

June 2010

Zero Beat

www.hcra.org



Field Day

Less than a month to go, what role will you be playing this year?

The FD committee met on May 11th to discuss planning, stations and food. A lot of good ideas were exposed and some unique opportunities presented themselves. Take a look at W1MSW's article in this month's issue to find out about our plans for FD 2010.

One thing the FD committee recommended was to dissolve the separate Field Day group and move those conversations to the regular HCRA mailing list. We felt the overall membership should be aware (and hopefully take part) in Field Day planning and a second list tended to hide those activities. The HCRA FD group has been deleted from Yahoo and unique members have been subscribed to the HCRA list.

We're still looking for additional operators, band captains, kitchen help, greeters or whatever. As stated earlier our goal this year is to make Field Day a 'build to suit' operation crafted around everyone's desires to have fun while exposing the general public to what amateur radio can accomplish during times of emergency. An up to the minute picture of where we stand can always be found on the HCRA website at: <http://www.hcra.org/fd2010.htm>.

HCRA Breakfast Bash!

Our Saturday breakfasts are continuing to grow with 16 people at the May gathering. Where will we be in June, and how big will the crowd be? The only way I know to find out is to attend! Keep an eye on the HCRA mailing list to find out the date and location of June's breakfast bash. Thanks to Ed and all the participants helping to keep this a monthly HCRA happening!

June is Tail Gate Party time!

There's only a few days left to get your treasures ready for sale at the annual HCRA Tail Gate Party. I'm sure the weather will be cooperative so don't even worry about it! Spots are only \$5 and buyers are free. As always there will be a club donation table to shield you from embarrassment if you don't want to be associated with your junkie!

HOT DOGS and soft drinks! New this year, and thanks to Jack, Jim and George, we will be serving up steamed dogs and buns and some soda to go along with them – the perfect treat for a warm

June evening. Now aren't your taste buds screaming already? Put aside some gear for the party, stuff some cash in your pocket and come on down for around 6:00 (that's when the fun begins). After the tail gate party we will adjourn to the meeting hall for our annual elections, field day planning **AND a mystery guest**. Don't miss the bargains or the fun – come on down!.



HCRA is 'Radio Active'

It has been a pleasure to see so many of our members slipping the bonds of 'armchair amateurs' and actively seeking fun in our hobby. From Rookie Roundup to contesting, SOTA to GOTA, HCRA members are stepping forward and showing others how it is done. W1MJB is closing in on DXCC, W1MSW came in 2nd nationwide in the Rookie Roundup, KB1NBH operated W1NY to a new high score in the New England QSO Party, WB1DBY had been on the air making both QRP and rag chew contacts, K1JAW has been doing QRP portable ops and N1FJ & W1MSW took a stab at 'Summits on the Air' (SOTA) – just to name a few.

Others have stepped forward to try new things with Field Day and to help out with club activities. It has been an exciting way for HCRA to end the year, don't you think? If you haven't found time yet to try something new don't wait any longer. The easiest way to get in on the fun will be this year's Field Day. We've got the equipment, location and personnel to help you try new things – all we need is you. Antenna & tower erection, public awareness and greeting, cooking, operating, station setup, generator maintenance, on the air operating – Field Day has it all and more. Don't let another year pass you by without giving it a try.

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



HCRA Board of Directors Minutes

April 13, 2010 1905hrs

HCRA Board of Directors Meeting

Held at Hampden Bank, Longmeadow, MA

OFFICERS

KK1W, KX1X, KC1V, KB1NWH, W6IS, K1JAW, AA1YW

GUESTS

W1MSW, N1FJ, W1MJB

OFFICER REPORTS

Vice President, Kx1x

Report: should have fall class dates by field day

Treasurer, KC1V

Current financial report \$5193.23

Current Member count 86

With the current law change. All 501c organizations must file tax forms

Secretary KB1PKJ/KB1NWH

Accept March minutes for publication with correction on members call

DIRECTOR REPORTS

Technical, AA1YW

Report: Will get in touch with Norm in Otis

Zero Beat, WB1DBY

Cutoff date for May ZB is the 26th

Suggestion for an HCRA daytrip to Hyde Park, NY to visit the Samuel Morse, and FDR homes, lunch at culinary institute

Membership, KB1NWH

No new members for board approval

Boxboro bus trip update? KK1W, AA1YW, W6IS, KB1PKJ, KC1V, W1MSW, KB1NWH, N1TOY, W1SQ, N1SR, W1MJB. AND THAT'S 11

Recap of 1st Monthly Breakfast Meeting, All went well with the 14 that attended. What is the date of the next one? Saturday May 8th 9:00 A.M. IHOP West Springfield

Program, K1JAW

NE1RD has agreed to do a meeting on Jan 7, 2011. KK1W will follow up with Scott when the date gets closer.

K1SFA, Kristine from ARRL is scheduled for the Sep 3rd meeting. Kx1x will follow up with her prior to the meeting.

White elephant table was a success.

Tailgate party will have hot dogs and soda for sale

OLD BUSINESS

WB1Z Plaque – criteria? Table to next BOD meeting

Rookie Roundup Planning and update. W1MSW is planning to attend the KK1W shack. Others have offered their shacks also.

WA1GXY looking for help installing a wire antenna. KC1V to follow up

Centralize board meeting location – Larry has confirmed a Hampden Bank in West Springfield if we need it.

NEW BUSINESS

Next board meeting: May 19th

Speaker for October needed. Marty will check on a MARS speaker

Field Day Planning – We are in favor of a 'free dogs & burger' bash from 1 to 4 PM.

HCRA Picnic – many members would like it, need someone to run it to make it happen?

Slate for officials

President	KK1W
Vice Pres.	KX1X
Secretary	W1MJB
Treasurer	AA1YW
Zero Beat	WB1DBY
Technical	KB1NWH
Membership	W1MSW
Program	OPEN
At Large	N1FJ

Respectively Submitted
Carroll Ed LaCombe
KB1NWH



The ARRL New England Convention

at the Holiday Inn in Boxborough, Massachusetts

AUGUST 26-27-28-29, 2010

Every two years during even numbered years the New England Convention Aka Boxboro is held. This has been going on for a long time as many of us know. Now that 2010 is here, it's a Boxboro year! You need to make time to attend! The sunspot cycle is on the upswing, more DX is coming in; more exciting HF contacts are to be made. To do that you need to listen in on a seminar for the latest techniques, maybe upgrade and buy some new gear, string out those antennas; talk with the big name reps. Boxboro is about 80 minutes from the Springfield area. But if you don't feel like driving, take the HCRA van instead. Let someone else do the driving while you sit back and chat with the others. Enjoy a nice sit down dinner (tbd where) on the way home. It's a fun and exciting trip and not to be missed!

At this time we have the following:

1. KK1W
2. AA1YW
3. W6IS
4. KB1PKJ
5. KC1V
6. W1MSN

7. KB1NWH
8. W1MJB
9. N1SR
10. W1SQ
11. N1TOY

Still looking for 1 more, and would like 2 standbys incase of cancelations.

When: Saturday, August 28th.

Cost per person: \$35 (increase due to proposed fuel price increase)

The fare includes your ticket into the convention, chauffeured, round trip, van transportation.

Please mail checks to HCRA P.O. Box 562, Agawam, MA 01001

E-mail KB1NWH@ARRL.NET or see him at the HCRA meetings!

73

Ed, KB1NWH



An Excuse To Get Out (and Ham)

(by Jim k1jaw/qrp)



I am not a contester, never was and probably never will be. However, I do like to operate QRP, and jumping at the additional opportunity to get out in the fresh air is a real plus, so when the opportunity arises, I accept the invitation, pack up, and move quickly.

Field day is the grand daddy of them all and I rarely miss one. As an avid QRPer, only twice did I join a group of other QRPer for the weekend of camping out and gala events. It was great, but more typically; I participate with a QRO group instead. (*See, I like QRO folks too*) How do I, a non-contester and QRPer, enjoy myself in a contest environment? Easy!

At FD, no one ever seems to want 15M, probably because the points are not there (*and FD is not suppose to be a contest – hmm!*). So I grab the slot whenever possible and operate solar QRP for the weekend. Ah, the best part of 15 meters is that it is a daytime band so I only get to operate about 4 hours Saturday and 4+ hours Sunday (*I actually get some real sleep*) but again, I am not a real contester like the others. As you can probably surmise, I am also far from being the high score operator (*and usually the worst*), but if I didn't operate, there would probably be few points for the band, and for me, this schedule is very relaxing and enjoyable!

But I am not limited to FD. A couple of weeks later is the QRP "Home Brew Night" which is one of many four-hour events. This one is a blast. Additional points are given for contacting QRPARCI members, being home brew, and being away from fixed installations (*hooking up to*

your antenna in your back yard doesn't cut it). And there are many other sprints, like the "Run for the Bacon", or another of my favorites "Freeze your Butt Off" which obviously is not held in the summer (*or spring, or fall*). Did you know that there is a month long "contest" to make up words from the names/calls of the hams you worked? Not that easy when you are actually doing it!



My biggest outdoor enjoyment however occurred just last week. Steve, Wa1HFF picked up a used 40M MFJ and wanted to try QRP so we made a "play date" (*as my wife calls it*), and went to the local park. After putting up his 20-foot high 40M dipole, he tapped out his CQ CQ and viola! (*wella!*), he received an immediate response to his three watts from another QRPer in Ohio. The excitement that he exhibited was awesome. He was hooked! And for me it was like my first QRP field trip all over again; a tremendous feeling, and I am looking forward to our next joint trip. Thanks Steve!

So I will continue to do my QRP thing, and talk it up with anyone who will listen to me. I like getting away from the basement operating location and into the field whether it is by a lake, on a hill, or just in the local park. Maybe someday I will be able to help another "QRP newbie" make his first contact on QRP. Ah! Nature and radio. It doesn't get any better! And you should have seen the swans (*not the radio, real live swans!*)

Hope to hear you on Field Day, June 26-27 - 15 meters CW (W1NY).

Jim K1jaw/qrp

**The Awakening
of the Bands
& This Old Ham**

by

Larry, WB1DBY

(article to the right)

**Zero Beat
Contributions**

Anything of interest is welcome. This is YOUR Newsletter. It's not interesting without YOUR ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS.

Please submit your ideas, articles and more to:
wb1dby@comcast.net

I have been a ham for more than 33 years now.

The thrill of making a contact with anyone, anywhere has not ended. I'm not a DX country chaser or any chaser, but I do like to ragchew.

My stations are modest but they work well enough for me and barefoot with 100 watts max. I often run 5 watts though when conditions let me.

In the last 2 weeks I have started getting the "Get on the air" bug again. I started with my mobile HF last week during a ride between West Hartford and Ellington. I talked to a W4 station in Greenville, NC for over 25 minutes. I was thrilled. Just yesterday on a trip to a Simsbury customer, I chatted with "Ivan" in Vienna, Austria. It's the first time in a long time that a DX station wanted something other than my name, report and QTH. Another thrill and while mobile yet. Later that afternoon, I worked Rick in Salt Lake City, Utah. The bands were starting to get flaky so I pulled over and talked for a while until I had to get going again. Same thrill. These were made on 17m (18 Mhz) during the day with 100 watts. (Yaesu FT-100D w/Atas-100 antenna)

Today, Saturday I awoke much earlier than I usually am up (5:40am) and came downstairs and turned on the radio to 40 meters. I heard a super strong CQ, recognizing the call as someone I met a number of years ago at a HCRA meeting. It was Steve, WA1HFF. I lowered the power to 10 watts and chatted until my rig seemed to have some issues. Now Steve is what I would call "Super DX" as he lives here in town and just 2 streets away from me!

For me, it's not the accomplishment of DX or some new country, it's just making the contact and learning something new about someone. I found out Steve likes to kayak as I do. We'll pair up and paddle somewhere soon.

So I'm suggesting to you, dust off that HF rig that you haven't used in a while. Listen on the bands often. Sometimes (frequently) you won't hear anything as the bands are just plain dead. But, you may hear someone calling CQ and go back to them and find that that THRILL of making a QSO is back and you'll be hooked again. As I am again.

Turn on your radio and make some new friends. You may find the excitement of ham radio still burns in your veins stronger than in a while.

73,

Larry, WB1DBY

Field Day 2010

by Matt, W1MSW

Fellow HCRA members,

We are pleased to bring you the details for this year's HCRA Field Day event. The Field Day committee had a long but successful meeting on May 11th and the results were submitted to the board of directors on the 20th. With all events like this, there are a few details that must still be ironed out, but HCRA is well on the way to having a great 2010 Field day.

As most of you know, the event will again take place in Dufresne Park in Granby on the last weekend in June. We will also once again be participating as a class 7A operation. Setup up will begin at 6am on Saturday morning, operation will begin at 2:00 PM Saturday running through the night to 2:00 PM Sunday and breakdown will hopefully be completed by 4pm on Sunday afternoon.

This year our band captains will be:

Frandy/N1FJ	20M & 80M CW
George/KC1V	40M CW
Bob/W1SQ	15M & 75M SSB
Earl/KD1UU	40M SSB
John/KX1X	20M & 160M SSB
Marty/W1MJB, Frank/KB1LFD, Dave/KB1JVB	
GOTA/10M SSB,	20M Digital & VHF
K1JAW	Natural Power Station/15M CW

As you can see there are a few changes in the line up this year as well as some changes for the station setups. We will be combining several stations at the gazebo and in an effort to stay true to the intended purpose of GOTA, it will only be designated as such for a specific length of time (to be announced soon). This will make it easier for those operators who can benefit from a GOTA station to know when coaches will be available and have them around for help and encouragement. We will also be setting up the greeter's station and brochures at the gazebo so guests and visitors can see first hand what field day is all about. We are also still looking for a station captain for the natural power station.

HCRA will be providing the following meals to members + 1 guest.

Saturday Dinner	4pm -7pm
Sunday Breakfast	7am - 8:30am
Sunday Lunch	11am - 1pm

The details of the menu are still being worked out, but they will be in the genres of hamburgers and hotdogs for dinner and lunch and a pancake breakfast.

Our raffle prize this year will be a radio package containing a Yaesu FT-1900R 2 Meter Radio combined with a Hustler MX-2 2 Meter antenna and Mag-Mount. Tickets will be \$5 each and ticket sales will be limited to a total of 75 tickets. They will go on sale at our next meeting, which is the annual tailgate party.

More important than all of these details is how you, a member of HCRA, will participate in Field Day this year. This is the largest event the club puts on and it provides members with an opportunity to get outside and spend the weekend operating both for fun and for a purpose. What could be better than having an excuse to enjoy the company of others who enjoy this hobby and honing those skills all the way from station setup to breakdown? For those of us with compromise antennas at home, it's an opportunity to operate free of the restrictions presented by our living situations. So please check out the signup sheet on the HCRA Field Day website <http://www.hcra.org/fd2010.htm>, contact either Matt or Jim to have your name added to the roster and feel free to contact us with any questions you may have. As more details unfold, we will make announcements on the HCRA reflector. We look forward to seeing you at this year's event!

Thanks & 73,

Matt Wilhelm
W1MSW@ARRL.NET

Jim Mullen
KK1W@ARRL.NET

HCRA Tail Gate Party

by Jim, K1JAW

It is not the biggest event that you will ever go to, but the annual HCRA tail gate party usually has some great deals, good friends, in a relaxing environment.

Admission for lookers/buyers is FREE, and if you would like to be a seller the cost is a whopping \$5.00.
How cheap and evening can you get?

And new this year; food service (hot dogs ala k1jaw & kc1v) will be available. Condiments will include mustard, relish, chopped onions, horseradish, and ketchup served with coffee or soft drinks.

See the details at www.HCRA.org which also has pics and a map.

HCRA Tail Gate Party - Friday June 4th - Setup beginning at 6PM, food by 6:30, good deals all night, and cheap gas is across the street at the pride. Plan on filling up before you leave. And not to steer you away from those great hot dogs, brownies, home brew coffee etc, there is a Dunkin Donuts and a I think a Subway in the pride station. Hope to see you at the tail gate party.

Jim k1jaw/qrp

A COMMERCIAL MOMENT

FD - whether for two hours, or two days, supporting field day is a great way to make new friends, see portable operation at its best, and have fun. Contact any member of the club for more information on how you can enjoy the outdoors, and ham it up!
Remember - it is the last weekend of June - always....

NEQP with Frandy; N1FJ & Matt, W1MSW

**Matt puming up
the antenna launcher**



Frandy launching into a tree





**Frandy pulling the antenna up
and tying it in place**



Matt operates SSB



2010/2011 Election

It is with great pride we present the following slate of proposed officers for the 2010/2011 Elections. Approval of this slate will be at the June 4th club meeting.

There is still time to toss your hat in the ring. Although all but one position is filled there are a few board members that could be 'convinced' to step aside and let some new ham have a hand in guiding our club. If you feel you have something to contribute to HCRA please contact the board before June 1st.

Now on to the slate:

2010/2011 Slate of Proposed Officers & Directors

Officers:

President	Jim Mullen, KK1W
Vice President	John Pise, Kx1x
Treasurer	Dave Cain, AA1YW
Secretary	Marty Bowen, W1MJB

Directors:

Editor	Larry Krainson, WB1DBY
Technical	Ed LaCombe, KB1NWH
Membership	Matt Wilhelm, W1MSW
At Large	Frandy Johnson, N1FJ
Program	open

Thanks to all of the above that have volunteered their time for the betterment of HCRA and its members. Without hams like you our club would not be as strong, active or fun as it is today.

New England Area Ham - Electronic Flea Market

8 May Rensselaer NY EGARA @FireCo	Thomas KC2FCP 518 272 1494 A
15 May Halifax NS H+DARC @Forum \$4@9 S@7	Tom VE1BMJ R+
16 May Cambridge MA FLEA at MIT Third Sunday April thru October	Nick 617 253 3776
22 May Goshen CT SoBARC @FG \$3@8	Lee K1LEE 860 435 0051
29 May Vernon CT NARC @TollandAgCtr	Wayne N1GUS 860 487 1921 A
30 May Sorel-Tracy CRAS-T \$5@9 \$15/T@6	Luc VE2DWE 450 743 8676 W+
4 Jun Feeding Hills MA HCRA Tail Gate @CongCh @6:30PM	Jim KK1W 413 245 3228 +
5 June Rochester NY RARA	Duane K2SI 585 594 4945 A
5 June Hermon ME PSARC @HS	Roger KA1TKS 207 848 3846 A
6 June Bethpage NY LIMARC @Briarcliffe	Richard K2KNB 516 694 4937 A
12 June Windsor CT VR+C Mus 115 Pierson LN @8AM Tailgate	John 860 673 0518 W+
12 June Rochester NH GBRA @ CommCtr	Larry K1SRJ 603 335 4805 A
13 June Queens NY HOSARC @HoS \$5@9 \$10/sp@7:30	Stephen WB2KDG 718 898 5599 W
19 June Newington CT NARL @StMarySchool	Steve WV1X 860 667 8199 A
19 June Windsor VT CVFMA @HS 10AM	Ray K1XV 802 875 4525 A+
20 June Cambridge MA FLEA at MIT	Nick 617 253 3776
18 July Cambridge MA FLEA at MIT	Nick 617 253 3776
24 July Thomaston ME PBARC @AmLegion \$5@8 \$5/T	Norman NY1B 207 354 6853 W

24 July N Haven CT YankeePeddler @HI \$7@8\$19/sp\$15/T John N1GNV 203 440 4468 F+
 14 Aug Gales Ferry CT RASON @FireHs \$4@9 \$15/T Chip N1MIE 860 376 0888 +
 14 Aug Swanton VT StAARC @RavenIndPk Arn N1ARN 802 309 0666 A+
 15 August Cambridge MA FLEA at MIT Nick 617 253 3776
 Third Sunday April thru October
 22 Aug Adams MA NoBarc @ AggieFG \$5@@8 \$10Sell Tim KE3HT 413 822 7075
 27,29 Aug Boxboro MA FEMARA NE Conv Mike K1TWF 978 250 1235 A
 11 Sept Windsor ME AARA @FG \$5@8 Bill K1NIT 207 623 9075
 11 Sept Windsor CT VR+C Mus 115 Pierson LN @8AM Tailgate John 860 673 0518 W+
 12 Sept Newtown CT CARA @TownHall \$6@8:30 \$15/T Joe AB1DO 203 938 4880 W
 18 Sept Alton NH MASONS @Lodge @7:30 Tg\$10 \$20/insidT Bob W1GWU 603 776 0086 +
 19 Sept Cambridge MA FLEA at MIT Nick 617 253 3776
 25,26 Sep Wakefield MA Photographica @AmericalCtr ~photo~ John 781 592 2553
 2 Oct Manchester NH NHAntqRC @Bingo \$10 @7:30 \$3 @8:30 Charlie 603 898 4821
 3 Oct Queens NY HOSARC @HoS \$5@9 \$10/sp@7:30 Stephen WB2KDG 718 898 5599 W
 10 Oct Wallingford CT Nutmeg Conv \$20/sp \$7@8 John N1GNV 203 440 4468 +
 15,16 October Deerfield NH Nearfest VIII @FG Mike K1TWF 978 250 1235 T
 16 Oct Greenwood NS GARC @CommCtr \$4@10 s@8 Eric VE1CFY R+
 17 October Cambridge MA FLEA at MIT Nick 617 253 3776
 23 Oct Longueuil PQ MS-SARC \$5@9 \$10/T@6 David VE2EDF 450 672 9791 W
 30 Oct Gales Ferry CT TCARC Auction @FireCo @10 Darryl WA1DD 860 443 7799
5 Nov Feeding Hills MA HCRA Auction @CongCh @6:30PM Jim KK1W 413 245 3228

Meeting Location:

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



Next Meeting:

Tail Gate Party

with hotdogs & soda,

good friends

& stuff for sale

**Friday,
June 4th @ 6:00pm**



The Hampden County Radio Association
P.O Box 562
Agawam, MA 01001



PLEASE HAND CANCEL