

# Zero Beat



Hampden County Radio Association

May 2014

## HCRA Meeting May 2<sup>nd</sup>

*JT-65, Remote Rig Control & SDR Panadaptors*

(Matt W1MSW) Please join us for our May 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting where our Jeff/NT1K and James/WD1S will give



overviews and answer questions about the JT-65 mode, Remote Rig Control and SDR Panadaptors. Each of these subjects has been mentioned on our Facebook page recently and this is your chance to learn more about how to get started.

As usual, we will also be discussing regular club business and future events, taking membership renewals for 2013/2014, and taking deposits for the WRTC equipment that the club is selling at a discount to members.



Meeting starts at 7:30PM. Holyoke Medical Center Auxiliary Conference Center 575 Beech St. Holyoke MA, 01040 Please see [www.hcra.org/meeting-location](http://www.hcra.org/meeting-location) for more information.



## New England QSO

### Party May 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>

2000Z Saturday until 0500Z Sunday (4pm EDT Saturday until 1am EDT Sunday)

1300Z Sunday until 2400Z Sunday (9am EDT Sunday until 8pm EDT Sunday)

(Matt/W1MSW) An on-going tradition, the New England QSO party is your chance to get on the air and be the rare DX. For many, QSO parties are a more laid-back version of a contest with a relaxed style of operating. For others it's an opportunity to achieve one of the certificates and plaques for best in class. Sometimes both are possible!

The goal for New England stations is to work as many stations as possible both inside and outside of New England. Multipliers are US States, Canadian Provinces and DXCC entities. Stations outside of New England try to work as many New England stations as possible with counties as multipliers.

They're going to be looking for us on the bands this weekend so fire up the radio, get on the air and don't be afraid to call CQ. HCRA sponsors a plaque each year



for top single operator score in Hampden County. Will you have something new to put on your wall next year? Please see [neqp.org](http://neqp.org) for more details and if you have any questions, feel free to send me an email. [w1msw@arrl.net](mailto:w1msw@arrl.net)

## What's inside?

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# FROM THE SHACK

## A Full Slate – how cool is that?

*HCRA volunteers step forward again...*

I was so nice seeing so many members volunteering for HCRA board positions at the April meeting. We went into the meeting with heavy hearts, worrying about ‘how’ we would fill the open board of director positions for next year. We closed out the meeting with a full, and very capable, slate of officers and directors. A board I’m sure will continue to keep HCRA a premiere amateur radio club for many years in the future. It’s worth mentioning one more time. Not only is this important to the longevity of HCRA, it’s even more important to the hobby of amateur radio as a whole and the communities in which we reside. For over fifty years HCRA has provided a fun place to meet other hams, helps out with emergency communication when needed and has been the entry point for many area hams. I’m confident we will continue to do so for many years to come. Thanks!

## New England QSO Party

### May 3rd and 4th

*Will you take home the coveted HCRA plaque this year?*

I would call this the ‘best little contest’ you can enjoy in Massachusetts, or any other New England state for that matter. Starting at 4:00 PM local time on Saturday and ending at 8PM on Sunday, with a big break in between for sleeping, this is one contest that won’t tire you out! Mark the dates on your calendar and check out a more detailed article elsewhere in this issue. All this and more in NEQP, learn more [here!](#)

## WRTC Equipment Sale – Payments due!

*Time is running short, payment would be appreciated at May’s meeting*

If you took advantage of these fantastic deals now is the time to pay off your balance. All orders are due and payable prior to June 1<sup>st</sup>. If possible please see us at May’s meeting to pay off your balance. If you’re unable to make the meeting a check for your balance, sent to HCRA, PO Box 562, Agawam, MA 01001 before June 1<sup>st</sup> would be appreciated. Questions about your balance? Contact either Dave/AA1YW or myself. Remember, equipment purchased will be available soon after the completion of the WRTC contest on July 13<sup>th</sup>.



*Jim operating SOTA from Peaked Mountain April 21*

## Club Log?

*Should I or shouldn't I???*

Like everyone else I struggle to keep up with technology, especially the fast changing landscape of computer logging. Club Log started a few years ago with the goal of acquiring as many QSO records as possible to allow statistical analysis of QSO’s. They’re not like LotW and you can’t get your DXCC award from them. What you can get is analysis of your log, tracking of your DXCC progress and more.

One of the newest methods of QSLing is OQRS. This is when you request, on-line, a QSL from one of the DXpeditions to rare countries. When these DXpeditions are active Club Log also has a ‘leader board’ where you can check how many bands/modes you’ve made contacts. Many of the current logging software packages, including my favorite [DXlabs](#), can automatically upload your contacts to Club Log without requiring any user effort. So I figured I may as well give it a try and uploaded my log to them. It only took a few minutes to upload over 18,000 Q’s! Once my Q’s were in there I learned there were more advantages I never thought of, here’s just a few things I found:

1. Club log caught a half dozen log errors I would never have seen.
2. Once corrected my Club Log and DXlabs DXCC status tracked very well.
3. It makes filling out the OQRS forms extremely simple.
4. You can put a Club Log applet on your QRZ page and it shows your last 10 QSO’s. I don’t know why but I think that’s pretty cool.

All in all the investment of an hour’s time was worth the  
*(Continued on following page)*

(From the Shack, continued from page 2)

effort. I caught some log errors, I have a current list of DXpeditions and their OQRS links, made my QRZ page more interesting and now my data joined the 226 million (yes million) Q's providing better statistical analysis for everyone. Not bad for free!

Read more about Club Log at: [www.clublog.org](http://www.clublog.org)

## Foxhunting is returning to HCRA

*Time for some warm weather fun?*

Now that winter is (finally) over, the grass is starting to grow and summer is just around the corner isn't it time to get out and find some foxes? Simply using an HT and some ingenuity you too could be the first one to the fox's lair. Read more about it elsewhere in this issue and see if you can be the first one to discover NT1K's hiding place!

73,  
Jim/KK1W

## May Contests and QSO Parties

For a more detailed list: [www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/](http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/)

7th Call Area QSO Party 1300Z, May 3 to 0700Z, May 4  
<http://ws7n.net/7QP/new/Page.asp?content=rules>

Indiana QSO Party 1600Z, May 3 to 0400Z, May 4  
<http://www.hdxcc.org/inqp/rules.html>

New England QSO Party 2000Z, May 3 to 0500Z, May 4 and 1300Z-2400Z, May 4  
<http://www.neqp.org/rules.html>

CQ WW WPX Contest, CW 0000Z, May 24 to 2400Z, May 25  
<http://www.cqwp.com/rules.htm>

## Greetings from WW1X in Santa Rosa, CA

From our old friend Rockwell Schrock, WW1X: Hi folks!



Remote Ham Radio is a project I've been working on for the past 18 months. In a nutshell, you can get on the air today and operate some BIG stations all over the US - all within your web browser. You don't need any extra equipment or software beyond what you're using to read this right now.

It's called WebDX, and is a great addition for people trying to snag the rare ones that you can't quite hear from your home QTH, or for folks that can't afford to put up and maintain a big tower and a 1KW amp.

Check us out! <http://www.remotehamradio.com/>

[Editor's warning: It ain't free!]

## HCRA Foxhunt—Coming Soon!

(Jeff/NT1K) Now that things are warming up in Hampden County, I think it's time to have ourselves a Foxhunt. So dust off your direction finding equipment and make sure it works. With thanks to Larry, W1AST (ex WB1DBY), We had a decent turnout for our last foxhunt that took place in the fall of 2013. I (Jeff, NT1K) have volunteered to be the fox this time. If you are interested and want to join in on the hunt, please contact me at [mycall@arrl.net]. Anyone and everyone is encouraged to join in on the fun. Home stations with a beam could also help the operators by providing beam headings.



We have permission to use the K1ZJH repeater. The fox



will transmit on the repeater while the hunters will be using the input frequency to look for the location of the FOX.

- Frequency: 146.715 MHz
- Input Frequency: 146.115MHz (This is the frequency you want to track the fox on)
- PL: 100hz
- Date: TBD
- Time: TBD (A Sunday Afternoon?)
- Starting Location: Holyoke Mall Overflow Lot (Behind Sears)
- Duration: 1-2hrs

If you are new to Amateur Radio and never participated in a fox hunt, This would be the perfect time to get your feet wet. Take some time and read an excellent post by Larry (W1AST) about fox hunting basics. You can also check out [homingin.com](http://homingin.com) for more information.

# 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/>

**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](mailto: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/>

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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

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

[w1fab@arrl.net](mailto:w1fab@arrl.net)

# My First Field Day

(Gent Lam, WA1CQF) It's the mid 1960s and I've upgraded from novice WN1CQF to general class WA1CQF--no longer limited to 75 watts input power and crystal control.



As a bonus, phone privileges on the HF bands. As a high school student, yet to have a part time job, owning a phone rig was pretty much out of the question. No big deal! I preferred CW anyway.

There were many hams in the same boat at Technical High in Springfield. We had decided to try our hand at ARRL Field Day. Participants were: Gent WA1CQF, Ralph K1ZZI, Carl K1FPI, Chuck WB1DXC (SK), Jeff WN1EKD, and Glenn WN1CYG. Only one in our group had a car so the prospect of trekking to a remote location



Left to right: Gent WA1CQF, Glenn WN1CYG, Jeff WN1EKD, Ralph K1ZZI, Chuck WB1DXC, and (standing) Carl K1FPI.

was out of the question. My parents agreed to let us use their garage. Great! We have a covered operating location. Years later, some of us from the HCRA operated Field Day from the Middlefield Fairgrounds under similar conditions. I had dipoles for 20 and 40 meters. So much for the antenna farm. Ralph, K1ZZI supplied his Drake 2B receiver. The transmitter was my Eico 723 and homebrew VFO from the ARRL handbook. They were modified for grid block keying on which I expended many hours tweaking to eliminate key clicks. I have the Official Observer cards to prove it. I thought I would work 50 states with Official Observer endorsement before I would obtain the conventional WAS award.

I had constructed an 811A amplifier (from the handbook) which was upgraded to a 572B when they became available. QRO at 500 watts input. All of the above was rack-mounted—easily transported. Not bad for odd jobs and skipping lunch to save money.

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Equipment circa mid 1960's: Drake 2b receiver, Eico 723 60 watt cw transmitter and homebrew vfo mounted in lower rack, homebrew 572B amplifier in upper rack. Note the stack of 2x6's and trash can holding up the operating desk---really roughing it!

No band captains since we only had 1 rig. Took turns operating and logging. No computers at that time---paper logs and dupe sheets. No memory keyers or DSP. It was a two person effort. Even then, Murphy's Law took its toll. In the middle of the fray, a problem occurred in the grid



A better view of the transmitter and amplifier.

blocking keying circuit of the transmitter. It was quickly pulled from the rack and the problem rectified. Back in business PDQ. A true test of operating under "adverse" conditions. We operated straight through, working in shifts. Don't remember what our score was but we did send in our log to the ARRL. (Thanks to Ralph, whose father took the photos.)

**How about your first Field Day?**  
In June, we will probably have room for one or two more first Field Day articles. Send an article (with pictures if possible) to N1FJ@arrrl.net by mid-May.

# W1AW/1 operation at K1TTT in Peru

From April 9th to April 15th W1AW/1 was on the air from K1TTT in Peru, Mass. Dave Robbins opened his super station to hams from around the region for this ARRL Centennial event. The operation used CW, SSB, and RTTY on 160 through 10m meters, up into VHF and UHF, with lots of power and amazing antennas.

## 14 Operators from HCRA contributed to the event:

- Nick/K1MAZ
- John/K1VOI
- Jim/KK1W
- John/Kx1x
- Al/N1AW
- Eli/N1ELI
- Frandy/N1FJ
- Steve/N1SR
- Jeff/NT1K
- Juergen/NV1Q
- Jim/W1EQO
- Matt/W1MSW
- James/WD1S
- Dave/WN1E

## Statistics:

- Operators from HCRA: 14
- Total Q's worked by HCRA: 11607
- Total operators: 29
- Total contacts: 35,667
- Percent of operators from HCRA: 48%
- Percent of contacts by HCRA ops: 32%



Nick/K1MAZ



John/K1VOI & Juergen/NV1Q



Matt/W1MSW



N1FJ (in distance), KK1W to right



James/WD1S



Jim/KK1W



Jeff/NT1K

Jim/KK1W



Dave/WN1E