

## January Meeting

### Special points of interest:

- HCRA Annual Show and Tell March 6th
- MTARA Swap Meet March 7th
- Visit the HCRA [facebook page](#).
- Don't forget to check out [hcra.org](http://hcra.org)
- Visit Summits on the Air <http://www.sota.org.uk>

**Don't forget March is the Show N Tell.**

**Get your projects ready!**

**Join us Friday January 2nd at 7:30, in the Holyoke Medical Center Auxiliary Conference Center**

### "Three small talks in an hour"



B. Scott Andersen, NE1RD, was first licensed in 2002. He learned of contesting and DXpeditioning not long after that and has been an eager participant in both. He's traveled to places such as VP2M, KP2, V4, and KH6 (twice), and has made many trips to the Boston Harbor Islands in support of the RSGB IOTA program. His interest in portable and QRP operation led to the "Buddipole in the Field" book, a complete handbook for users of that portable antenna system. Many RockMite QRP transceiver enthusiasts assembled their units using the instructions from the "Small Wonders Labs RockMite Assembly Manual" he wrote in support of a buildathon held at his local club. He recently moved to NH where he maintains a very modest station.

[For directions to The Holyoke Medical Center Auxiliary Conference Center:](#)

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**Only 3 meetings left to get your tickets for this years raffle!**

## HCRA's raffle is for a Elecraft KX3!



For a mere \$10 donation to the HCRA, you get a chance to win an assembled KX3 by Elecraft valued at around \$1000.

This is an very popular and excellent HF portable radio that has an excellent receiver, low power consumption, can run on external power or 8AA batteries internally, it can transmit up to 12W and has plenty of options like an 100W amplifier, 2M mod-

ule, pan adapter, ATU, Roofing filters, internal battery charger, custom CW paddle and others that can be added later.

HCRA has printed only 250 tickets and we will start selling them during field day 2014. Tickets will also be sold at meetings and other events throughout 2014 and part of 2015. The drawing will happen when all 250 tickets have been sold or during MTARA's Hamfest in March of 2015.

Raffle is just for the Elecraft KX3 Transceiver only. Microphone and paddles not included. Drawing Date Subject To Change.

# DECEMBER'S ARRL 10 METER CONTEST RESULTS

Jeff Bail NT1K

This year propagation was really good. According to some people, you may never see 10 meter band conditions this good for a long time. The band was alive with decent windows to EU and SA. I hope you all had a great time on the air!

Call Used	Operators	CW	SSB	Mults	Total
KK1W	Jim	542	382	275	806300
W1AST	Larry (AST) Jim (KC2FEV) Bob (NO4MM)	53	760	136	235552
NV1Q	Juergen	182	156	156	162240
W1MSW	Matt	232	109	120	137520
NT1K	Jeff	132	224	113	110288
WD1S	James	140	63	106	72716
N1FTP	Harold	0	293	83	48638
NQ1C	Bob (1C) Andrew (KB1WPJ)	24	179	66	29964
N1AW/QRP	Al	114	0	48	21888
AB1WT	Jeff (fmr KB1VKY)	0	100	45	9000
W1NY	Ed (KB1NWH)	0	53	26	2756
NZ1MT/QRP	Mike	0	50	27	2700
N1FJ	Frandy	3	4	6	120
K1MAZ	Nick	0	2	2	8

**Total Claimed Score For HCRA in 2014: 1,639,690**

## Past Final Scores

2013 Final Score: 1,144,606 (14 entries)

2012 Final Score: 466,188 (11 entries)

2011 Final Score: 1,546,158 (18 entries)

2010 Final Score: 197,830 (9 entries)

2009 Final Score: 72,258 (8 entries)

2008 Final Score: 38,378 (11 entries)

2007 Final Score: 19,544 (8 entries)

2006 Final Score: 64,878 (6 entries)

2005 Final Score: 72,910 (4 entries)

2004 Final Score: 35,956 (5 entries)

2003 Final Score: 212,070 (6 entries)

2002 Final Score: 925,124 (12 entries)

Source: [ARRL Contest Results Page](#)

## Soapbox Comments

**Mike (NZ1MT):** I operated QRP SSB with only an end fed dipole attic antenna and only operated when I had time during the day between household jobs. The propagation on the 10M band was excellent and seemed better than previous years. A lot of fun using my new ICOM IC-703.

**James(WD1S):** Made good use of N1MM to spot multipliers this year. I was using a 160m inverted L and a G5RV and surprisingly worked almost everyone I could hear.

**Al (N1AW):** Approximately 6 hours operating time. 24 states, 3 provinces, 21 DX, 114 Qs 48 multipliers. At my age I may never see another 10 meter contest like this one.

**Jeff (AB1WT, Formerly KB1VKY):** i can't wait until next years so i can do it again.

**Larry (W1AST):** It was great fun and I had Jim, KC2FEV and Bob, NO4MM helping me. We're already planning on doing it again next year

**Jeff (NT1K):** This is my first 10M contest. I did SOLP mixed without using spotting assistance which made a bigger challenge for me on CW. My new 3el beam is working fantastic.

**Bob (NQ1C):** Andrew and I operated the 10M contest as a multi-op from Montgomery, MA. Andrew built a 10M dipole antenna for a science project for school and since our G5RV came down, we decided to use the 10M dipole to run the contest. Conditions were great and the dipole, only up about 15 feet, worked quite well. We interspersed working the contest with visiting family so it wasn't a full-out effort, but we had fun.



# NT1K's ANTENNA PARTY

Jeffery Bail NT1K

After years of running wire antennas, I wanted to upgrade my antenna. Installing a 60ft bracketed tower against my house was out of the question so I managed to get a hold of a 5ft roof top tower and Mosley TA-33 classic. The antenna and tower ending up sitting for almost a year because of procrastination and my stubbornness. It wasn't until November when I finally started to do something about it. I took all the traps apart and cleaned them. I found a couple cracked traps that I repaired with epoxy and then used abrasive pads to clean the aluminum and hit all the joints with an anti-oxidization compound.

In early November, I needed some roof work done and felt it was the perfect time to get the antenna installed.

While the roofer was installing the tower, I was in the attic bracing the tower against the rafters using 2X4's and a Metal U-Channel covering at least 5 rafters



With some "encouragement" from other club members, I finally decided to install the antenna. I wanted it up before the 10M contest so it left a small window for the installation. The only available day was Sunday (12/7/14). Of course it had to be cold and windy but it was the only clear day.

I've asked a bunch of fellow club members for help. Ed (KB1NWH), Jim (KK1W), Steve (N1SR), Dave (AA1YW) and Frandy (N1FJ) responded to my cry's for help. They came over on a cold Sunday morning in December to help me install my antenna

The installation went pretty well. I had a element clamp reversed and reversed the traps on the director and driven element. But everything went pretty smooth and all the major work was done and everyone left just a little bit before noon. I have to give major thanks to Ed (KB1NWH) for spending hours on top of my roof doing the majority of the work.



I spent the rest of the afternoon tidying up cables and running them to my shack. I was eager to get on the air. I hooked an A/B switch up to my rig so I can switch back and fourth between the G5RV and the beam. There was a HUGE difference. S-2 signals on my G5RV were coming in as S-9+ on the beam as expected. I should have done the beam sooner. The beam worked very well in the 10M contest and it re-sparked my interests of being on the air.

Thanks to all who encouraged me and thanks to those who helped. I couldn't have done it without them which makes me grateful for being a part of this wonderful club.

## PICTURES FROM THIS YEARS HCRA/MTARA CHRISTMAS PARTY



Photography by  
Frandy Johnson N1FJ



# FROM THE SHACK



Happy New Year to all,

Hopefully every got their new transceivers, antennas, and connectors that was on their Christmas list.

Just want to reminisce a little from the past year, from my memory.

2014 started out kind of shaky. What was going to happen to HCRA? We had nobody interested in filling vacancies that were about to occur.

The start of W1AW/P, and the centennial contacts put on by ARRL had started. The Q A Day that Dan KB1VWQ thought would be a great idea kicked off.

Went thru NEQP, had a great turn out of operators.

The BOD started having concerns that the club was going to fold. They started figuring out what to do with the items that the club owns and financials.

Low and behold by the June meeting it was looking pretty gloom, but the stars align with the planets and we got a full BOD. So we went on to FD at School Street Park and had one of the best years in a long time. Whether it was the amount of participation, (which was great), or the new antenna layout (thanks Jim KK1W, and Jeff NT1K), or was it just great band conditions? Who cares, we had a great time.

July brought us WRTC. Had another great showing by HCRA. Dave AA1YW, and Jim KK1W brought home a BUNCH of stuff the HCRA had purchased for resale to the members at a discounted price. Sorry I don't have the complete list of all volunteers, but I am pretty sure there was at least a dozen.

August brought a BIG inhale, exhale that there is a month with nothing happening, however, the start of the new club year and the new BOD was about to get going.

September rolled around and the meeting went great with the recap of the summers events,

October brought another great meeting (Thanks Larry W1AST) and the close of our membership drive (You can still join), which brought HUGE numbers to a fairly new way to pay for renewals via Paypal.

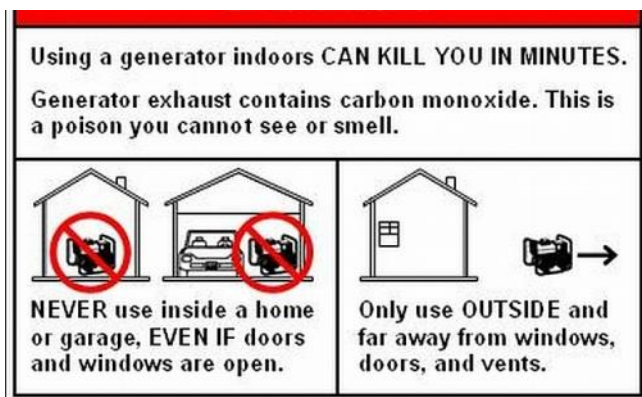
December brought us a couple of mentionable events. First is the awesome turn out tot the holiday party (Thanks Eric W1MOR and Diane KB1KST). Then there was the 10 Meter contest. Many Q's were made, with some very high scores thanks to the propagation.

In closing, thanks to all that have made this club what it is today and will continue in the future.

73's

Ed KB1NWH

## GENERATOR SAFETY



### Portable generator safety

When the power goes out a portable generator can be a lifesaver, but used improperly it also can become life-threatening.

DANGER	REASON	PREVENTION
Carbon monoxide poisoning	Gasoline-powered generators exhaust carbon monoxide, a colorless, odorless gas that displaces oxygen in the hemoglobin of the red blood cells.	Operate generators away from the house, in a well ventilated area. If it's in the garage, make sure the garage is open.
Backfeed shock	The generator is connected to the home's wiring system, posing a hazard to anyone working on powerlines.	Plug appliances you want powered directly into the generator. If powering a hard-wire item, such as the furnace fan, you will need a transfer switch. The switch should only be installed by a licensed electrician and requires an electrical permit and an electrical inspection.
Fire	Overloaded cords can overheat and cause fires. Small gasoline engines can sometimes backfire, causing sparks.	Be sure extension cords are properly sized to carry the electric load. Install a spark arrest muffler and keep the generator away from combustible material.

### Symptoms of carbon monoxide exposure

These are possible complications average adults may expect from different percentages of carbon monoxide in their blood:

- 10 percent: Headaches may develop, or there may be no apparent symptoms. A carbon monoxide detector will activate.
- 15 to 25 percent: Headache and nausea.
- 30 to 35 percent: Drowsiness, weakness, dizziness, dimmed vision, severe headache, nausea and vomiting.
- 40 percent: Confusion, increased heart rate and blackout spells.
- 45 percent: Convulsions, permanent brain damage.
- 50 percent: Convulsions, coma and death.

SOURCES: VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION, UNDERWRITERS LABORATORIES INC.

GNS AND THE NEWS-PRESS

# 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

## 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>

## 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 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, Room S301, Greenfield Community College (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/>

## HCRA contact list

President, Ed LaCombe KB1NWH  
kb1nwh@comcast.net  
Vice-President, Eric LaCombe W1MOR  
w1mor@comcast.net  
Treasurer, Dave Cain AA1YW  
aa1yw@arrl.net  
Secretary, Dave Fant WM1B  
wm1b@arrl.net  
At Large, Jeff Bail NT1K  
nt1k@nt1k.com  
Newsletter, Gary Fields WA1MOW  
wa1mow@arrl.net  
Programs, Larry Krainson W1AST  
wb1dby@comcast.net  
Membership, Rich Wheeler N1KXR  
n1kxr@comcast.net  
Technical, Bob Meneguzzo K1YO  
k1yo@comcast.net  
Skywarn Liaison, Eric Tuller N1QKO  
et-n1qko@juno.com  
VE Session Liaison, Dave Cote W1FAB  
w1fab@arrl.net

# DOTS & DASHES:

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

## HELP WANTED!

Your Board of Directors are working hard at trying to give you, the members a quality organization.

We need your help!

What can we do to improve our club? What are we doing wrong, or right? How can we make it better? Is there a topic that you would like more information about? Is there a technical subject that baffles you? Are you a new Ham, and would like some help getting started? What logging software should I use?

What can I (Gary WA1MOW) do to improve Zero Beat?

These are some ideas,. What are yours?

PLEASE LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK!

Our contact information is on page #5. Please feel free to email us with your thoughts.

## SPECIAL EVENTS:

Not only during Field Day in June, do the bands come alive with improvised signals proving the ability to respond to emergencies. Since emergencies and natural disasters don't always happen in the summer, during Winter Field Day, frigid winds, icy limbs and bitter cold replace the thunderstorms and blistering heat of summer. In 2007 SPAR established a Winter Field Day event and invited all Amateur Radio operators to participate. The event was repeated in 2008 and was considered a success, so it was then designated an annual event to be held the **last full weekend each January**. In 2007 - 2014 the event was enjoyed by many, but it is time to issue the invitation for the Ninth Annual SPAR Winter Field Day!

The 2015 Winter Field Day will be held from 1700 UTC (12:00 noon EST) Saturday January 24, 2015 through 1700 UTC (12:00 noon EST) Sunday January 25, 2015. The object of the event is familiar to most Amateur Radio operators: set up emergency-style communications and make as many contacts as possible during the 24 hour period. The rules encourage as many contacts on as many bands and modes as possible, because during a real emergency, the most important factor is the ability to communicate, regardless of band, mode or distance.

The official rules can be found at the [SPAR](#) web site.

## INTERESTING HAM RADIO WEB SITES:

We all have experienced what has happened to [Radio Shack](#). For those of us that remember what a great place it was, you could get all the parts, kits, and their people actually knew about electronics! They were one of the pioneers of the personal computer movement!

If you would like to re-live the glory days of Radio Shack: [Radio Shack Catalogs - General Catalogs](#)

## JANUARY 2015 CONTESTS

December 31	Red Badges on the Air	<a href="http://arrrl.org/news/arrrl-s-last-red-badges-on-the-air-day-on-december-31">arrrl.org/news/arrrl-s-last-red-badges-on-the-air-day-on-december-31</a>	
January 1	ARRL Straight Key Night	<a href="http://arrrl.org/straight-key-night">arrrl.org/straight-key-night</a>	CW Only
January 3	ARRL RTTY Roundup	<a href="http://arrrl.org/contests">arrrl.org/contests</a>	Digital only
January 4	ARRL Kid's Day	<a href="http://arrrl.org/kids-day">arrrl.org/kids-day</a>	Phone only
January 10	North American QSO Party(CW)	<a href="http://ncjweb.com">ncjweb.com</a>	CW only QSO Party
January 17	North American QSO Party(PH)	<a href="http://ncjweb.com">ncjweb.com</a>	Phone only QSO Party
January 19	Run for the Bacon (CW)	<a href="http://fpqrp.org">fpqrp.org</a>	This is a CW contest
January 24	Winter Field Day	<a href="http://spar-hams.org">spar-hams.org</a>	All Modes
January 24	ARRL January VHF Contest	<a href="http://arrrl.org/contests">arrrl.org/contests</a>	Phone/CW

## FOR SALE:

If you have a piece of Ham Radio equipment to sell, send photo and details by the 20th of the month, to [wa1mow@arrl.net](mailto:wa1mow@arrl.net). All submissions will be screened for appropriateness, and content. The decision to publish is at the discretion of the ZB Editor



For sale are a set of paddles by GHD Key and sell for \$229.95 new. I'm looking for \$100 Firm. These are smooth paddles and will make your cw sending very easy. Chrome paddles with red finger grips on a marble base. In excellent conditions as can be seen from the pictures.

Also for sale is a Kenwood external speaker. Matches the size of the TS-590 and TS-570 but matches the color of the TS-570. Still looks good next to the 590 or other rigs. In excellent condition, works great, original box & manual. New is \$84.95. I am asking \$60.

Contact Larry, W1AST at 413-348-3289 or [wb1dby@comcast.net](mailto:wb1dby@comcast.net)

**Missed out on the last time we had badges available for order? Well have no worries because they're back! Break the ice and let others know who you are with a stylish new badge. Sorry, the old style badges are no longer available.**

**They are just \$12**

**To order go to [hcra.org](http://hcra.org) or see Larry W1AST**



**If you have any Amateur Radio related equipment to buy, sell, or trade.**

**Or**

**If you need a piece of equipment.**

**Email [wa1mow@arrl.net](mailto:wa1mow@arrl.net) to list in Zero Beat.**

## AREA SWAPFESTS:

2015

Feb 14	Algonquin Amateur Radio Club Flea Market	Marlborough, Ma	<a href="http://www.nlem.org">www.nlem.org</a>
Feb 14	Connecticut Valley FM Association	Springfield, Vt	<a href="http://www.cvfma.org">www.cvfma.org</a>
Feb 15	New England Antique Radio Club Swap Meet	Westford, Ma	<a href="http://www.nearc.net/swapmeetinfo.htm">www.nearc.net/swapmeetinfo.htm</a>
Feb 28	Radio Amateurs of Northern Vermont	So. Burlington, Vt	<a href="http://www.ranv.org/hamcom.html">www.ranv.org/hamcom.html</a>
Mar 7	Mt Tom Amateur Radio Association Ham Fest	Chicopee, Ma	<a href="http://www.mtara.org">www.mtara.org</a>
Mar 14	Eastern Connecticut Amateur Radio	Dayville, Ct	<a href="http://www.qsl.net/k1muj/hamfest/hamflea3.pdf">www.qsl.net/k1muj/hamfest/hamflea3.pdf</a>
Mar 15	Southington Amateur Radio Association	Southington, Ct	<a href="http://www.chetbacon.com/flea2015.pdf">www.chetbacon.com/flea2015.pdf</a>



# 1ST ANNUAL UGLY HOLIDAY SWEATER POTA ACTIVATION

Dan Vierno KB1VWQ  
POTA\*413 Co-Founder

A Unique and one-of-a-kind ugly sweater can make you stand out in any crowd this holiday season! This holds true this past December 21st at Mt Tom State Reservation, in Holyoke, MA where Dave N1MFL with Dan KB1VWQ (Co-Founders of POTA\*413) teamed up with HCRA President Ed LaCombe KB1NWH with other hams and HCRA members to put together POTA\*413's first annual ugly sweater parks on the air.

The meet up was a great success, activating the park with over 20 QSO's in little over 2 hours QRV, despite cold temperatures of around 31 degrees, with even some moderate snowfall coming down on their side of the mountain. Most of these contacts were 90% DX overseas using two HF stations under the club callsign of W1NY, the team consisted of ten hams on location (eight operators) With them were:

KA1V Ralph, KC1AEO Rich, KC1ANE Ron, KC1BTA Jason, N1AND Doug, N1BPH Ann and NT1K Jeff. All had a good time working the stations and showing off their ugly sweaters. Perhaps its something that will can offered again next winter, should the interest continue.



You got to be kidding me!  
It's snowing!



Ed KB1NWH, loves POTA\*413 this much!  
With Jeff NT1K, & Jason KC1BTA



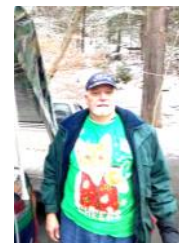
The group taking a break.



Dave N1MFL  
And his Star Trek/Xmas sweater



Ed KB1NWH  
Dan KB1VWQ



Doug N1AND  
And his cat shirt.



Ron KC1ANE, Ralph KA1V  
With Anne N1BPH



Jason KC1BTA working  
a QSO.



Dan KB1VWQ



## Signal Makers

## 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

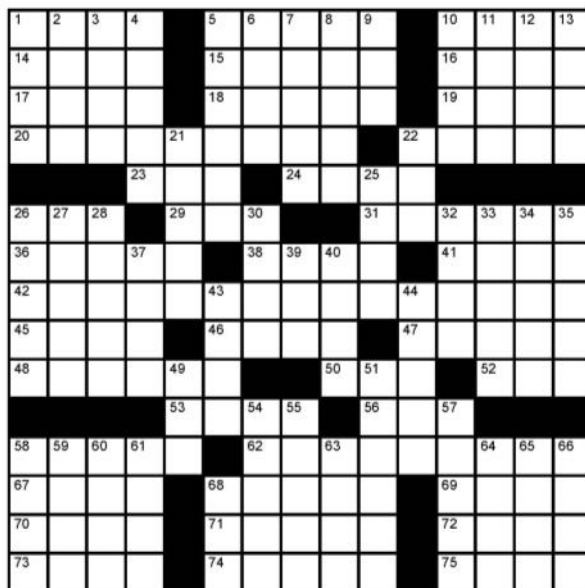
73. QSL bureau process  
 74. Put up, as a crank-up, say  
 75. Lodges

## 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. "Geel!"  
 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



## ARE YOU READY?

Now that winter is here, do we know how to safely run our generators? A Firefighter/EMT from New Hampshire was recently found dead in her garage. They were running their generator inside a garage, with just the garage door opened. She went to check on the generator, and was overcome by carbon monoxide within minutes.



- Always run the generator outdoors. At least 20' away from any building.
- Always let your generator get to temperature before plugging in any electrical load.
- Never connect to your house without a generator disconnect switch.
- Never fill the gas tank with the generator running.
- Never shut down the generator with the load still connected.
- Always run on a dry level surface.
- Remember a generator gets hot, be careful around the exhaust.
- Always check the oil before using, and after 10 hours of use.

## December's Puzzle





**Here is your exciting copy  
of January's  
Zero Beat!**

**Hope to see you all at the  
meeting January 2nd.**

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**Hampden County Radio Association  
P.O. Box 562  
Agawam, MA 01030-0562**