

Zero Beat



Hampden County Radio Association

December 2013

Something to look forward to!



View of Steaming Tender at night

The second annual H.C.R.A./M.T.A.R.A. Holiday Party extravaganza will be held Monday, December 9, 2013, at the Steaming Tender Restaurant in Palmer, Massachusetts. A fine evening of New England holiday fare and potables will be served as you take the opportunity to dine and socialize with your many friends and fellow club members amidst the ambiance of a quaint restored train station, now the home of a celebrated New England restaurant festooned in holiday decor. The evening begins at 6:00



PM when cocktails become available from the bar. At 7:00, dinner will be served, followed by a raffle with a Baofeng UV-5R HT as the grand prize and door prizes galore. Contact me by December 1 at (413) 525-3717

or e-mail at w1mjb@gmail.com to reserve your tickets. [The Holiday Party is really a lot of fun and at \$15 per person is a bargain. The Steaming Tender is a pretty neat place to visit even if there weren't a holiday party! - N1FJ]



Interior of Steaming Tender

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Note: Due to travel plans, this is a somewhat abbreviated early edition of the December Zero Beat. - N1FJ

FROM THE SHACK

Holiday Party – December 9th

There isn't a regular meeting this month

Time is drawing short, if you haven't ordered your tickets yet to our gala event at the [Steaming Tender](#) in Palmer, MA there's still time. I would suggest you contact either [Marty/W1MJB](#) or [Diane/KB1KST](#) and let them figure out the best way to get you a spot at the table. Great atmosphere, scrumptious menu, super door prizes and fantastic friends. Hope to see you there.



WRTC Equipment Purchase Update

Inventory is dwindling...

Rather than bore you with yet another edition of the Purchase Agreement this month I thought we could dispense with that and just give you a quick update.

The Honda generators, tents, TX-38 antennas and 80 meter dipoles are sold out. We are down too one 40 meter dipole, one lamp and two lengths of LMR-240 coax. A camp toilet even sold this month (hmmm, I wonder what lucky person this season will receive that beauty!)

There's still a good supply of Rohn tower sections and Yaesu rotors. Now's the time to start planning a 2014 tower installation. Figure out what you need and lock in the savings! We will return next month with an updated list. A special thanks to everyone who has taken advantage of a good deal and supported our efforts. We couldn't do it without you.

HCRA Board regretfully says "goodbye" to Dave/N1MFL

Thanks for two years of faithful service

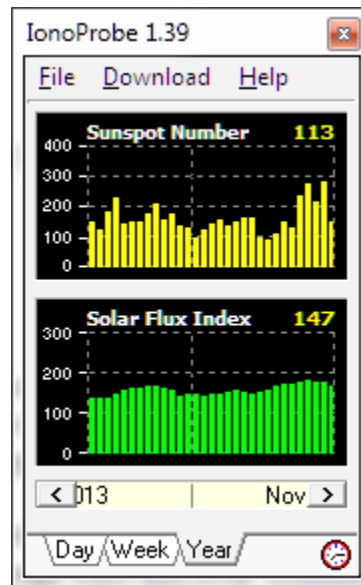
N1MFL has been our secretary for the past two years. Taking the meeting minutes, filing state and federal documents, keeping an eye on our PO box and most importantly speaking up and bringing new thoughts and ideas to the board for consideration. Unfortunately the toll of trying to balance a busy work and life schedule with HCRA duties has proven to be just a little too much at the moment and Dave has decided to put the board position aside for the time being. It is our hope he will be back soon and we thank him for his contributions over the last two years.

We will not fill the position for the remainder of his term but ask our membership if anyone would like to volunteer

to help out through June 2014. Dave has done the bulk of the hard work and you would only be taking the minutes at four board meetings and a few other odd jobs. Please let any board member know if you would like to pitch in and give us a hand.

Cycle 24's 2nd Peak has emerged

Let's hope we see great propagation for the ARRL 10m contest this year!



Band conditions continue to be SUPER. Sunspot counts were over 200 this past week, 10 and 12 meters have been open worldwide - even past sunset. Adding to the fun there's been a lot of DXpeditions to some rare places: Wake Island and Juan Fernandez to name a few. Whether you're a contester, ragchewer or DXer you really don't want to miss the action.

Get on the air and have some FUN!

Notes from the cluster...

Foxhunting! Larry/WB1DBY pulled off a great foxhunt on November 3rd. I hope you had a chance to participate and have some fun. Between cold weather and holidays we may not get another one off this year but let's look forward to getting them back in 2014!

December – The ARRL 10 Meter contest will be held December 14th and 15th (8:PM Friday the 13th to 8:00 PM Sunday the 15th). See Matt's challenge and the possibility of having a coffee/donut on us just by making a measly 100K points. With solar conditions like we've seen lately it should be BIG FUN!

January 3rd Meeting – The first meeting of the New Year features Fred/K1VR talking about how to find your way through state and local ordinances while planning your installation. This is great information and perfect timing to start planning your spring and summer antenna projects. Best wishes from the KK1W shack to you and yours this Holiday Season!

'73 and see you at the holiday party December 9th,

Jim/KK1W

Local happenings

(All times are local time)

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!

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/>

No December meeting—Holiday Party December 9th

3rd Friday of the month 7:30 PM, MTARA Club meeting, Red Cross building 506 Cottage St, 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

Third Monday of the month 7:00 PM, Franklin County Amateur Radio Club meeting, Greenfield High School (no meetings held in July or August) <http://www.fcarc.org/>

4th Monday of February, May, August, November 7:00 PM, FCARC VE Exams, Unitarian Church, Main Street, Northfield <http://www.fcarc.org/>

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>



Visit our website at
<http://www.hcra.org>

HCRA contact list

President, Jim Mullen KK1W (413) 237-4666

kk1w@arrl.net

Vice-President, Ed LaCombe KB1NWH (413) 250-3137

kb1nwh@comcast.net

Treasurer, Dave Cain AA1YW (413) 569-6901

aa1yw@arrl.net

Secretary, Dave Scarpa N1MFL (413) 241-0139

scarpad@comcast.net

At Large, John Pise KX1X (413) 532-7474

kx1x@arrl.net

Newsletter, Frandy Johnson N1FJ (413) 584-9005

n1fj@arrl.net

Programs, Matt Wilhelm W1MSW (413) 336-4701

w1msw@arrl.net

Membership, Rich Wheeler N1KXR (413) 584-3372

n1kxr@arrl.net

Technical, Bob Meneguzzo K1YO (413) 896-4879

k1yo@comcast.net

Skywarn Liaison, Eric Tuller N1QKO (413) 967-3869

et-n1qko@juno.com

VE Session Liaison, Dave Cote W1FAB (413) 575-2950

w1fab@arrl.net

New Hams at VE Session

(Rich, N1KXR) We had a great VE Session Friday night at the Holyoke Medical Center! Several new Hams joined the fold, the HCRA got some new members and several more *250* Raffle Tickets were sold. Please keep an eye out for our new members at our next regular meeting in January. Have you got your *250* Raffle Ticket yet? If not, simply drop me a line at n1kxr@arrl.net and I'll hook you up. Or, come find me at the HCRA/MTARA Holiday Party on the 9th of December. [Two of the successful candidates were Paul Siqueira, below left (Tech and General) and Mike Pfeiffer, below right (Tech). - N1FJ.]



A Yaesu FT-857D for only \$10?



That's right! This year, the HCRA's *250* raffle prize is a brand-new Yaesu FT-857D HF/VHF/UHF transceiver.

The *250* means only 250 tickets will be sold, with the drawing scheduled for March 7, 2014 (or earlier, if all the tickets are sold before then).

Tickets are available at any HCRA meeting, or contact n1kxr@arrl.net.

HAM Radio License Class and Study Groups

The Hampden County Radio Association will be holding an Amateur Radio Technician Class along with General and Extra Study Groups at the Holyoke Hospital Auxiliary Conference Center (auditorium), 575 Beech Street, Holyoke, Mass. These classes and study groups are open to everyone of all ages and affiliations.

There will be three different meeting dates:

Class #1 - Monday, January 13, 2014 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Class #2 - Monday, January 20, 2014 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Class #3 - Saturday, January 25, 2014 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

VE Exam - Saturday, January 25, 2014 at about 3:00 PM

Attendance is NOT taken. If you can't make the Monday evening dates, just come on Saturday.

These condensed meetings are presented with the assumption that individuals will study and take practice tests on their own outside of class time. Our goal is to provide experienced ham radio operators (elmers) to be used as resources when going over the questions and answers that may be on the test.

There is no charge for the class/study group, but the purchase of the ARRL License Manual (\$29) is strongly suggested. Internet links to other resources will be provided. ARRL License Manuals can be ordered for delivery at the first class by contacting John, kx1x@arrl.net.

The cost to take the test is \$15 per attempt. Two forms of ID are required, including one picture identification.

Questions? Email John/Kx1x, kx1x@arrl.net

Next HCRA Meeting Friday, January 3rd

Bundle up and come on out to HCRA's January meeting where guest speaker Fred Hopengarten – K1VR will discuss the legal aspects of antennas and towers. Fred is the author of the book Antenna Zoning published by the ARRL and has been a lawyer handling federal communication law since 1990. His presentations are filled with advice on working with local governments and zoning regulations as well as success stories from his clients who have hit legal roadblocks. We are looking forward to his presentation and hope that you will join us.

Along with Fred's presentation, we will be discussing regular club business and future events, selling raffle tickets for the FT-857, and taking membership renewals for 2013/2014. Don't forget to come early for Bob – K1YO's Tech Corner!

Meeting starts at 7:30PM (Tech Corner at 7:00pm) at Holyoke Medical Center Auxiliary Conference Center
4 575 Beech St. Holyoke MA, 01040



ARRL 10 Meter Contest December 14-15, 2013

Starts 0000 UTC Saturday; runs through 2359 UTC Sunday

10 meters is OPEN, people! If there has ever been a time in the last 11 years to operate in the ARRL 10 meter contest, it's NOW! As many of you know, it is an HCRA tradition to enter this contest not only as individual operators, but also as a club. This means that the scores of every participant who submits a log with Hampden County Radio Association in the club field will be combined for a club score entry. Last year we had 11 HCRA members submit logs with a combined score of 466,188. I would be great to have more members participate this year and with conditions looking good, maybe much higher scores.

Contesting is all about setting goals and as like last year, we will be offering a goal and an incentive to achieve it. Any club member that makes over 100K in points during the contest will receive a Dunkin Donuts gift card. So if you've been thinking about trying out contesting or just want to make some contacts on 10 meters, put aside some time that weekend and work a few for yourself and for the club. As always, if you have any questions, need a place to operate or need help setting up your contest logging software, please don't hesitate to contact me.

For more rules and info: <http://www.arrl.org/10-meter>

Matt – W1MSW

w1msw@arrl.net

2013 SKYWARN™ Recognition Day

December 7, 2013, from 0000Z to 2400Z

SKYWARN™ Recognition Day was developed in 1999 by the National Weather Service and the American Radio Relay League. It celebrates the contributions that volunteer SKYWARN™ radio operators make to the National Weather Service. During the day SKYWARN™ operators visit NWS offices and contact other radio operators across the world. Separate stations will also individual QSL cards. See the web site for a list at <http://hamradio.noaa.gov>.

SKYWARN™ Recognition Day Operating Instructions:

1. Object For all amateur stations to exchange QSO information with as many National Weather Service Stations as possible on 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, 6, and 2 meter bands plus the 70 centimeter band. Contacts via repeaters are permitted. SKYWARN™ Recognition Day serves to celebrate the contributions to public safety made by amateur radio operators during threatening weather.
2. Date NWS stations will operate December 7, 2013, from 0000 - 2400 UTC.
3. Exchange: Call sign, signal report, QTH, and a one or two word description of the weather occurring at your site ("sunny", "partly cloudy", "windy", etc.).
4. Modes: NWS stations will work various modes including SSB, FM, AM, RTTY, CW, and PSK31. While working digital modes, special event stations will append "NWS" to their call sign (e.g., N0A/NWS).
5. Station Control Operator: It is suggested that during SRD operations a non-NWS volunteer should serve as a control operator for your station.
6. Event and QSL Information: The National Weather Service will provide event information via the internet. Event certificates will likely be electronic and printable this year. Stay Tuned!

FD Wrap Up

(Ed, KB1NWH) Well, the scores are in, and after a trying and fun Field Day here is what we got:

Matt, W1MSW and Ed, KB1NWH did an outstanding job as did all that made it possible for our first time at a new location. Yes, there were a couple of SNAFUs but they were overcome with the help from the other participants. The town of Agawam was a great help and they invited us back again next year (2014). There were only good comments from the hams that showed up and from the public. Some people on their usual walk through the park said they were glad to see the park being used!

OK, now on to the part you all have been waiting for. The scores and stats...

A big round of applause goes to the Hampden County Radio Association with call W1NY for finishing 7th out of 79 other 5A stations. We managed to accomplish 2387 QSOs for total points of 7966.

Here is a couple of general *overall* FD stats: 528,569 CW Qs were made, 51,103 Digi Mode Qs were made, 689,244 Phone Qs were made, for a whopping 1,268,916 QSOs total. There were 36,560 participants and 2,548 entries.

Again congratulations to all that help put W1NY near the top.