

  
Hampden  
County  
Radio  
Association



MARCH 2009

ZERO BEAT

<http://www.hcra.org>

March 6th 2009

7:30 PM

## Show & Tell

You Build It & Tell US About It  
to Win A HRO Gift Certificate

### 100th Anniversary of W1MX

The MIT Radio Society (W1MX) will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of its founding this April 30th, 2009. In commemoration, the Society will be operating a special event station, W1MX/100, for a two week period beginning on April 30th and issuing a special QSL card.

Additionally, the Society will be holding two events for Radio Society alumni at MIT during reunion week in June. Details are available on our website - <http://web.mit.edu/w1mx/www/>. Please spread the word! And if you are an alum, PLEASE get in touch with us at [w1mx-100@mit.edu](mailto:w1mx-100@mit.edu).

We would like very much to hear from you!

### 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!!!

## From the Shack...

### You can get anything you want...

Folks from New England can probably fill in the last three words of that famous line in "Alice's Restaurant" by Arlo Guthrie but you know what? The times they are a changing! Enter the new world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and we now have the internet as our 'armchair library' along with eBay as the place to look for stuff. These two resources can work hand in hand when you are need some knowledge and may be looking to make a purchase. How do I know? Read on...

While peering into the un-built pile of electronic kits that I might want to assemble for this month's 'Show & Tell' I realized something. The reason those kits were still in the package was because I was afraid to attempt soldering those tiny SMT devices and/or I didn't have the proper equipment. So, off to the internet for research I went. Entering a few search terms into Google found a number of tutorials on SMT soldering, recommendations for soldering stations and types of solder and flux. Some were printed pages, others even had videos! Cool! After spending an hour or so reading and watching it looked like the impossible really was probable. Using some of the recommendations for soldering equipment I did some additional internet research. Armed with that new knowledge I 'almost' ended up buying a new soldering station on eBay but actually (and astoundingly) ended up at Radio Shack and got just as good a deal. But don't despair, eBay to the rescue for a great price on tips for my new soldering station. In the end it all boils down to using 21<sup>st</sup> century tools to do what we have always done. Gather information to make informed and intelligent decisions.

Have you thought about building things in this hobby? It is getting harder by the day to find parts, isn't it? Those long aisles in Radio Shack are now about 4' of pull out drawers, no fun in that. If you're at all interested in building here's an internet dealer that will 'spark' your imagination. It is called "sparkfun ELECTRONICS" and can be found at

<http://www.sparkfun.com>.

This is a site for the 'geek' side of all of us. How to's & tutorials, cool stuff, the list goes on. This website is a great place to get excited about creating something in our very own workshop. My experience has been positive with sparkfun (fast service and reasonable prices) but as always your mileage may vary.



Don't forget about eBay. Do your research, check out the sellers rating and use good amateur radio common sense and you will save some of your hard earned dollars. A good example is the tips I purchased for my new soldering station. I saved close to 66% on them compared to other sources. Yes, I did have to wait a few extra days but the savings was worth it. Unfortunately all my searches did not turn up any sunspots - I guess we will have to keep waiting for them!

### April meeting will be at Channel 22 in Chicopee!

A tour of the WWLP studios is on the agenda for our April meeting. Instead of meeting at the church the meeting will be held at the WWLP studio at One Broadcast Center in Chicopee, MA. This will be a fantastic opportunity to get a first hand glimpse of what a state of the art television studio looks like. I have been there and can tell you it isn't at all like the old studio on top of Provin Mountain. In addition to the 'wow' factor of the equipment you'll get to see exactly where your favorite news and weather personalities sit and stand every evening to keep us informed. HCRA thanks Bob McCormick - W1QA, Director of MIS for WWLP for suggesting and organizing this tour. W1QA has also been instrumental in preserving the legacy of one of the valley's best known hams, Art Zavarella - W1KK by creating the W1KK Wireless Association. Read about them at <http://w1kk.com>. See you this Friday - don't forget to bring your project!

Jim, KK1W

# Upcoming New England Flea Markets

8 Mar	Hicksville NY	LIMARC @LevitH	<a href="#">\$6@9+\$20/T@7</a>	Richard	K2KNB	516	694	4937	W+
21 Mar	Pomfret CT	ECARA @CommSch		Paul	KE1LI	860	928	2456	A+
22 March	Southington CT	SARA @HS	<a href="#">\$5@8</a> <a href="#">\$20/T@6</a>	Chet	KA1ILH	860	628	9346	W+
28 Mar	Middletown NY	OCARC @Wallkill	ComCtr	Donald	AA2DS	845	342	2056	A+
28 Mar	Lewiston ME	AARC ME Conv @Ramada	<a href="#">\$6@8</a> +8/T	Cory	NIURA	207	514	0202	+
29 March	Framingham MA	FARA @KeefeSch	<a href="#">\$25/T@7:30</a>	Bev	NILOO	508	626	2012	
29 Mar	Henniker NH	CVRC @CommSch		Jim	NS1E	603	428	7438	A+
11 April	Montreal PQ	MARC @CanLegion	<a href="#">\$5@9</a> <a href="#">\$10/T@8</a>	James		514	697	7205	W+
18 Apr	Manchester NH	NEAntqRC @BingoCtr	<a href="#">\$10@7:30</a> <a href="#">\$3@8:30</a>	Charlie		603	898	4821	F
18 Apr	S Portland ME	PAWA @AmLegion		Bryce	K1GAX	207	799	1116	A+
19 April	Cambridge MA		FLEA at MIT Third Sunday April thru October	Nick		617	253	3776	F
26 April	Lindenhurst NY	GSBARC		Walter	KA1RGI	631	957	0218	W
26 April	Lagrangeville NY	MtBARC @Tymor Pk		James	K2JIM	845	427	2702	A
1,2 May	Deerfield NH	NearFest @FG		Mike	K1TWF	978	250	1235	W
9 May	Lindenhurst NY	GSBARC		John	W2HCB	631	669	6321	A
9 May	Rensselaer NY	EGARA	Thomas	KC2FCP		518	272	1498	A

**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](mailto:wb1dby@comcast.net). Thank you,  
Larry, WB1DBY, Zero Beat Editor**

## 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 Jim, KK1W at [kk1w@arrl.net](mailto:kk1w@arrl.net) or (413) 245-3228.

Questions, Comments, and Suggestions  
Can Be Directed To:

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Open—your name here!

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# HCRA's Show & Tell

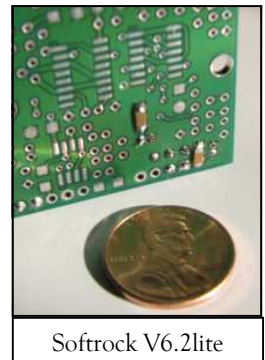
By the time you read this there won't be much time left to build, test and document your entry for this year's Show & Tell. But hey, we all work better under pressure, right? Until the presentation begins you can still be working away, putting the finishing touches on your creation



The 'Sudden Storm' from Frame

This year we have added a new twist to HCRA's Show & Tell. In an effort to encourage more hams to try their hand at constructing we gave away over a half dozen kits to lucky members. Our hope is to see those kits, along with others, entered into the competition this year. Won't it be interesting to see how these newbies did on their first kit building adventure? They will be competing in a new, separate class this year called 'Kit Builder Class' (we worked long and hard to come up with that name)!

There have been many changes in the technology of the hobby as well. Software Defined Radios (SDR's), once an esoteric idea, are now available in kit form from many vendors. The ever present 'computer in the shack' has changed ham radio and projects you can build to increase your enjoyment of our craft now include software as well. And of course we have seen the shrinking of the size of just about everything. Through hole mounting has given way to SMD (Surface Mount Devices) that require a few new tools along with good eyesight and a steady hand. Different, but not impossible—just some new skills to learn. But hey, if things didn't change what fun would that be?



Softrock V6.2lite

Do you need to know a little more about Show & Tell? It's pretty simple, build a project or write some software, bring it to the meeting and tell the crowd about your creation. A team of volunteer judges will score all the projects and announce the winner in each category. The categories this year are Expert and Kit Builder. The Kit Builder class is intended for the HCRA kit builder recipients as well as other first time kit builders. All other contestants will compete in the Expert class. Prizes this year are a \$50 HRO Gift Certificate to the winner in the Expert class and an ARRL Antenna Book to the winner in the Kit Builder class.

## Expert's Categories

### Expert

*Seasoned builders*

*Any type of project*

*1st Prize = \$50 HRO Certificate*

### Kit Builder

*Novice builder*

*Built from a kit*

Over the years our members have presented us with a range of items the ARRL would be proud to have in the handbook. Isn't it amazing what our members create? Not only are many of the projects unique but the craftsmanship is truly outstanding. Don't have any ideas yet? Take a look through a few ham magazines and see what others have been doing, or browse through some to the ads in the back of QST. A lot of small companies make some unique products that you can R&D (rob & duplicate) for Show & Tell. Still stumped? A trip through a ham flea market can not only give you ideas for a project but yield stuff to build it with too. The proverbial 'win-win' situation we always hear so much about. Last but not least you can always take a walk up and down the aisles in Radio Shack. They don't have as many parts as in the past but there are still some good ideas waiting for just the right person to find.

Once you pick your project, acquire the parts and assemble your entry don't forget about the paperwork. Part of the judging will be the quality of the documentation. Like everything else the project isn't complete until the paperwork is done!

# The Amateur Radio Crossword Puzzler

*By Chris Codella, W2PA*

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13	
14						15					16				
17						18					19				
			20		21				22	23					
24	25	26						27				28	29	30	
31				32			33					34			
35			36				37				38				
39						40				41					
42					43					44					
45				46				47	48			49			
50			51					52			53				
			54				55								
56	57	58			59	60					61		62	63	64
65					66						67				
68					69						70				

Clues on next page

## **Across**

1. Rock band Los \_\_\_\_
6. Polite XYL title
10. Cooper maker
14. Amplifier connector label, say
15. Light beige
16. Coax elbows
17. Loop type
18. Apple competitor
19. Phony DX
20. Sign in a radio station
22. Packet ckt.
24. NTS rock band?
27. Clues
31. Bamboozle
32. SV letter
34. B4, of yore
35. CW shorthand item
37. Single- or multi-, in propagation
38. Gator's cousin
39. Knight's need
40. NTS unit
41. Type of feed
42. Globe \_\_\_\_ transmitter
43. ARRL volunteer official
44. Prefix with -single
45. Good report, using 35-acrosses
46. W7 city
49. 76, 77 and 78 maker
50. Expressionless
52. Illicit rendezvous station?
54. Area net for 55-across
55. Region net for 12-down
56. Staff
59. Brain wave
61. Soldering tools
65. OOTC members
66. Jamaica
67. Bigger than picos
68. Bosses on 40-acrosses
69. Small dwellings
70. Isle of Man prefix

## **Down**

1. Needer of too many fills
2. New year's nr
3. Traffic handling award
4. Words before band, on an FCC citation?
5. W6YX
6. Noble I-land family name
7. Tennis whiz
8. Characters before seventy three
9. Entry class
10. Early radio parts maker
11. 9RN place
12. A 30-down, in W2-land
13. An end to perfection?
21. Ready follower?
23. Transistor type
24. Long haul 52-across
25. Common preamble item
26. Where a radiogram enters the ether
27. Fox or turkey follower
28. Guy wire hardware items
29. \_\_\_\_ back
30. ARRL unit
33. Word count
36. Batt. term. label
38. 7 MHz timer
40. Pre-LED amber light
41. Spreading, as with cream cheese
43. EA talk
46. Health resort
47. Forever
48. Humor newspaper nameplate middle
51. Places to find antenna restrictions
53. Filter maker
55. RTTY conveyance
56. Area net for 11-down
57. RX ckt.
58. Old video game inits.
60. Was CR8, once
62. Band breaker
63. Dahdit, in F-land
64. Dir. from W2 to LU

**The Answer is in the Zero Beat Section of [www.hcra.org](http://www.hcra.org)**

## DX News

SB DX @ ARL \$ARLD007  
ARLD007 DX news

ZCZC AE07  
QST de W1AW  
DX Bulletin 7 ARLD007  
From ARRL Headquarters  
Newington CT February 19, 2009  
To all radio amateurs

SB DX ARL ARLD007  
ARLD007 DX news

This week's bulletin was made possible with information provided by NC1L, QRZ DX, the OPDX Bulletin, DXNL, 425 DX News, The Daily DX, Contest Corral from QST and the ARRL Contest Calendar and WA7BNM web sites. Thanks to all.

ITALY, I. To celebrate the 100th anniversary of Guglielmo Marconi's Nobel Prize in Physics, special event station IY1GM is QRV until March 31. QSL via IK1UGX.

GRENADA, J3. Bill, K4LTA and Ruby, K4UPS are QRV as J37BO and J37RO, respectively, until March 4. Activity is on 80 to 10 meters, and possibly 6 meters. They will be active as J38A in the ARRL DX CW contest. In addition, look for AK4Z, KT4E and KE4TG to be QRV as J3/homecalls. Activity is on all bands using CW, SSB and various digital modes. QSL to home calls.

CRETE, SV9. Willi, DJ7RJ will be QRV as SV9/DJ7RJ beginning February 24 and be here for three weeks. Activity will be on the HF bands using CW and SSB. QSL to home call.

TUVALU, T2. Bob, W7YAQ and Bill, N7OU are QRV as T27A and T27OU, respectively. Activity is on 160 to 10 meters using mostly CW with some RTTY. They will be QRV as T27A as Multi/Single entry in the ARRL DX CW contest. QSL to home calls.



## Class Projects

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

I have been teaching a *General Class* license class for the past five years. The first year, I had five students, the next year 35! This year, I have only five again.

Not being a pedagogical genius, it never really occurred to me until last year to give my *General Class* students a project to work on while we slogged through the material. Last year, some of them built little QRP kits. Not only was that fun, it was educational. Some of them had never even soldered before!

Since last year's project worked out so well, I am asking this year's students to do some kind of project, but one that they choose themselves. Here's the short list that I came up with:

- \* Build a kit like my students did last year.
- \* Build a 2m beam. At our first meeting, one of the guys noted that while he could hear a repeater about 30 miles away from his QTH, he wasn't able to hit it with the 5/8-wavelength vertical he was using. I suggest that he build a Cheap Yagi (<http://www.fredspinner.com/WOFMS/CheapYagi/vjbcy.html>).
- \* Download some antenna simulation software and analyze a dipole or vertical antenna. MM-ANA (<http://mmhamsoft.amateur-radio.ca/mmana/index.htm>) is free and looks to be a pretty good program.
- \* Learn Morse Code. Being the CW geek that I am, how could I not suggest this?

I wanted to give my students a bigger choice, so I asked the readers of my blog for more suggestions:

Kenneth, W6KWF, replied, "Hands down the most useful and most successful projects I've built have been 2m J-poles. I've built both the 1/2-in. copper tubing and TV line variants, and use both as my primary antennas. The TV line one is nice because I live in an apartment, so when I need a good antenna, I tie a magnet to the top of it and stick it to my upstairs neighbor's balcony. It's a very forgiving antenna."

Zeke also like the idea of building J-pole antennas. "You didn't mention the age group/groups you are working with," he said, "but have you thought about a hands-on project such as a j-pole for 2 or 6 meters. It would give them an opportunity to feel the pride that follows an involved project. Furthermore, the J-pole is a pretty good antenna."

John N8ZYA, said, "I like the [idea of learning CW] it's like learning to play the guitar or piano. A skill that can be used your entire lifetime!"

Robert suggested, "How about building a 20 meter delta loop? I am very inexperienced when it comes to antenna building, but a friend suggested this for working DX on 20 meters and it worked out really well. In fact, my first contact on it was Spain!"

I would love to offer my students even more choices. If you have a suggestion, please e-mail it to me at [cwgeek@kb6nu.com](mailto:cwgeek@kb6nu.com). Thanks!

Meeting Location:

Meetings are held at the  
Feeding Hills  
Congregational Church

21 North Westfield Street  
Feeding Hills, MA 01030.

*Parking is in back  
of the church.*

*Access is HP accessible.*

**Next Meeting:  
Friday Night**

March 6th, 2009 — 7:30 PM

**Show  
&  
Tell**



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



PLEASE HAND CANCEL