



Zero Beat

A Publication of the
Hampden County Radio Association
[HTTP://WWW.HCRA.ORG](http://www.hcra.org)

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The New Amateur Radio And You

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'The New Amateur Radio and you'

Are you aware of the latest FCC regulatory changes to our hobby? Join us for a special presentation by our members, for our members. Learn about the new band segment changes contained in the FCC's 'Omnibus' release from last December and about the new 'codeless' HF license.

Are you a Technician that now has HF access? This meeting will show you how to get on the air on 10 meters and below, how to operate, what type of equipment to use, operating events and propagation hints. Everything you need to know about HF operation but were afraid to ask.

This is the perfect meeting to bring prospective

hams. With the advent of codeless HF we are on the doorstep of a new upswing in the hobby. Perhaps what they see tonight will get them started down a road filled with learning, adventure and fun.

Your presenters will be Jim, K1JAW, John, Kx1x, George, KC1V, Bob, K1YO and Jim, KK1W.

See you there!



W1MBT/R Repeater

(446.775 MHz, - offset, PL77, repeater IDs as W1MBT/R PL77) One more week of testing:

New crystals are working. Both TX and RX freq have been tweaked. Transmit power has been adjusted up slightly. Transmit audio has been ad-

justed up slightly.

Basic coverage is slightly improved. It seems to work to the west and south of Westfield. I can work it down to Granby CT and can trip it from Windsor CT (my work site) and have heard it down near Hartford. Coverage to the North and North east

(towards Holyoke/Chicopee) remain a problem due to my height challenged area. The repeater is now back on the air and available for general use. Thanks for your support,

Marc K1MZ

Meeting Location:

Meetings are held at the Feeding Hills Congregational Church, 21 North Westfield Street, Feeding Hills, MA 01030.

The church is located right next to a Dunkin Donuts and across from a gas station.

Parking is in back of the church. Access is HP accessible.

Talk-in is available on the 146.94 repeater.

HCRA Board Meeting

January 10, 2007

Held at corporate boardroom of Rocky's ACE Hardware, Springfield, MA.

Members present: John KI1A, Dave AA1YW, Greg N1AEH, George KC1V, Jim KB1JVF, Jim KK1W, Eric KB1JVI, Larry WB1DBY.

President John, KI1A:

Johnny reported on the New England Division Cabinet Meeting that he and George, KC1V attended on January 6 in Framingham, MA. KI1A and KB1NWH will be participating in the SPAR Winter Field Day event January 13 and 14, possibly using one of the club call signs.

Vice President Dave, AA1YW:

Dave reported that the January raffle went well and that he is looking for 10-meter equipment for future raffles.

Treasurer Greg, N1AEH:

Greg reported that the current club balance is \$4502. A deposit of \$174 was made for January.

Secretary George, KC1V:

George distributed copies of the Cabinet Meeting minutes and his notes to the Board and received 3 Membership renewal forms from N1AEH for recording. There are currently 107 paid regular club members

At Large Jim, KB1JVF:

Nothing to report this month as Director at Large.

Program Jim, KK1W:

Attendance at the January meeting was good at 68 or 69. Club members will be putting together a special meeting for February, focusing on the recent FCC changes.

Technical John, N1JIO:

Not present.

Membership Eric, KB1JVI:

No new member contacts this month.

ZeroBeat Editor Larry, WB1DBY:

The deadline for the next ZB is the January 20, as usual.

Old Business:

KI1A will order the Club Coffee mugs.

New Business:

Field Day: KB1JVF, Field Day Chairman, will make up a flier for Scouting groups.

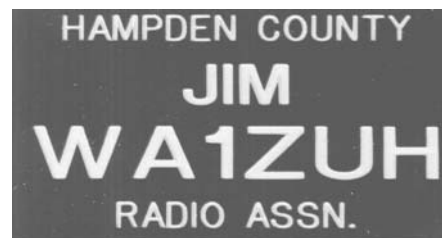
PSAs: KB1JVI will look into getting PSAs on area radio stations, KI1A will assist.

Special Event Station: Doing a special event at the Radio Museum was discussed.

Board of Directors Meeting: The next board meeting will be held on February 8 at Rocky's.

Respectfully submitted,
George Collins, KC1V, Secretary.

Wear it Proudly!
HCRA Name Badges



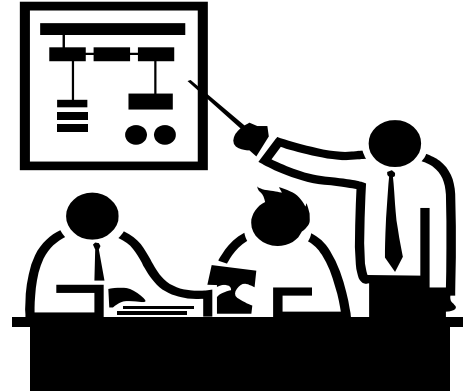
Only \$6.00. Available for order at any club meeting, or call or drop an email for immediate service!
Show the world you belong to the oldest club in the Pioneer Valley.

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

March Meeting Announcement



&



HCRA's Sixth Annual

Show & Tell

What's a "show & tell"? It's a chance to show off your latest creation and win some nice prizes to boot. It's the feature part of our March meeting and is always a lot of fun! You've still got a lot of time to prepare, so read on...

To enter, show up with your project, explain it and wait for the judges decision. There will be Novice and Expert classes. All entries will be judged by an independent panel of electrical engineers from MIT, RPI and Radio Shack :->) Entries will be judged on originality, construction quality and usefulness. So, bring your home brewed whatizit, your latest software creation, new mobile mount, portable PSK31 station, Tesla coil, etc. and "show & tell" everyone about your handiwork.

First prize in each category will be a \$50 gift certificate to HRO

The judges reserve the right to banish 'dangerous' demonstrations to the parking lot in the name of member safety!

New England Division Cabinet Meeting Notes

January 6, 2007

They were 35 Amateurs in attendance, including Division Director K1KI as meeting chairman and Vice Director K1TWF as recording secretary.

Subjects of major interest to attendees;

- BPL and the League's response to the FCC actions. K1KI discussed the change of the League's focus from one of an engineering issue to that of a political issue.

Elimination of Code requirement. League HQ has already seen a large increase in orders for licensing materials. Tom said that there are 150,000 Technician Class licensees.

Other topics discussed;

- The role of ARRL Congressional lobbyists.
- How digital modes will impact band usage.

Relationship between Emcomm groups and town and city police and fire officials.

BPL recent activity;

- BPL test site in Maine is causing major interference.
- Concord, MA is a new possible BPL site.
- Southwest Connecticut BPL trials have been discontinued.
- No new activity in Agawam, MA.

Manassas, VA cases have been disappointing, with the FCC closing the complaints without any real resolution.

Remote Desktopting

Software Talking to Hardware

by Johnny, KI1A

Hi again!

Well by now you should have your rig and PC outfitted with the Interface I talked about last month. This month we'll talk about the software.

You need three different pieces of software and a microphone to make this work.

1- Radio Control Program. This allows you to control your rig completely with your PC. One program you can use for that is Ham Radio Deluxe. <http://hrd.ham-radio.ch/> It's a pretty great program and best of all... It's free and works with a pretty fair amount of radio brands and models!

2- Remote Desktopting Ability. If your PC at home doesn't have Windows XP Pro on it (XP Pro allows the Remote Desktop feature to work without the need for extra software), you need a VNC program. I used a freeware version called Real VNC. <http://www.realvnc.com/>

3- VoIP Software. For this I recommend yet another freeware program called Skype. <http://www.skype.com/download/> This is the program that will let your PC's to talk to each other and to the rig via the Interface.

For the sake of writing space, I'll just assume you know how to download and install these programs. So, once they are installed, test them beginning with the Radio Control Program. When you first run it, you'll have to go into the "Options" or "Tools" menu (depending on the program you use) and select the radio type, model, etc. There are too many variables to list here, but it shouldn't be too difficult to figure it out and get working. Just verify that it will control your radio properly.

Next you have to install and get both the VNC software & Skype working on the PC at your rig, and the PC you want to control from (A second PC elsewhere in the house or your work PC, etc.)

*Also, make sure that you have that microphone plugged into the remote PC.

For Skype, just make sure that you use different user names for each computer (i.e. "Home" and "Shack"). Once it's installed and working, you can make a "call" from one PC to the other. For the VNC program, this gets a little bit trickier. For now, we'll assume that you only have one PC at home (with no router), and your going to control it from your computer at work. Next month we'll talk about "Porting" through your router at home. Once you have the VNC program installed, you need the IP Address of the shack PC. There a few ways to find out what your IP address is. One is to use a website called <http://www.findmyip.com/> . Just go to that website (from your home PC) and it will tell you your IP, and then write it down exactly the way it's shown. Make sure your home PC is on, and the VNC software and Skype is running. From work, start the VNC program and enter in your home PC's IP address and make the connection. A new window will open and you'll be looking at your home PC's desktop (remote desktop)!

Now, from your work PC, open Skype and "call" your home PC. On the remote desktop you'll see Skype pop up and let you know that you have a phone call. Just click to answer it. Now, also on your remote desktop, open up your radio con-

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Can Be Directed To:

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President's Message

Hi Folks!

Well, these are certainly some interesting times where Amateur Radio is concerned! The Buzz is everywhere about the new rule change dropping the Morse Code requirement. At the time I'm writing this, the ARRL speculates that the change will be posted in the Federal Register late this month, which means that the new rule would go into effect in late February.

So, if you're a VE... Get ready! Everyone (myself included) feels that the VE test sessions, after the rule goes into effect will be pretty full of both new applicants and upgrades. I also feel that the 10 meter band will see more activity than ever, since all licensee's holding a Technician Class license will have phone privileges there. And that's a great thing!

It should be easier than ever to attract new people to the hobby when they learn that they don't have to learn Morse Code. So, talk it up! Sure, our club roster is getting pretty big... but why not make it bigger? The more club members, the stronger the hobby gets, and the more valuable resources we have in terms of knowledgeable individuals. And that's just one perspective!

And don't worry about Code dying out. Some folks think that this change will in fact make code more popular! As a matter of fact, at the last club meeting a member asked me if once the new rule goes into effect, will they also have CW privileges on some HF bands! When I told them "yes", they replied with something to the effect of "Oh good! Then I'll be able get some good practice!"

Let's all hope that'll be the trend!

73 for now!

-Johnny, KI1A

HCRA Ham Shacks

KC1V Ham Shack



A Kenwood TS-930SAT serves as the primary HF rig, with an even older Kenwood TS-820S and a pair of Kenwood transverters serving as my 6-m and 2-m ssb/cw station. Currently solid-state amps are used with the transverter for outputs of about 150 watts on 6 and 2. Also on 2 meters is an FT-480R Multimode mobile rig and an FT-2500M FM rig. A new addition to the station, an FT-897D, will take over the 6 and 2-meter duties and will add 70-cm capabilities to the station. Other station equipment includes a HW-9 QRP rig and a 6-meter FM box. A Hallicrafters HT-32 transmitter is in storage waiting for the day I set up my 1960s dream station.

The current crop in the antenna garden is a TA-33Sr at 40 feet, a 15-element 2-m yagi, inverted Vees for 40 and 30 meters and an 80-meter dipole. A Ringo Ranger is

used for 2-m FM and a 6-element 6-meter beam sometimes replaces the TA-33 on the tower. An R8 vertical is going back up soon along with new antennas of 6-m FM and 70-cm operation.

The station is always changing and that's always fun.

73, George, KC1V

Each month we showcase ham shacks from HCRA members. If you would like to submit your shack, please do the following: take a digital picture so you or someone you know can email it, write a description of the shack with equipment, model numbers, etc. Plus a comment on the type of operating that you prefer. Don't forget your name and call. Please send it all to: wb1dby@comcast.net

WE NEED **YOUR SUGGESTIONS**

We are asking for your suggestions and ideas for future HCRA meetings. The recent success of HCRA has been, in part, because of its interesting and timely key speakers and topics.

If you can help, please contact Jim, KK1W at jmullen@rockys.com or (413) 245-3228

HCRA 10m Net

Join NCS, Tom Doyle (n1muv),
each Monday night at 7:30 PM (local) on

28.375 MHz

Get the latest local word, join good friends,
take part in good conversation each week!!!
Anyone can join in, don't be shy!!!

Adventure in Newington

by Dennis Malone, WB1EHD

Rich, N1KXR; Josh, KB1MZB; and myself went to Newington, Connecticut on Friday the 22nd of December.

Our first stop was at the "candy store" Lentini Communications where Rich bought a six meter base antenna and accessories. The staff at Lentini's assured us that they(Lentini's) are NOT going out of the ham radio business as rumored. The guys were quite vocal about this issue and asked us to squelch the rumors.

We then went to the ARRL HQ/W1AW site on Main Street in Newington. The W1AW antenna arrays loomed very large as we approached. It was good to see the towers since the new changes have taken place in the antenna system.

Rich, Josh, and myself went into the HQ building and gawked at the excellent antique radio display in the lobby. We then began our 11:00 AM tour with our tour guide Bob Allison, WB1GCM who was very informative and thorough in his explanations of the displays and departments at HQ. Our questions were always very well answered. Bob also used Rich's digital camera to take pictures of Rich, Josh and myself at the various displays and departments.

We then visited the VEC Department upstairs and met some the the very hard working folks who process the materials and data from VE sessions for uploading to the FCC. I thanked Maria Somma, AB1FM for the great job that she and her staff do for the VEs in the field. It is a team effort between the field VEs and the VEC staff that makes the testing program as successful as it is. Without the program, there probably would be no more ham radio hobby as the FCC would likely have tested only once or twice a year in Washington, DC. The expense and logistical problems of travel to our nation's capital would keep most hams from upgrading or most prospective operators out of the hobby.

After our tour of HQ we went to lunch and returned to the ARRL campus for our afternoon operating session at W1AW. Joe Carcia, NJ1Q, operator at W1AW set Josh up for six meter SSB operation on 50.125 MHz and myself on 17 meters in Studio 1. I tried to make contact with my friend and Morse elmer Bob, WB1AFI but the band was in no shape to get down South. Joe then put me on 40 meters using the beam. I asked if the frequency was in use and Bob came right back to me with a good 5x8 signal into the big 40 meter beam that was aimed toward Hilton Head, South Carolina. Bob and I enjoyed a five minute or so QSO on 7197 kHz and then I worked several more stations. The signals were all good. I worked quite a few mobiles on 40 meters with excellent results. Josh had a very good outing on six meter SSB working many stations. Acting as control operator, I had Josh work several more stations on 20 meters. Joe had pointed out that Josh could work 20 if I was his control op. Rich worked the camera during this time and documented the W1AW station facility quite well photographically. Rich get a chance to sit behind the 6 meter station afterward.

After the 3:45 PM cut off we checked out the very nice AM station donated by Joe Walsh, WB6ACU and Bob Heil, K9EID. The station consists of a National receiver and Johnson Viking transmitter with a Heil Classic desk microphone and a little mixer. If you are at W1AW, be sure to check out this fine station. Joe was a great host and made our operating experience at W1AW most enjoyable. Thanks Joe!

W1AW is the house of Maxim. One can sometimes feel Mr. Maxim's presence in the building. I'm sure W1AW is smiling from somewhere nearby. Going to Newington and the ARRL campus is well worth the trip. Operating W1AW is a real treat that should be experienced by all hams at least once. Photos of our adventure can be viewed at: <http://ph.groups.yahoo.com/group/WesternMassAmateurRadio/photos/browse/310e> Please check them out. There are 126 pictures posted at present.

Remote Desktopding

continued from page 4

trol program. When it opens you should see a radio faceplate (or facsimile thereof). On some software there might be a "Power" button to turn the radio on & off. If not, then you'll have to just leave the radio on before you leave for work. In any event, when the radio is on, the radio control program should come to life displaying the frequency, S-meter and so on.

You might have to tweak all the audio level controls a bit, but you should hear you rig's audio through your remote PC's speakers/headphones. Move your mouse over to the "TX" button on the screen and click (This usually works as a 'Click on - Click off") Your indicators should show that you're transmitting, and as long as your mic is plugged into your remote PC and the levels are right (they might need a little tweaking too), you

should see the needle move with modulation.

That's it! I know that reading it here, it seems pretty complicated, but it's not as bad as you might think!

Next month, I'll see if I can get someone to help with the explanation of how to do this if you have a router and more than one computer at home. It gets a bit more complicated because your modem has an IP address... and so does your router. So you have to "port" or "tunnel" your way from the modem through your router.

Until then... Have fun and 73!

Johnny, KI1A

Adventure in Newington continued from page 8

Our tour guide Bob, WB1GCM ->



Below: WB1EHD and KB1MZB in Studio 1



<- Rich, N1KXR; Dennis, WB1EHD; Josh, KB1MZB at the door of W1AW.

Below: WB1EHD and KB1MZB with Joe, NJ1Q.



January Meeting Photos

Thank you to Mark—W1MRB
The Official
Meeting Photographer



Have you tried IRLP yet?

IRLP is the Internet Radio Linking Project, connecting radios over the Internet. With your 2m radio, you make contacts all over the world. HCRA sponsors an IRLP node, in South Hadley, MA. It is there for your use, please give it a try (at least turn it on and listen) 146.46 simplex, 114.8hz PL Kx1x, Node #7270, S.Hadley, MA

For a list of IRLP nodes and other IRLP information, go to:
<http://www.irlp.net/>

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