



ZERO BEAT

<http://hcra.org>

April 2016

Special points of interest:

- Next Meeting Friday, May 6th
How to Report Weather & How to Properly Read Your Weather App
- [Visit the HCRA facebook page.](#)
- Don't forget to check out hcra.org
- [Visit Summits on the Air](#)
- [Visit POTA413 facebook page](#)

April's Meeting

**Join us Friday April 1st at 7:30, in the Holyoke Medical Center
Auxiliary Conference Center .**



If you're an HCRA member that has been working on an Amateur Radio related project, you are invited to show it off along with other members at our annual show and tell. If it's small enough, you could bring it in and say a couple words about it. If your project is good enough, you could possibly win a prize!

Don't forget **FIELD DAY 2016**

June 24, 25, & 26, 2016
School Street Park
Agawam, Ma

HELP WANTED!

Stay tuned for more info.

For directions to The Holyoke Medical Center Auxiliary Conference Center:

<http://www.hcra.org/meeting-location/>

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DAN VIERNO (KB1VWQ) WINS THE 2015/2016 HCRA RAFFLE



HCRA's 2016 Raffle was won by one of our members, Dan Vierno KB1VWQ.

The 2016 raffle was for a Kenwood TS-590SG. Dan is currently using a 25 year old Yeasu FT-857. "It's going to be a great addition to my Shack." Dan said. "It's going to allow me to dedicate the FT-857 to 80/75 meter band"

As most of you know, Dan started the local POTA*413 Group, as well as being very active with "National Parks on the Air" (NPOTA)

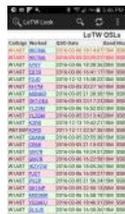
Congratulations Dan!

HAM APPS FOR ANDROID PHONES

LARRY KRAINSON W1AST

I was looking for a reason to go sit at my picnic table on this beautiful, early March 84 degree day. Taking my laptop out and writing another article for Zero Beat sounded like a great reason. The early season warmth sure felt good!

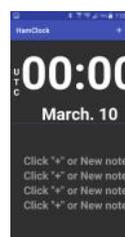
Since I last wrote about a few apps, a few more good ones have come out that are worth mentioning.



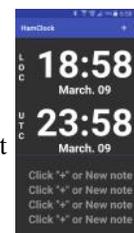
1. **N1KDO's LoTW Look**: This app allows you to view and see contacts as Logbook Of The World (LOTW) confirms them. From the attached picture from my phone, you can see new confirmations as they come in. Tap on a call and it'll give you basics such as call worked, entity name, date and time worked and some other info. You can also do a search for a certain call or date range, mode, band, etc. It's a free app and you just need to sign in with your LOTW credentials to make it work.

Here's the web site for more info and it's available on the Google Play Store: <http://www.n1kdo.com/lotwlook/>

2. **Ham Clock**: I was using a different app for a 24 hour clock, but this one is much simpler and easier to read. (Thanks to Gary, WA1MOW for the tip). While portable, I rarely log by computer or tablet or phone. I have an old fashioned log book I use and have been using for years. For some reason, I always write down the wrong GMT time when not using a clock. Ham Clock fixes this. It gives 24 hour local time, the date and 24 hour GMT time with the date. Settings are few with display timeout minutes, date format, the ability to hide the local clock or change the color scheme (a bit). The app is free.



I have mine showing only GMT time as I do not need local time in 24 hour format. And yes, at 0000 it does change the date to the next day correctly. It is a free app and is made by Zoran Tools. Just search ham clock in the Google Play Store and you'll find it. (see the 2 screen samples)



3. **KX3 Companion**: I've just started tinkering with the KX3 Companion on my Samsung Galaxy Tab Pro tablet. It connects to the KX3 via the KX3 usb cable and an adapter (OTG adapter) to go to micro usb. Here is the web site: <http://kx3companion.com/> There is a \$6.99 charge for the full version with a trial version that is free and very limited.

Since I did not do any portable operation during winter, I didn't use this much except to tinker with. But very soon, I'll be camping again and plan on using it a lot and will review it in full then. The website says it will send and receive CW, PSK31 and RTTY via a tablet or phone. The app lets you record full qso's on the tablet for future playback and export to your favorite logging program, plot frequency range and SWR, audio spectrum and waterfall thru the audio out port. It will make use of a blue tooth keyboard for sending/typing the messages. Also supports interaction with a number of KX3 accessories. It looks like one cool app that I can't wait to start working with. (see pic)



FIELD DAY 2016

Field Day is quickly approaching, it's only 13 weeks away! (June 25, 26,& 27)

I know....13 weeks sounds like a long time. But we have a lot of things to accomplish before hand.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!!!!!!

Just about every position is open: From Band Captain's, to setup and take down.

If you can help out, no matter what position or for how long, please contact Jeffery Bail at any meeting or by email at: nt1k@nt1k.com





Amateur Radio License Classes Apr 27th, 28th, and 30th 2016 [Http://www.hcra.org](http://www.hcra.org)

Are you or do you know someone who's interested in amateur radio? The Hampden County Radio Association (HCRA) is holding classes for those interested in obtaining their Amateur Radio license. With a combination of these classes and at-home studying, it's possible to make it happen. Learn from experienced instructors who are active within the amateur radio community who are willing to help you along the way.



Dates and Times:

- Wednesday Apr 27th, 2016 – 6:00pm to 9:00pm
- Thursday Apr 28th, 2016 – 6:00pm to 9:00pm
- Saturday Apr 30th, 2016 – 9:00am to 3:00pm
- VE Session: Saturday April 30th, 2016 – 3:15pm (Walk-Ins Welcomed)



Where:

Holyoke Medical Center Auxiliary Conference Room
525 Beech St. Holyoke MA, 01040

Cost: Free / \$15 Exam Fee (Additional prices may include optional study material)

Due to the short amount of time, it's up to the candidate to do most of the studying at home before attending the classes. The classes will cover the exam questions, provide some details about the questions and help you to better understand the material needed to pass the exam.

Interested? Please Contact

Name: Jeffrey Bail (NT1K)

E-mail: NT1K@arrl.net

Address: P.O. Box 562, Agawam MA, 01001

You can also sign up On-line by going to [Http://www.hcra.org](http://www.hcra.org) and clicking "Upcoming Classes" towards the top of the page. Please refer to website for exact directions and for any possible changes, delays or cancellations. At this time we're also trying to form study groups for those who are interested in upgrading to general or extra class license. Stay tuned!

HAMPDEN COUNTY RADIO ASSOCIATION

[Http://www.hcra.org](http://www.hcra.org)

FROM THE SHACK

JEFFERY BAIL NT1K



Show and Tell

I am very excited about the upcoming show and tell. I hope you have a project to show! It doesn't have to be built from scratch project. It could be anything as long as electronic or amateur radio related. HCRA will be giving away a couple prizes for those who favor well with the crowd. 1st place prize will get an Raspberry Pi 2. It's a credit card size single board computer. It has a 900Mhz quad core processor with 1 gig of RAM, 4 USB ports, ethernet port and much more (\$35 Value). 2nd place prize will get an Arduino Uno R3 Microcontroller. The possibilities are endless with what you can do with an MCU. 3rd place prize will be raffle tickets to our next raffle.

Field Day 2016

Even though Field Day is a couple months away, it will be here before you know it. Hopefully the weather this year will be much better. Last year it started to rain on Saturday and didn't let up until the end of Field Day. We've managed to secure School Street Park in agawam again this year. It's an excellent location. The town of Agawam has been very helpful and supportive by letting us use the park and even helping out with power, tables and trash cans.

We're looking for volunteers to help with setup, operations and tear down. We're also looking for band captains, generators and operators. We're planning for a 5 station effort but that may vary depending on participation. This is HCRA's chance to show the public what amateur radio is about. Please support your club by volunteering. Even if you can't volunteer, show your support by stopping by and saying hello. Maybe get on the air for a couple of contacts.

HCRA Classes

Not sure if you noticed but HCRA is sponsoring classes at the Holyoke Medial Center for those wishing to obtain or upgrade their amateur radio license. The course will start on Wednesday April 27, continue on the 28 and a full day on Saturday the 30th followed by a VE session. We currently have almost 30 people signed up with most of them wanting to get their license. It's great to see so many people interested in amateur radio. Please make them feel welcome if you come across a new local ham on the air.

HCRA Raffle

At the MTARA's hamfest on March 5th, we were hard at work trying to sell raffle tickets for the TS-590SG. Many people purchased tickets at the hamfest to where we were able to raffle off the radio at the hamfest. Our lucky winner was HCRA's own Dan Vierno (KB1VWQ). It's great to see a member winning the prize. The TS-590SG raffle was a test to see what a more expensive item would do. Honestly, It didn't do so great. What I would like to ask you is what item (or items) should we raffle? A good portion of the tickets sales are from you so it's the obvious choice to see what you all want. I will be talking about this at the next meeting. Please think of some items.

2016 ARRL NEW ENGLAND DIVISION CONVENTION IS LOOKING FOR SPEAKERS

Don't just attend Boxboro 2016—BE A PART OF IT! The Boxboro Committee seeks fresh and exciting presentations for this year's ARRL New England Division Convention. (Note the new date!) As a Boxboro speaker, you will have the opportunity to share your subject and knowledge with Amateur Radio operators from around New England, surrounding states, and Canada.

Last year's program included top-notch presentations of both a technical, as well as non-technical nature. This year, we will feature workshops on Friday, a Saturday morning keynote address, and an enhanced Sunday program schedule. It's our hope that Convention attendees will attend the many activities spanning the three-day event.

If you represent a regional club or organization (e.g. YCCC, NEQRP, WRONE, MARS, etc.) we can help facilitate open forums or closed meetings by providing you a meeting space.

Groups who wish to set up information booths should get your requests in early. While the information booths are offered without charge, we ask for some volunteer time in return to assist us with ticket sales and other logistics during the convention. To register as a presenter, please visit <https://goo.gl/Nrwu1g> and complete the online form. For the latest information on Boxboro 2016! please visit <http://www.boxboro.org>, or email or call us if you have additional questions. We look forward to meeting all of you at the convention!

THE RADIO AMATEUR'S CODE

LARRY MAKOSKI W2LJ

Originally published on AmateurRadio.com

CONSIDERATE: He/[She] never knowingly operates in such a way as to lessen the pleasure of others.

LOYAL: He/[She] offers loyalty, encouragement and support to other amateurs, local clubs, the IARU Radio Society in his/[her] country, through which Amateur Radio in his/[her] country is represented nationally and internationally.

PROGRESSIVE: He/[She] keeps his/[her] station up to date. It is well-built and efficient. His/[Her] operating practice is above reproach.

FRIENDLY: He/[She] operates slowly and patiently when requested; offers friendly advice and counsel to beginners; kind assistance, cooperation and consideration for the interests of others. These are the marks of the amateur spirit.

BALANCED: Radio is a hobby, never interfering with duties owed to family, job, school or community.

PATRIOTIC: His/[Her] station and skills are always ready for service to country and community.

The original version of this was written in 1928, by Paul M Segal W9EEA, and it's been modified over the years as things change with the times. The core message remains the same though, as it's pretty much timeless.

The one trait that I want to touch upon today, is the "Balanced" one.

The Radio Amateur is: **BALANCED:** Radio is a hobby, never interfering with duties owed to family, job, school or community.

Sometimes, I think we forget this one the most, and the evidence is not that hard to find. Take a wander on over to Facebook, or listen to a repeater and it's pretty obvious that some of us become seriously preoccupied or obsessed with such activities as NPOTA, contesting, DXing, county hunting, SOTA, etc.

Amateur Radio, on the whole, and these activities in particular *are* good and wholesome things. For instance, I'm certain that a lot of our wives, husbands and significant others would rather have us in the shack, yakking away on our radios than spending the month's mortgage money in bars, saloons, casinos or race tracks.

But it's easy to lose focus and become obsessed. Radio sport that involves chasing that elusive country, county, SOTA peak, NPOTA entity or whatever should never become the focus of our lives, or our reason for being. Just as purchasing that new rig, antenna, or piece of test equipment should never result in being unable to pay the mortgage, rent or put food on the table. It should also never result in the kid's college fund being raided.

Do you enter the shack on a Friday night for a contest, *only* to emerge late Sunday evening or early Monday morning? That's not good, my friends.

Even an essential thing can become bad, if you're not careful. Are you that someone who HAS to be at every civic function or training class? Even public service, as worthy and noble a cause as it is, should never become between you and your family. Before going out to respond to any disaster or emergency, the health and welfare of your loved ones should always be your top priority. If they're not taken care of, you don't go.

The bottom line is that there's more to life than Amateur Radio. In our quest to satisfy our passion, sometimes we forget that. Family, friends, loved ones and those relationships are way more important, and should always come before getting that high score, or working that 300th country or buying that newest, latest and greatest radio.

Always keep in the back of your mind that the greatest gift you can give your family is your time. If you're doing OK with that, then you're doing a good job with the "Balanced" part of The Radio Amateur's Code.

72 de Larry W2LJ

QRP - When you care to send the very least!

DOTS & DASHES:

Things I can't think where to put, but are interesting.

COMMUNICATIONS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

On Sunday, April 3rd, the Westfield Boys and Girls Club will be holding their annual 10k road race. The Greater Westfield Medical Reserve Corps/ CERT team has been asked to provide Ham radio coverage throughout the course. If anyone is interested in volunteering to help out, please email N1LWS@yahoo.com for more information. After the race all participants and volunteers are invited to have a free meal provided by the Boys and Girls Club.

ARRL TELLS FCC TO RESTORE BALANCE OF MODES ON 80 AND 75 METERS:

In comments filed on March 23 on its Petition for Rule Making (RM 11759) seeking changes to 80 and 75 meters, the ARRL has told the FCC that its primary objective is to "rebalance" the bands by correcting a 10-year old FCC error.

"ARRL's proposal is not fairly viewed as a proposal to take anything away from anyone," the League's comments assured. "It is more properly viewed as the effectuation of a fair, equitable, and efficient 'band plan' looking forward for the foreseeable future that balances everyone's needs, and which remedies a plainly unfair plan, imprudently created in the 2006 Report and Order in WT Docket 04-140." The Report and Order can be found on the web at, <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=5513680269>.

INTERESTING HAM RADIO WEB SITES:

Over all we had a pretty mild winter. The past couple of weeks have been very interesting. We had temperatures in the 70's, heavy wet snow, high winds, and rain. Do you ever listen to the weather reports and wonder what all the terms they use mean? Here is a web page from Wikipedia that explains them all:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Severe_weather_terminology_%28United_States%29

AREA SWAPFESTS:

Apr 2	PHSNE Photographica	www.wara64.org	Newton, Ma
9	Vintage radio Museum	www.vrcmct.org	Windsor, Ct
10	FARA Swap Meet	www.fara.org	Framingham, Ma
16	Tri-City Amateur Radio Club Swap	www.qsl.net/tricityarc	Gales Ferry, Ct
17	Swap @ MIT	www.swapfest.us	Cambridge, Ma
29/30	NEAR Fest XIX	www.near-fest.org	Deerfield, NH

CONTESTING:

APRIL'S CONTESTS:

Apr 2	Mississippi QSO Party	www.arrlmiss.org	CW, Ph, Dig.
	Missouri QSO Party	www.w0ma.org/mo_qso_party.htm	CW, Ph, Dig
3	No American SSB Sprint	www.ssbsprint.com/rules	Ph
9	New Mexico QSO Party	www.newmexicoqsoparty.org	CW, Ph, Dig.
	Georgia QSO Party	www.georgiaqsoparty.org	CW, Ph, Dig.
16	Nebraska QSO Party	www.qcwa.org/chapter025.htm	CW, Ph, Dig
	Michigan QSO Party	www.miqp.org/rules.htm	CW, Ph, Dig.
	Ontario QSO Party	www.va3cco.com/oqp/rules.htm	CW, Ph, Dig
	North Dakota QSO Party	www.w0nd.com/ndqso15.pdf	CW, Ph, Dig
17	ARRL Rookie Roundup SSB	www.arrl.org/rookie-roundup	Ph
23	10-10 Inter Spring Dig Contest	www.ten-ten.org	Dig
30	Florida QSO Party	www.floridaqsoparty.org	CW, Ph Dig

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American Heart
Association
Learn and Live

Local happenings

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)
Munich House
13 Center Street
Chicopee, MA 01013

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>

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, [150 Brookdale Dr. Springfield, Mass.](#) (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, Mass. 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) <http://www.fcarc.org/>

4th Monday of February, May, August, November 7:00 PM, FCARC VE Exams, Unitarian Church, Main Street, Northfield <http://www.fcarc.org/>

HCRA contact list

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HCRA MEMBER'S PROFILE

This months "Member Profile" is Bob Meneguzzo K1YO of Southwick, Ma.

Bob is the Technical Director of the H.C.R.A.

If you have any technical problems or questions, you can email Bob at: k1yo@comcast.net

- 1) **Name:** Bob Meneguzzo
- 2) **Town:** Southwick
- 3) **Callsign:** K1YO
- 4) **Previous Callsigns:** WN3HAH WA3HAH AA1WN
- 5) **License Class:** Extra
- 6) **Main station equipment:** Yaesu FT1000MP
- 7) **Favorite Band(s):** 17M 15M 12M
- 8) **Favorite Mode(s):** Phone, Digital modes, occasional CW
- 9) **Year you were first licensed and license class:** 1965 as a Novice
- 10) **How did you become interested in amateur radio?** Listened to shortwave for many years --- including the AM hams ... got bitten by the bug shortly after
- 11) **What are some of your favorite aspects of the hobby?** Playing around with different antennas (mostly wire for HF), magnetic loops, exploring with various types of rf test equipment, teaching occasionally
- 12) **What is your most memorable experience in the hobby?** Running a 6m emergency communications station at local shelter / focal point during Agnes hurricane / flood of 1972 in Wilkes Barre, PA. More recently, running net control on 2m for the June tornado in the Springfield / W. Ma. area
- 13) **What do you feel ham radio operators must do to help ensure the future of the hobby?** Participate! Show the community how we can be of assistance ... stay technically sharp so we can depend upon our own expertise / skills in communication situations that demand thinking outside the box.



THE AMATEUR RADIO PARITY ACT OF 2015:

The ARRL has announced that currently they have 111 co-sponsors for US House Bill HR-1301. There is now 2 members of Congress from Massachusetts, District #2 James McGovern (D), and District #5 Katherine Clark (D), District #1 (Where most of the HCRA resides.) Richard Neil has yet to sign on. It is time for us to step up and get involved. [You can find more information on getting involved here.](#)

Senate Bill S-1685 currently has only 2 co-sponsors: Sen Roger Wicker of Mississippi , and Sen Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut.



Homeowners Associations across the country have been mobilizing against both bills. They have been using scare tactics to get their members to write opposing letters to members of Congress.

To separate fact from fiction, the ARRL produced a video. [Click here to watch.](#) (Look for a familiar face at 4:55)

BOXBORO!

2016

September 9, 10, & 11

The ARRL New England Division Convention
at the Holiday Inn, Boxborough

For ham radio operators or those interested in learning more about Ham Radio!



PURCHASE TICKETS ONLINE AT WWW.BOXBORO.ORG

at participating retailers, or at the door

DXCC CARD CHECKING ▪ LICENSE CLASS ▪ HAM RADIO (VE) EXAMS
Free to paid Attendees: Screening of the Movie "Frequency" on Friday Night

Admission \$15.00 per person, Flea market \$10.00 per space. Tickets valid all days.
Friday DX Dinner \$40. Saturday Banquet is \$40.
"Whole Convention" package – Admission + both Banquets \$90
Special discounts for groups that want to reserve a table at the banquet or DX dinner.

Ample free parking is available outside the flea market.

The Holiday Inn Boxborough, MA is located on Route 111 just off I-495 at Exit 28.
Full details and maps are available on the official 2016 Boxboro! Web Site www.boxboro.org



**Here is your exciting copy
of Zero Beat!**

**Don't forget the MTARA
HamFest**

Saturday March 5th.

**Hampden County Radio Association
P.O. Box 562
Agawam, MA 01030-0562**