

# ZERO BEAT

http://hcra.org February 2017

#### Special points of interest:

MTARA HamFest Saturday March 11th Castle of Knights, Chicopee, Ma

- Visit the HCRA facebook page.
- Don't forget to check out <a href="https://hcra.org">hcra.org</a>
- Visit Summits on the Air
- Visit POTA413 facebook page

Don't forget
HCRA's
KX2
Raffle
See page #2 for
details!

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#### February's Meeting

Join us Friday February 3rd at 7:30, in the Holyoke Medical Center

Auxiliary Conference Center

#### **HAMSOURCE**



John from Hamsource is going show us how to prep power poles, and then talk about some useful and interesting gadgets he manufactures and sells.

He'll also have some items for sale too

For directions to The Holyoke Medical Center Auxiliary Conference Center:

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

## **SAVE THE DATES**

February 3rd - John from Hamsource

March 3rd - Dick Frey WA2AAU, Northeast Weak Signal Group

April 7th - Show N' Tell

May 5th - Steve Davidson, Mgr HRO, Salem, NH, Everything

wanted to know about Go Boxes

June 2nd - Elections and Field Day 2017

**TBA Short Presentation** 

HCRA'S MEETINGS
1ST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH JANUARY—JUNE





with

Elecraft MH3 Hand Microphone
Elecraft KXAT2 Antenna Tuner



Tickets only \$10 - all proceeds to HCRA
Only 250 tickets sold!

Drawing March 11th, 2017 @ MTARA Hamfest

(or at a preceding HCRA meeting if all tickets sold prior to March 11th)

### FROM THE SHACK

#### JEFFERY BAIL NT1K



#### This Month's Speaker Is John Kalotai (N1OLO) From Hamsource

John is an owner of a small business called Hamsource. They sell accessories for hams they also manufacture a line of affordable DC power products and station accessories. He will be speaking about some of the products he sells. We've had John speak in the past and it's always been a good meeting.

#### **MTARA Hamfest Next Month**

On Saturday March 11<sup>th</sup>, MTARA will be hosting its annual hamfest. This year will be different since MTARA has changed venue. They will be hosting at the Castle of Knights in Chicopee MA.

It's right up the road from their last location. I had the opportunity to check out the venue at the joint Holiday party and must say it will be an improvement. There is more floor space which will allow for more tables and hopefully more wiggle room. If you are in the area that weekend, I would strongly suggest that you go check it out.

As a club, we should be supporting anything that is positive for amateur radio in the pioneer valley regardless of who is hosting the event. This is a big fund raiser for MTARA and believe it or not, it's a big fund raiser for HCRA as well. We sell a lot of tickets for our annual raffle and we usually sell enough to raffle the item at the hamfest. It's a great time for all and I hope to see you there.

#### **Show And Tell Is Just Around The Corner**

For our April meeting, we will be hosting our annual show and tell. This is where HCRA members show off their project(s) they have been working on with others. It can range from a simple kit build to equipment designed from the ground up. If you've been working on something, bring it in!! This year HCRA will be giving prizes out to the top 3 projects from paid members. They will be voted on by those who are in attendance. There is just 2 months left so if you don't have a project, you still have time!

#### Field Day Planning Kicking Off

Even though Field Day is 5 months away, it will be here before you know it. Learning from last year, HCRA is taking actions to make Field Day even more enjoyable. Bob Meneguzzo (K1YO) has stepped up and volunteered as co-chair. He has already been hard at work putting together check lists and procedures to make FD easier. We also have our tower and antenna captains. This year Chris Thornton (W1TRK) has stepped up to be the tower captain. Chris was very helpful during the 2016 Field Day with the tower installations. Rockwell Schrock (WW1X) volunteered to be the Antenna Captain. Rockwell has setup the TX-38 and the 40-2CD for the past two field days. We also have a couple band captains who volunteered. Larry (W1AST) volunteered to do 20m CW and I volunteered to be the 40m SSB captain.

However, we still need volunteers. We need people to come help setup, operate and help with tearing down and cleaning.

#### **ARRL New England Division Cabinet Meeting**

On Saturday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, Tom Frenaye (K1KI, ARRL New England Director) hosted a bi-annual cabinet meeting for club presidents and directors in New England. The weather was not ideal but since it was hosted in Springfield, I attended to represent HCRA. Tom spent a good amount of time talking about what the FCC and ARRL were up to.

#### **Amateur Radio Parity Act**

Was close by was stalled by Sen Nelson (FL), Will be introduced in 2017. At the moment of writing this, it (H.R. 555) has already passed U.S. House and is now headed to the senate. H.R. 555 calls on the FCC to establish rules prohibiting the application of deed restrictions that preclude Amateur Radio communications on their face or as applied.

#### **FCC Actions**

FCC has been very quiet on the Amateur Radio front. About 1/3 of the FCC field offices have been closed. The ARRL is trying to strengthen the relationship between the FCC and the ARRL OO's (Offical Observers). The ARRL has also expressed concern about increasing RFI from utilities, LED lighting, Solar and other commercial products.

#### **New Hams**

A great deal of time was spent talking about attracting new hams to the hobby. Some of the issues were obvious. It was suggested that clubs reach out to schools and work on a relationship to get middle and high school students interested in amateur radio. Look at other ways to get people on the air and Elmer those who are interested in Amateur Radio. Social media (Facebook, twitter, reddit and others) should not be look at as competition but as a tool to help get people interested. There was also talk about more collegiate programs to get more college age students into Amateur Radio

#### Boxboro, W1 QSL, Spectrum

Boxboro convention is being planned for Labor Day weekend (Sept 8-10). There may be a builder event on Friday. Keep tuned to the website for more information.

Continued on page #4

#### FROM THE SHACK (CONTINUED)

The W1 QSL bureau has reported that there will be an increase of 10c per envelope plus 10c per ounce. Volume of cards is down somewhat as sunspots decline and LoTW is being used more. W1 QSL is looking at clubs to help sort cards.

Overall the meeting was good considering it was cut short due to the snow storm. A lot of attendees ended up staying in Spring-field as there was more snow on the eastern part of New England. This was the first time I've attended a division cabinet meeting. I learned a lot about what is going on and I've meet directors from other area clubs.

#### **License Results**

During the cabinet meeting, Tom (K1KI) shared license data over the past year for the ARRL sections. In 2016, The FCC has issued 1199 licenses and 519 upgrades. In Western Mass, we got 109 new licenses and 43 new upgrades. Thanks for reading and hope to see you at the meeting on Friday!

#### THE FORGOTTEN STATION ACCESSORY

#### GENT LAM WA1CQF



Throughout the years I've managed to acquire a decent amount of test equipment. Among those are a Simpson analog VOM and a couple of Fluke digital multimeters. The ohmmeter function of these instruments is probably the most widely used function; not only for ham related needs but also for a multitude of duties around the house.

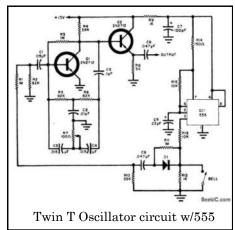
How many times have you needed to check continuity? Is it shorted or is it open? Many of these situations don't occur at the operating desk or work bench. Instead, more likely at the car, at an antenna, rotator on a tower, antenna connection panel, etc. A lot of these places are not the most friendly environments for these sophisticated instruments. A digital multimeter from harbor Freight for under \$10 would suffice.

However, in many cases a simple audible signal to indicate continuity is sufficient. My Fluke meters have an audible tone function for continuity. As luck would have it, many antenna problems only occur in inclement weather or when you have half a foot of snow on the ground.

I'd rather not face the possibility of dropping the Simpson or Fluke in a snowbank just to check a piece of coax or dropping it as you are climbing up a ladder.

Enter the continuity tester—— AKA code practice oscillator. Having built one to learn the Morse code for my novice license, I've always had one around the shack for code practice and continuity testing. One of the most useful applications is identifying an intermittent connection in a cable, especially a coiled microphone cable. There is nothing more apparent than the scratchy audio when flexing a coil cord that has an intermittent connection. It eliminates the need to position the instrument so you can watch a needle on an analog meter or watch the changing numbers on a digital meter while trying replicate an intermittent connection.

A continuity tester can be nothing more than a piezo electric transducer, battery, and test leads mounted in a minibox. I prefer the sound of a sine wave and use a twin T oscillator circuit which generates a pleasing sound. A volume control is a plus. I found a circuit via an internet search. A 555 timer integrated circuit can be used to function as an audio oscillator with enough power to drive a speaker.







#### H.R. 1301 is Now H.R. 555

Reprinted from ARRL Bulletin 6 ARLB006

H.R. 555 - a new "Amateur Radio Parity Act" bill - has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. The bill's language is identical to that of the 2015 measure, H.R. 1301, which passed in the House late last summer but failed in the waning days of the US Senate to gain the necessary support. As with H.R. 1301, the new measure introduced on January 13 in the 115th Congress was sponsored by Rep. Adam Kinzinger (R-IL), with initial co-sponsorship by Rep. Joe Courtney (D-CT) and Rep. Greg Walden, W7EQI (R-OR). Walden now chairs the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, to which the new bill has been referred. H.R. 555 will get an initial airing in the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology. When H.R. 1301 came up in committee, Walden spoke forcefully in favor of the measure, which ultimately attracted 126 House sponsors.

#### AMATEUR RADIO PARITY ACT SPEEDS TO U.S. HOUSE PASSAGE, HEADS TO U.S. SENATE

Just 10 days after being introduced, the 2017 Amateur Radio Parity Act legislation, H.R. 555, passed the U.S. House of Representatives this week on unanimous consent under a suspension of House rules.

The bill's language is identical to that of the 2015 measure, H.R. 1301, which won House approval late last summer after attracting 126 co-sponsors, but failed to clear the U.S. Senate last fall as the 114th Congress wound down. The new bill, again sponsored by Rep. Adam Kinzinger (R-IL), was introduced on January 13 with initial co-sponsorship by Rep. Joe Courtney (D-CT) and Rep. Greg Walden, W7EQI (R-OR), who chairs the influential House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

H.R. 555 can be found on the web at, <a href="https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/555?r=27">https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/555?r=27</a> .

"The grassroots effort of Amateur Radio operators across this nation in support of the Amateur Radio Parity Act has been remarkable, nothing like we have ever seen before," ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR, said. "To all hams, keep going! Now is the time to charge forward with that same momentum to the Senate. We can do it!" The bill arrives in the U.S. Senate with ample time in which to garner its approval through an education campaign.

"We're very encouraged by the speed with which this bill made it through the House. It's amazing that this happened," said ARRL Hudson Division Director Mike Lisenco, N2YBB, who has been at the forefront of the legislative initiative. "With the help of ARRL members, we believe we can get this done," Lisenco continued. "We came within a hair's breadth last time, with 110,000 e-mails to

members of both houses of Congress, as well as letters and telephone calls. Member participation in this final push is critical."

H.R. 555 calls on the FCC to establish rules prohibiting the application of deed restrictions that preclude Amateur Radio communications on their face or as applied. Deed restrictions would have to impose the minimum practicable restriction on Amateur Radio communications to accomplish the lawful purposes of homeowners association seeking to enforce the restriction.



#### 30th Annual

# Amateur Radio & Electronics Hamfest



Saturday March 11, 2017

Located at:

#### Castle of Knights

1599 Memorial Drive, Chicopee, MA 01020

www.castleofknights.com

#### \*\*\*Directions\*\*\*

#### From North:

\*Take I-91 South to the Mass Turnpike. Take exit 5 (Rte. 33) off the Turnpike. After the tollbooth bear to the right to the first traffic light. Turn left onto Memorial Drive and travel north for about 2 miles.

#### From South:

\*Take I-91 North to the Mass. Tumpike. Take exit 5 (Rte. 33) off the Turnpike. After the tollbooth bear to the right to the first traffic light. Turn left onto Memorial Drive and travel north for about two miles.

#### From East:

\*Travel on the Mass. Turnpike toward West. Take exit 5 (Rte. 33) off the Turnpike. After the tollbooth bear right to the first traffic light. Turn left onto Memorial Drive and travel north for about two miles.

#### From West:

\*Travel on Mass. Turnpike toward East. Take exit 5 (Rte. 33) off the Turnpike. After the tollbooth bear to the right to the first traffic light. Turn left onto Memorial Drive and travel north for about two miles.

Castle is on the right for all of the above.

	Mail- in Registration	Form
Name		
Call sign		
Address		
City	State	Zip
Phone (cell p	oreferred)	
Email Addres	ss:	
# of Tables	x \$20.00 =	
Is 120 VAC N	eeded?	
	to: MTARA Mullarney-KC1BDF, ampton, MA 01027	20 Spring Street,

#### \*\*\* The Details \*\*\*

#### Doors Open:

6:30 AM Vendors <u>only</u> help available for loading and unloading

8:30 AM General Admission

#### Admission:

Adults: \$5.00

Children: under age12 are FREE!

#### No Tailgating

#### Handicapped Parking Available

**Snack Bar** – hot and cold beverages, hotdogs, burgers, etc.

Raffle Prizes - six (6) tickets for \$5.00

#### VE Exam -10:30 AM

Bring **two** forms of positive ID; originals and photocopies of any CSCE's you hold; and if licensed, the original of your current license plus a photocopy.

#### Additional Information:

http://www.mtara.org

**Talk–In on** 146.94 (127.3 PL)

#### **Table Registrations contact:**

Brian Mullarney – KC1BDF 20 Spring Street Easthampton, MA 01027 Tel. (860) 478-6790 kc1bdf@arrl.net

#### WINTER DRIVING TIPS



Snow plows, wet roads and icy patches can make winter driving treacherous.

While you should only drive when it's absolutely necessary, if you must drive: travel during the day; don't travel alone; keep others informed of your schedule; and, stay on main roads. Follow these and other tips for driving in winter conditions from the <a href="National Highway Traffic Safety">National Highway Traffic Safety</a> Administration (NHTSA):

• Drive slowly. It's harder to control or stop your vehicle on a slick or snow-covered surface. Increase your following distance so that you'll have plenty of time to stop for vehicles ahead of you.

- Know what kind of brakes your vehicle has and how to use them properly. In general, if you have antilock brakes, apply firm, continuous pressure. If you don't have antilock brakes, pump the brakes gently.
- If you find yourself in a skid, stay calm and ease your foot off the gas while carefully steering in the direction you want the front of your vehicle to go. Continue to stay off the pedals (gas and brake) until you can regain control of your vehicle.

#### **Navigating Around Snow Plows**

- Don't follow too closely behind a snow plow or travel beside it. Snow plows can throw up a cloud of snow that can reduce your visibility to zero in less time than you can react.
- The road behind an active snow plow is safer to drive on because it is clear.
- Always pass a snow plow in the left. Never pass a snow plow on the right because plows are pushing the snow in that direction.

Learn more about winter driving and preparing your vehicle with the NHTSA's Winter Driving Tips.

#### Winter Storm Safety Rules

In the interest of public safety, the following safety rules are provided. Please feel free to broadcast these safety rules through Social Media while a Winter Storm Warning is in effect.

#### Take Action, Be Prepared!

- Be informed ... listen to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television.
- Should you need to travel, make sure your car is winterized ensuring all parts are in good working order and that you begin any trip with a full tank of gas.
- · Ensure food and medical supplies are adequate before the storm begins.
- Check your supply of heating fuel, and be careful when using alternative heating sources with the risk of carbon monoxide and fire.
- If you must venture outside, wear several layers of light-weight warm and dry clothing.
   Protect extremities while wearing waterproof and hooded outer garments.

A <u>Winter Storm Watch</u> means that a winter storm is imminent within the next 12 to 36 hours – be prepared to take action.

A Winter Storm Warning means that a winter storm is expected within 12 hours or occurring — take action now!



Website: www.weather.gov/boston Twitter: @NWSBoston

Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/NWSBoston



## **DOTS & DASHES:**

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

#### CIA DECLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS ABOUT AMATEUR RADIO

Central Intelligence Agency (<u>CIA</u>) reports about Amateur Radio in the former Soviet Union (including the Baltic States) and Warsaw Pact member countries have been declassified to a new searchable <u>online database</u>, the CIA Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Electronic Reading Room.

Documents include translations and assessments of Amateur Radio clubs, including Soviet DOSAAF (Volunteer Society for Cooperation with the Army, Aviation, and Fleet) groups; training; monitoring Sputniks; technology and equipment, and even QSL cards.

All documents have been declassified and occasionally "sanitized" and made available to the public for the first time in this archive. Some of these documents were only available previously in a closed system at the **US National Archives**.

— Thanks to Southgate Amateur Radio News via Andy Thomas, G0SFJ

#### ARRL ASKS FCC TO ALLOCATE NEW 5 MHz BAND

ARRL has asked the FCC to allocate a new, secondary contiguous band at 5 MHz to the Amateur Service, while also retaining four of the current five 60-meter channels and current operating rules, including the 100 W PEP effective radiated power (ERP) limit. The federal government is the primary user of the 5 MHz spectrum. The proposed action would implement a portion of the *Final Acts* of World Radiocommunications Conference 2015 (WRC-15) that provided for a secondary international allocation of 5,351.5 to 5,366.5 kHz to the Amateur Service; that band includes 5,358.5 kHz, one of the existing 5 MHz channels in the US."

Such implementation will allow radio amateurs engaged in emergency and disaster relief communications, and especially those between the United States and the Caribbean basin, to more reliably, more flexibly, and more capably conduct those communications [and preparedness exercises], before the next hurricane season in the summer of 2017," ARRL said in a January 12 <u>Petition for Rule Making</u>. The FCC has not yet acted to implement other portions of the WRC-15 *Final Acts*.

#### INTERESTING HAM RADIO WEB SITE:

There are a lot of nets on the amateur HF bands. Did you ever wonder if there is a net that you would enjoy. Here is a list of nets put together by Elmore Scott N1YZ.

http://www.n1yz.com/HFNET\_LIST.HTM

#### **AREA SWAP/HAMFESTS:**

Feb 4	Connecticut Valley FM Swapfest	Springfield, VT	http://www.cvfma.org/
Feb 18	Algonquin ARC Flea Market	Marlborough, Ma	http://www.gsl.net/n1em/
Feb 25	White Mountain ARC Flea Market	Chocorua, NH	http://www.w1mwv.com
Mar 5	New England Antique Radio Show	Nashua, NH	http://www.nearc.net/
Mar 11	Mt. Tom ARA HamFest	Chicopee, Ma	http://www.mtara.org/
Mar 31	Androscoggin ARC Convention	Lewiston, Me	http://www.w1npp.org/
Apr 8	Seacoast Amateur Radio Flea Market	Hampton, NH	http://www.w1wqm.org
Apr 15	Portland Amateur Wireless Hamfest	South Portland, Me	http://www.gsl.net/pawa/
Apr 16	Flea at MIT	Cambridge, Ma	http://www.swapfest.us
Apr 22	Radio Association of Norwich Swap	Gales Ferry, Ct	http://www.rason.org/
May 5/6	NEARFest XXI	Deerfield, NH	http://www.near-fest.com/
May 13	East Greenbush ARA Hamfest	East Greenbush, NY	http://www.w2egb.org/
Sep 8/10	New England Convention	Boxborough, Ma	http://www.boxboro.org/

#### **FEBRUARY'S CONTESTS:**

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Fel	b 4	Vermont QSO Party	www.ranv.org/vtqso.html	CW, Ph, Dig
		10-10 International Winter SSB Contest	www.ten-ten.org	Ph
		Minnesota QSO Party	www.w0aa.org	CW, Ph
		British Columbia QSO Party	www.orcadxcc.org/bcqp_rules.html	CW, Ph, Dig
	5	North American CW Sprint	www.ncjweb.com/Sprint-Rules.pdf	CW
	11	OMISS QSO Party	www.omiss.net	Ph
	13	ARRL School Club Roundup	www.arrl.org/school-club-roundup	CW, Ph
	18	ARRL International CW DX Contest	www.arrl.org/arrl-dx	CW
	24	CQ 160 Meter SSB Contest	www.cq160.com/rules.htm	Ph
	25	South Carolina QSO Party	www.scqso.com/rules	CW, Ph, Dig
		North American RTTY QSO Party	www.ncjweb.com	Dig
	26	North Carolina QSO Party	www.rars.org/ncqsoparty	CW, Ph, Dig

## **Local happenings**

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

First Monday: Southwick Regional RACES Drill, 1845, 146.49 Sim-

plex

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  $\dot{}$ 

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

Expect between 6 and 12 attendees 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.) <a href="http://www.hcra.org/meeting-location/">http://www.hcra.org/meeting-location/</a>

**3rd Friday of the month** 7:30 PM, MTARA Club meeting, Red Cross building, <u>150 Brookdale Dr. Springfield, Mass</u>. (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 Community College. (no meetings held in July or August) <a href="http://www.fcarc.org/">http://www.fcarc.org/</a>

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

#### 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

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## Here is your exciting copy of Zero Beat!

Buy your KX2 Raffle Ticket Now...Don't miss your chance!

Get yours at the January/February meetings.

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