



Radio Amateur News & Views

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10 Great Years of RANV

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VINTAGE RADIOS II The April 10th RANV Meeting

At last month's meeting, we were treated to a short presentation on Vintage Radios. We had so much fun that we brought it back for another month! Todd KA1KAQ, Mike W1RC and Rene W1GWD will talk about the segment of ham radio known as collecting "boatanchors". As a continuation of last month's meeting, more vintage equipment will be brought in and shown off. There will also be details on how to *restore and modify* old gear. A number of items will be brought to the meeting, including a Collins KWM2-A which we plan to put on the air. **If you have any vintage equipment, please bring it along and share the fun with all of us.**

So, by all means, join us for the meeting on Vintage Radios. The pre-meeting festivities take place at Zach's starting at 6pm.

HOSSTRADERS MOVING

It's not too likely that you will get the next newsletter before the May Hosstraders Swapfest, so here are the details on this year's hamfest. The fest has moved to the *Hopkinton Fairgrounds*. This is a lot closer than Rochester! To get there, take I-89 to New Hampshire to the *Exit 7 - Davisville* exit. Make a left at the end of the ramp, turn onto Route 103, and go about a tenth of a mile past the underpass. Make the first right you come to and go 1.4 miles. The fairgrounds is on your left. If you have a GPS, look for 43°14'02"N x 71°43'26"W.

I conducted a reconnaissance run last weekend to the new location. While the locked gate was a minor annoyance, the 2 feet of fresh snow dissuaded me from doing any careful checking. However, from the road, the facility almost looks identical to Deerfield. Nice shady pine trees and a cozy atmosphere were evident. And, get this - I was able to key up the 145.15 repeater from the front gate! It was extremely weak (*hey, what do you want for 99 miles away*), but with a higher antenna, it should be workable during the fest.

Hosstraders is May 4-5th this year - 1 week earlier than usual. The fest opens at 9am on Friday. Admission is likely to be \$10 before 3pm and \$5 after that. Sellers pay an additional \$10. Some adjustment in times and prices are likely. Official details on Hosstraders is found at: <http://www.qsl.net/k1rqq>.

I'll have the 146.67 repeater running and the flashing red beacon going (*may be hard to see in the trees*). So, join us at Hosstraders. There will plenty of good times and good junk to look at.

FOX HUNT APRIL 6th

Join us for the first Fox Hunt of 2001 as Bill N1IRO will attempt to foil a cast of hunters. The hunt will take place Friday, April 6th, starting at 6pm. Joining with Bill is Disco, KB1FLE.

The rules are simple. Check into the event on the 145.15 repeater at 6pm (*required*). Then, listen on the input of the repeater (*144.55 MHz*) and look for the Fox. The Fox will hide in a public accessible spot in Chittenden County and will transmit at least 10 seconds out of every minute. The winner of the hunt gets to be the Fox at the June Fox Hunt and receives all bragging rights associated with this honor.

Welcome to RANV

Rob KB1FWV of Burlington, is a graduate of last fall's ham class. During the day he works in Investments Banking.

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OUR LAST RANV MEETING

by Mitch W1SJ & Grant K1KD, Sec'y

The last RANV meeting called to order at 7:15pm on March 13th to a packed house. We had introductions of the 25 people attending.

Mitch and Brian gave a recap on the Milton Hamfest. The attendance was just shy of 500. Financially, the hamfest was a success. About \$1500 was deposited into the treasury. After \$300 in expenses, we netted \$1200.

Mitch invited participation in Field Day, to be held June 23-24th. He explained some of the new rule changes allowing bonus points for 3 different modes of experimental operation, such as APRS, SSTV, etc.

In celebration of RANV's 10th anniversary, Mitch showed a video of the very first RANV meeting on March 12, 1991. At that meeting there were 20 people in attendance and it pretty much looked like any other RANV meeting. We also saw a small clip of the 1991 Milton Hamfest and several minutes of the first activity that RANV participated in, The Vermont ETV Auction. Members wore highly visible light blue hats with RANV spelled out in front, and were involved in all sorts of activities at the auction. We then welcomed 3 of the founding members of RANV, Tom N1EXY, Tom K1KBL (*ex-N1ENH*) and Carl KC1WH. They each spoke about why RANV was founded and gave some insight about ham radio in the Burlington area 10 years ago. It was great having a meeting with the founding fathers!

To complete the birthday party, we had Birthday Cake! Mitch and Debbie rounded up some delicious Black Forest Cake for the occasion.

The second half of the meeting was on Vintage Radios, hosted by Mike W1RC and Rene W1GWD. Rene was gracious enough to step in when our guest speaker Todd KA1KAQ was unable to make it due to illness.

Mike and Rene first described their love of collecting what they call "boatanchors" – vintage equipment which was usually very well built and quite heavy. Years ago, you couldn't give these things away. Now they command high and sometimes ridiculous prices at hamfests and on-line auctions. There has become a whole group of people, some hams, some not, who collect these pieces for either nostalgic or monetary value. Many of the collectors buy old transmitters, modify them and operate using Amplitude Modulation (AM). AM operators take great pride in the clarity and fidelity of their signals.

Rene then passed around a number of back issues of Electric Radio, a publication for people who collect and restore boatanchors. In the issue I got, I saw many old pieces of gear which have graced hamfest tables over the years and saw plans to make them shiny and new.

Because of the limited time, we decided to have Mike and Rene, along with Todd, back for next month's meeting for a Part II on Vintage Radios. Todd plans to put his Collins KWM-1 on the air. Oh joy, we get to put antennas up in the snow!

THE PREZ SEZ

by Paul AA1SU, President

RANV is known as "The Fun Club." Let me tell you, it is sure fun being the Club President. It is so great to see so many of you fine folks attending the meetings each and every month. This past meeting was especially nice, as we got to meet the founding officers of the club, and hear about its great history. It is not often that current officers and members get this unique opportunity. It was a great birthday party. Thanks to Mitch for rounding these guys up.

As for the next ten years, I see ham radio growing and expanding ever more into new areas. This is after all, an experimental hobby, and it can keep us busy for decades to come. RANV will be there, leading the way for Northern Vermont. The names and faces may change a little, but that's why the club has endured so well for the past decade.

What will you be doing to enhance amateur radio? This is a rhetorical question, but it is best answered by "just getting on the air." No matter what the stresses are in the day, we can always get on the air, ragchew, and relax a little. Ham radio takes us to a different place in our minds, whether we are just driving along and chatting on the repeater, conversing on HF or trying to break a DX pile-up. The whole time, we are learning new and different things about our equipment, our friends, propagation, and ourselves. In fact, I look forward to finding you on the air by chance. I recall a recent RTTY ragchew with Steve K1LJL. I was hanging out on frequency after a RTTY sked, when Steve gave a call. That was fun. We were only 2 miles apart at most, but we could be heard across the country. I've also bumped into Fred N1ZUK on a DX Packet Cluster in Albany. We were only 7 miles apart at the time. The other day, I found Eric N1SRC on the Covey Hill Repeater in Canada. These are just some silly examples, but like I said, we were on the air having fun and just shooting the breeze.

So, keep coming to those great RANV meetings, keep talking up ham radio, and keep having fun.

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Please send submissions for the newsletter to the editor, W1SJ.

RANV - THAT WILD FIRST YEAR!

By Mitch WISJ

Last month, we looked at the events leading up to the formation of RANV and the very first meeting on March 12, 1991. In this second part of the story, we'll look at the whirlwind of activities in which RANV members were involved in that first year.

Each month we had a regular schedule of meetings. On the 2nd Tuesday was the membership meeting, followed by the Steering Wheel meeting on the 3rd Friday. Boy, I miss some of those wild and woolly Friday night meetings! At the March Steering Wheel, we tapped out Tom N1ENH to be the newsletter editor. We also decided to help out at the *Vermont ETV Auction* in April and commissioned the design of the famous light blue RANV hats. We also decided to do a short biographical sketch each month in the newsletter called *Famous Hams in RANV*.

At the April meeting, our guest speaker was Michael KB1UM, who often goes by the name "Kaboom", a transliteration of his callsign. He spoke about his cassette transmitter – a QRP 80-meter transceiver built into a cassette box. It really works – I worked him on it from home. Michael was always buying up seemingly worthless bits of junk at hamfests and turning them into useful circuits. He is now a singer-songwriter living in LA – and still gets on 20 meters!

April 13th, 1991 is a day which will live in infamy. OK, perhaps it wasn't that dramatic. But it was the last day of the last ever *Vermont ETV Auction*, and RANV members, with their striking blue RANV hats, presided over the debauchery closing a popular Vermont tradition. On the Quickie Stage, board operators N1EXY, N1HRO, N1HRP and WISJ took bids, rang cowbells, popped balloons and otherwise drove stage host Jim Reid crazy, while KC1MP, N1GQA and others worked back-stage running bids and working the

phones. And N1DMP, an ETV employee working in the control room, tried to disavow any knowledge of the crazy bunch he was associated with. It was tremendous publicity for our new club and it was a ton of fun. We were really sad when we heard that the auction would not run again.

At our May meeting, we had another interesting topic. Enrique N1HRP gave us a lesson in elementary Spanish. With many amateurs in Latin America, some knowledge of Spanish would go a long way in landing some of those rare DX countries. Enrique is originally from Mexico, so he qualified as an expert in Spanish. Today, he still works for the University of Vermont in the public relations department, qualifying him as an expert in English too! Sadly, Enrique did not renew his ham license a few years back. Anyway, about an hour into the meeting, he had us rolling our "R's" like native Latinos and we proceeded to carry on QSO's with each other in Spanish and fill out Tarjeta de QSL's (*QSL Cards*).

During the Steering Wheel meetings through April, May and June we worked towards bringing a new hamfest to life. The original plan was to make it half hamfest and half computer fair and run it in early summer. The *RANV Summer Hamfest* debuted July 20 at the South Burlington Middle School. It was an excellent location, right near the Interstate and it had plenty of room for indoor and outdoor festing. Unfortunately, the school district also booked the parking lot to the Fire Department for their annual Fire Hose competition. So there it was, hams tailgating on one side of the lot while fireman ran around shooting water at each other (*and us*) on the other side. With the sticky 90-degree temperatures, it wasn't all that bad! The hamfest was successful. As president N1EXY put it, "100% of all people who bought

tickets attended the hamfest." The actual attendance was around 300 and we received more publicity and praise for RANV. The summer hamfest moved into June for two more years and then we stopped doing it. The general feeling was that it was always going to be the 3rd hamfest in the area and if we were going to do all that work, we really wanted it to be the best. Who wouldn't?

After a summer break in meetings, we reconvened in September with a visit from *Carlnak the Magnificent*.

Carlnak, also known as KC1WH, was dressed up in his traditional robe and turban and he mystified the audience by reading clues from envelopes held up to his head. N1DMP served as Carlnak's assistance as the audience roared. That night, we also had our first ever Show & Tell night. And we are still doing them 10 years later. Around this time, RANV became an ARRL affiliated club.

Our November meeting that year featured the "Great American Turkey Hunt", or what was to become the first in a great series of RANV Fox Hunts. Tom drew honors as the "Turkey" and settled in a spot by the Dunkin Donuts on Williston Road. We took turns driving by him, but Joe N1DMP finally found him and was declared the winner.

Moving on to February, RANV held the first of many demonstrations at University Mall. We set up an amateur shack at Radio Shack, consisting of HF, VHF and packet. Many people stopped by to watch, especially when Tom turned up the volume and sent cw wafting through the Mall!

With two full pages of writing, I've only covered the FIRST year of RANV. The club had great activities, fun meetings and was on the rise. And we still have these items today.

CONTEST CORNER

by Paul AA1SU

Looking at some recent contest results, I see familiar call signs. Articles in CQ Magazine show the standings for CQ *WorldWide WPX*. In both SSB and CW, I was the only RANV member to submit logs. It looks like a certificate is coming for the CW portion. That's good, I like wallpaper. It's amazing what one can do with 100 watts. In the August *North American QSO SSB Party*, sponsored by *National Contest Journal*, Ron KK1L put out a blistering high score and came in second place for New England. One hundred watts was the maximum power allowable for this test. Congratulations Ron! I am also listed in the August NAQP CW results with a small effort that I put in after the RANV Summer Picnic.

I am very encouraged to hear more RANV members participating in the contests this year. I know that Dave W1DEC got on for the *CQWW WPX SSB* this month, and got his feet wet with contesting. How many others of you got on? Remember to send in your logs, and send your scores to Mitch W1SJ. He will proudly post your score on the web page. Plus, I'll be reporting your scores here next year, not necessarily mine. I won't be contesting as much. With the new activity, comes the need for more education. Areas such as contest software, and log checking need to be addressed. For experience with the contest software called *NA*, come to the RANV Field Day site on June 23-25 for some hands on experience. In the future, I might do a review of the 4 most popular brands of such software. I will have help though, from *QST Magazine* articles.

The next four weekends bring us some odd, but interesting contests. The *Lighthouse Spring Lites Rites QSO Party* is a rare 10-day venture from 7 PM April 13 to 11 PM April 23. The confusing scoring system is in *QST*, but I think that this is just an opportunity to work a lot of Lighthouses. They have their own awards program. Our own Joe K2KBT is a member of the Amateur Radio Lighthouse Society, and can enlighten you more on this subject. Remember my teaser from March; are you ready to rumble? The *TARA PSK31 Rumble* starts at 8 PM on Friday, April 20 and lasts for 24 hours. Details are also in *QST*. This one utilizes that great new mode, PSK31.

Going into the last weekend of the month, you can go all out in the *Florida QSO Party*, which is a rather large stateside test. Or, you can take advantage of the current sunspot/equinox conditions, and get into the Six-Meter Sprint. It starts at 7 PM on Friday, April 27 and ends at Midnight on Saturday.

On the weekend of May 5, it just gets odder & odder. The *10-10 International Spring CW Contest* is the only one worth mentioning. It starts at 9 PM Friday, and ends at 8 PM on Sunday. Remember that CW can cut through better than SSB, if you are looking to add to your collections for awards.

Next month: it's the *Hootowl Sprint!*

NEW GENERAL CLASS QUESTION POOL

April 15th marks the first anniversary of the rule changes to amateur radio which eliminated the 13 and 20 word per minute code tests and the Novice and Advanced class licenses. On April 15th of this year, the Question Pool Committee will put the new question pool into effect for candidates for the General class license. Your VE team has scheduled extra sessions to allow candidates to take the old General Class exam.

The new questions for the General incorporate a new method of testing called "Structured Testing." Instead of a multiple-choice test, candidates will be asked to perform certain tasks. As each task is performed satisfactorily, the difficulty level of succeeding tasks will go up.

Since we don't have room to print the entire General Class question pool, here is a sample of some of the new questions:

1. Build an HF transceiver. You have been provided with wire, carbon and a piece of glass. Complete a QSO with it.
2. Explain the nature of matter. Include an evaluation of the impact of the development of amateur radio on science.
3. Create life. Estimate the difference in subsequent human culture if this form of life had developed from a semiconductor with a built-in antenna.
4. Write a piano concerto. Orchestrate and perform it with a flute and drum. You will find a piano under your seat.
5. 2500 fanatics are storming the test session. Calm them. You may use any language except AM or Morse Code.
6. Remove your appendix. You have been provided with a razor blade, a piece of gauze and a bottle of Scotch. Do not suture until your work has been inspected.
7. Describe the history of the papacy from its origins to the present day, concentrating on its social, political, economic religious and philosophical impact on amateur radio.

NEW FCC RULES

On April 1st, the FCC issued a Report and Order modifying its indecency rules. Indecent communication includes any mention of excretory or body functions. Based on several complaints, the FCC has ruled that discussions of any body ailments, operations, doctor visits or hospital stays are in violation of Part 97.113 of the rules.

Prohibited communications include, but are not limited to the following:

- "Last month, Mert had a 25-pound growth removed"
- "This was his 5th open heart surgery and he's fine"
- "Every time Larry eats beans he has a terrible bout of gas"
- "I'd love to come to the hamfest, but my feet is killing me"
- "The doctor said that the pain in my neck is in my mind"

The FCC also reminded hams who engage in Nets which promote this activity to take up some other interest, like DXing or Traffic Handling.

SIX NEW HAMS AND SOME UPGRADES

There were six new hams created at the recent Weekend Ham Radio Class plus a couple of upgrades. It was a small class, but a very enthusiastic one. Small isn't too bad – I just finished a monster class in New Hampshire with 27 people and I'm exhausted! The new hams are:

KB1GMB	James Johnson	Hardwick
KB1GMC	Stan Borucki	Ferrisburgh
KB1GMD	Martha Camp	Richmond
KB1GME	Dennis Reinhardt	Stowe
KB1GMF	Chad Anderson	Shelburne
KB1GMG	John Hill	South Hero

So, who are these guys? James, KB1GMB has a colorful dad, Red, K1RED. He joins brother K1RAD and dad in the *Father & Son Team, WS1J* (like W1SJ, but backwards). Stan KB1GMC has wanted to be a ham for a long time and finally found a class and got his ticket. Martha KB1GMD is spouse to KB1FRW, and she hasn't been on the air yet! Dennis, KB1GME is a member of the Stowe Search and Rescue team, which includes a whole bunch of hams: N1TNC, N1UPB, N1UPD, N1UPE, N1XZU, N1YTU, N1YTV, N1YUA, N1YTR and possibly others. Chad KB1GMF grew up with Bob WE1U. It's taken me 4 years of calling him, but Chad finally got in the class. John KB1GMG is interested in talking around the world and has a good start by getting the General.

In the upgrade category, John KB1AMA has been a Novice for a couple of years, but after Sunday night, he is the proud holder of a General ticket. Dave W1DKL and John K1JHK picked up their General credit. Now they need to work on the 5 word per minute code test. If you hear either of them on, remind them to practice their code!

Be on the look out for these folks and give them a warm welcome!

AIRCRAFT SIGNALS

by Mitch W1SJ

One of my classes involves teaching the *General Radio Operators License* for the *Airframe and Power Plant* program of the *Burlington Technical Center*. We learn all about aircraft radio communications and navigation. This information might be of interest to amateur operators who would like to listen.

All communications involving land-based aircraft use amplitude modulation (AM). Fortunately, most scanners and VHF ham transceivers automatically switch to AM below 138 MHz. Some receivers might not and this will result in a signal with very weak audio or none at all. The proliferation of the Yaesu VX-5R makes listening in on aircraft signals very easy. However, remember that the VX-5R is operating quite far from the ham bands and its sensitivity will be less than spectacular – sometimes quite poor. Also, remember that aeronautical stations are set up to transmit into the air. As a result, their coverage on the ground is often limited.

The most obvious signal to pick up in our area is Burlington ATIS. It transmits continuously on 123.8 MHz from the control tower and contains all sorts of useful information (*for pilots*) about the weather, airport advisories, and what runways are being used. When they say runway "33" it means the plane is pointing toward 330 degrees (NW) when landing or taking off. There are 3 major frequencies at the airport for the direction of flight traffic. The control tower is on 118.3 MHz and is either the first or last frequency used, depending on whether you are departing or arriving. Burlington approach/ departure is on 121.1 MHz. This is the frequency used by planes in the air in the immediate vicinity of the airport. Ground control is on 121.9 MHz and is used for planes taxiing to various spots at the airport. When a plane leaves the immediate area, they are told to QSY to Boston Center on 135.7 MHz. This system consists of linked repeaters all over New England, with the local repeater on Mt. Mansfield. If you are adept with the radio, you can listen for a particular flight to call in on Boston Center, and have about 7 minutes to get to the airport to meet the plane as it comes in. I have done this before.

The airport has some other interesting signals for guidance of aircraft. There are two frequencies used in Burlington, the *localizer* on 110.3 MHz and the *glideslope* on 335.0 MHz. The localizer gives the left-right indication that the pilot is aligned with the runway and the glideslope is the up-down. The 100-watt localizer is at the end of each runway pointing down the runway. Besides sending either a 90 or 150 Hz tone, it ID's IBTV for runway 15 and IVOE for runway 33. Both are easily heard in the vicinity of the airport, but they are highly directional. The 2-watt glideslope does not ID and is harder to hear, because it is lower power and more directional. In addition to the above, there is an installation called the "Outer Marker" on 75.0 MHz. It is located 5.6 miles down the flight path in Colchester, behind Allphase Body Collision on Heineberg Drive. Look in the back and you will see two yagis pointing up at a 45-degree angle. It sends a pulsing 400 Hz tone which can only be heard about a mile. The installation also contains a longwave beacon on 382 KHz, sending BT. Finally, there is an installation in Shelburne, just to the West of Shelburne Pond, called a VOR. It transmits on 117.5 MHz and ID's with BT and has advisories on voice. It is generally heard poorly near the airport.

There are certainly other frequencies to hear besides those listed above. Most of the traffic control frequencies are duplicated up in the 270 MHz range. The Air and Army Guard have their own set of frequencies. There are also radar frequencies are 1030 and 1090 MHz, if you have the equipment to listen in. For more details on frequencies and facilities at Burlington airport and other airports, go to <http://www.airnav.com>. Have fun!

**NEXT MEETING:
“Vintage Radios II”
Tuesday, April 10th
O’Brien Civic Center**

**FOX HUNT:
Friday, April 6th, 6PM
145.15 MHz**

RANV

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