

Zero Beat



Hampden County Radio Association

October 2011

Friday's Meeting: Mike Raisbeck, K1TWF

Come join us October 7th for a conversation with Mike/K1TWF. Many of you know Mike—he has been the Vice Director for ARRL's New England Division for some years now, helping Tom/K1KI keep abreast of everything happening in the New England amateur community. K1TWF will be talking with us about ARRL's upcoming 100 year Anniversary, and is hoping to leave with more information from us about what we're looking for from amateur radio, ARRL and more. So come prepared to ask questions, gather information and learn more about why we love our hobby so much.

Mike is also the guy behind NEAR-fest, New England's largest ham radio flea market (hamfest). Never been there? Then let Mike fill you in on what lies ahead if you make the trip to New Hampshire this October.

Mike is traveling quite some distance to be with us, share information and learn your views. Let's welcome him with our usual HCRA friendliness and send him back home filled with our input about Amateur Radio!

HCRA 2011/2012 Raffle

Because of the success of HCRA's Honda generator raffle last year, we have decided to do the something similar this year with what we hope will be a very exciting prize for our members. This year we a raffling off the base configuration of Elecraft's soon to be released KX3 HF portable radio. Tickets will be \$10/each and only 200 will be sold. The drawing will be held once all the tickets are gone or at the end of the June 1st meeting, which ever comes first. Elecraft's KX3 is the first exciting release in the portable radio market in many years. Here's what Elecraft has to say about their new radio:

The revolutionary Elecraft KX3 puts the world in the palm of your hand! Despite its small size, it covers all amateur bands from 160-6 meters, operates in all modes, and has DSP-based features usually found only on larger radios.

The KX3's unique form-factor allows you to operate from anywhere. Fold out the rear tilt-feet for use on a desktop or picnic table, or add our rugged mobile mount bracket for vehicle use. For extreme portability, you can add the internal wide-range ATU, 8-AA cell battery pack with NiMH charger, and adjustable KXP3 keyer paddle. With a whip antenna, you can even operate hand-held.

In receive mode, current drain can be as low as 150 mA – about one-half to one-third that of competing all-band portables. Transmit efficiency is also excellent, further improving battery life.


The KX3 features a large front panel with all controls optimized for convenient use. You won't have to dig through menus to set the power level, adjust the keyer speed, or change filter settings. And the KX3 has the same full-size display as the Elecraft K3, so all operating information is available at a glance.

The KX3's tutorial-style manual explains *how* and *why* controls are used, so new hams will be experts in no time. Of course you'll also have Elecraft's legendary customer support, and free firmware upgrades via the internet.

•160-6meters, SSB/CW/DATA/AM/FM modes •10 W PEP (100 W with KXPA100 amp) •Only 1.5 pounds (0.7 kg) •Current drain as low as 150 mA •Internal wide-range antenna tuner (ATU) and battery options •Built-in speaker •Advanced DSP provides dual watch, noise reduction, noise blanking, auto notch, stereo audio effects •Software-defined radio (SDR) architecture *plus* roofing filters (KXFL3) for excellent dynamic range •Operates in data modes (PSK31/RTTY) with or without a PC •Includes RX I/Q soundcard output

We are looking forward to having another successful raffle this year and hope that everyone makes a donation to the club for their chance to win the KX3!

Matt – W1MSW

HCRA KX3 RAFFLE			
Name	Callsign	Phone	«F5»
_____	_____	_____	
			«F5»
Elecraft KX3			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 160 - 6 meters• SSB/CW/DATA/AM/FM• Only 1.5 pounds• Advanced DSP• 10W PEP, low current drain• Be the 1st on your block!• MSRP \$899.99 (estimated)			
DRAWING BY JUNE 1ST, 2012			
\$10/ticket - Only 200 tickets will be sold!			

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Local happenings

(All times are local time)

Sundays:

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

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

<http://thecupinc.com/home.html> for more details and directions. Expect between 6 and 12 every Friday. Good food, great company!

Club Meetings & VE Sessions

1st Friday of the month 1930 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 1930 MTARA Club meeting Red Cross building 506 Cottage St, SPFLD, MA (no meetings held in July or August)

4th Friday of the month 1800 License Exams Holyoke Hospital Auditorium Beech Street, Holyoke, MA. Hosted by the Western Mass VE Team (WMVET)

Third Monday of the month 1900 Franklin County Amateur Radio Club meeting, Greenfield High School (no meetings held in July or August) (Meeting Jan 23, 2012, 4th Monday; meeting Apr 23, 2012, to avoid holidays)

4th Monday of February, May, August, November 1900 FCARC VE Exams, Unitarian Church, Main Street, Northfield

New England Flea Markets

9 Oct Wallingford CT Nutmeg Conv \$20/sp

14,15 Oct Deerfield NH Nearfest @Fairgrounds

15 Oct Greenwood NS GARC @CommCtr

16 Oct Cambridge MA FLEA at MIT

29 Oct Gales Ferry CT TCARC Auction @FireCo

30 Oct Westford MA NEAntiqueRC @Regency

4 Nov Feeding Hills MA HCRA Auction @CongCh @6:30PM



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

HCRA Contact List

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Skywarn Liaison, Eric Tuller N1QKO (413) 967-3869
et-n1qko@juno.com

FROM THE SHACK

Last chance to renew & win!

Yup, it's time to start a new year at HCRA and renew your membership in the area's coolest radio club. Enclosed in this month's Zero Beat is a handy application form you can fill out and bring to the September meeting. To make it even easier if you're renewing and your address, email and preferences haven't changed just fill out your name & call at the top and write "no change" in the address area. Please be sure we have your correct email so you won't miss a single issue of Zero Beat!

Once again this year every regular member at the end of the October meeting will automatically be entered in a 'Sign Up' raffle drawn at the end of the meeting. The prize this year is a Yaesu FT-2900 2 meter transceiver worth over \$100. Get your renewal in before October 7th so you don't miss your chance to win.

Next up – the HCRA Annual Auction

Friday's silent auction is just 'teaser' for the big event in November – the HCRA Auction. Our auction is well known throughout the area and we attract buyers and sellers from all the surrounding states. Here's a chance to pick up some much needed items for your shack or workshop or an opportunity to make room in your shack or shop – the choice is yours! More often than not it seems we go home with just as much as we came with—it's just different stuff.

If you've never been to the auction be prepared for a long evening of fun. Typically we have close to one hundred buyers and sellers and it can take until near midnight to work through all the great stuff for sale. You never know what you will find here so plan on arriving early enough to get a close look at the items before they go on the auction block. The rules are simple. Admission is free for everyone, buyers and sellers. HCRA gets 10% of the selling price (minimum \$1.00). More information contained in the auction advertisement elsewhere in this issue.

If you have an item or two you would like to sell but don't really want to actually 'put your name on it' why not donate it to the cause? HCRA will profit and you're saved the embarrassment of identifying yourself. (Just kidding!) It really is a great way to help out your club and give a new ham a great deal at the same time. If you have, or know anyone that has, a large amount of items to donate we can arrange pickup. Give me a call if you have any questions about donating.

Auction profits underwrite a major portion of the budget and help defray the cost of big events like the Holiday Party

and Field Day. You can support it by attending, selling, buying or donating. Not only that, it's great fun too!

Sunspots and the December 10 meter contest!

Cycle 24 is finally showing some life. This past week the solar flux was close to 200 and 10 meters was open at 10 AM! How cool is that? This year's 10 meter contest (December 10th & 11th) could be WAY better than the last few with the possibility of hundreds of contacts world wide. As always we will have a club entry again this year. The ARRL 10 meter contest is one you can operate individually from home *and* combine your score with other club members for a club entry. We've done very well in our division (WMA) in past years, lets see how well we can do this year! See past results and learn about the contest at <http://www.hcra.org/tutorial.htm>. Rules and info at: <http://www.arrl.org/10-meter>.



Loose Ends:

Frank/KB1LFD has volunteered to take over the *200* raffle and will be selling tickets for a chance to win a new Elecraft KX3 Transceiver at Friday's meeting. Thanks, Frank, for stepping up and helping out!

If you would like snacks or drinks at the meeting we are still looking for a volunteer. One comment, it sure was easier to cleanup after the last meeting.

Holiday Party tickets will be on sale at October's meeting. Get your ticket from Marty before we sell out! \$15 for a great buffet meal at the Steaming Tender with your friends –it doesn't get any better than that.

The area's biggest ham flea market is NEARfest in Deerfield, NH on October 14th and 15th. Interested? Check it out on the web at <http://www.near-fest.com/>. If the weather is good the real action is on both Friday and Saturday and camping is allowed. A short two hour ride from the Springfield area and a small entrance fee gets you into 'ham radio heaven'. If you can't make it to New Hampshire there's another good one in Wallingford, CT on October 9th <http://nutmeghamfest.com/>. This one is also the ARRL's Connecticut Convention so there are lots of things to do at this one.

'73... see you at the meeting,
Jim, KK1W

The Bucket List

I suppose everyone has a “Bucket List” of sorts. One of my items has been listed far longer than I care to remember, actually long before I ever heard of the term “Bucket List”. I was probably eleven or twelve years old, an avid SWL and quite the Ham wannabe, when I first came across the famous DX Century Club awards and decided to put them on a “To Do” list, the precursor of the big “BL”. Of course, you need to be a licensed amateur radio operator to work and confirm the one hundred contacts necessary to submit for any of the DXCC categories and their many endorsements, so I put the FCC amateur radio license with HF privileges on the list just before the DXCC and let them age like a fine wine for close to forty one years.



The FCC licenses came in quick succession during 2003 but between then and 2010 I only logged one significant DX contact. It was a brief contest style QSO with T32WW on 20 meter phone but what a contact it was. I had just erected and tuned a Hustler 6BTV Vertical antenna purchased on EBay that day and finally in the wee hours of the following morning had found time to troll the phone portion of the 20 meter band when I heard a very clear strong voice calling “CQ DX CQ DX THIS IS T32WW OVER”.

When he finished, I quickly shot out my call and was amazed to hear a reply. We exchanged information and the DX contact was mine. However, I had no clue where T32WW was transmitting from. The operator had identified himself as Paul T32N and stated he was on Christmas Island. So, now onto QRZ where T32WW materialized as the DXCC entity Eastern Kiribati (Line Islands) which, of course, meant nothing to me. Now out came the map where I found the island in Eastern Oceania. Wow, 7390 miles from my QTH.

I became animated like a whirling dervish and spun upstairs to tell my sleeping wife the fantastic news. At 2:00 AM she did manage to coo “that’s nice dear, when are you coming to bed?” and drifted off to dream land as I ran back down stairs for more Pacific DX but nothing of significance happened for an hour or so and eventually sleep overtook me. I went to bed ecstatic from my big DX contact and dreamt a pleasant dream of DX contacts soon to come.

I kept my self-busy playing Emcomm radio until March of 2010 when the DX virus emerged out of the depths of retirement-induced boredom. Mind you, I could have gotten started on the infamous “Honey Do” list which was, if truth be told, decades behind but the devil made me choose to play radio and the chase for DXCC entities was on. Around the same time, I decided to try radio contesting. A

modest effort for sure using 100 watts output into a dipole proved me no superstition but the first three contests netted seventy DXCC entities worked. Ah ha, I thought, DXCC is going to be a piece of cake but little did I know that it would take another year to work the final thirty entities and confirm the entire lot.

Oh, yeah, during this time I became a born again CW believer or more accurately born for the first time CW nut case thanks to N1FJ, KK1W and W1MSW and their SOTA efforts. I became obsessed with actually becoming a bona fide CW operator, a competence that is still very much a work in progress. Finally the big day arrived. I had one hundred mixed DXCC entities logged as QSL in the Log Book of the World. So with credit card in hand, I submitted my DXCC log to the ARRL through LOTW and waited like a nervous hen on a golf ball for the league to verify the submittal and send me the certificate.

At last in April 2011, it came. Rolled in a cardboard tube was DXCC # 44,727. Forty one years in the making but finally an important item checked off. And yet, so many modes, so many bands, so many DX entities, it’s a tough job but somebody has to do it, chase DX that is. After all what’s a bucket list for?

Marty Bowen, W1MJB

Visit our website at hrca.org. We are also on Facebook Groups: *Hampden County Radio Association* and *SOTAJerks*. Join us!

New Raffle Volunteer

As much fun as I had convincing everyone last year to buy raffle tickets (and some of you took some serious convincing) it was difficult to do that and fulfill my duties as Membership Director such as talking to new members and prospects, and visiting club meetings for the first time. Frank /KB1LFD has generously volunteered to handle raffle ticket sales at our club meetings and events for 2011/2012 and we all appreciate his willingness to take on the responsibility. So if you would like to take home a new KX3 make sure you find Frank to get your ticket or find me and I’ll point you in his direction.

Membership Renewal Raffle

Don’t forget folks, we have a raffle going on right now that doesn’t require buying a ticket to win. WHAT???

That’s right, all you have to do is make sure to renew your membership before the Secretary and Treasurer shout “Last call” at the October meeting and you will automatically be entered to win a Yaesu FT-1900R 2 meter mobile radio. So bring your dues, fill out a form and turn it in to Dave-AA1YW and Marty-W1MJB. Can’t ask for anything much easier than that! See you there.

Matt – W1MSW

HCRA Holiday Party

Join your friends for a relaxing evening at the Steaming Tender Restaurant in Palmer, MA. Absorb the charm of a turn-of-the-century railroad station while savoring award winning cuisine. Close your eyes and listen for the sound of the station agent pounding the key...

When & Where

December 5th

Cocktails at 6:00 PM – Dinner at 7:00 PM

Steaming Tender Restaurant

28 Depot Street, Palmer, MA 01069

Holiday Buffet

Soup du jour or Fresh Garden Salad

Fresh Carved Roast Beef

Baked Haddock

Roasted Pork Loin with Apples Cider Sauce

Roasted Red Bliss Potato

Chef's Selection of Vegetable

Steaming Tender's Signature Whiskey Bread Pudding

HCRA Holiday Cake

Coffee, Decaf or Tea

Activities

Door Prizes, Award Presentations and more!

Cost

HCRA Members or guests - \$15/person

Please mail the total number of attendee(s) and your check to:

HCRA, P.O. Box 562, Agawam, MA 01001

It would be great to receive your payment by 11/26!

This event is a major effort to provide a fantastic Holiday Party for our club. Please help make this a success and register early so we can ensure everyone has a great time.

Drinks, except for water and coffee/tea not included. Cash bar available for adult beverages



***200* Raffle Prize
Elecraft KX3!**

*Drawing June 1, 2012
(\$10/ticket - only 200 sold)*



AUCTION

November 4th !!!

Turn your old 'stuff' into cash!

- *Set-up at 6:00 PM*
- *Auction starts at 7:00 PM*
- *KX3 Raffle Tickets*
- *Lots of bargains!*



Auction held at:

Feeding Hills Congregational Church
21 North Westfield Street
Feeding Hills, MA 01030

Just North of the Pride station at the
intersection of routes 57 and 187

Contact: Jim, kk1w@arrl.net

AUCTION RULES:

Amateur radio or computer related items only.
Mark all items with name/call and minimum
acceptable bid.

Items without minimum will sell at any price!
10% of selling price goes to the HCRA.

Minimum fee = \$1.00

If it doesn't sell - you bring it home!

More info: www.hcra.org

Silent Auction, part two – October’s listing:

This month’s offerings from the estate of Al Drake, N1CQT represent the ‘cream of the crop’ of the donated equipment. Here’s your chance to get on HF or VHF with a quality base station radio, or add some accessories to your station.

The Kenwood TS-830S is a great ‘starter’ HF base station transceiver. Solid state except for the finals it covers all the HF amateur bands with 100 watts of power. It plugs directly into the wall so an external power supply is not required. Bundled with it is an MC-50 desk microphone. Installed in the radio is the optional YK-88C CW filter. Included are the original operator manual and a set of spare tubes (used) for the finals. These rigs are selling for as much as \$500 on the internet, here’s a chance to get one for a lot better price and get on the air that evening.

The Kenwood TS-711A is a two meter (144 MHz) all-mode base station transceiver. This radio covers the entire two meter band and is all mode; FM, SSB and CW with 25 watts output. Installed in the radio is the TU5 tone encoder so you can work repeaters with CTCSS tone access. The radio plugs into the wall, no external supply required. Included is the original operator manual. Looks like new, works as it should and would be a great addition to anyone’s shack. This radio easily sells for \$350 plus on the used market – but could be bargain priced at the silent auction.

When you come to the meeting there will be a display of equipment with a bid sheet in front of each item. Simply put down your name/call on the list and your bid. That’s all there is to it! You can go back as often as you want if you want to win the bid. At the end of the night the high bidder pays the treasurer and takes their item home. Simple enough? There will be a minimum bid for some of the equipment but it won’t be revealed until after the auction, and then only if the minimum hasn’t been met. Remember every dollar of your purchase goes directly to the HCRA treasury to fund our yearly events.

Please Remember these two very simple rules:

1. You MUST be a member of HCRA to place a bid. When paying for your item the Treasurer will check your status. If it turns out you aren’t a member you can either join then or the item will go the highest member bid.
2. The auction ends tonight (if the minimum has been met). All items won must be paid for before you leave. If you place the winning bid and are not there to pay for your item then it will go to the next highest member bid.

October ‘Silent Auction’ Items

Make	Model	Description	Notes
Kenwood	TS-830S	HF Transceiver	Includes MC-50 mic, CW filter, manual, 120 VAC
Kenwood	TS-711A	VHF Transceiver	Includes MC-48 mic, TU5 encoder, manual, 120 VAC
Radio Shack	15-1245	Light Duty Rotator	Like new condition.
Yaesu	YH-55	Headphones	Good condition
Kenwood	SP-50	Mobile Speaker	Good condition
???	POS-123Z	12 V, 3A regulated PS	Good condition
Kenwood	AT-230	Antenna Tuner	Excellent condition, w/manual – matches TS-830S
Kenwood	TR-7400A	2 meter transceiver	Old but works, no PL tones, good for packet or APRS
Kenwood	MC-85	Microphone	Very good condition, w/two cables and manual
KTO	GC-20	\$20 Gift Certificate	From Knox Trail Outfitters

The gift certificate to Knox Trail Outfitters was not part of the N1CQT estate but instead is a gift to HCRA from Mike/ K1TA. Mike has opened a new business just around the corner. If you’re into hiking or outdoor activities be sure to check out KTO. Thanks, Mike, for the generous donation.

Kenwood MC-50 mic, TS-830S, AT-230



Kenwood AT-230, TS-711, MC-48 mic





HAMPDEN COUNTY RADIO ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 562
AGAWAM, MA 01001

Application for New or Renewal Membership



DATE: / /

NAME: CALL SIGN:

ADDRESS: LICENSE CLASS:

APT. NO. CITY STATE: ZIP:

PHONE HOME: ()- - CELL: ()- -

WORK: ()- - - EXT ARRL MEMBER YES NO

OTHER PHONE:()- - - EXT

EMAIL: I don't want to be a member of the HCRA mailing list

TYPE OF APPLICATION NEW RENEWAL
If renewal use data already on file? YES NO
Class of application REGULAR FAMILY

DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE THANKS

Table with 4 columns: Name, CALL, ARRL MEMBER?, EMAIL. Header: Please list additional family members. If you need more space, write on back.

Thoughts for improving 'our' club:

Dues are \$15/year for regular membership. Additional family members are free. ANNUAL DUES: \$15.00

DONATION:

TOTAL:

RECEIVED BY: DATE: / /