

Zero Beat



Our 55th Year

A Publication of the Hampden County Radio Association

October, 2000

*Join Us on Friday, October 6th, 2000 for
Mike Tracey, KC1SX*

Doors open at 7:PM Meeting Starts at 7:30

Mike works at the ARRL Labs, and
Will give a presentation on
Lightning Protection and Proper Grounding.

Hope to see you there!!!

WB1HOF 2000 -- Basketball Hall of Fame

Once again, the HCRA is sponsoring a Special Event Station for the enshrinement weekend at the Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield.

The event will take place during the weekend of October 14 and 15, 2000, and will commemorate the enshrinement of the latest Hall of Fame honors recipients.

We need help in all aspects of this special event, including antenna installation and removal and operations. If you can help, please contact Jim Mullen, WA1ZUH.

Please Help, it is activities like this that help advertise Amateur Radio and the HCRA, and show your dedication to this club.

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HCRA CONTACTS

Questions, Comments, and Suggestions Can Be Directed To:

HCRA OFFICERS

President	Jim Mullen, WA1ZUH	(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		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)	w1uph2@juno.com
WB1HOF Trustee	Jim Mullen, WA1ZUH	(413) 245-3228	jmullen@rockys.com
WM1FD Trustee	John Pise, KX1X	(413) 532-7474	kx1x@arrl.net

EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

Emergency Coordinator	Dave Isham, KB1MU	kb1mu@mindspring.com
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ON THE AIR

Please remember to join our Monday evening 10m Net

Join NCS Tom, N1MUV, On Monday nights, 7:30PM local for the
HCRA/W1NY 10m Net 28.375 +/- QRM

43rd Annual Jamboree-On-The-Air (JOTA)

HAM operators bring scouts from around the world together for a weekend during this fun event, October 21 at 0001z to October 22 at 2359z. Scouts from Pioneer Valley Council will be attending a camporee at the Horace A. Moses Scout Reservation in Woronoco. The focus of the camporee will be JOTA and JOTI (Jamboree on the Internet).

Please make time during that weekend to work local scouts (local repeaters and 146.550) and others around the world. Call CQ-JOTA on the World Scouting JOTA Frequencies:

SSB: 3.940, 7.290, 14.290, 18.140, 21.360, 24.960, and 28.390

CW: 3.590, 7.030, 14.070, 18.080, 21.140, 24.910, and 28.190



U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Station, K3G

All are invited to contact for a QSL the Special Event Station in Philadelphia, Pa.:

U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, K3G from 1400 Z to 0000 Z October 21, 2000.

Commemorating the Sixty First Anniversary of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary from Coast Guard Base Group Philadelphia.

7.232; 14.332; 21.332; 28.332 "Special Commemorative QSL" Via: NM3S 196 Dam View Drive Media, Pa. 19063

You are welcome to stop in to U.S. Coast Guard Group Phila. During the day to visit the Station. Address: 1 Washington Ave. -

Philadelphia, Pa. For More Information: Dan Amoroso 610-566-2187 NM3S@prodigy.net

Event Co Chairs: Joe Rzucidlo - DSO- CM 5 NR and Dan Amoroso; ADSO- CM 5 NR



DX Clips

de
Jordy, W1JK

This month I will discuss DX and "solar max" conditions. With the Solar Flux Index (SFI) over 200, 10M came alive on Friday, Sept 22. Signals were "loud" from much of Europe and Oceania. Australian stations were 5-9 and Europeans were 5-9+. This should improve even more as the Fall season progresses.

DX operators should look forward to the next six months and get busy "pruning" those Antenna systems. Get the new Beam or Quad or Dipole, etc up in the air...30-40 ft high should do just fine. Conditions through the Winter will be as good as it gets for the next ten years. If you are serious about improving your DXCC score, this is a great opportunity!

Many DXpeditions are scheduled and it should be "fairly easy" to work some "rare" ones.

I will discuss each of the most used HF bands and make some suggestions for propagation "windows" typical for each:

First - my all time favorite DX band - 20M: This is the premier DX band and it is open somewhere 24 hrs. a day in Fall, Spring & Summer; however, in mid-winter there will be some nights with poor propagation if the SFI dips. Watch for good openings Southeast at sunrise and sunset to Asia on "long path". In mid to late afternoon you should listen for African countries. Mornings, afternoons & evenings, too, bring on the Europeans. Also look for Asia in the afternoon and the Indian Ocean in early evening. This is an interesting path - sometimes long & short path are useful at the same time - pick the best. If you only have a 20M beam, you will never have to worry about a lack of DX. There are stations on the DXCC honor roll who have done it all on this band.

15M: Similar to 20M in many respects, but usually not open around the clock. In its favor is a lower noise level which is attributable to the higher frequency. This means that you can copy weaker signals than on 20M. Another obvious advantage is the smaller physical size and turning radius for space-limited installations. The mornings are replete with Europeans, Indian Ocean, & Africans...Asian stations are very loud & easy to work also. The ubiquitous Indonesians are always easy to work. Every night produces openings into West Asia, Russia & Europe. Late afternoon is great for Oceania contacts.

10M: This band should be spectacular! It is the quietest of the HF DX bands & requires little power and a small Antenna "footprint". I operated 10M mobile on Saturday, Sept 23, during the Scandinavian contest & worked Norway, Finland, Sweden & other Europeans one after the other while sitting in the car for 1/2 hour while the wife shopped. Most signals were 5-9 + 10-20 & I received superlative reports "for a mobile". This is truly the "magic band". You can install a 10M only mobile very cheaply & have a ball working DX from your car if your home QTH is a "problem". One word of caution...New mobilers are advised to operate while parked - it is a lot safer. Remember, 10M signals are refracted at sharper angles over very long distances as they "graze" the Ionosphere. This translates into benefits for those whose antennas are at modest heights. If the band seems dead, try a CQ...you will be amazed at what is out there.

Basic suggestions: your beam should be Northeast after sunrise; go Northwest in the afternoon & Southeast all day into the evening. Go Southwest mid morning.

12/17M: These bands are similar to the bands adjacent to them. The bands are very small, but quite interesting. 12M usually stays open longer than 10M & 17M often stays open longer than 15M. They are both quieter than 20M & the propagation is similar to their "sister" bands. Also, as I have said in the past, the competition is much less formidable here because many operators are using modest antennas & run lower power than on 20M & 15M. I have recently been operating these bands more frequently and enjoy them. In fact, I have been asking some "rarer" DX stations what their operating plans are for 12 & 17M and have been pleasantly surprised in many cases when they offered to QSY immediately. In every case I had a Q5 QSO with them on bands that had very little activity & at times seemed dead. This points up the necessity of calling CQ, particularly on 12M. Put up a G5RV or a conventional dipole cut for these bands & have fun.

Don't miss out on the great propagation! These exceptional conditions will only last a few years & will geometrically increase your DX pleasure.

LOOK FOR:

VK0M - Macquarie Is.: Everybody's "not so favorite" operator, Alan (VK0MM), is leaving there Nov 12. That means that there will be no operators there for quite a while. Check his RIGID operating schedule on his website: www.geocities.com/VK0LD/1.html

3B6 - Agalega: operations should begin Oct 8 & end Oct 25. This is a big DXpedition with many experienced ops. Don't miss it.

3W - Vietnam: Hans, W1LWS will be active from Nov 9-26 on 80-10M CW only.

9K2 - Kuwait: Bob, 9K2ZZ is going back to Kuwait & expects to reactivate his old call. this time he plans to be active on PSK31. QSL via W8CNL only.

AX9 - Norfolk Is.: A multinational team of YL operators will be QRV from Oct 5-12 on CW & SSB. The call is AX9YL & QSL is via VK3 bureau or VK3DYL.

FG - Guadeloupe: The Florida DXpedition group will be there Oct 24-31. They will be a Multi-single entry in the CQWW contest as FG5BG. After the contest they will sign FG/homecalls. QSL per instructions. FG5BG is QSL via KR4DA.

KH0 - Mariana Is.: KH0T & KH0V from Saipan Oct 5-8 on all bands 80-10M. QSL via home call signs - JA1SGU & JJ1KZI respectively.

3X - Guinea: Dan, VE2DPS has returned as 3XY2D. QSL via W3HMK.

J5 - Guinea Bissau: Look for J5X (DJ6SI) & J5Z. QSL J5Z via DJ9ZB. Franz, DJ9ZB is a fine gentleman & will QSY to the WRC bands for you, if asked.

A3 - Tonga Is.: Yt1AD & Z32AU are active as A35AD & A35AU until Oct 28 on CW & SSB on all HF bands. QSL via Yt1AD & Z32AU.

YJ - Vanuatu: VK4BKM & VK4FI will be active Oct 8-16 as YJ0DX on all bands, especially 6M. QSL direct only via VK4JSR.

Good luck & think DX. See you next month....

de Jordy Koltz, W1JK, W1JK@earthlink.net



Are You Ready for Hurricane Season?

de **Eric Tuller** **NIQKO**

The Atlantic hurricane season each year runs from June 1st through November 30th. This means that during this period tropical storms and hurricanes are a threat to strike land...including New England. Since 1900, a total of 39 tropical systems have impacted New England in one way or another. Some brought just light amounts of rain and light winds, while others brought flooding rains, large storm surges and destructive winds.

Since hurricane season is here, now is the time to prepare for it. Here are some things you can do to help protect life and property before a storm threatens:

The marine community: One of the main threats a tropical storm or hurricane can pose to New England is to the boating community. Now is the time to Prepare your vessels for such a threat: Boat owners should have all the necessary gear on board for properly tying down the vessel. You will lose precious time if you have to rush around searching for gear when a storm is approaching. Realize that you may not be able to pull your boat out of the water before a storm threatens. Your only alternative will be to tie the vessel down. Have a plan worked out with the marina operator so there are no questions or any confusion when the time comes to tie up or pull the boat out of the water. Be sure to take pictures and make a written description of the vessel, so that this may be used after the storm passes for insurance purposes. Insure that your vessel is as watertight as possible.

Inland residents: Tropical storms and hurricanes not only affect the marine Community, inland areas can be affected as well. Now is the time to prepare: Be sure to have plenty of batteries on hand for flashlights, AM/FM radios, and your NOAA weather radio. More often than not, power will be disrupted during the storm and may be disrupted for several days. Be sure to have canned food and other items that do not need refrigeration on hand. As stated above, it is almost a certainty that electrical and telephone power will be disrupted. If you own a portable generator, be sure it is properly hooked into the power supply. If it is not properly installed it may do damage to the main power supply. Store plywood and plenty of nails so that you can quickly board up windows on open facing sides of your home. Do not use masking tape to tape windows it will not help. In case of the unlikely event that you must evacuate, know where your nearest storm shelter is located, and the quickest route to it.

Coastal residents: Know your evacuations routes and the proper shelters for your area. Check with your local town hall to see if you are in an evacuation zone. Most shelters will not allow pets. Make arrangements ahead of time for a place for your pets to stay. Some animal hospitals offer to keep pets until you are able to return home. Know where your gas and water shutoffs are. It is essential that you turn off both your gas and water before you leave your home. If you choose not to head to a shelter, make arrangements now with relatives or friends if you wish to stay with them should you need to evacuate.

Following these simple steps will help make what can be a very stressful and difficult time that is created by the threat of a tropical storm or hurricane go a bit more smoothly.

The Beaufort Wind Scale

Beaufort#	mph	Observation	Beaufort#	mph	Observation
0	0-1	smoke rises vertically	6	25-31	large branches sway
1	1-3	smoke drifts slowly	7	32-38	whole trees in motion
2	4-7	leaves rustle	8	39-46	twigs break of trees
3	8-12	leaves and twigs in motion	9	47-54	branches break
4	13-18	small branches move	10	55-63	trees snap and are blown down
5	19-24	small trees sway	11	64-72	wide spread damage
			12	73-82	extreme damage

SEVERE WEATHER BRINGS OUT THE BEST IN HAMS

Hams in Northern New Jersey and just up the Hudson River in Dutchess County, New York, rallied to provide assistance as severe weather and flash flooding struck the region last month. Dutchess County Emergency Coordinator Adam Nowik Jr, KC2DAA, reports that in the early morning hours of August 10, a severe thunderstorm rolled into the area. Substantial damage occurred in areas of Poughkeepsie and LaGrange. The Dutchess County Red Cross was called upon to provide relief to families in the affected areas. Red Cross officials, in turn, put out the call for Amateur Radio assistance in the relief effort. Nowik says that he, SEC Ken Akasofu, KL7JCQ, Red Cross Communications Officer and AEC Ed Hahn, WC2J, located 21 amateurs available for service.

"Our first stations were on the air within 45 minutes of the initial call up," Nowik said. Hams assisted the Red Cross at the Chapter House, at a fire station that was being used as a feeding site and at a staging area for disaster workers, and the Red Cross ERV--the emergency response vehicle--plus two outreach vehicles. The situation was even worse the weekend of August 12-13 in Northern New Jersey, where parts of Morris and Sussex counties got anywhere from eight to 14 inches of rain in less than 24 hours, flooding local highways and homes. The National Weather Service issued a severe flood warning on the morning of Saturday, August 12.

"A dam failed on one of the lakes in that region, and things only got worse," reports Northern New Jersey SEC Mike Hoeft, K2MPH. "Hams were called on originally to supplement, and--at one point--replace failed landline communications in Sparta and Jefferson townships," he said. That involved a combined effort between Sussex County RACES and local ARES operators. After lightning knocked out town communications in Hardyston, hams filled that gap--and others. Amateur Radio operators also handled communications stations at several Red Cross shelters set up in those areas as well as the Metropolitan Red Cross Chapter--the lead office for Northern New Jersey. Four Red Cross shelters were established, and, with the help of Amateur Radio communication, the Salvation Army and Red Cross assisted those who had to be evacuated from the area. The effort continued through the weekend and into the following week, when FEMA personnel arrived and requested ham radio shadows to help with damage assessment, Hoeft said.

As the weather raged, Amateur Radio SKYWARN volunteers monitored local conditions as they went from bad to worse. Sussex County SKYWARN Coordinator Deb McKay, N2TTP, says weather watchers reported rain falling at more than an inch per hour. A possible dam breach at Tamarack Lake, near McKay's home, upped the tension and the ante for amateurs and local emergency officials.

RACES was called in the afternoon of August 12 after an emergency was declared. The Sussex County emergency van was deployed first near Tamarack Lake and later in Sparta, where it was staffed 24 hours a day until August 16.

McKay, who's also a RACES volunteer, reported that hams in surrounding counties in New Jersey as well as in parts of New York and Pennsylvania joined the growing network. "It was something that I was very proud to be a part of," she said.



Emergency Coordinator's Corner

Simulated Emergency Test (SET)

de KB1MU, Dave Isham



On Saturday November 4 there will be a Simulated Emergency Test (SET). The SET will be conducted between 9:30 AM and 10:30 AM. Operations will be conducted on local repeaters, HF bands (80 meters) and packet. Traffic from the Two meter nets will be relayed on 3.934 +/- . Packet operations will consist of individual message passed between participants.

The SET is a nationwide exercise in emergency communications. Both ARES and NTS are involved. The SET exercise gives communicators the opportunity to focus on the emergency communications capability within their community while interacting with NTS nets.

The purpose of SET is to find the strengths and weaknesses of ARES, NTS, and other groups. It also provides a public demonstration of the value to the public that amateur radio provides. An "emergency" situation is announced and emergency nets will be activated. Designated stations originate message on behalf of served agencies. Emergency power operation is encouraged.

The main function of NYS in an emergency situation is to tie together all of the various local activities and to provide a means by which all traffic destined outside of a local area can be systematically relayed to the addressee. In a real emergency we find amateurs with all sorts of varied interests coming out of the woodwork. Get them involved in SET so they will know more about emergency communications should be handled.

See you on the SET and keep those batteries charged.

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 st Week of the Month 147.09 Every other week 147.000

Club Meetings & Testing Sessions

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

Amateur Radio Related Special Events, Flea Markets, and Auctions

Oct 2 nd	Nashua NH -NARC Auction
Oct 6 th , 7 th	Rochester NY- Hoss Traders
Oct 8 th	Wallingford, CT – NUTMEG
Oct 14 th , 15 th	WB1HOF -- (HCRA sponsored Special Event at the) Basketball Hall of Fame, Springfield
Oct 21 st	Wallingford, CT - TRI county ARC Auction
Oct 21 st , 22 nd	JOTA – Scouting's Jamboree on the Air
Oct 27, 28, 29	CQWW International HF Contest (SSB)

Please forward additions and suggestions to: Stan Bates, n1inb seb@wca.com

(All times Local)

HAMPDEN COUNTY RADIO ASSOCIATION Board of Directors meeting, Sept 8, 2000, Feeding Hills Congregational Church

HCRA Officers present: Jim Mullen, W1ZUH, Jordy Koltz, W1JK, Greg Stoddard, N1AEH, Dave Isham, KB1MU, Betty Buller, KB1CPZ, Stan Bates, N1INB, John Pise, KX1X, Les Prentice K1DNX and Irv Slitsky K6IS.

MEMBER REPORTS:

Treasurer: Starting balance for the new 2000/2001 year is \$1370.00. The HCRA portion of Field Day expenses have been paid.

Secretary: A set of ZeroBeat mailing labels will be generated to be used for last years members who have not yet renewed. The label will contain the expiration date to be used as a reminder. The minutes of the board meeting will be sent via e-mail to all board members, and also available for publication is the next issue of ZeroBeat.

Vice President: Possible duties of the Vice President were discussed. Jorty has agreed to be responsible for the "big stakes" raffle to be drawn during the November Auction. An attempt will also be made to obtain "paid" advertisers for ZeroBeat.

Zero Beat: All information for inclusion in the Oct issue must be in John's hands by Sept 29. To reduce printing costs, future issues will be on plain white paper. The idea of a single colored sheet proved to be more expensive. It was agreed to pay the required amount for the use of the "HCRA.ORG" domain name, as a first step towards an e-mail version of ZeroBeat. John will also take the initial steps toward setup up the HCRA web page.

Special Event Station: There is sufficient interest in repeating the Basketball Hall of Fame operation. Betty KB1CPZ will attempt to follow-up on this.

Big E Station: There was sufficient interest in participating in this event. Contact will be made with The event organizer. We will participate for one weekday.

Education: This item was discussed with no conclusion.

Program: Irv reviewed the lineup of speakers through the first of the year. He emphasized the need for assistance from the general membership in obtaining interesting speakers for the monthly meetings.

Membership: Betty will complete the info sheet that she has begun. This info sheet along with a membership application will be made available to all new and upgrading hams at the MTARA VE sessions. Any of these new or upgraded hams will receive a free membership for the remainder of the current year, if they attend a HCRA meeting. This will include receipt of ZeroBeat.

Technical: Stan will continue to work on setting up a "Show and Tell" session immediately prior to the monthly meetings. Stan is also working on an article which unfortunately did not make the past issue of ZeroBeat.

Trustees: W1NY: The board expressed their appreciation for the fine job done by Tom N1MUV as net manager for the weekly session of the HCRA 10 meter net.

W1LHOF: Betty has made arrangements for Jim to meet with Hall of Fame personnel. Arrangements will be made for the W1LHOF special events operation. The event will be on the weekend of Oct 14/15 with operation 10:00 am to 4:00 PM Sat and 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM S Help will be needed for setup, operating, and teardown.

OLD BUSINESS:

Big E: HCRA day at the Big E will be Sept 28. The club is looking for volunteers to help man this operation. Free admission and free parking are among the enticements offered.

Name Badges: Jim has a made arrangements with a vendor to supply name badges for club members for approx. \$5.00. Members who desire name badges should contact Jim.

Meeting Hall Costs: It was agreed to continue at the current meeting place at least until 2001. The board is open to suggestions of meeting place alternatives.

NEW BUSINESS:

Field Day Planning: No discussion was held on this item.

Auction Preparation: The raffle tickets will be printed without number. This will reduce the printing costs. The board agreed that name, call sign, and phone number would be adequate information.

W1LHNN Antenna purchase request.: Walt W1LHNN has expressed a desire to purchase the club owned antennas. The board voted unanimously to deny this request.

Thank You Letters: The secretary will send a letter of thanks to Bob Ennis W1FXH for his generous equipment donation. Thank you letters will also be sent to the members who were kind enough to include cash donations with their annual dues.

73 de KB1MU
David W. Isham

Swap & Shop

Classifieds available FREE to members of HCRA if space is available. Radio and Computer related equipment only, please.

FOR SALE

USED TOWER 48' SPAULDIND, self supporting, 28" at base

USED TOWER: 38' TRISTAO (no U.S. TOWERS), self supporting, tubular, crank up & tilt over, 2 winces, rotor mounts at ground level, entire tower rotates

USED TOWER: 48' ROHN 25G, fold over, winch, rotor mounting plate, base plate, stainless guys

USED TOWER: 37' TRI-EX, crank up, winch, fold over base

HAM-M ROTOR, relubricated and tested

ICOM-IC-728 HF transceiver, AM-FM board, HM-12 mic, IC-PS-15 power supply, manuals

HEATHKIT HW-101 HF transceiver, HP-23B power supply, manuals.

HY-GAIN DB-10-15 DUOBANDER antenna, 3 elements on 10 and 15, manual, like new condition

All towers are on the ground and dismantled.

CONTACT: Mike, W1DGJ, Ludlow, MA (413) 583-6678

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The next meeting of the
Hampden County Radio Association
Will be on Friday

October 6th, 2000

At 7:30 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 on the
146.94 and 147.105 repeaters.*

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

HCRA
P.O. Box 562
Agawam, Massachusetts
01001

TIME TO RENEW!!!
Your membership in the
HCRA has expired!!!
Don't take a chance on missing out on
your monthly Zero Beat!!!

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For the next HCRA Club Meeting with
Mike Tracey, KC1SX
Lightning Protection & Grounding