRLP node, in South Hadley, MA. It is there for your use, please give it a try (at least turn it on and listen) 146.46 simplex, 114.8hz PL Kx1x, Node #7270, S.Hadley, MA

For a list of IRLP nodes and other IRLP information, go to: <http://www.irlp.net/>

HCRA Auction Wrap-up

Well gang, another successful HCRA auction under our belt, and a fun one it was too. Who says eBay is cutting into face to face sales out here in the real world?

As usual a group of over one hundred buyers and sellers showed up November 3rd to make money or find bargains. A wide selection of great ham radio and computer equipment sold at bargain basement prices. The auction proved it is still possible to get an HT, outfit a ham shack or stock up on pieces/parts without breaking the bank.

The parking lot started filling up at 6:00 PM and by the time the auction began at 7:30 it was difficult to find a seat. Tables lined all three sides of the hall, piled high with stuff someone just 'had to have!' As the night wore on the gear dwindled down but most of the crowd stayed until the very end (which was about 11:45!).

Special thanks to Gary, AA1UE, Rick, N1RL, Jim, K1JAW and all the others who donated items for the auction. Their generosity contributed greatly to our financial success this year. HCRA grossed over one thousand dollars because of these donations.

Here's a brief list of auction hits:

- Dave, AA1YW & crew - arriving early and getting the tables set up.
- Johnny, KI1A - great sound system (I still had a voice at the end of the evening!).
- Ed, KB1NWH's - assistance to Greg to keep the finances straight.
- Dave, KB1MU - selling the raffle tickets.
- Jim, KB1JVF - coffee, donuts and soda for all.
- Greg, N1AEH - keeping track of all the money.
- George, KC1V - tables and final clean-up.
- And all the others, buyers and sellers alike, that came from miles around to have fun and enjoy our hobby.

The HCRA auction always has a great raffle prizes and this year was no exception. All but 6 books of tickets were sold for a chance to win an Icom IC-718 HF rig. Here's the winners (aren't we all winners in some way?).

- 1st Prize - Icom IC-718 HF Rig --- Johnny, KI1A
- 2nd Prize - RS HTX-100 10M Rig --- Jim, K1JAW
- 3rd Prize - ARRL 2006 Antenna Book --- Jim, KB1JVF

That's it from your auctioneer this year; see you November 2, 2007.

Jim, KK1W

**Annual Holiday Party
Friday, Dec. 1, 2006
7:00 pm
See inside for details**

*Hampden County Radio Association
P.O. Box 562
Agawam, Massachusetts 01001*



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