



ZERO BEAT

<http://hcra.org>

January 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 hcra.org
- [Visit Summits on the Air](#)
- [Visit POTA413 facebook page](#)

January's Meeting

**Join us Friday January 6th at 7:30, in the Holyoke Medical Center
Auxiliary Conference Center .**

REMOTE HAM RADIO WITH ROCKWELL SCHROCK



Rockwell's foray into the world of RF began in 2006, when he got his Tech license to complement the hobbies of severe weather spotting and storm chasing. A few years later, he upgraded and was bitten by the HF bug. Since then he has worked on millimeter-wave interferometric radars (UMass Amherst), written software for spectrum analyzers (HP/Agilent/Keysight), and is currently developing and maintaining RemoteHamRadio.

He enjoys operating the remote stations, as well as doing portable activations for Summits On The Air. You might also know him for his iOS applications, Waveguide and SOTA Goat. He lives in Ashford, Connecticut with his wife Jess.

For directions to The Holyoke Medical Center Auxiliary Conference Center:

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

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SAVE THE DATES

January 6th -	Rockwell Schrock WW1X, Remote Ham Radio
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

Win a KX2 !!!

Elecraft's Hottest New Transceiver



ELECRAFT KX2

The New KX2: An 80-10 Meter SSB/CW/Data Station That Fits In Your Pocket!

NEW!

Quick Specs

- 5.8" x 2.8" x 1.5"
- Ultralight grab-and-go station
- 80-10 meters (9 bands)
- SSB / CW / Data
- Up to 10 W TX
- Li-ion battery option
- Amp-hour meter
- Built-in mic and 0.5-W speaker
- Wide-range Internal ATU
- Perfect for SOTA and field ops

\$1000 Package

Elecraft KX2 Transceiver

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



HAPPY NEW YEARS!

I would like to wish you and your family a happy new year. I hope that 2017 treats everyone well. People usually use the new year to improve. They usually set a goal and work on it throughout the year and beyond. We at HCRA should set some goals for the new year that we should all work on together as a club. We should encourage on-air activity, show those within the pioneer valley what amateur radio is about and improve the club through volunteering. Let's make 2017 be the best year ever for HCRA.

A Glance Back At 2016

Even though we should be looking forward to the future, we also need to learn from the past. There were a lot of things that we tried out as a club. Some worked out for the good and some didn't do so well. Last year we went with a more expensive item for our yearly raffle. We thought the TS-590SG is an excellent item that would sellout tickets. Well, it didn't work out as we thought and ended up breaking even. We also had issues with guest speakers cancelling at the last moment. I've had made mistakes as well. This is the first time I ever held a position like this and it's still a huge learning curve. However, the support of fellow members has made it less stressful.

As a club, we've had successes as well. Our amateur radio license class was considered a success. We've had over a dozen new licensees and upgrades. Gary Fields (WAIMOW) suggested the "Share the Knowledge" series where we dedicate a class to a subject and make a day of it. We've had classes on DX labs suite, Contesting and the Arduino Microcontroller. It was very successful and we have more planned in the future for sure. HCRA also developed a new "Welcome to amateur radio" package for those who obtain a license at local VE sessions. It gives the new hams ideas of what to do around the valley and it lets them know that they are not alone. Our Field Day was also a success. We could have used some more volunteers but overall it seemed everyone had a great time. We made thousands of contacts and did very well considering the heat and band conditions. We've even made it on the local WWLP newscast.

Big thanks go out to all those who helped over the years. Without you, none of our accomplishments would be possible.

A Look Forward

We have some things planned for 2017. Our program director Larry (W1AST) has been hard at work booking guest speakers. We will also have amateur radio license classes for those interested in obtaining a license. We are trying to find a new venue that has multiple rooms to separate the classes. This would allow for more focus. Once venue, dates and instructors are selected, we will make sure to let everyone know.

We are planning on having more "Share The Knowledge" classes. There is a possibility to have classes on digital modes such as PSK, RTTY, JT-9, JT-65 and possibly a class on antenna and tower safety.

HCRA is also working on doing some type of display of amateur radio to the general public other than Field Day. We've reached out local maker and hacker spaces and we're attempting to form a relationship. There also might be some opportunities to where we can setup a station and let the public get hands on.

January's Guest Speaker

I am excited about this month's guest speaker. Rockwell Schrock (WW1X) is part of the Remote Ham Radio (RHR) team. They have stations setup all around the US that allow hams that live-in antenna restricted areas, high noise areas or that have no equipment to get on the air and make contacts all around the world. Rockwell is also known for his development of many amateur radio applications for the iOS (Apple). Most notably *SOTA Goat* for those interested in Summits On The Air and *Waveguide* which is a propagation prediction software. He has helped HCRA many times in the past with our Field Days.

Swap and Sell table volunteer needed

Jim Mullen (KK1W) helped last year with the swap and sell table at our general meetings. Members would come in with their items they wish to sell and Jim directed them to a table and provided them with some items that help make selling easier. It proved to be very successful. We're looking for a club member to step up and take over for Jim. It's not that much work. If you would like to help, please contact your board of directors and we will put you in touch with Jim

GIVE YOUR EQUIPMENT A BREAK

GENT LAM WA1CQF

How many shacks have you visited or seen photos of that have equipment stacked on top of each other or sandwiched into custom fit cubbies? Given the cost of equipment, it may behoove us to give a little consideration to that precious gear that you spent your hard earned money on.

The primary focus is providing proper air flow. Stacking or locating within in a cubby usually provides for minimal air flow for proper cooling. This practice doesn't do anything to prolong the life of your gear. Tube based equipment generate considerable amounts of heat which really needs to be removed. My first shack was in an unheated basement and my receiver and transmitter were always turned on when I was down there. Always liked the ambiance of lit vacuum tubes. Served nicely to provide a little warmth around the operating position. Current solid state gear has so many parts jammed into the case. Typically the rear panel and/or bottom chassis are heat sinks and serve to dissipate heat. I've seen instances where fans are virtually blocked by adjacent equipment or shelving. Of course, if you restrict airflow and maintain an airtight environment, you won't have to worry about dust and pet hair from getting inside your equipment. You do periodically clean equipment fans?

I shudder when I see equipment stacked two or three high on top of each other. Needless to say, this practice is sure to scratch up and dent your equipment housings.

How many pieces of gear have you seen at hamfests that look as though someone used the top of a radio to clean off the bottom of somebody's shoes.

Over the years I've tried different approaches to housing the equipment on my radio desk. The attached photos show my current method.

The main shelf is a stair tread which I got at the local Home Depot. I used pine but they also had them in hardwood if you want a higher end look. The rounded edge provides for a finished look. This would not be the case if 3/4" plywood was used (which I typically used previously for the shelf). It is over 1" thick and is robust enough to support a 70 lb amplifier without bowing.



It is supported by two rectangular supports which were assembled with biscuit joinery. Pocket screws or half lap joints can be used to provide for alternate sturdy construction. The opening in the middle of the support promotes air flow. Stain and polyurethane were used to match the desk. Material cost was under \$20. A piece of lexan and plastic spacers are used to create a shelf above the transceivers to store the logbook and pad. Yes, I still use paper logs.

If the station layout changes where a different shelf height or different spacing between supports is required, fabricating a new shelf and supports would require a minimal outlay of material and labor.

Finally, give yourself a break. Try to arrange everything such that it is accessible without getting out of your chair. By the way, treat yourself to a comfortable chair and suitable lighting.

DID YOU KNOW THAT HCRA HAS A FACEBOOK PAGE?

JEFFREY BAIL NT1K



HCRA's facebook page

During our meetings and in our publications such as our [website](#) and Zero Beat, we often bring up that HCRA has a [facebook group](#). I would assume that mostly everyone knows what facebook is. Many HCRA members use facebook for various reasons and we thought it would be nice to connect members together on Facebook so they can discuss amateur radio and club related activities with each other and stay connected in between meetings.

In 2011 the HCRA [facebook group](#) was created. A group on facebook is a place where people that share a common interest could join and share their thoughts, opinions, questions or web links to others who've also joined the group. HCRA also used the group at that time as a promotional tool with the hopes of attracting people to not only HCRA but also to amateur radio in general. Think of it as an online bulletin board system (BBS) or forum that is ON facebook. We currently have over 200 members on the facebook group. Good portion of those people ARE dues paying members, former members, guests and some are interested in amateur radio. It's active with a lot of content.

You can check it out for yourself by visiting: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/hampdencountyRA>

Once there all you would need to do is press the Join button and once approved by an admin, you will be able to view and post on that group (facebook membership required beforehand)

Early on when facebook created the groups option, they've noticed that a lot of businesses were using the groups as a promotion tool. They would create their own group for a product, store or movie. However there were issues with businesses using groups. The business or corporation couldn't speak as itself and the more popular groups were very difficult to control. Facebook's response to this was by introducing the "Facebook Page". This allowed businesses and other corporations to create a "Page" that would allow better promotion and control. Around the same time facebook started focusing on advertising in part by using these pages. The creators of these pages have the option to promote a page to the general public (for a fee of course) and facebook provides analysis and records of who you are attracting.

For a long time HCRA avoided having a facebook page because our group was in the open and anyone would be able to find and view our activity. Being open also led to some possible issues with those who are part of the group. Any postings within the group would also be shared with those on your friends list whether they want to see it or not. Some members were concerned that it was invasive to others and were reluctant to use the group as to not annoy their friends who may not be interested in amateur radio at all. Also some potential employers will look into your facebook profile. Plus as a group page, we wouldn't be able to advertise it to the general public. HCRA decided that it was best to make the group a bit more private. The group still could be found and people still can join it. However what you post in that group now stays within the group and doesn't broadcast it to everyone on your friends list.

By making the group more private, some HCRA members were concerned that we lost a promotional tool. In this day and age, we do need to promote HCRA and amateur radio in any way we can. We figured now would be a good time to create a facebook page where we can tailor it to promote amateur radio to the general public. If needed, we can also advertise amateur radio and our club to general public. Those who are attracted to the page could request to join the [facebook group](#) or better yet, obtain a license and become a dues paying member.

Don't forget to "like" us. It will help with advertising and it will show your friends that amateur radio exists and that HCRA exists. All without having to annoy anyone. This page right now is in its infancy but HCRA will be adding to it and maintaining it by keeping it current. If there is an event or posting on the page that you think would benefit your friends on facebook, you are more than welcome to share it on your own wall for your friends to see. It's a win-win for all involved.

I understand that some HCRA members do have concerns about privacy and some have other reasons and refuse to participate on facebook. However there is currently 1.8 billion people on facebook. That is almost a quarter of the entire world's population. A good size portion of the HCRA membership are also facebook members. It's just another tool that we can use. However don't feel left out. HCRA also provides content and updates through our website (<http://www.hcra.org>) and through our e-mail so that almost ALL members are informed of what is going on. If you do have a facebook account, give both the group and page a try.



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. 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 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 preferred) _____

Email Address: _____

of Tables _____ x \$20.00 = _____

Is 120 VAC Needed? _____

Checks payable to: MTARA

Mail to: Brian Mullarney-KC1BDF, 20 Spring Street,
Easthampton, MA 01027

*** The Details ***

Doors Open:

6:30 AM Vendors *only* help available for loading and unloading
8:30 AM General Admission

Admission:

Adults: \$5.00
Children: under age 12 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

2017 NORTH AMERICAN QSO PARTIES

Jan 14/15	North American CW QSO Party	http://ncjweb.com/NAQP/
Jan 21/22	North American SSB QSO Party	http://ncjweb.com/NAQP/
Jan 28	Montana QSO Party	http://fvarc.org/?q=MT-QSO-Party
Feb 4/5	Vermont QSO Party	http://www.ranv.org/vtqso.html
Feb 4	Minnesota QSO Party	http://www.w0aa.org/index.php/mn-qso-party
Feb 4	British Columbia QSO Party	http://www.orcadxcc.org/bcqp.html
Feb 11/12	New Hampshire QSO Party	http://www.w1wqm.org/nhqso/
Feb 12	Colorado QRP Club CW QSO Party	http://www.coloradoqrpclub.org/contests/winter.htm
Feb 25/26	South Carolina QSO party	http://scqso.com/
Feb 25/26	North American RTTY QSO Party	http://ncjweb.com/NAQP/
Feb 26/27	North Carolina QSO Party	http://www.rars.org/ncqsoparty/
Mar 11/12	Idaho QSO Party	http://idahoarrl.info/qsoparty/
Mar 11/12	Wisconsin QSO Party	http://www.warac.org/wqp/wqp.htm
Apr 8/9	Georgia QSO Party	http://www.georgiaqsoparty.org/
Apr 15/16	Michigan QSO Party	http://www.miqp.org/
Apr 15/16	Ontario QSO Party	http://www.va3cco.com/oqp/
Apr 29/30	Florida QSO Party	http://floridaqsoparty.org/
May 6/7	Indiana QSO Party	http://www.hdxcc.org/inqp/
May 6/7	Delaware QSO Party	http://www.fsarc.org/qsoparty/qsohome.htm
May 6/7	New England QSO Party	http://www.neqp.org/index.html
Jul 15/16	North American RTTY QSO Party	http://ncjweb.com/NAQP/
Aug 5/6	North American CW QSO Party	http://ncjweb.com/NAQP/
Aug 12/13	Maryland-DC QSO Party	http://mdcqsoparty.w3vpr.org/
Aug 19/20	North American SSB QSO Party	http://ncjweb.com/NAQP/
Aug 26/27	Hawaii QSO Party	http://hawaiiqsoparty.org/
Aug 26/27	Ohio QSO Party	http://www.ohqp.org/
Sep 23/24	Maine QSO Party	http://www.qsl.net/ws1sm/Maine_QSO_Party.html
Sep 23/24	Texas QSO Party	http://www.txqp.net/
Oct 7/8	California QSO Party	http://www.cqp.org/index.html
Oct 14/15	Arizona QSO Party	http://www.azqsoparty.org/home.html
Oct 14/15	Pennsylvania QSO Party	http://www.nittany-arc.net/PAQSO.html
Oct 21/22	New York QSO Party	http://nyqp.org/wordpress/
Oct 22/23	Illinois QSO Party	http://www.w9awe.org/ILOP.html
Nov 11/12	Kentucky QSO Party	http://www.wkdx.com/mainsite/

Hands-Only™ CPR
Ad Council

1 

Call 911

2 

Push hard and fast in the center of the chest.
Learn more at handsonlycpr.org

American Heart Association
Learn and Live

DOTS & DASHES:

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

H.R. 1301 IS DEAD....FOR NOW

AS you may have heard, "The Amateur Radio Parity Act " has died....at least for now. Florida Senator Bill Nelson refused to let the bill be heard by the Senate. Because the measure had not been put on the floor schedule, the only way it could have passed the Senate would have been through a process called "unanimous consent." A Senate member may request unanimous consent on the floor to set aside rules and expedite proceedings. If any single Senator objects, though, the request is rejected. [You can read the details here.](#)

WINTER FIELD DAY IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

We all have heard a bout the ARRL's Field Day event the last weekend in June, how about Winter Field the last weekend in January?

Winter Field day is sponsored by the [Winter Field Day Association](#). We believe as do those entities of ARRL Organizations like ARES & RACES that maintaining your operational skills should not be limited to fair weather scenarios. The addition of a Winter Field Day will enhance those already important skills of those that who generously volunteer their time and equipment to these organizations. Disasters are unpredictable by nature and can strike when you least expect them. WFDA's goal is to help enhance your skills and ready you for all environmental conditions found in the US and Canada during the spring, summer, fall, and winter.

If you are serious about emergency communications as we are; we welcome you to join us for our yearly event. We are sure that you will find this event a pleasant change and challenge to that of a normal summer time field day

INTERESTING HAM RADIO WEB SITE:

If you like to build your own antennas, there is a magazine for you . They also offer an interesting e-book, free of charge. Check out the [magazine here](#), you can get a copy of the [e-book here](#).

AREA SWAP/HAMFESTS:

Jan 21	Whitman ARC WinterFest	Whitman, Ma	http://www.walnpo.org
Feb 4	Connecticut Valley FM Swapfest	Springfield, VT	http://www.cvfma.org/
Feb 18	Algonquin ARC Flea Market	Marlborough, Ma	http://www.qsl.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.qsl.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/

JANUARY'S CONTESTS:

Jan 7	ARRL RTTY Roundup	www.arrl.org/rtty-roundup	Dig.
	ARRL Kid's Day Contest	www.arrl.org/kids-day	Ph.
14	North American CW QSO Party	www.ncjweb.com/NAQP-rules.pdf	CW
16	Run for the Bacon QRP Contest	www.qrpcontest.com/pigrun	CW
21	North American SSB QSO Party	www.ncjweb.com/NAQP-rules.pdf	Ph.
	ARRL January VHF Contest	www.arrl.org/january-vhf	CW, Ph, Dig.
27	CQ 160 Meter CW Contest	www.cq160.com/rules.htm	CW
28	Montana QSO Party	www.fvarc.org	CW, Ph, Dig.
	Winter Field Day	www.winterfieldday.com/rules.htm	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 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

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.)

<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 Community College. (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/>

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**