



ZERO BEAT

A Publication of the
Hampden County Radio Association
<http://www.hcra.org>



FEBRUARY 2008

Next Meeting:

**Friday, March 7, 2008:
Show and Tell: at 7:30pm**

The Presidents Message from Jim KB1JVF

I don't know if HCRA members are wondering what I'm up to. I'm wondering if anyone is complaining. I want to get Amateur Radio out to the public. That's one of my goals for this year and I set out on it last year. I was working on getting a information booth at the Westfield Fly-in as I know one of the original founders for the Military, Transportation Museum.

We have a little disagreement on how people come to Ham radio. Some say we get our leads from the ARRL. While I be leave the ARRL is a useful tool, and can bring leads, I don't agree. Just listening at the meetings and out in the public I get a different picture. Most people come to Amateur Radio by someone showing them the hobby. Friends, Father's, Grandfathers, mothers, all have Elmered people into the hobby. I didn't know of the ARRL until I got to the HCRA. I got to the HCRA by way of a member that told me of the meetings. Years later I went to the Big 'E' and then the HCRA. At the VE sessions we see friends, relatives sitting anxious over the pass fail test. They took the time to teach what Amateur Radio was and saw the testing on the web till the percent was above passing.

I believe that we need to keep our name in print. No it's not easy. The Republican will print things that they can get full stories out of. Try to get the monthly meeting in and it just disappears. All the small news outlets have a fixed area and don't see that the HCRA covers a large area. "Who is the local Ham?" We are talking of National things. Anyway we can get a word in the paper, on the air, it keeps our hobby alive.

I signed up with Galaxy Council for Westover. The announcement of the Air Show and 250,00 people seemed like a good people presentation place. I have since learned that Eric N1QKO's group at Westover is in charge of the Hanger that is home to the Civilian booths. So we'll pursue the show through Eric. With 2 days and 250,000 people it's more than one or two people can handle. So this will take planning.

I was told the Barnes fly-in was around 80 people and one day. Another area I'm looking into is the Westfield Fair, Small 3 days and not hard to handle. A lot like the Peach Fest. Which last year turned out to be more of a ham meeting place, but it was a first year and if they change the location of our booth, and the crowd grows as planned. It could be a gold mine, but if not, it gets us out in the public.

Now the Big E is another thing. 3 days, or 7days, or 17 days leaves a real planning nightmare. The 3 days proposed last year I had covered with 3 people, but we were to late to get on the list. This year I'm right in the foray. Seems that they wanted less people in the booth, and more content. They have talked about a table with a backdrop and two chairs.

I don't know if all know that Greg Stoddard N1AEH has departed to the Villages, Fl. 30 years is a long time to be a officer in a club. I had the pleasure of working with Greg for only 4 years but I enjoyed every minute of it. He's a great guy. Every BOD meeting brought a Treasurer's report and Greg had every cent accounted for. Most of you will have a much longer time to reminisce about Greg and the HCRA. The BOD voted to grant Greg a Lifetime membership for his many years of service to the club. Greg, we already missed you. We had planned a farewell dinner but you left the state before we could pull it off, anxious to get out of the snow and ice to Florida I guess. The members of the HCRA all wish you well.

HCRA Board Meeting

Held at the home of Larry, WB1DBY, Longmeadow, MA.

Members present: Jim KB1JVF, George KC1V, Greg N1AEH, Larry, WB1DBY and Ed, KB1NWH, John N1JIO

Jim, KB1JVF, President: Received the okay for an information booth at the Barnes fly-in, no date yet. In discussions about the Westover air show; would like to have MTARA participate if approval is given for an information booth. Received a letter from the Big-E people, but no definite dates were given. There are tentative plan for a Special Event station at the Catfish Derby in July. The Titanic Special Event station will be in April. Discussions with the Connecticut Museum of Radio and Communications about a special event station are on going, but nothing has been finalized.

Greg, N1AEH, Treasurer: Last deposit was \$108; the little raffle totaled \$63; current balance is \$5136. Church is paid; Co-op Printing was paid \$97 for December and January and \$50 for February; Field Day deposit of \$50 was made to Town of Granby.

John, N1JIO, Technical: Has been investigating Multi-PKS for Emcomm file transfer.

Larry, WB1DBY, Zero Beat Editor: The deadline for the March ZB will be February 20th.

Old Business: None.

New Business: Field Day: time to start getting out sign-up sheet, etc.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be March 11, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,
George, KC1V

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!!!

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, South Hadley, MA.

For a list of IRLP nodes and other IRLP information, go to:
<http://www.irlp.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 Johnny, Ki1A at
Ki1A@comcast.net or (413) 543-9367

Zero Beat Contributions: Anything of interest is welcome.

Please submit your ideas, articles and more to
wb1dby@comcast.net. Thank you,
Larry, WB1DBY, Zero Beat Editor

Questions, Comments, and Suggestions
Can Be Directed To:

HCRA OFFICERS

President

Jim Harrington, KB1JVF
(413) 862-3230 jldhjr@verizon.net

Vice-President

Dave Cain, AA1YW
(413) 569-6801 aa1yw@arrl.net

Treasurer

Greg Stoddard, N1AEH
(860) 668-5143 gstoddard@rcn.com

Secretary

Dave Isham, KB1MU
(413) 596-6605 kb1mu@charter.net

HCRA DIRECTORS

At Large

Ed Lacombe, KB1NWH
(413) 250-3137 kb1nwh@comcast.net

Program

Johnny Lenville, KI1A
(413) 543-9367 ki1a@comcast.net

Membership

George Collins, KC1V
(860) 749-2701 kc1v@arrl.net

Zero Beat

Larry Krainson, WB1DBY
(413) 567-3505 wb1dby@comcast.net

Technical

John Stark, N1JIO
(413) 747-8169 n1jio_qrp@yahoo.com

STATION TRUSTEES

W1NY Trustee

Don Johnson, W1UPH
(413) 566-3560 w1uph@arrl.net

WB1Z Trustee

Jim Mullen, KK1W
(413) 245-3228 kk1w@charter.net

IRLP Trustee

John Pise, Kx1x
(413) 532-7474 kx1x@arrl.net

"Get On The Air Class"

The HCRA is taking signups for a new class starting sometime this spring. It's called the: "Get On The Air Class"

It is aimed at new hams that need some extra help getting on the air after earning their ham license. But it is open to ANYONE who wants to participate. If you've been off the air for a while and want to get back on, then this is the jumpstart that you need.

The class will be held over 3 to 4 nights and spread out over 3 to 4 weeks.

Subjects that might be covered:

Making a 2 meter contact (maybe IRLP too)

Building a wire antenna

Making a HF contact

Spare day - other ideas?

Each class will be hands on. The two making a contact class will have EVERYONE in the class on the radio and chatting with other hams.

If you know of someone who is interested (maybe you?), please have them email or call on of the following hams:

Larry - WB1DBY: wb1dby@comcast.net or (413) 567-3505

Ed - KB1NWH: kb1nwh@comcast.net or (413) 250-3137

73,

The Hampden County Radio Assn.

www.hcra.org

Public Service

If any one is interested in helping out with Public Service events, there is the Scantic Spring Splash on March 29th. and the Westfield Half Marathon on April 6th.

The Splash is held on the Scantic River, starting in Somers and ending in Hazardville CT. Their web address is www.scanticspringsplash.com

The Westfield Half Marathon starts and ends at the Westfield boys and girls club.

Public Service events are a good way for HAMS to practice our operating skills and use our radios under unusual conditions

Mark you calender for July 4th and the East Longmeadow "4th of July parade".

Other events that have NOT been confirmed for 2008:

May: Hadley Road race sponsored by KD1XP
August: Jumbo Tanzania road race in Longmeadow
September: MDA walk in Springfield
October: Monroe Trail race sponsored by KD1XP

I should be receiving the date and location for this years SKYWARN training class in the next couple of weeks.

If you're interested in helping with an event, contact me on the 146.94 repeater or e-mail at N1QKO@ARRL.net

Build Something!

A couple of years ago, a group of us were talking on the club repeater, and the talk got around to building stuff. One of the guys said, "You can't really build anything anymore." I almost fell out of my chair. That's simply not true. Heathkit may be just a fond memory, but there are still many companies out there selling kits that are not only fun to build, but are useful additions to the ham shack.

Here are a couple of sources:

- * Elecraft (www.elecraft.com). In my mind, Elecraft has become the premiere ham radio kit company, if not the premiere ham radio company, period. The new K3, for example, outperforms just about anything on the market by many accounts. Personally, I have built the KX-1, which is a real blast to operate from a park bench or to take on vacation. I also have and use the W1 wattmeter.
- * TenTec (radio.tentec.com/kits). While perhaps known more for their ready-made rigs, they also sell a line of single-band transceivers and receiver kits.
- * QRP Kits (www.qrpkits.com). QRPKits.Com sells kits that were originally projects of the Northern California QRP Club. My current General Class students are going to build the DC40A kit (\$40) as an exercise in building and as a way to learn about how radios work.

Below are some other companies whose kits have good reputations, but

with which I have no personal experience:

- * Small Wonder Labs (www.smallwonderlabs.com)

- * Wilderness Radio (www.fix.net/~jparker/wild.html)
- * Milestone Technologies (www.mtechnologies.com)
- * Almost All Digital Electronics (www.aade.com/index.html)
- * FAR Circuits (www.farcircuits.net)
- * Jackson Harbor (home.att.net/~jacksonharbor/ham.htm)
- * QRPme (www.qrpme.com/)
- * Linear Amp UK (www.linamp.co.uk)

QRP clubs are also a good source of cool kits. The problem with QRP

clubs is that they order parts only for a very short run of kits. Once they sell out, the kits are no longer available. Even so, here are some clubs that are worth checking out:

- * American QRP Club (www.amqrp.org)
- * Four State QRP Club (4sqrp.com/kits/kits.htm)
- * NORTEX (www.kk5na.com/nortex.htm)

Ready to rock and roll? Here are a couple websites that you might want to check out before you dive in:

- * Electronic Construction from A to Z (www.mtechnologies.com/building/atoz.htm). This site includes a page that lists all the tools you'll need to become a successful kit builder.
- * Crystal Sets to Sideband: A Guide to Building an Amateur Radio Station (www.qsl.net/k3pd/book.html). This site not only discusses kit building, but also radio theory.
- * The Art of Kit Building (ww2.netnitco.net/users/wt9w/kit%20building.html)

I hope that I've whetted your appetite for building a kit or two. They're a lot of fun to build, and you really do get a rush from operating a radio or using a piece of test equipment that you built yourself.

What have you built lately? Let Dan know. Email him at cwgeek@kb6nu.com.



Jim; KB1JVF presents Greg; N1AEH with a lifetime HCRA award for nearly 30 years of being the Treasurer. Greg is now the Treasurer Emeritus and has moved to Florida. We all wish you the very best and hope that you will some day return to visit us all!

Meeting Location:

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

The church is located across from a Pride gas station.

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

Talk-in is available on the 146.94 repeater.

Next Meeting:

Friday Night

March 7, 2008

7:30pm



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



PLEASE HAND CANCEL