

Zero Beat



Hampden County Radio Association

May 2012

HCRA Trailer Party

On Saturday, April 28th Ed/KB1NWH and Sue/KB1PQX, hosted a "Trailer Party" at their house in Agawam. The purpose of the party was to inventory HCRA's Field Day equipment and move it into the club's new enclosed trailer.



Eric/KB1JVI carefully positioning one of HCRA's beams in the new trailer

In total we had 16 members show up to help with the event. Along with checking inventory, new shelf brackets were installed to hold all of the antennas and keep the other gear more accessible. Lists of repairs and replacement items needed before Field Day were also compiled. Ed did an excellent job keeping the crew on task, which we all know can be difficult when it comes to hams. Most importantly, the new trailer looks great and all the equipment fits nicely. This is going to be a great resource for the club and make moving our equipment out to the Field Day (or other portable events) much easier in the future, as well as keep our equipment protected from the



We love it when a plan comes together!

elements the other 362 days of the year. The trailer also represents the generous equipment donations and the hard work of turning those donations into cash for the club over the last year. Thank you to everyone who directly or indirectly helped bring the trailer project to fruition.

We also ran some initial tests on the triplexer system that we're hoping to use at Field Day this year. We used a K3, KX3 and a TS-520. What we found is that radios with poor close signal rejection will definitely not work with this system. Further testing is planned at the WB1Z

operation next weekend in Vermont before the New England QSO Party begins. Rigs that have better close signal rejection and that will be used at Field Day will be tested this time to verify that interstation interference will not cause problems for operators.

Pizza and soda were provided for lunch and as usual there was no shortage of fun discussions, opinions and jabbing that make these events even more fun. Thank you to Ed – KB1NWH and Sue/KB1PQX for allowing us to invade their home and to the following Hams for spending a large part of their Saturday helping make the event a success: Jim/KK1W, Marty/W1MJB, Dave/KE2SN, Bruce/KB1RNU, Al/KB1XG, Sam/KB1UYH, Nick/KB1WQJ, Bill/KB1OPV, Eric/KB1JVI, Steve/N1SR, Jeff/NT1K, Frandy/N1FJ, Dan/KB1VWQ, and Dave/N1MFL.



HCRA's new trailer fully loaded and ready to go! Trailer will also be used as an operating position at Field Day



Dan/KB1VWQ happily makes his first contact with his new Elecraft KX3. With 5 watts he easily made several contacts!

Local happenings

(All times are local time)

Sundays: 0845: Western Mass Emergency Net 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R

First Monday: RACES Drill, 1900, 146.91; 1930, 146.94; 1945, 146.985

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)

Common Ground Restaurant

25 Park Avenue

West Springfield, MA 01089

Expect between 6 and 12 every Friday. Good food, great company!

Club Meetings & VE Sessions

1st Friday of the month 7:30 PM, HCRA Club Meeting, Feeding Hills Congregational Church 21 N. Westfield St., Feeding Hills (no meetings held in July or August)

3rd Friday of the month 7:30 PM, MTARA Club meeting, Red Cross building 506 Cottage St, SPFLD, MA (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, MA. 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) Meeting Apr 23, 2012, to avoid holidays)

4th Monday of February, May, August, November 7:00 PM, FCARC VE Exams, Unitarian Church, Main Street, Northfield

New England Flea Markets

4,5 May: Deerfield NH Nearfest XI @FG
08/12/12: NoBarc Hamfest 2012, sponsored by the Northern Berkshire Amateur Radio Club. www.near-fest.com

12 May: E Greenbush NY EGARA @FD

19 May: Goshen CT SoBARC @FG

20 May: Cambridge MA FLEA at MIT

2 June: Windsor CT VR+C Mus 115 Pierson LN @8AM Outdoor

24 Aug/12: New England Division Convention, sponsored by the New England Division of the ARRL. www.boxboro.org/



Dust off that old key
or paddle and get
on the air!

HCRA Contact List

President, Jim Mullen KK1W (413) 237-4666

kk1w@arrl.net

Vice-President, John Pise KX1X (413) 532-7474

kx1x@arrl.net

Treasurer, Dave Cain AA1YW (413) 569-6901

aa1yw@arrl.net

Secretary, Marty Bowen W1MJB (413) 525-3717

w1mjb@arrl.net

Newsletter, Frandy Johnson N1FJ (413) 584-9005

n1fj@arrl.net

Programs, Jim Machia NN1Y (413) 535-1703

machiaj@lmsn.com

Membership, Matt Wilhelm W1MSW (413) 336-4701

w1msw@arrl.net

Technical, Ed LaCombe KB1NWH (413) 250-3137

kb1nwh@comcast.net

At Large, Rich Wheeler N1KXR (413) 584-3372

n1kxr@arrl.net

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

et-n1qko@juno.com

FROM THE SHACK

KX3 Raffle Winner – Dan/KB1VWQ

The Elecraft KX3 radio was won by one of our own! Congrats to Dan for buying enough tickets to go home with the slickest new transceiver to hit the airwaves in years. Well, he didn't actually go home with it last month; it hadn't even been made yet! But good things come to those that wait and just a few days ago KX3, serial number 65, arrived from California. I had a chance to play with the rig a bit (well, maybe more than a bit) in my shack before bringing it to last Saturday's 'Trailer Party' at KB1NWH's house. There we set it up, tested it with the Field Day triplexer (more to come on that test) and waited for Dan to show up after leaving work later in the afternoon. Dan arrived, set up the radio (we had packed it back up and pretended we never used it!), Ed climbed the tower and hooked up a feedline to the beam and Dan was on the air. Over the next hour Dan, Jeff, Ed, Frandy and I made numerous contacts, both local and DX on 15 and 20 meters. All good things must come to an end, Dan packed up his new toy and the rest of us went (sadly) home without the rig.

Only with the support of all our members were we able to hold this exciting raffle. Through ticket purchases, helping out at meetings and hamfests, and talking it up to your friends, you not only made Dan a happy ham and put needed money into the HCRA treasury but provided excitement for everyone over the last six months. A big "Thank You" to everyone that took part!

Friday Night's Meeting – John Elsworth

John is the curator/owner of the Vintage Radio and Communications Museum of CT. Join us for a trip down radio lane with an interesting presentation about the museum. John will be showing a DVD tour of the museum, show of some of the more interesting instrumentation pieces from their collection and talk about the Eppley Laboratory. (Google 'eppley' for a preview). A former educator, John's presentations always are informative and fun to attend. You won't want to miss this one!



Silent Auction Returns in May

The silent auction has been on vacation lately but will return to the May meeting with some interesting items. Be sure to bring a little 'extra cash' just in case a thing or two on the tables is something you just *have to have!* We're always looking for additional donations to the silent auction—if you have something to donate bring it to Friday's meeting.



Loose Connections:

The New England QSO Party (NEQP) kicks off at 4:00 PM on Saturday, May 5th. Have you read all about it yet? If not check out April Zero Beat SE (Special Edition) at <http://www.hcra.org/zerobeat/apr12se.pdf>. WB1Z will be QRV from VT again this year. We placed 5th in Multi-Op New England in 2011, we're shooting for a higher score this year. Jeff/NT1K will be trying for back to back wins of the HCRA sponsored "High Score, Single Op, Hampden County" plaque. I think Ed/KB1NWH will be QRV with the WINY club call. What are YOU doing for NEQP?

The storage trailer was purchased, delivered and is 90% outfitted. Thanks everyone for your help. You can read the whole article in this month's Zero Beat.

Field Day planning has now moved into second gear. Not sure where/what/how you want to participate? Please

contact Matt/W1MSW, Ed/KB1NWH or Jim/KK1W, you'll be glad you did.

New England's largest ham radio flea market comes to Deerfield, NH on May 4th & 5th. More info at: <http://www.near-fest.com/>.

Elections 2012/13: A slate of officers has been selected. Details elsewhere in this issue. This doesn't mean there isn't room for YOU! Do you feel you can contribute

to HCRA's future success. Talk to any board member via email or at the May meeting and find out how you can make a difference.

Our June meeting will feature a 'swap meet' a presentation about WRTC from Tom/K1KI, annual elections and food & drink courtesy of Venture Crew DX. See you there.

Negotiations continue on a possible new meeting location. More to come soon on a spot that could provide an upgraded location and save us money at the same time.

'73... See you at the meeting!

Jim, KK1W

Field Day – June 23-24

It's your monthly reminder that Field Day is just around the corner and we need your help to make it a success.

The band captains this year will be:

VHF - Al KB1XG & Sue KB1SG kb1xg@grimaldi.com

15m/75m SSB - Bob W1SQ w1sq@arrl.net

20m SSB - John KX1X kx1x@arrl.net

40m SSB - Jeff NT1K nt1k@nt1k.com

20m Digital - Ed KB1NWH kb1nwh@arrl.net

10m CW - Matt W1MSW w1msw@arrl.net

15m/40m CW - Jim KK1W kk1w@arrl.net

20m/80m CW - Frandy N1FJ n1fj@arrl.net

If there is any specific band or mode that you're interested in operating during Field Day or you just want to make sure to carve out your favorite time to operate, make sure to contact the corresponding band captain to reserve your time in the seat. But don't worry if you don't make a reservation-- we'll make sure you end up in front of a radio!

Along with our regular call for operators, we're still looking for volunteers in the following areas:

- Setup and break down
- Help Jim NN1Y in the kitchen
- Copy the Field Day message from W1AW
- Send 10 NTS messages
- Send an NTS message to our section manager
- Complete one satellite QSO
- Present an educational activity
- Setup a public information table/Serve as public relations person

There are lots of opportunities to volunteer. None of them take all weekend and some don't take much work at all. However, all of them make a big difference for the club's morale and final Field Day score and could be a great opportunity to try something new. If interested, please contact Matt – W1MSW.



Visit our website at <http://www.hcra.org> .
We are also on Facebook Groups: *Hampden County Radio Association* and *SOTAJerks*.



Skywarn Classes

For anyone interested in Skywarn training, the National Weather Service has announced two courses for our immediate area. Additional courses in MA and CT are viewable on the [2012 Schedule](#).

May 31, 2012 (Thursday), 7-10 PM, 22 News WWLP-TV, 1 Broadcast Center, Chicopee, Mass. NWS Taunton Forecaster, Registration not required.

June 2, 2012 (Saturday), 12 Noon - 3PM, Hitchcock Free Academy, 2 Brookfield Rd., Brimfield, MA, Registration: Required. Email william.babcock@noaa.gov to pre-register.

For further information on this and other possible Skywarn classes, contact Eric, N1QKO, et-n1qko@juno.com .

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 Annual Election

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

We have a new board member and a reorganization of others. It is our belief the new mix will expose the members to different areas of the operation of HCRA and expand their ability to provide a better experience for all members.

Here's the current slate of board members expected to be presented for your approval at the June 1st meeting. This list is not 'cast in stone' and HCRA would certainly benefit if YOU raised your hand to help out. I'm sure any of the board members would give up their position to make room for new blood.

POSITION	NOMINEE
At Large	Marty/W1MJB
Program	John/Kx1x
Membership	Rich/N1KXR
Technical	Matt/W1MSW
Zero Beat Editor	Frandy/N1FJ
Secretary	Dave/N1MFL
Treasurer	Dave/AA1YW
Vice President	Ed/KB1NWH

Nominations are open until voting time June 1st. This year's slate brings on board one new member and five have moved to different positions. All in all, an excellent board that will keep HCRA on the same growth pattern of the last few years. The board can only direct or recommend—it is the membership that is driving HCRA forward. Thanks everyone for making HCRA the great amateur radio club that it is. Don't forget to attend the June meeting to vote your choice.

Please take a moment to thank these folks that work so hard to help HCRA continue to be relevant in this day and age. They all take time out of their schedules to work for our club. The pay is poor (well, actually, non-existent) but a simple 'thank you' is all they need to keep going for another year (or two or)

Jim, KK1W

