

# Zero Beat



Hampden County Radio Association

October 2012

## Friday's Meeting

At Hampden County Radio Association's monthly meeting the speaker will be Tom Homewood, W1TO, speaking about RTTY station setup and contesting. This will be a joint meeting of the Western Massachusetts Area of the Yankee Clipper Contest and HCRA, October 5, 2012 at 7:30 p.m. at HCRA's new meeting place,

As this is a local Yankee Clipper Contest Club meeting new members will be eligible to join YCCC at the meeting. All are welcome to attend the meeting.

## Time to renew!

Our 2012/2013 season started on September 1st and thanks go out to all of you who renewed your membership for another year. However some of you have yet to take that quick moment to get your own renewals taken care of. It's fast, it's easy, and can be done by mail or in person at the upcoming October 5th meeting.

Your dues are what help to make HCRA events such as Field Day and the Holiday Party possible. It assists members without email access by offsetting our mailing costs. In addition there's liability insurance expenses, IRLP node maintenance and of course our web hosting fees and all the little things that go into making a club run.

So please, while it's on your mind and at your fingertips, won't you download the application form found on our membership page and take care of renewing right now?

## KX3 Raffle!

We were one of the first clubs in the world to give away an Elecraft KX3 – and we're doing it again! Tickets are on sale now. Plan on purchasing a ticket or two at the next meeting at the Holyoke Medical Center. *A \$10 donation puts you in the running. Only 250 tickets will be available and the drawing will be held March 1st, 2013.* You won't want to miss our next meeting at the new location. This will be a joint meeting of the YCCC (Yankee Clipper Contest Club) and the HCRA.

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

## Who'd like a new Dual-Band HT?

Did you say, "Me"? Well it *could* be you. That's right, you could add a brand new, right-out-of-the-box TYT TH-F5 Dual Band HT to your radio collection. What's the catch you ask? No catch, it's something you were going to do anyway. And what might that be, you next ask. Simple, come to the next HCRA meeting on Friday, October 5, 2012, enjoy the company of your fellow Hams and learn a thing or two about RTTY from Tom Homewood - W1TO, Western Mass. Area Manager for the Yankee Clipper Contest Club. At the end of the meeting, a door prize drawing will be held with one person in



attendance going home the proud recipient of a TYT TH-F5 Dual Band HT.

The only way it could be you, is for you to join us at the Holyoke Medical Center's Auxiliary Conference Center located at 575 Beech Street Holyoke Mass, 01040-2223 on Friday, October 5, 2012 at 7:30pm (doors open at 7:00pm).

## 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>

# FROM THE SHACK

## What's that Funny Noise on 14.085 MHz?

If you're tuning around the bands and come across some signals that sound like "beedley, beedley, beedley" you may have stumbled across a radio teletype transmission. Not exactly sure what that "beedley" sound is? Usually abbreviated RTTY, it is one of many digital modes that include PSK31, WSPR and others. RTTY has been around for many years and has seen an uptick in activity lately. No longer do you have to drag home a 100 pound teletype machine, listen to the clatter of the type or smell the warm machine oil (although you still can if you want to). Modern amateur operators use a computer to do all the heavy lifting nowadays.

Sound interesting? Want to learn more? Then come to our October meeting and guess what, you will! Our guest speaker is Tom/W1TO and he will be talking to us about RTTY and RTTY contesting. You will learn what is necessary to setup and operate RTTY (hint - not much!) and how to play in your first RTTY contest (another hint, it is fun and addictive!) Best of all you're guaranteed to leave the meeting more informed than when you arrived!

## Have you subscribed to our new website yet?

HCRA's new website is getting better everyday. New content, new links, new events - it's the place to go to feel amateur radio's pulse in the Pioneer Valley. Wouldn't it be nice to know about new content or events on the website without having to constantly check the website (although that's OK if you want to). Well you can do that, just by subscribing. <http://www.hcra.org/>

The next time you're on the site, scroll to the bottom of the main (home) page. In the center of the page is a, you guessed it, a 'Subscribe' button. Simply enter your email address, press the button and you're done. You'll receive a confirmation email and you're all set. Now the website will let YOU know when a new article or event is added. Stay up to date without having to work at it - how cool is that? <http://www.hcra.org/>

HCRA's website is secure, your email is never revealed or used for any other purpose. It is not necessary to subscribe to view the site or leave comments - the only purpose is to keep YOU informed of all our activities. We have over 100 subscribers on our facebook page, wouldn't it be nice to exceed that on our webpage? <http://www.hcra.org/>



## KX3 Raffle - Have you purchased your ticket yet?

Tickets are selling fast, don't miss your chance to win a fantastic HF transceiver for a tiny donation of \$10. Only 250 tickets will be sold, so chances are high, even if you only purchase one ticket! The faster they sell, the sooner we can hold the drawing. We've pre-ordered the rig from Elecraft. The wait period is pretty short with Elecraft and I'm sure we will have the rig in time for the drawing.

Why would you want to win this beautiful radio? After all, it's only QRP, right? All I can say is, after owning one for a few months now, is it really does everything a large radio will, but at less than two pounds! All band/mode, DSP, great filtering, dual VFO's, auto-notch, CW decode, built in PSK and RTTY and more - who wouldn't want one?

Tickets will be on sale at the October meeting, purchase one or two and good luck. If you don't win, remember your donation has gone to a good cause! Read more about the raffle here.

## Renewal Time is here!

Rich/N1KXR is asking for your help. He's in charge of increasing HCRA's membership, and the only way that can happen is if everyone that was a member last year renews their membership AND we add new members. New members are coming in so it is up to you, our former members, to fill out your application and bring it to the October meeting. Can't make the meeting? Use our handy application form and mail it in to the PO box. We have worked hard over the past ten years to control our costs, provide quality events for our members and NOT raise  
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dues. By becoming a member you will help keep dues low and fun high! Bring your completed application to the October meeting and see Rich/N1KXR or Dave/N1MFL so we can get you 'back in the fold'.

Still not convinced? OK, here's some incentive. If you join or renew your HCRA membership by the close of the October 5th meeting you could be the winner of a TYT TH-F5 dual band HT with rechargeable batteries, desk and mobile charger. Getting the bulk of our memberships early in the season allows us plan the year ahead. Help us out by renewing early and we might help you out with a new HT. Fair enough?

## HCRA/MTARA Holiday Party - December 10th, 2012

Last year's party was an unbridled success and we wondered, "what can we do to make it even better in 2012?). It is hard to improve on the location or the food, hmmm. What if BOTH of the amateur radio clubs in the valley joined forces and held the party together? Wouldn't that be fun? That's exactly what we're doing! Both clubs sat down and worked together to create a super get together for 2012.

Same great location! Same scrumptious buffet! Bigger and better raffle/door prizes! Same \$15 price tag! MORE friends to eat, drink and be merry with!

Tickets go on sale at both clubs starting in October. See Rich/N1KXR at any HCRA meeting or Diane/KB1KST at any MTARA meeting and by mail to either club's PO box.

Another example of both clubs, working together, to the benefit of all area amateurs.

## Notes from the cluster:

The HCRA October meeting featuring Tom Homewood/W1TO will also be a Yankee Clipper Contest Club (YCCC) regional meeting. If you're interested in contesting you can join YCCC at the HCRA meeting. It's fun, painless and not too expensive. Learn more about it by clicking YCCC!

The Silent Auction returns at our October meeting. We will have a beautiful set of chrome Bencher paddles available and a few other items. Items for the auction will be displayed on a table along with a 'bid sheet'. Enter your bid and if you're the highest bidder at the end of the night pay Dave/AA1YW and go home with your new toy!

Don't forget we're meeting at our new location! Starting September 2012 meetings will be at the Auxiliary Conference Center at the Holyoke Medical Center. Many of you have been here before, it's where the Western Mass VE Team has given examinations for close to a decade. We have all the details of the hall and how to get there on our website.  
'73... Jim/KK1W



From top: KX3, KK1W, K1MAZ



Oops, wrong KX3!

# 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)

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, 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, 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

*Listed below are three hamfest/flea markets of special interest to HCRA members. For further information and directions, visit the website listed. Note that the Nutmeg Hamfest is in a new location.*

October 7th, 2012 (Sunday) **Nutmeg Hamfest and ARRL Connecticut State Convention**, 8AM - 2PM at the Sheraton Four-Points Hotel 275 Research Parkway, Meriden, CT 06450  
<http://www.nutmeghamfest.com/>

October 12-13, 2012 **NEARFest XII**, Friday, Oct 12th 0900 through Saturday, October 13th 1500 2012. DEERFIELD Fairgrounds, Deerfield, NH  
<http://near-fest.com/>

October 21, 2012 **FLEA at MIT**, Cambridge, MA  
<http://w1mx.mit.edu/flea-at-mit>



## HCRA Contact List

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VE Session Team Liaison, Dave Cote W1FAB (413) 575-2950  
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# Tablets and Amateur Radio

by NIMFL

This is my first article covering tablet computers and the apps they provide for amateur radio. In this first article I will look at the two main platforms, Apple's IOS and Google's Android. Apple's OS revolves mainly around two devices, the Iphone and Ipad. Both will utilize the same applications. But Apple has many more native tablet apps than does Google. A native app utilizes the device's space properly, an app designed for a phone often does not adapt well to the increased size of a tablet. Apple's App Store is the front runner having more than a 800,000 applications. Google however is catching up quickly. Google's Android platform is a bit more fragmented, not only do its devices vary from manufacturer to manufacturer, the flavor of its OS also varies. The latest OS for Android is version 4.1, but you'll find it on only one device at present, Google's own Nexus 7. Many more tablets are running previous version 4.0 or earlier. When buying Android to get the newest OS available is presently up to the manufacturer's desires. Apple IOS to version 6, the devices is that the oldest devices get automatic OS updates; Android devices get updated based on the various manufacturers' desires.

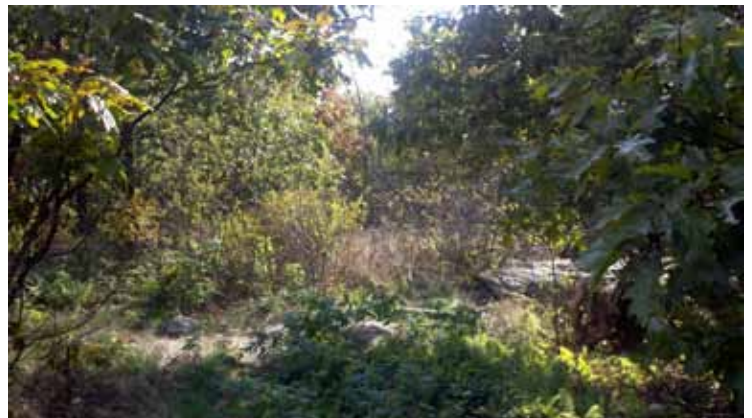


Both platforms have their strengths and weaknesses. The Android tablet offers greater customization. Icons and Widgets can be set up on pages anyway you'd like; every Android tablet can look different because of this. Things can be more complicated to run if you are a novice user. The Ipad also uses Icons which can be rearranged on the various pages, but at a lesser degree and there are no Widgets. The Ipad is a better choice for the novice computer user, "It just Works" is a saying Apple and their users have said. It's true, the Ipad is very easy to pick up and use. If you are a tinkerer though and are familiar with a computer and its operating system, you should not have many problems with an Android device after a few days of use.

Both platforms offer wi-fi and cellular versions, the latter allow internet connection without a wi-fi connection but will cost you a monthly fee. Both have their own app stores, for Google it's the Play Store and for Apple it's the APP Store, where both applications and content can be purchased. So both platforms devices can be used without the need of a computer to interface with, making them the perfect first device for the non-computer user. Android tablets are available at a multitude of price points from \$99 on up. The Ipad currently start at \$349 for an Ipad 2, and \$499 for an Ipad 3 with a higher resolution screen. Devices from Amazon and Barnes and Noble do not offer enough flexibility as a tablet to be useful to amateur radio. My next article will look at the at using a tablet in amateur radio.

-NIMFL

# On a SOTA Summit Near You?



*From top: Burley Hill summit, such as it is; Ed, KB1NWH at the mike on Burley Hill; The view from Holt Peak, such as it is; Frandy, N1FJ operating KK1W's KX3 on Holt Peak, New Hampshire.*

## Hampden County Radio Association

Board of Directors Meeting 9/18/2012, Holyoke Hospital Boardroom

### Officer Reports

Vice President - 35 Raffle Tickets sold for KX3 Raffle

### Treasurer's Report - AA1YW

Current financial report - KX3 Raffle - \$310.00 Membership - \$615.00 Donations - \$110.00

Income Total - \$1035.00

Expenses - \$120.00 (Welcome Back Refreshments)

Starting Balance - \$6017.81

Ending Balance - \$6932.81

### Technical Report - W1MSW

Help Dave Cayen and Dave Henderson K3 Setup

### Zero Beat Update - N1FJ

Cutoff Date for October ZB is Sept. 27th. Discussion of future of Zero Beat

### Membership report - N1MFL

Renewals - 41, Donations - \$110.00

### New Membership

Rule proposed extending new memberships March 1st or later until the following August 31st. Seconded by N1KXR and all in favor.

Discussed free memberships given at VE Sessions.

### At Large - W1MJB

Nothing to report

### Program report - KX1X - absent

Discussed Encouraging participation in the meetings and for content on website

Discussed Future Programming

Discussed Joint HCRA/MTARA Holiday Party. Marty, W1MJB volunteered to coordinate

### Old Business

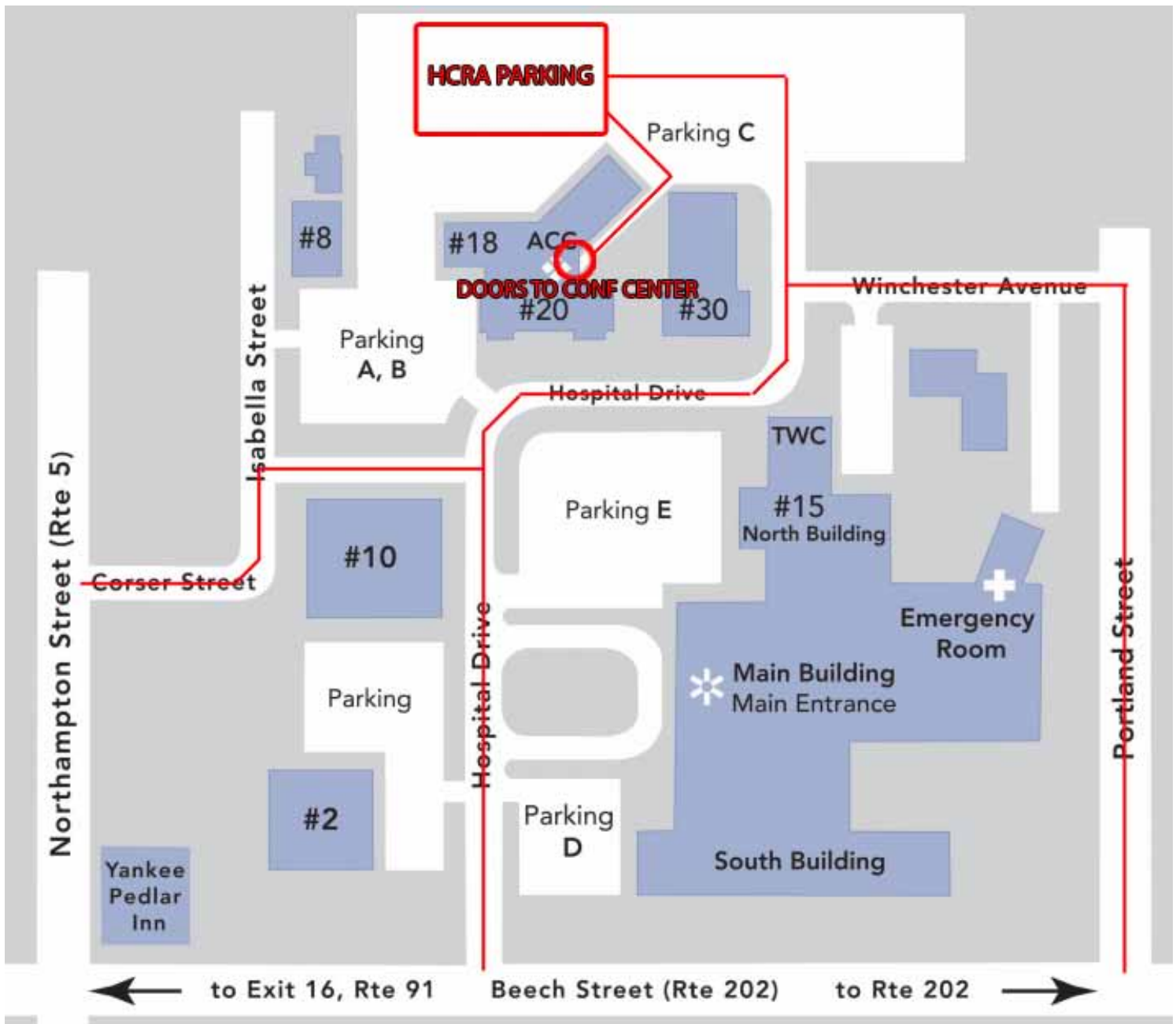
Motion to suspend November auctions, seconded and approved. Discussed the parsing of duties for the holiday party planning. Decided to drop putting letters on the club trailer.

### New Business

Discussed publishing of Articles to website . January 8th will be the first date of a trial of teleconferencing for the board meetings.

Club Meeting minutes respectively submitted by Dave Scarpa, club Secretary.

**Hampden County Radio Association**  
**P.O. Box 562**  
**Feeding Hills, MA 01030**



## ***New Meeting Location***

*If you haven't seen our new meeting place you are in for a treat.. Starting with the September 2012 meeting our meetings are being held at the Auxiliary Conference Center at the Holyoke Medical Center. Many of you have been here before, it's where the Western Mass VE Team has given examinations for close to a decade. We have all the details of the hall and how to get there on our website. <http://www.hcra.org/meeting-location/>*

*Our new location is newly renovated with state of the art heating and cooling, comfortable chairs, a complete A/V setup including screen, projector, sound system and wi-fi. Handicap access, convenient rest room, vending machines and 24/7 security round out the list. Join us!*