

Zero Beat



Hampden County Radio Association

November 2012

Friday's Meeting



Friday's HCRA meeting will feature a presentation on portable operating, with an emphasis on SOTA (Summits on the Air) activations. Nick, K1MAZ, will talk about all the fun that he and Jimmy (KB1PRA), and John (Kx1x) and others had on Mt. Monadnock in New Hampshire on October 20th. Nick is a recent member of the SOTA Jerks, and is also venturing out on his own to operate from many nearby summits. We'll discuss what SOTA entails, and how you can get started from home and from a peak. New portable rigs, new antennas, and new battery technology will be shown. Join us for a fun-filled and informative meeting! Other likely participants: Ed, KB1NWH; Dave, WN1E; Matt, W1MSW; Jim, KK1W. – Frandy, n1fj@arrl.net

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Antenna Zoning for the Radio Amateur

Is there a tower and antenna in your future? Applying for a Permit? On November 19 the **Franklin County Amateur Radio Club (FCARC)** speaker will be Fred Hopengarten, K1VR, telecommunications lawyer. Fred is author of the definitive book, *Antenna Zoning for the Radio Amateur*. Fred has represented many amateurs in conflicts with local zoning authorities about antennas and towers, including right here in Franklin County. His book is published in cooperation with the ARRL and he will probably have a few copies on hand.

This is a not-to-be-missed meeting !

The meeting will be at the usual time and place, Greenfield High School, Lenox Ave (off Silver St.) at 7:15 p.m. (coffee at 7:00).

Directions to School: From Greenfield go St. (Rtes 5 and at Silver St.

From North or Exit 27, Route exit, Bernardston Rd (Routes 5 and 10 South). The Silver St. intersection is about 0.3 mile south of Rte 2, turn right at the stop light. On Silver St. look for a sign for the High School on the left, about 0.3 mile from Federal St. [\(Click here for a Google map.\)](#)



Greenfield High the center of north on Federal 10) about 1.5 miles, (stop light) turn left. South on I-91, take 2 East, then the first



FROM THE SHACK

Our last 2012 meeting is Friday, November 2nd!

Yep, November is our last meeting this year. December brings the joint HCRA/MTARA Holiday Party, which replaces the regular meeting. We have an interesting presentation for you this month, a presentation focusing on portable operations, including SOTA, battery technology, field deployable antenna ideas for HF, and an opportunity to see a KX3 setup and operating. A little something for everyone that will leave you with some ideas you can employ in the future.

HF Bands on FIRE lately!

Cycle 24 has been exciting the last few weeks. Ten meters has been open worldwide, sometimes just after daybreak. Combined with the start of the new contest season and you've got a recipe for fun! Not interested in contesting? That's OK, the bands still work for ragchewing, DX, digital and more. Don't be one of those folks that is 'negative on everything' except what they like. Every facet of amateur radio encompasses all aspects of the hobby. You can't do well in contest, work DX or chat with your buddies on 75m if you don't have a good antenna, can't set up an emergency operation without portable power - you get the idea. As soon as you close your mind to a mode of operation, types of antennas, contesting, etc. you lose the opportunity to learn more about our hobby. Stay open-minded and embrace the activities of others instead of coloring them with your own preferences.

Cycle 24 peak revised!

Although our current solar cycle is not one for the record books NASA has revised the predicted peak to May 2013. Earlier predictions had the peak occurring in either 2011 or 2012. This is certainly good news for amateur operators everywhere. Read more about NASA's forecasts [here](#).

Notes from the cluster:

Tickets for the HCRA/MTARA joint [Holiday Party](#) are selling fast. Pick up yours at November's MTARA or HCRA meetings or by mail to either club. December 10th is your date for fun at the [Steaming Tender](#) in Palmer, MA.

Our annual November auction has been cancelled this year. If you hear someone mentioning attending please inform them of the change.

ARRL 10-Meter contest is this December. This year should be an exciting one, especially based on recent 10-meter band openings. Look for more information from



At my "summer shack!"

W1MSW about this fun event elsewhere in this edition of *Zero Beat*.

KX3 Raffle prize is in our hands! When we hold this year's drawing we will have the radio ready and waiting for you. Ed will have this excellent prize on display and we plan on having a KX3 on display and operating at tonight's meeting!

'73... Jim/KK1W

Visit our website at <http://www.hcra.org>. We are also on Facebook Groups: *Hampden County Radio Association* and *SOTAJerks*. Join us!

Join the ARRL or renew your membership!

ARRL members enjoy:

- QST Magazine
- Members-Only Web Services
- Technical Information Service
- Member Discounts
- Outgoing QSL Service
- Continuing Education
- ARRL as an Advocate
- Regulatory Information Branch
- Public Relations for Amateur Radio
- ARRL Field Organization
- ARRL-sponsored contests
- Operating Awards
- Local Clubs
- Amateur Radio Emergency Service
- Hamfests and Conventions
- Volunteer Examiner Coordinator Program

<http://www.arrl.org/membership>



ARRL 10 Meter Contest December 8-9

December is right around the corner and that means it's time for the ARRL 10 Meter Contest. Every year HCRA participates in this contest as a club. What does that mean you ask? It means when individuals submit their score, they write "Hampden County Radio Association" into the club field of their Cabrillo file and the combined scores of members are tallied and compared against other clubs competing in the category. Here are 10 reasons why you should plan on operating in the 10m contest this year.

- It's Fun!
- Technicians have SSB privileges on a slice of the band
- A 10 meter antenna is easy to make
- A 10 meter antenna is short and easy to hang up
- Propagation on 10 meters has been great over the last couple weeks
- You can operate both CW and SSB in this contest
- The exchange is easy
- If propagation remains good, you might be able to add some new countries
- It's fun to hear other HCRA members working stations
- It's fun to see if you can beat KB1NWH in the pileup!

So if nothing above makes sense, but you're still "contest curious" make sure to make the November 2nd meeting where I will go into a bit more detail about the 10 meter contest, what you need to participate and how to submit your log when you're done. I hope to hear everyone in the contest that weekend. – Matt, W1MSW



Hampden County Radio Association and the Mount Tom Amateur Repeater Association



Holiday Party



Monday, December 10, 2012

The Steaming Tender Restaurant - Palmer, Mass.

CONTACT FOR TICKETS & INFORMATION:

HCRA: Marty Bowen – W1MJB w1mjb@arri.net

MTARA: Dianne Shippee – KB1KST kb1kst@netzero.net

Local happenings

(All times are local time)

Sundays: 0845: Western Mass Emergency Net 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R

First Monday: Southwick Regional RACES Drill, 1845, 146.49 Simplex

Mondays: 1930: HCRA 10m Net 28.375

Tuesdays: 1930-2000: 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R - Hampshire County Emergency Net

Wednesdays: 1930: MTARA Info net 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R - includes NTS Net

2000: MTARA Swap net: 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R

2000: MTARA Simplex Net - starts on 146.94 - PL 127.3, then goes to 146.42 direct (simplex) Usually starts immediately following the swap net.

Thursdays: 2100: Weather Net (Roger, K1PAI Net Control), 1st Thursday of every month: 147.090 MHz, All other Thursdays: 147.000, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R

Fridays: 1200: BB's (Brown Baggers Luncheon)

Common Ground Restaurant

25 Park Avenue

West Springfield, MA 01089

Expect between 6 and 12 every Friday. Good food, great company!

Club Meetings & VE Sessions

1st Friday of the month 7:30 PM, HCRA Club Meeting, Holyoke Hospital Auxiliary Conference Center, 575 Beech St. Holyoke MA, 01040 (no meetings held in July or August) <http://www.hcra.org/meeting-location/>

3rd Friday of the month 7:30 PM, MTARA Club meeting, Red Cross building 506 Cottage St, SPFLD, MA (no meetings held in July or August)

4th Friday of the month 6:00 PM, Technician, General, and Extra Class License Exams, Holyoke Hospital Auxiliary Conference Center, 575 Beech Street, Holyoke, MA. Hosted by the Western Mass VE Team (WMVET). Contact: David Cote, w1fab@arrl.net

Third Monday of the month 7:00 PM, Franklin County Amateur Radio Club meeting, Greenfield High School (no meetings held in July or August) Meeting Apr 23, 2012, to avoid holidays)

4th Monday of February, May, August, November 7:00 PM, FCARC VE Exams, Unitarian Church, Main Street, Northfield



A view in the Adirondacks and a paddle AND a bug?

HCRA Contact List

President, Jim Mullen KK1W (413) 237-4666

kk1w@arrl.net

Vice-President, Ed LaCombe KB1NWH (413) 250-3137

kb1nwh@comcast.net

Treasurer, Dave Cain AA1YW (413) 569-6901

aa1yw@arrl.net

Secretary, Dave Scarpa N1MFL (413) 241-0139

scarpad@comcast.net

At Large, Marty Bowen W1MJB (413) 525-3717

w1mjb@arrl.net

Newsletter, Frandy Johnson N1FJ (413) 584-9005

n1fj@arrl.net

Programs, John Pise KX1X (413) 532-7474

kx1x@arrl.net

Membership, Rich Wheeler N1KXR (413) 584-3372

n1kxr@arrl.net

Technical, Matt Wilhelm W1MSW (413) 336-4701

w1msw@arrl.net

Skywarn Liaison, Eric Tuller N1QKO (413) 967-3869

et-n1qko@juno.com

VE Session Team Liaison, Dave Cote W1FAB (413) 575-2950

w1fab@arrl.net

MEMBER PROFILE

Name: Nick Maslon

Town: Three Rivers

Callsign: K1MAZ

Previous Callsigns: KB1VYZ (never used on the air)

License Class: Extra

Main station equipment: Kenwood TS-450
(borrowed from NE1C) with a G5RV and 160m
inverted L

Mobile station equipment (if applicable):

Favorite Band(s): 17m, 15m

Favorite Mode(s): SSB

What year were you first licensed and what license
class? 2011 General

How did you become interested in amateur radio? I
became interested in amateur radio through exposure
from Kx1x and NE1C at various Scout functions.
Although I did the radio merit badge in 2003 with
John at scout camp, it wasn't until last year that it
really peaked my interest. I took my license test and
made to General in the first go. I then upgraded to
Extra two months later.

What are some of your favorite aspects of the hobby
(ex. field day, swap meets, contesting, rag-chewing,
EComm, etc)? I enjoy contesting, both from my
house and at stations such as K1TTT as well as casual DXing. I've recently become involved with Summits on the Air
which is an excellent way to combine my love of the outdoors with my love of radio.

What is your most memorable experience in the hobby? My most memorable experience in the hobby would have to be
opening a packet from the ARRL expecting membership solicitations but finding a certificate for first place in the 2011
phone Sweepstakes for single operator low power in Western Mass. This goes to show that anyone can win a contest with
a piece of wire in the air and a little effort.

If different from the above question, what was your most memorable contact on the radio? I would say that I have two
most memorable contacts. The first was with KC3FL in Florida. He originally lived up here and we spent quite some
time ragchewing about the area. The second was my first ZL contact which was on 20m past midnight. After a couple
calls, I was ecstatic when I heard my call come back to me.

What do you feel ham radio operators must do to help ensure the future of the hobby? There are two big things, in my
opinion, that ham operators need to use to ensure the future of the hobby. First of all, proper manners on the air will go a
big way. Following rules like the DX Code of Conduct will not only help make the airwaves a more pleasant place to be
but will help to make large pileups less intimidating for new users. Second of all, elmers can really make a big difference.
I wouldn't be as involved in the hobby as I am without the support, encouragement, and ideas from a lot of the elmers in
the community and HCRA. Being receptive and supportive of new and/or novice hams as well as interested individuals
can play a big role in the survival of the sport, especially since the younger generation is the future of the hobby.



This KX3 could be YOURS!

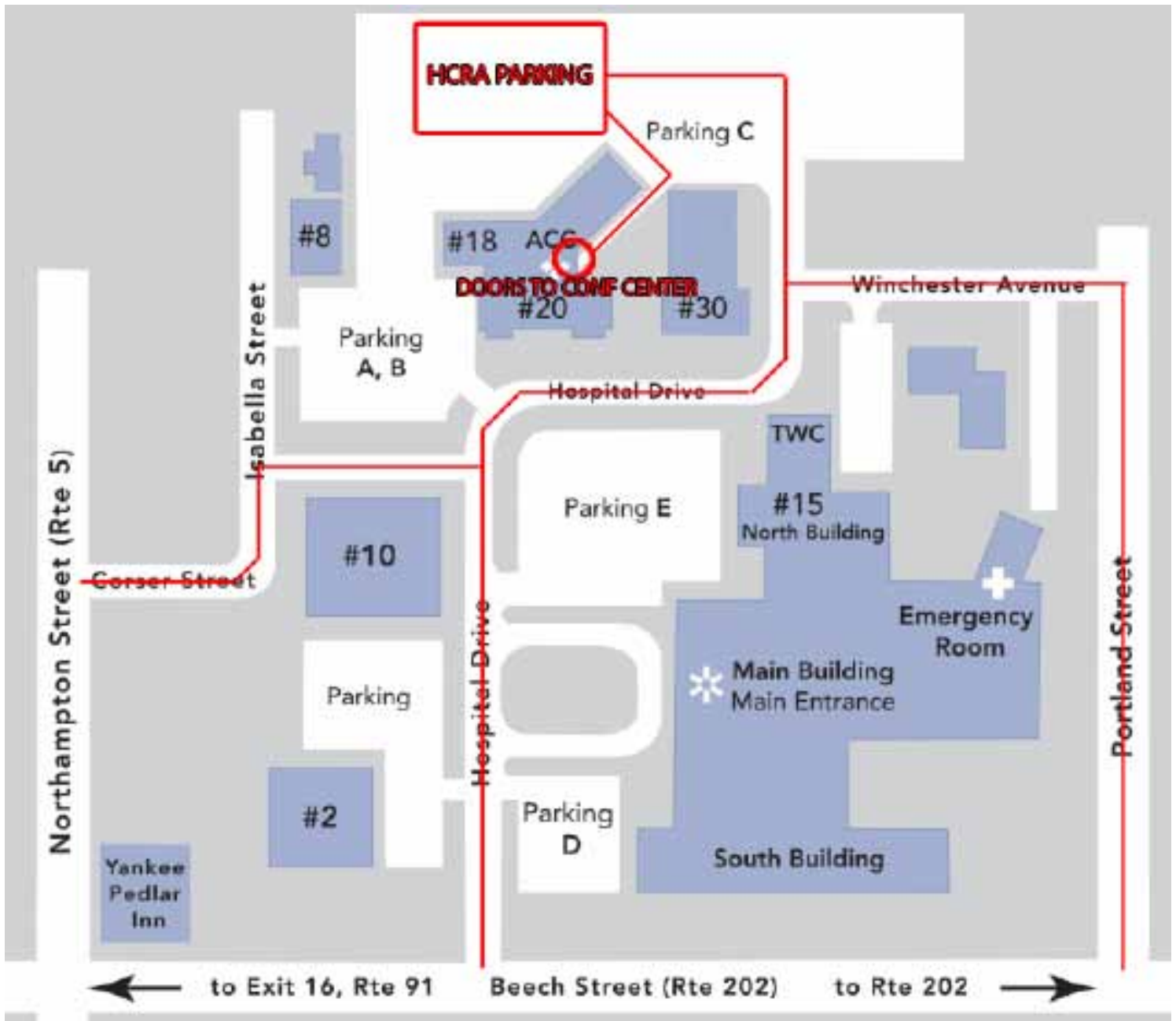
We're talking about the *exact* [Elecraft KX3](#) in the photograph, serial # 2261. It arrived safely and is in our hands. So how do you get it? Easy, purchase a KX3 raffle ticket at the next HCRA meeting, that's how!

For a mere \$10 donation to HCRA you get a chance to win this exciting new HF transceiver valued at \$1000. Just recently it topped [Sherwood's](#) list for best receiver performance but now has slipped to second place behind a \$20,000 rig. Twelve watts, all HF bands and runs on 8 AA batteries – how cool is that? Only 250 tickets will be sold and the drawing will be held March 1st, 2013 (or earlier if we sell all the tickets). Tickets are selling quickly – don't miss out on a golden opportunity to own a world class, ultra portable, HF transceiver..

A few of our members own a KX3 and they are indeed a nice toy. Rumor has it there will be one set up and operating at our November 2nd meeting. Of course #2261 will be on display (if you can get it out of Ed's hands) at the raffle table. Can't make it to the meeting, then drop me an email and I'll be sure you get your ticket(s). Thanks as always for your support of HCRA, our raffles and our events!



On 2 or 3 weekends recently, NISR, KK1W, W1MSW, and N1FJ helped Jose, N4BAA, remove beams and lower towers in Sunderland. That's Jose on the 90 foot Rohn 45 tower -- to be relocated in Pennsylvania?



New Meeting Location

If you haven't seen our new meeting place you are in for a treat.. Starting with the September 2012 meeting our meetings are being held at the Auxiliary Conference Center at the Holyoke Medical Center. Many of you have been here before, it's where the Western Mass VE Team has given examinations for close to a decade. We have all the details of the hall and how to get there on our website. <http://www.hcra.org/meeting-location/>

Our new location is newly renovated with state of the art heating and cooling, comfortable chairs, a complete A/V setup including screen, projector, sound system and wi-fi. Handicap access, convenient rest room, vending machines and 24/7 security round out the list. Join us!