



# Zero Beat



Our 55<sup>th</sup> Year

A Publication of the Hampden County Radio Association

June, 2001

<http://www.hcra.org>

**Meetings Held at: Feeding Hills Congregational Church  
21 North Westfield Street  
Feeding Hills, MA**



## *Last Meeting Before The **Summer** Break!!!*

Be sure to join us, Friday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001 for  
our last meeting before the summer break.

*HCRA Tailgate Party **starts at 6:PM***

*Regular Meeting **starts at 8:PM***

*On Tap:*

*Election of Officers for 2001 to 2002*

*Field Day Planning*

*Great Friends and Conversation.*

This issue of ~~Zero Beat~~ was also sent to the general membership of the  
HCRA via e-mail -- **NOW in COLOR!**

If you would like to be included in our monthly e-mailings, see page 5 for details.

Visit our Club website at: <http://www.hcra.org>

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# President's



# Corner

## Tailgate Party—June 1st

Our first "tailgate party" will be happening this Friday evening. If you have, or know of someone who has, some neat stuff to bring to sell, get them or it here this Friday.

*These pins will be available for FD participants this year. See Norm, WIBMK for details*

Plan on arriving at the church parking lot between 6:00 and 6:30 PM. If you have a tailgate, that's great! If not, you might want to bring a small table or something similar to hold your treasures off the ground. There is a small \$5 donation asked from the sellers, buyers get free admission. That's right, no entry fee. So, bring your friends, non-members, whatever. There will be a great raffle prize, coffee & donuts and the usual pleasant group of people. Expect the party to end around 8:00, since it will be getting dark and there's no lights in the parking lot.

## 2001/2001 Elections

It's time for us to fulfill our constitution and elect next year's slate of officers and board members. A list of candidates is printed elsewhere in this issue of Zero Beat. That doesn't mean you can't be on the list! Nominations will be accepted right until election time, so you still have a chance. All kidding aside, the HCRA would love to entertain more nominees for each and every position. If you feel you would like to contribute to the HCRA's well-being next year, please come to the June meeting and toss your name into the hat. Your participation would be greatly appreciated. All you need is a commitment to amateur radio and a willingness to give up a few evenings throughout the next year. We'll be looking for you in 2002!

## FIELD DAY

It's almost time to make the final decisions regarding this year's event. The Field Day committee will have met twice by the time you read this, and most details have been worked out.

As you probably know, this year's event will be held at beautiful Dufresne Park in Granby, MA. The committee met at the park a few weeks ago and all were impressed with the facilities. The park offers a great (and large) parking and camping area, lot's of tall pine trees, a pavilion and even flush toilets! For the non-ham participants, there is a pond, hiking trails, and other activities available. And it's easy to find, right on Route 202 in Granby, MA.

To keep everyone updated on the progress of the organization, keep checking the HCRA web page. The committee is making every effort to keep the web page current, and it presently includes a short FD description, map to the park, and a handy Field Day checklist. More information will be added as it becomes available.

At this point equipment, antennas, generators and food purchasing have been accomplished. Operators have signed up, but more operators are always needed, as well as anyone willing to help during set-up and take down.

**A very important area not filled yet, is cooking.** It would be great of someone would volunteer for this critical position. There is water and charcoal grills available at the site and we have made arrangements for purchasing the necessary provisions, what we need is someone to organize and volunteer to cook a few meals. How about it, would you like to help out the HCRA this FD?

One thing I would really like to see at FD this year is some new hams operating the stations. Remember how you were hesitant to get behind the mic or in front of the key at your first FD? But with the help of some patient hams, we all learned how to do it and have a great time! Now is your chance to be the

mentor. Contact someone you know would like to have fun at FD, but is just too scared to do it without a little push! Neither of you will be sorry you made the effort. It's not the score, but the fun factor that makes this event. Let's all gather at Dufresne Park and have some fun!

<http://www.hcra.org>

In case you don't recognize the URL above, that's the HCRA's own web page and it should at least be in your "favorites" list if not your home page. A lot of effort from Larry, N1URE has produced a web page that is good looking, informative and up to date. It's a great resource that everyone in the club should use if you have internet access. There is also a great "message board" application, ATV, satellite info and lot's of other neat stuff. Check it out and drop Larry a note and tell him how much you like it.

## The Magic of Radio

It's easy to forget the magic, surrounded by cell phones, digital TV and pocket size electronics of all types. But the magic of radio is still there! It's hard to describe and even harder to quantify, but it's still there. I know, I had occasion to experience it this past week.

One day before I left for the Dayton Hamvention, I made an impromptu schedule with Earl, KD1UU, to try some HF mobile while on the road. We picked 7.215 MHz at 8:00 PM every evening. I'm not sure about Earl, but I left for Dayton not expecting a lot, boy was I wrong!

Wednesday evening at 8:00 PM, I didn't hear anything. I tried for a while, then had to make a stop to pick up a few things for the evening. When I got back in the truck (now mobile), I turned on the radio and heard Earl in QSO with Rick, W2RW, looking for me. Rick hooked us up and Earl and I had a short QSO that evening.

The following day I checked into ECARS while mobile and contacted Tom, W1TAT, as well as other mobile operators.

The next day my antenna mount broke, and at 8:15 PM I duct taped it together and turned on the radio. Calling me with an S-9 signal was John, KX1X. We had a brief QSO, that faded as the tape sagged and the antenna rested against the truck. The next evening while I was calling Earl, Jim—WB1Z popped in and we had a brief QSO then and the following evening.

On the way home Monday morning I had a nice long QSO with Harry in Michigan and Frank in North Carolina. Tell me this HF mobile stuff isn't neat! And it's getting smaller and cheaper all the time.

I don't know how to describe it, but those short QSO's had magic the cell phones will never achieve. It's one of the reasons this hobby will always be popular and fun! Why don't you turn your radio on today and find some of this magic for yourself? It's fun!!

*73...Jim, KK1W*



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## HCRA CONTACTS

Questions, Comments, and Suggestions Can Be Directed To:

### HCRA OFFICERS

President Jim Mullen, KK1W (413) 245-3228 jmullen@rockys.com  
Vice-President Jordan Koltz, W1JK (413) 532-3729 w1jk@earthlink.net  
Treasurer Greg Stoddard, N1AEH (860) 668-5143 gstoddard@rcn.com  
Secretary Dave Isham, KB1MU (413) 596-6605 kb1mu@mindspring.com

### HCRA DIRECTORS

At Large Les Prentice, K1DNX (413) 783-6775  
Program Irv Slitzky, W6IS (413) 565-5222 w6is1@juno.com  
Membership Elizabeth Buller, KB1CPZ perkyzebra@aol.com  
Newsletter John Pise, Kx1x (413) 532-7474 kx1x@arrl.net  
Technical Stan Bates, N1INB

### STATION TRUSTEES




W1NY Trustee Don Johnson, W1UPH (413) 566-3560 (let it ring) wluph2@juno.com  
WB1HOF Trustee Jim Mullen, KK1W (413) 245-3228 jmullen@rockys.com

### EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

Emergency Coordinator Dave Isham, KB1MU (413) 596-6605



## Scouts on the Air

	WANTED: Boys & Girls, 14 to 20 years old, to join the HCRA sponsored BSA Venture Crew focusing on Emergency Communication. There will be a meeting, June 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 6:PM, at the Horace A. Moses Scout Reservation Ham Shack for anyone interested in joining. Contact John Pise, Kx1x, at 532-7474, or kx1x@arrl.net.
	<b>Webelos Woods 2001 at Moses Scout Reservation</b> A demonstration of Amateur Radio will be given at the 2001 Webelos Woods at Moses Scout Reservation on June 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2001. Please be listening when Biff (AA1DI), John (KB1FTX), Kate (KB1GDG), John (Kx1x), and over 400 nine and ten year old cub scouts call out on the local repeaters and on HF. Please give us a call back!!!
	<b>K2BSA/4, Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia</b> John, Kx1x, will be at the 2001 BSA National Jamboree between July 22 <sup>nd</sup> and August 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2001. He'll be attempting to work a sched with Moses Scout reservation on Tuesday July 24 <sup>th</sup> , and Monday, July 30 <sup>th</sup> , at 1930 (EDT) and would like to make contacts with local hams. Contact Kx1x at 532-7474 or kx1x@arrl.net.



# DX Clips

de  
Jordy, W1JK

I have written this column for several years and have come to realize that there is a limited amount of data and information to pass on. One can editorialize on sensitive issues in the DX community; but, that approach is highly opinionated and contentious. Most of you already know my feelings on DXCC matters at this stage, and I have touched on "elitism" in the past. There is no room for "elitism" in this Hobby - at any level! We need every Radio Amateur we can get. The latest group to get "bashed" by the "elite critics" are the newly licensed Extra class. I have heard denigrating comments locally and on the Bands. The 5 WPM Code test is obviously much easier than 20WPM, but it cannot be logically argued that those Amateurs are less intelligent than those of us who passed at 20. It is simply a matter of motivation. We have simply created interest to upgrade in a group of Amateurs who previously did not possess the desire to learn higher speed Code for the additional privileges thereby granted. If one analyzes Morse Code use by prominent DXers (on the Internet) it is apparent that the majority significantly favor SSB. In fact, many solely operate SSB and reserve CW for instances where "rare" DX is only available via CW. One need only visit the DXpedition Websites and enter the Callsigns of well-known DXers to draw this conclusion. On the other hand, there are a few who clearly prefer CW and work very few on SSB or other Digital Modes. None of this is important - it is simply a matter of choice. I believe that CW usage has dropped considerably in recent years. My sense is that one of the major reasons for this fall-off is that many have lost their CW proficiency. Use it or lose it!! Have we actually enhanced potential CW operation by adding these new Extra Class Hams? I would not be surprised to see a positive "Blip" on the usage graph.

I believe that we have provided incentive to many who were bored with their "niche" in the Hobby. Hopefully, they will operate more on the HF Bands which have suffered from lack of use for years. It scares me to observe the inactivity at the peak of the Sunspot Cycle. At times it seems that the DX outnumbers US Hams on the popular HF Bands. If this trend continues, we have a serious risk of losing some of our HF allocations.

Let us recognize and congratulate the new Extras among us. I personally hope many get "bitten by the DX Bug" - we will all profit by their ACTIVE presence.

We are now moving from Spring toward Summer Propagation conditions. Ten Meters is not as useful as it was in late March or early April. Longer daylight hours in the Northern Hemisphere heat the Ionosphere and it thins with a resultant lower Maximum Useable Frequency (MUF) during the daylight hours. 15 Meters is still quite good, especially into areas that are dark. 20Meter nighttime openings will become more common as the days get longer.

New DXpeditions are planned for the coming months, and I will report on them as firm information becomes available.

Enjoy the Summer and the great outdoor activity opportunities, but attempt to allot some of your time to operating - we need you.

## LOOK FOR:

Rodrigues Is. - 3B6: Robert, 3B9FR, has been QRV around 21295 just prior to 1300Z.

Niger - 5U: Jim, 5U7JK, has been active on 28495 around 1630Z. QSL via I2YSB.

Papua, New Guinea - P2: Look for Ron, VK3IO, as P29IO from May 18 to August 22.

Bangladesh - S2: Rashid, S21AR, is active almost daily on 15M around 21260 and 21290 from 1100Z and 1530Z or after 0430Z. QSL via JA1UT.

Chad - TT: Chris, TT8DX has been very active on 10M. Check 28495 around 1330Z. QSL via F5OGL.

Faroe Is. - OY9UR, from 5/28 - 6/07. QSL via OY9UR.

Svalbard - JW0PK, from 6/01 - 6/09. QSL via SP5DRH.

Mozambique - C93: C93/JR6XIW all bands from 6/09 - 6/20. QSL homecall.

Crete - SV9: SV9/F8BBL from 6/25 - 7/02 all bands. QSL homecall.

Remember - it's a HOBBY - have fun.

Jordy-W1JK



## Get Your **Zero Beat** Electronically each month

HCRA members can receive their monthly club newsletter in any or all of three ways!

- 1) First Class Mail, just like you always have. This costs HCRA approximately 75 cents per copy. This is one of the benefits of your membership with HCRA.
- 2) E-mail. If you would like to get on our e-mail list, just write [eZB@hcra.org](mailto:eZB@hcra.org) from the account that you wish to receive your copy from, and request that you join our list. HCRA respects your privacy and will not under any circumstances give your e-mail address to ANYONE.
- 3) [WWW.HCRA.ORG](http://WWW.HCRA.ORG). Our new web site carries the latest copies of **Zero Beat**. Just click and read.

NOTE 1: You will need Adobe Acrobat ® installed on your computer to read electronic copies of **Zero Beat**. Just click the button on the [WWW.HCRA.ORG](http://WWW.HCRA.ORG) website, and follow the directions to get your FREE copy of Adobe Acrobat ®.

NOTE 2: There is a cost savings to the HCRA if you receive your **Zero Beat** electronically only. If you prefer to NOT receive your newsletter by First Class Mail, please contact John, Kx1x, Dave, KB1MU, or Jim, WA1ZUH to be added to the eZB only list.

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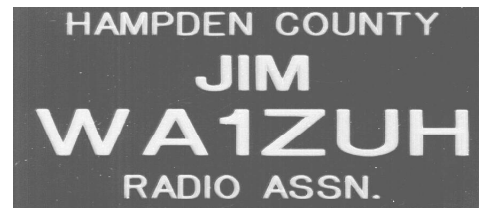
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## Whats Happening???

On The Air

Mon., Tues, Thur, Fri	19:00	National Traffic System (NTS) Net	146.94
Sundays	08:45	Western Mass Emergency Net	146.94
Mondays	19:30	HCRA 10m Net	28.375
Wednesdays	19:30	MTARA Info net	146.94 and 147.000 (link)
	20:00	MTARA Swap net	
	20:30	MTARA Tech net	
Thursdays	21:00	Weather Net (ncs K1PAI Roger)	1 <sup>st</sup> Week of the Month 147.09 Every other week 147.000

### ~~Club Meetings & Testing Sessions~~

1 <sup>st</sup> Friday of the month	19:30	HCRA Club Meeting	Feeding Hills Congregational Church 21 N. Westfield St., Feeding Hills
3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month	19:30	MTARA Club meeting	Red Cross building 506 Cottage St, SPFLD, MA
4 <sup>th</sup> Friday of the month	18:00	MTARA License Exams	Holyoke Hospital Auditorium Beech St., Holyoke
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month	19:00	NOBARC club meeting	Pittsfield MA (146.91 for talk-in)

Please forward additions and suggestions to: Stan Bates, n1inb [seb@wca.com](mailto:seb@wca.com)

(All times Local)

## Bus Trip

**Date: June 16, 2001**



### First Stop: National Weather Service

**WHERE:** We start with a 35 minute sound-and-picture show in the conference room. This show explains who we are, what operations occur at the Forecast Office, and how forecasts are prepared and sent. We then take a few minutes to answer any questions the audience may have. The participants then view our operations area; here, they see the various computer systems that we use to view satellite, radar, and computer forecast model data...as well as the systems we use to prepare and send forecasts and warnings.

**HOW LONG:** A typical tour takes 60 minutes. If there are a lot of questions, the tour length could go longer.

Time permitting, they will then walk through our "Weather Gallery". This has pictures from extreme New England weather of the past 60+ years.

Over 2500 people have toured our office during the past 3 years.

### Second Stop: Lunch

We will be stopping somewhere for lunch. You are responsible for any costs for lunch as they are not included with the trip fee.

### Third Stop: New England Wireless and Steam Museum

The New England Wireless and Steam Museum is an electrical and mechanical engineering museum emphasizing the beginnings of radio and steam power. The museum honors engineers who achieved greatness and served the public good by analyzing and solving tough engineering problems.

In 1875 Rhode Island was the world center of the stationary steam industry. According to the American So-

ciety of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) the New England Wireless and Steam Museum has the finest collection of Rhode Island made engines, together with the finest collection of original stationary steam engine drawings.

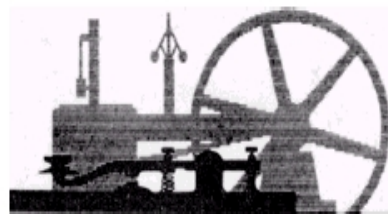
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This museum preserves the original Massie coastal wireless station which was moved from Point Judith, Rhode Island. This station, built in 1907 to communicate with marine shipping, is the oldest surviving, originally equipped wireless station anywhere. It symbolizes the very start of the electronics industry - a Plymouth Rock of the radio, TV, cellphone, satcom, Internet, computer, CATscan and all the other marvelous creations of electrical engineering. The significance of the Massie station is enormous.

The museum's assembly hall is an 1822 neo-classic New England meeting house which, like the Massie station, was moved here to be saved from demolition. This charming building is available for weddings, christenings, club functions, corporate presentations, etc.

The museum shows rare early radio and steam apparatus - much in working order.



Cost per person: \$27 - this includes admission to the museum. The NWS is free.

Please make sure you write down your name, call sign, number of people attending and your home phone number on a note with your check.

Please make the check out to the HCRA and send it to: Larry Krainson WB1DBY, 100 Kenmore Drive, Longmeadow, MA 01106-2759.  
Seats are limited - don't delay!

## HAMPDEN COUNTY RADIO ASSOCIATION HCRA Board of directors Meeting May 10, 2001 Held at Elizabeth Buller's home

Present: Jim KK1W, Greg N1AEH, Dave KB1MU, Irv W6IS, Les K1DNX, Betty KB1CPZ, Norm WB1BMK, Larry WB1DBY, Larry K1ILZ, and Pat N1CET.

### Member Reports:

Vice President (not present) The "Tailgate Party" will be from 6:30 to 8:00 on June 1. The meeting will start at 8:00 with election officers.

Treasurer: Current balance is \$3046.00. The raffle at last (May) meeting netted \$90.00.

Secretary: No changes in membership. The list of e-mail zerobeat continues to fluctuate as members change e-mail address's. This will be a continuing task.

Program: Due to the tailgate party there will be no guest speaker for the June meeting..

Zero Beat: May 21 is the deadline for ZeroBeat articles.

Membership: No new membership applications have been received.

At large: The W1NY QSL cards should arrive before the June meeting.

Field Day: The field day committee will hold a meeting 10:00 AM on Sat May 12 at the field day site.

Old Business: The June 16<sup>th</sup> bus trip has 35 persons signed-up and as of May 10 17 are paid.

New Business: Dave KB1MU will ask Walt WA1HHN to bring all the HCRA material he has in storage to a local location. Someone from the HCRA board will then pickup this material.

The club is considering a possible special event station for the opening of the new Basketball Hall of Fame building.


Respectfully submitted by Dave Isham KB1MU.

# W1NY ON THE AIR

+ + + **EXTRA!!! EXTRA!!!** + + +

## The HCRA 10m Net will continue to meet, all summer long!

Join NCS, Tom Doyle (n1muv), each Monday night at 7:30 PM (local) on 28.375 Mhz (+/- QRM)  
Get the latest local word, join good friends, take part in good conversation each week!!!  
Anyone (with HF privs) can join in, don't be shy!!!

Public activities this month included supporting Northampton High School Regatta at the Oxbow. HCRA members joining other Western Massachusetts hams were Larry WB1DBY, Dave, KB1MU, Eric, N1QKO, Ray, N1RLX, & Tom, N1MUV. Communications were provided by hams from base operations to judges & Coast Guard.		
<b>The Oxbow Team</b> <b>(from left to right)</b> Ray N1RLX, Larry N1TPA, Tom N1MUV, Eric N1QKO, Larry WB1DBY, Dave KB1MU, and Tom KA1BAQ		

## HCRA 2001/2002 Annual Election

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

Here is a list of proposed members desiring election or re-election for the upcoming year:

Position	Nominee
At-Large	Larry Krainson, WB1DBY
Program	Irv Slitzsky, W6IS
Membership	Norm Gregoire, W1BMK
Technical	Stan Bates, N1INB
ZeroBeat Editor	John Pise, Kx1x
Treasurer	Greg Stoddard, N1AEH
Secretary	Dave Isham, KB1MU
Vice President	Jordy Koltz, W1JK
President	Jim Mullen, KK1W

It's a credit to HCRA that we are able to have at least one person for each position within the club. This, at a time when many organizations have trouble filling positions is a credit to the club. That said; if you feel you have something to offer to HCRA, at any position, don't hesitate to contact the board. Many of the members running for re-election would be happy to vacate the position for a new face and new ideas. It's been said many times, any club is only as good as the desire and activities of its members. For HCRA to grow, it requires the effort, commitment and involvement of the members.

Thanks and don't forget to show up at the June meeting to vote your choice for 2002.

Jim, KK1W



Announcing

# FIELD DAY

## the WINY way

Hampden County Radio Association  
Dufresne Park, Rte 202, Granby, MA

June 23 & 24 (setup June 22<sup>nd</sup>)

Field Day is held each year on the fourth weekend of June to bring hams of all ages and experience levels together to show their capabilities in operating in less than ideal situations with less than ideal operating conditions, such as using portable power and temporary antennas.

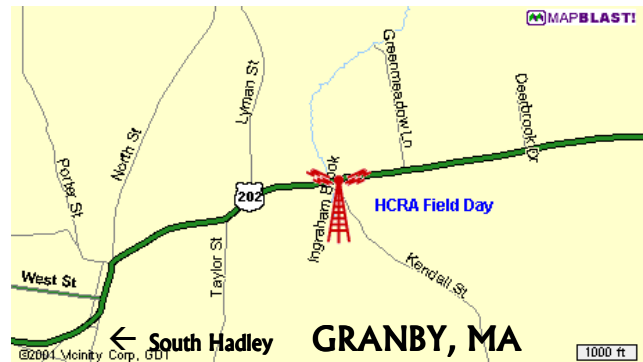
This is a public display of Amateur Radio to show our Emergency Preparedness.

Demonstrations of many aspects of Amateur Radio will be given over the weekend.

This year, HCRA will be holding their field day at

Dufresne Park  
Rte 202, Granby, MA

- Plenty of room for operations and camping
- Indoor Restrooms
- Bring the Family
  - \* Fishing in the stocked pond
  - \* 2 Playgrounds (swings, see-saws, etc...)
  - \* Picnic Areas, Pavilion
  - \* Hiking



All participants will be operating under WINY, and will have extra class privileges, regardless of their license class, including those operators that don't even have a license.

**We have an immediate need for someone to volunteer to cook for us over the Field Day weekend. We have the food. We have the grills. We need someone to prepare meals for operators and participants.**

If you are interested in helping plan our Field Day, or  
 If you have a suggestion to help make our Field Day better, or  
 If you would like to operate at the HCRA Field Day, or  
 If you could help by logging contacts at the HCRA Field Day, or  
 If you would like to help us set up on the evening before Field Day, or  
 If you know someone interested in Amateur Radio, or  
 If you have equipment that we can use,  
 PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE contact

Kx1x, John Pise 532-7474 or  
 KK1W, Jim Mullen 245-3228





## Personal Lightning Safety Tips

de Eric, N1QKO

A reminder that hurricane season started June 1 and goes thru November.

1. Plan in advance your evacuation and safety measures. When you first see lightning or hear thunder, go to a building or a vehicle. Lightning often precedes rain, so don't wait for the rain to begin before suspending activities.

2. IF OUTDOORS... Avoid water. Avoid the high ground. Avoid open spaces. Avoid all metal objects including electric wires, fences, machinery, motors power tools, etc. Unsafe places include underneath canopies, small picnic or rain shelters, or near trees. When possible, find shelter in a substantial building or in a fully enclosed metal vehicle such as a car, truck, or a van with windows completely shut.

If lightning is striking nearby when you are outside, you should :

A: Crouch down. Put feet together. Place hands over ears to minimize hearing damage from thunder.

B: Avoid proximity ( minimum of 15ft.) to other people.

3. IF INDOORS... Avoid water. Stay away from doors and windows. Do not use the telephone. Take off head sets. Turn off, unplug, and stay away from appliances, computers, power tools, & TV sets. Lightning may strike exterior electric and phone lines, inducing shocks to inside equipment.

4. SUSPEND ACTIVITIES for 30 minutes after the last observed lightning or thunder.

5. INJURED PERSONS do not carry an electric charge and can be handled safely. Apply First Aid procedures to a lightning victim if you are qualified to do so. Call 911 or send for help immediately.

Bought to you by the National Lightning Safety Institute, 303-666-8817

## KK1W's Notes on The Dayton Hamvention

One of the good things about working at the same place for almost 20 years is a lot of vacation time. With a new policy of "use it or lose it" in place this year, I made a quick decision to take some time and attend the Dayton Hamvention. This is the hamfest of all hamfests, the mother lode, or so it's written in all the magazines. Guess it was time to see for myself.

I decided to drive, although airfares were reasonable. I planned a few stops at some neat railroad spots in PA to help make the drive more enjoyable. Actually, the drive was not bad at all, and the straight drive back on Monday took about 13½ hours, including two fuel stops and a light lunch. A "day trip" as we call it around here!

I got to Dayton about 1:00 PM on Friday, just in time for the rain to start falling. Most of the flea market was set up, and everybody was pulling out the tarps to cover up the stuff. That made up my mind, time to do the inside booths today!

The HARA arena is a large convention center, but spread into four different halls. It was busy inside, but not super crowded. I got a chance to walk most of the halls, talk with some of the vendors I had on my list to check out, and make a few purchases. Speaking of purchases, this is the place to go if you are contemplating new rigs. The price wars between the vendors are extreme. For example, the Yaesu 817 was going for \$639, the Yaesu VX5R was \$269, Yaesu FT1000 MkV was \$2399 and an Icom IC706IIG for under \$800. You could easily cover the cost of your trip with the savings from these deals. Unfortunately (or fortunately, it all depends on your view!) I only bought some accessories and didn't manage to save the cost of my trip – oh well, maybe next year! If you really want to see and chat with just about every conceivable manufacturer of ham gear, this is the place to go.

Saturday dawned gloomy, but at least not raining. I made up my mind to walk the entire flea market before going back into the exhibit hall and it was a good thing I did. I don't know how many vendors there were outside, but it took me over four hours to walk the entire flea market just once. The selection was amazing. If you wanted something that was ever made, it was probably there. The pile of "free" stuff was larger than some local hamfests I've seen. Again, like the inside vendors, come prepared with your needs and you probably won't go home disappointed. Shop carefully though, the price disparity is much larger than the inside vendors. You could easily buy the same used boat anchor for either \$100 or \$450 if you weren't careful. Absolutely amazing, that about sums up the flea market in two words.

I went back for more on Sunday; the hamfest ends at 1:00 PM on that day. That's the best day for bargains, but not the best for selection. A lot of outside vendors went home Saturday evening, and many started packing early Sunday. The same for the inside, many exhibitors were packing up at noon. Still, a great time to cruise the flea for any last minute markdowns. Combine the bargain hunting with perfect weather and it made for a nice Sunday morning. Not far away is the "Wright-Patterson" Air Museum, so I spent the rest of the day there. Beautiful exhibit – and free too! Another good example of your tax dollars at work. Too bad there aren't more examples like it!

Well, that's a quick Hamvention report. I don't know what attendance was, but I heard in the neighborhood of 20,000. I took some pictures, but they weren't ready in time for this issue of Zero Beat. Watch the web page for them in the coming weeks. I had an enjoyable time, and certainly would consider going again next year. Should you plan on it next year? The quote you always see is "every ham should go at least once" is very true. Try it, you'll agree it was worth it.

A few observations...

1. There are more cubic yards of worthless commercial radios than cubic yards of dumpster space available. This appears to be a national problem.
2. That wasn't a radio-controlled goat I saw, but it did have a TV camera & transmitter on it!
3. There's still too much computer junk at hamfests, and observation #1 above applies to computers also.
4. The event was well organized, and the shuttle service from the off site parking was convenient and quick.
5. \$22 for all three days is a bargain.
6. Come prepared, if you contemplating ANY major purchase within the next 6 months, do it now and save big \$\$\$.
7. Plan ahead for lodging, motel space is difficult to find anywhere near Dayton if you don't reserve ahead.
8. There were a lot of food vendors on the grounds, and the prices were average. Quality --- I won't comment on that!!

So, to sum it all up, was it worth it? Absolutely! Should you go there next year? Why not, it's fun; you could save lots of money on purchases. You really don't have anything better to do with your time anyway, do you?

de KK1W, Jim Mullen

The next meeting of the  
*Hampden County Radio Association*

Will be on Friday

**June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001**

At 6:00 p.m. at the  
**Feeding Hills Congregational Church**  
**Doors open at 7:00 PM**

Hope to see you there!

In case of inclement weather, tune to TV Channels 22 or 40,  
or the 146.94 repeater.

*Meeting cancellation information will be given out by 6:00 PM.*

HCRA

P.O. Box 562

Agawam, Massachusetts

01001

**PLEASE HAND CANCEL**

*Friday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001*

***HCRA***

***Tailgate Party***

***Starts at 6:PM***