

Zero Beat

Our 40th ARRL affiliated year
Special Service Club

Hampden County Radio Association

Springfield, MA

September Meeting

The September meeting of the HCRA will be held on Friday, September 9, at 8:00 PM at the Feeding Hills Congregational Church. The topic will be packet radio and the HCRA's new PBBS.

Phil, **KA1MP**, and John, **AC1T**, will discuss the details of the new HCRA PBBS (packet bulletin board system) **W1NY-2**. They will describe what is needed to access the PBBS, how to use it once you gain access, and what it can do for you.

Also, a general discussion of packet radio will be held, along with a demonstration. Join us to get the latest scoop on **W1NY-2**!

Callbooks

The club will be taking orders for the 1989 callbooks at the September meeting. The price for the North American edition is \$26.00, and the club will be making them available for \$24.00. The price for the international edition is \$28.00, and the club will have them for \$26.00. Payment is due when you place your order, and the callbooks will be available at the December meeting.

Contest Advantage

Rusty Hack, **NM1K**

After setting up the antenna for the 15 meter station, I was sitting there waiting for the Field Day festivity to begin. When a man in a yellow shirt walked in and put down a beige box. Upon this box were buttons, knobs, and an assortment of switches. The words "Computer Keyer" were displayed in large, black letters. I thought "this is the little box I heard so much about"? It could not be for it was so small. As Stan (**KA1ZE**) explained the workings of the keyer to me, I thought of what Bob (**KA1KPH**) had said to me during the practice setup the week before, "If we had this for the ARRL November sweepstakes we would be dangerous".

It was all so simple. Just enter the callsign of the station on the computer keyboard. Like magic, it appeared on the LCD display's top half. The contest exchange, when entered, would be in the bottom half. Punch "Log" and you're all done, right? Ha! Another feature of the keyer is if you work a dup, the display tells you the date, time, and QSO number in-

stantly when you punch in the station's callsign.

The first half hour or so I must have sounded strange. I would repeat the other station's callsign while pushing the keys on the keyboard. As I do not know how to type, I just hunt for the keys while saying the call. There must have been at least 3 seconds between letters. After about 2 hours I was a pro! You really don't have to say a word or use the paddle key. All you do is push buttons. This is the life! Sit there and listen for the call, push the first memory button which gives your contest info while you type in his call into the keyer to log it. As you listen for the other station's contest info, push memory 2 after he or she unkeys and the computer sends 73 and good luck. Then push the 3rd memory that sends "CQ Field Day".

On CW, it's even better. After you hear their call and type it in, just push the memory 1 plus the special Green button. And it sends in CW the call you entered and the contest info in that memory. Another advantage in the CW mode is you can use the key to send the info instead of the keyboard. So if

you are good with the key, you can really fly. The first 2 1/2 hours I did about 254 QSO's. This is a great little keyer for the serious contester. All in all, it was an interesting time on 15 meters. I feel sorry for the little guys when the bigtime contesters get a hold of this little keyer. On phone we had a DVK Digital Voice Keyer. So this little box does not do everything, almost but not quite. 73, NM1K Rusty Hack.

Exams

License exams are held periodically on the "east" and "west" sides of the river. For details on the "east" exams, contact Yorke, K1BXE, at (413) 566-3010. For details on the "west" exams, contact Jeanette, KA1MEW, at (413) 786-1463. Current "east" exams are planned for September 10 and December 10 at 8:30 AM.

Nets

The Ten Meter Ragchew Net net meets every Sunday at 7:00 PM on 28.400. Ten meters is open, so join the net, work some DX, and have a good time! The CW version of the Ragchew Net meets on Tuesdays at 8:00 PM on 3.709. Practice your CW from 5 to 20 WPM with Bob, KB1VV and the net.

The Nutmeg VHF Traffic Net meets every day, at 9:30 PM on the 146.88 repeater in Bristol, CT. Rusty, NM1K is the Net Manager.

The WMPN meets Monday through Saturday at 6:00 PM on 3.937, and the WM(CW) net meets evenings at 7:00 PM 3.562 Mhz. The Western Mass Traffic Net meets Monday through Friday at 1:00 PM on the K1FFK (Mt. Greylock) repeater, 146.91.

HCRA Meetings

First Friday of each month at Feeding Hills Congregational Church
Center of Feeding Hills
Intersection of routes 57 & 187
Doors open at 7:30 PM
Meeting starts promptly at 8:00 PM

Packet Radio and W1NY-2

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