



Our 55th Year

Zero Beat



A Publication of the Hampden County Radio Association

<http://www.hcra.org>

May, 2001

Meetings Held at: Feeding Hills Congregational Church
21 North Westfield Street
Feeding Hills, MA



Chet Kruczek
W1HGJ

will be this month's speaker. Chet will be talking about another exciting Ham mode, Amateur TeleVision.

The Next HCRA meeting is Friday, May 4th, 2001
Doors Open at 7:PM - Meeting Starts at 7:30 Sharp!
Hope to see you there!!!

This issue of Zero Beat was also sent to the general membership of the
HCRA via e-mail -- **NOW in COLOR!**

If you would like to be included in our monthly e-mailings, see page 5 for details.

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

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President's

Corner

Next meeting—Television!

The subject of our May meeting will be Amateur Television, demonstrated by one of our members; W1HGJ. Chet has been active in ATV for many years, helping anyone interested to get active on this exciting mode.. In addition to helping many local hams get "seen" on ATV, Chet handcrafted an ATV repeater on Soapstone Mountain during the 1990's.

Chet will have quite a few things to demonstrate; receivers, antennas, and some informative videos.

It's always a pleasure to have a meeting presented by one of our own, come early so you can get a good seat. I know you won't be disappointed.



Some pictures of the 1998 HCRA Field Day

any capacity, now's the time to come forward. Very little decision making has been done at this time, so you should be able to get the "perfect FD job" you have always wanted! So 40M phone (or 20 CW, etc.) has always interested you, but last year

some one beat you to it? Well, be the first to volunteer and you'll have your dream position.

Even though it seems late in the year to start Field Day planning, rest assured, we have plenty of time. We have confirmed one site (Dufresne Park) if we wish to use that, and certainly have others that are available. The club has sufficient equipment and monetary resources to easily make this a Field Day to remember. What will make all the difference is **you**. What everyone brings to the event, whether it be operating, set-up, logging, cooking or planning, **YOU** are the one that will make the difference. Don't be shy, make your voice heard and be a part of **YOUR** club this Field Day.

Field Trip

Would you like to spend a pleasant Saturday in June, visiting NOAA in Taunton, MA, lunch, then off to the Steam and Wireless Museum in RI? If so, now's the time to give Larry, WB1DBY a call and get your name on the list. For only \$27 (plus lunch) you can get this entire day of fun. Spaces are filling rapidly, so give Larry a call. See the flyer in this issue for more details.

Tail Gate Party

HCRA is trying something new for the June meeting. An old-fashioned "tail gate party". Now's the time to peruse the shack for those "I have to have this" items that you didn't really have to have! Load them into you truck or trunk and head for the HCRA meeting on June 1st. For only a \$5 donation to HCRA you will get a chance to turn that old stuff into cash! Plan on arriving by 6:30 PM for setup. The tail gate event will end at 8:00 for the regular club business meeting and election. As usual, we will have our raffle (maybe even a special one!), coffee & donuts and the usual group of friendly hams. I hope to see you all there, let's make this first tail gate party an annual event.

Field Day, the HCRA way

Although there has been much talk since January about a joint Field Day with MTARA, apparently the decision process has taken too long for some. According to the March 19th minutes of the MTARA board, they have decided to hold their own Field Day at Mt. Tom. MTARA has welcomed us to join them, but it is the HCRA board's position that although the offer is appreciated, it really isn't a "joint" FD any longer. As such, your board has voted to hold our own Field Day for 2001, just like we did in 1998 and 1999.

John, KX1X has volunteered to head up our Field Day committee. If you have some interest in the event, why don't you give John or myself a call? With just a little help from a few people, the 2001 HCRA Field Day should be fun and exciting! If you or someone you know would like to help out, in





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HCRA CONTACTS

Questions, Comments, and Suggestions Can Be Directed To:

HCRA OFFICERS

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W1NY Trustee Don Johnson, W1UPH (413) 566-3560 (let it ring) w1uph2@juno.com
 WB1HOF Trustee Jim Mullen, KK1W (413) 245-3228 jmullen@rockys.com

EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

Emergency Coordinator Dave Isham, KB1MU (413) 596-6605

HCRA Sponsors a New Venturing Crew

The Hampden County Radio Association has agreed to sponsor a brand new Venture Crew, which will have a focus on Emergency Preparedness, especially in the communications field.

We are looking for boys and girls, between the ages of 14 to 20 who are interested in learning about emergency communications to join our Crew. The crew's activities will be designed, planned, and implemented by the youth involved, under the advice and counseling of volunteer adults, and may include pedestrian fox hunting, field day, camping, and community service projects, among other worthwhile projects. The program limits depend on the enthusiasm and willingness of those involved.

No license required, but this is a great place to get help getting one!

If you know of anyone interested in joining this group, please contact John, kx1x, at (413) 532-7474 or by e-mail at kx1x@arrl.net.



Venturing is a youth development program of the Boy Scouts of America for young men and women who are 14 (and have completed the eighth grade) through 20 years of age.
 Venturing's purpose is to provide positive experiences to help young people mature and to prepare them to become responsible and caring adults.
 Venturing is based on a unique and dynamic relationship between youth, adult leaders, and organizations in their communities. Local community organizations establish a Venturing crew by matching their people and program resources to the interests of young people in the community. The result is a program of exciting and meaningful activities that helps youth pursue their special interests, grow, develop leadership skills, and become good citizens.





DX Clips

de

Jordy, W1JK

I see improvement in the weather as evidenced by warmer temperatures; but , the recent Solar eruptions have worsened HF band conditions & DX activity is down. This will , of course , improve with time.

This month I will revisit DX QSL protocol....this time from the perspective of the DXpedition. These Guys & Gals provide us with the best opportunity to work and confirm the rarer ones. We should be aware that most DXpeditions have the awesome task of confirming tens of thousands of QSO's. I am sure that they are eagerly awaiting the ARRL approval of e-QSLs. In the meantime we must follow their "rules" in order to expedite receipt of that coveted QSL card.

Here they are:

1. Ensure the information on your Card is clear & accurate. They will not take the time to search for you if you provide the wrong date or time. Although their Data is organized by Callsign, they may have entered your call wrong. If you only have one contact , you may ultimately get the QSL if no one else with that Call at that time submits. There are cases where they recognize their mistakes & remit the QSL. This applies only where the QSO stats are in agreement with their log times. A few minutes difference is OK , but you should always set your Clock & computer Clock to WWV before chasing Rare DX.
2. Enclose a good quality self - addressed envelope large enough for a standard sized card.
3. Mark your envelope with your address including country (eg. USA). I use a commercial ink stamp. It beats my printing "hands down".
4. If you have no inked stamp and poor handwriting , type it!
5. Do not....I repeat do not send labels without an envelope. You will wait for Bureau processing if you omit the SAE.
6. It is best to send "Green Stamps" (US Dollars) rather than IRC's. I suggest a minimum of \$2...\$3 is better. These Expeditions cost tens of thousands of dollars, primarily because of the high cost of Chartering boats and the "risk factor" to the boat owners. Never send US stamps. They are worthless to the DX.
7. Use "confidential" type (opaque) envelopes for your SAE and carefully fold your Dollars inside the fold under the envelope flap so that they cannot be seen or felt. Postal workers or others could open them and remove the bills.
8. Be sure to send your QSL to the proper QSL address. Some Dxpeditons have different addresses categorized by Frequency or mode (eg.CW or SSB; 6M to another address).

The above are the basic "Caveats" in QSLing DXpeditions. Remember - usually all incoming cards are carefully checked to ensure that the QSO appears in their Log. Normally only the QSO's listed on your QSL card will be answered. Do not assume that one QSL card with one of your Band QSO's will result in receipt of confirmation of all the bands you worked them on. Some Dxpeditons will print out a QSL label that automatically collates all your QSO's and prints them on a single label for your card...this is not always the case. Play it safe ! Do not send to the Bureau (if available) unless you are very patient. Bureau cards, even with contributions , are not sent back "direct" even if accompanied by SAE. Remember , this is a "well - oiled" machine. They adhere to a system in order to efficiently process the large volume.

What homework should you do before the start of a DXpedition to improve your chances of success??

Subscribe to the free Internet Bulletins such as the ARRL DX weekly Bulletin or OPDX , or if money is "no object" , the fee based Bulletins such as Bernie's (W3UR). They alert you to the upcoming DXpeditions well in advance and generally provide the DXpedition Web address (eg. URL).

Visit the Website at your earliest opportunity and read the Bulletins to ascertain updated arrival time. High seas and storms can delay them for days. Take advantage of other Data on the site - such as Band operating schedules , bearing from your location , sunrise/sunset times for them and your location , and planned operating frequencies. Study their Equipment and Antenna allocations by Band. Plan to operate on bands with Yagi's , not Verticals. Check if they plan to concentrate on certain bands because of worldwide needs...or if certain bands will stress CW or SSB , RTTY ,Etc. Be good to yourself. Take the easiest route to facilitate the first "Band QSO" ; then you can go after other bands at your leisure. plan to work every DXpedition. The odds of working them are much better than non - expedition operations. Most importantly...the all important QSL is virtually guaranteed!!

LOOK FOR:

3B6 - Agalega: Big DXpedition with 8 Stations QRV first 3 weeks of May. World Class Equip & Antennas. Check their website for updates: www.agalega2000.ch

3XY - Guinea: New stations on the air there.3XY6A mainly on 12M (24955) 1730-1930Z. QSL via VE2XO. 3XY2S on 10M (28447) around 1915Z.

A2 - Botswana: Charles , A25/KY4P now active on 10M CW/SSB. Check around 2800Z or 2845Z between 1200 and 1500Z. QSL via SV0LM.

E4 - Palestine: Gunter , OE1GZA is now active as E4/OE1GZA. Try 10/15M 1100-1600Z around 21270 and 28460.

HK0 - Malpelo Is.: Pedro , HK3JJH/HK0M active on 40/20/15/10M SSB.

Remember that the easiest and most effective thing that you can do to perpetuate our great and unique Hobby is OPERATE. We need more activity on the Bands.

CUL...Jordy - W1JK

Get Your **Zero Beat** Electronically each month

HCRA members can receive their monthly club newsletter in any or all of three ways!

- 1) *First Class Mail, just like you always have. This costs HCRA approximately 75 cents per copy. This is one of the benefits of your membership with HCRA.*
- 2) *E-mail. If you would like to get on our e-mail list, just write eZB@hcra.org from the account that you wish to receive your copy from, and request that you join our list. HCRA respects your privacy and will not under any circumstances give your e-mail address to ANYONE.*
- 3) *WWW.HCRA.ORG. Our new web site carries the latest copies of Zero Beat. Just click and read.*

NOTE 1: You will need Adobe Acrobat ® installed on your computer to read electronic copies of Zero Beat. Just click the button on the WWW.HCRA.ORG website, and follow the directions to get your FREE copy of Adobe Acrobat ®.

NOTE 2: There is a cost savings to the HCRA if you receive your Zero Beat electronically only. If you prefer to NOT receive your newsletter by First Class Mail, please contact John, Kx1x, Dave, KB1MU, or Jim, WA1ZUH to be added to the eZB only list.

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

Whats Happening???

On The Air

Mon., Tues, Thur, Fri	19:00	National Traffic System (NTS) Net	146.94
Sundays	08:45	Western Mass Emergency Net	146.94
Mondays	19:30	HCRA 10m Net	28.375
Wednesdays	19:30	MTARA Info net	146.94 and 147.000 (link)
	20:00	MTARA Swap net	
	20:30	MTARA Tech net	
Thursdays	21:00	Weather Net (ncs K1PAI Roger)	1 st Week of the Month 147.09 Every other week 147.000

Club Meetings & Testing Sessions			
1 st Friday of the month	19:30	HCRA Club Meeting	Feeding Hills Congregational Church 21 N. Westfield St., Feeding Hills
3 rd Friday of the month	19:30	MTARA Club meeting	Red Cross building 506 Cottage St, SPFLD, MA
4 th Friday of the month	18:00	MTARA License Exams	Holyoke Hospital Auditorium Beech St., Holyoke
4 th Sunday of the month	19:00	NOBARC club meeting	Pittsfield MA (146.91 for talk-in)

Please forward additions and suggestions to: Stan Bates, n1inb seb@wca.com

(All times Local)

Bus Trip

Date: June 16, 2001



First Stop: National Weather Service

WHERE: We start with a 35 minute sound-and-picture show in the conference room. This show explains who we are, what operations occur at the Forecast Office, and how forecasts are prepared and sent. We then take a few minutes to answer any questions the audience may have. The participants then view our operations area; here, they see the various computer systems that we use to view satellite, radar, and computer forecast model data...as well as the systems we use to prepare and send forecasts and warnings.

HOW LONG: A typical tour takes 60 minutes. If there are a lot of questions, the tour length could go longer.

Time permitting, they will then walk through our "Weather Gallery". This has pictures from extreme New England weather of the past 60+ years.

Over 2500 people have toured our office during the past 3 years.

Second Stop: Lunch

We will be stopping somewhere for lunch. You are responsible for any costs for lunch as they are not included with the trip fee.

Third Stop: New England Wireless

and Steam Museum

The New England Wireless and Steam Museum is an electrical and mechanical engineering museum emphasizing the beginnings of radio and steam power. The museum honors engineers who achieved greatness and served the public good by analyzing and solving tough engineering problems.

In 1875 Rhode Island was the world center of the stationary steam industry. According to the American So-

Everyone is invited. It's not just for hams. Bring your wives and girlfriends. It will be a fun day.

Bus leaves approx 7:30 am & returns approx 6:00 pm

ciety of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) the New England Wireless and Steam Museum has the finest collection of Rhode Island made engines, together with the finest collection of original stationary steam engine drawings.

This museum preserves the original Massie coastal wireless station which was moved from Point Judith, Rhode Island. This station, built in 1907 to communicate with marine shipping, is the oldest surviving, originally equipped wireless station anywhere. It symbolizes the very start of the electronics industry - a Plymouth Rock of the radio, TV, cellphone, satcom, Internet, computer, CATscan and all the other marvelous creations of electrical engineering. The significance of the Massie station is enormous.

The museum's assembly hall is an 1822 neo-classic New England meeting house which, like the Massie station, was moved here to be saved from demolition. This charming building is available for weddings, christenings, club functions, corporate presentations, etc.

The museum shows rare early radio and steam apparatus - much in working order.



Cost per person: \$27 - this includes admission to the museum. The NWS is free.

Please make sure you write down your name, call sign, number of people attending and your home phone number on a note with your check.

Please make the check out to the HCRA and send it to: Larry Krainson WB1DBY, 100 Kenmore Drive, Longmeadow, MA 01106-2759.

Seats are limited - don't delay!



Emergency Communications Corner Local Hams Volunteer Boston Marathon

de N1MUV, Tom Doyle



The 105th running of the Boston Marathon had the assistance of HCRA members among 200 other Hams. 2m & 440 repeaters linked the entire route from Hopkington town square to the finish line in downtown Boston.

The Boston Amateur Radio Club, BARC, coordinated course communications providing emergency & administrative radio communications along the 26 mile course.

Using 11 area repeaters, Hams covered 26 American Red Cross First Aid Stations, 56 Water Stops, numerous medical buses & other facilities from start to finish.

A long day but a very good day for HCRA members Betty, KB1CPZ, Dave, KB1MU, Eric N1QKO, Norm W1BMK, Larry WB1DBY, and Tom N1MUV.

**** There are a number of public service events throughout Western Massachusetts and Northern Connecticut each spring and fall. Any HCRA member who would be interested in working an event can contact Tom N1MUV or Dave KB1MU ****

73/Tom

HCRA 2001/2002 Annual Election

The June meeting is the one where next year's officers and board members are elected for another term. If you would like to be considered for any position within the HCRA, please notify any board member with your desire. We entertain any and all people for any position, pursuant to the HCRA Constitution.

Here is a list of proposed members desiring election or re-election for the upcoming year:

Position	Nominee
At-Large	Larry Krainson, WB1DBY
Program	Irv Slitzsky, W6IS
Membership	Norm Gregoire, W1BMK
Technical	Stan Bates, N1INB
ZeroBeat Editor	John Pise, Kx1x
Treasurer	Greg Stoddard, N1AEH
Secretary	Dave Isham, KB1MU
Vice President	Jordy Koltz, W1JK
President	Jim Mullen, KK1W

It's a credit to HCRA that we are able to have at least one person for each position within the club. This, at a time when many organizations have trouble filling positions is a credit to the club. That said; if you feel you have something to offer to HCRA, at any position, don't hesitate to contact the board. Many of the members running for re-election would be happy to vacate the position for a new face and new ideas. It's been said many times, any club is only as good as the desire and activities of its members. For HCRA to grow, it requires the effort, commitment and involvement of the members.

Thanks and don't forget to show up at the June meeting to vote your choice for 2002.

Jim, KK1W

ON THE AIR

Please remember to join our Monday evening 10m Net

Join NCS Tom, N1MUV, On Monday nights, 7:30PM local for the
HCRA/W1NY 10m Net 28.375 +/- QRM



Announcing the
W1NY

Hampden County Radio Association

Field Day

June 23 & 24, 2001

We Need YOU!!!

We need volunteers to help us plan and implement this year's HCRA Field Day. A Committee needs to be formed quickly to be ready for Field Day, June 23rd.

Field Day is held each year on the fourth weekend of June to bring hams of all ages and experience levels together to show their capabilities in operating in less than ideal situations with less than ideal operating conditions, such as using portable power and temporary antennas. This is a public display of Amateur Radio to show our Emergency Preparedness. All participants will be operating under W1NY, and will have extra class privileges, regardless of their license class, including those operators that don't even have a license.

If you are interested in helping plan our Field Day,
If you have a suggestion to help make our Field Day better,
If you would like to operate at the HCRA Field Day,
If you could help by logging contacts at the HCRA Field Day,
If you would like to help us set up on the evening before Field Day,
If you know someone interested in Amateur Radio,
If you have equipment that we can use,
PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE contact

Kx1x, John Pise 532-7474 or
KK1W, Jim Mullen 245-3228

HAMPDEN COUNTY RADIO ASSOCIATION

HCRA Board of directors Meeting - April 12, 2001

Held at Elizabeth Buller's home

Present: Jim KK1W, Jorty W1JK, Greg N1AEH, Dave KB1MU, Irv W6IS, Les K1DNX, Betty KB1CPZ, and Stan N1INB

Member Reports:

Vice President: It was agreed to go ahead with the planned "Tailgate Party" as the June meeting. The charge will be \$5.00 per car. And limited to Ham and Computer gear. The club will place advertisements in local newsletters and nets.

Treasurer: Current balance is \$3157.00 of which \$190.00 is for the June 16 bus trip. The raffle at last (April) meeting gathered \$109.00. This does not include the cost of prizes.

Secretary: The membership has not changed in the last month. Members are requesting to be removed from the ZeroBeat mailing list and receive only the E-Mail version. A request will be made at the May meeting for further updates in "E-ZB" status. The most recent issue with all the color certainly sparked a lot of enthusiasm.

Program: The May speaker will be Chet W1HGJ speaking on ATV, and the status of the proposed ATV repeater.

Zero Beat: April 23 is the deadline for ZeroBeat articles.

Membership: Betty KB1CPZ has sent information packets that include membership applications to 15 former members. No response has been received.

At large: Les K1DNX has ordered the Club (W1NY) QSL cards.

Old Business: The June 16th bus trip still needs a few more people. An effort will be made to publicize this event in the Berkshires and Greenfield area.

Based on the general membership vote taken at the April meeting, the Board of directors has agreed to go ahead with the joint (HCRA and MTARA) Field Day. The field Day committee consists of Walt WA1HHN (chairman), Ed WT1W, and John KX1X. The first meeting will be including the president of each club.

The cash donation for the ATV repeater will be held back until a site is secured for the repeater.

It was decided to delay any purchase of PA system speakers until after the June tailgate party.

New Business:

A proposed slate of club officers has been established. We are still looking for additional candidates. An announcement will be placed in the next ZeroBeat.

Walt WA1HHN has possession of a large amount of old HCRA records, and would like to have them stored elsewhere. A group will review this material, and decide on a proper storage place for these records.

Respectfully submitted by Dave I sham KB1MU.

Editor's Note: Board of Directors Meeting Minutes and Field Day

Since the last Board of Directors meeting, a set of circumstances were set into motion that caused the Board to question whether or not a "joint" field day with MTARA could be accomplished in the short time remaining before June 22nd.

An e-mail question was sent to the HCRA Board of Directors requesting their views into the matter.

The result of the email questionnaire was unanimous agreement by the Board that the membership of HCRA would be best served if HCRA planned and implemented its own Field Day event, separate from MTARA. Also, it was stressed that communication lines remain open and plans begin ASAP to have a joint Field Day event with MTARA in 2002.

Questions concerning the W1NY/HCRA Field Day event can be forwarded to KK1W, Jim Mullen, or Kx1x, John Pise.

The next meeting of the
Hampden County Radio Association

Will be on Friday

May 4th, 2001

At 7:30 p.m. at the
Feeding Hills Congregational Church

Doors open at 7:00 PM

Hope to see you there!

In case of inclement weather, tune to TV Channels 22 or 40,
or the 146.94 repeater.

Meeting cancellation information will be given out by 6:00 PM.

HCRA
P.O. Box 562
Agawam, Massachusetts
01001

PLEASE HAND CANCEL

Friday, May 4th, 2001

**Chet
Kruczek
W1HGJ**

On ATV