



Radio Amateur News & Views

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FIELD TRIP TO WULFDEN The May 14th RANV Meeting

The RANV May meeting will be a Field Trip and Party at *Wulfden*, the QTH of Brian, N1BQ and Sara, W1SLR. **Festivities get underway at 5:30.** Allow time to travel to Underhill Center.

Wulfden is a 2000 square foot log cabin completely off the power grid. The power system stores DC power from a 1.2 kilowatt solar array in a 12 volt DC battery bank. This produces 10 kilowatt-hours of energy to power the house around the clock. DC-AC inverters supply conventional AC power for the lights, TVs, stereos, and the computer network. Part of the meeting will be to demonstrate how power is generated and used in daily life.

We will start to gather at 5:30 for food and drink and hold the formal part of the meeting (*whatever that will entail*) around 7. RANV will supply hamburgers, hot dogs, fixings and drinks. Desserts and extras will be potluck. Please contact Brian or Sara at 899-4527 or n1bq@wulfden.org to let us know if you are coming for dinner and to coordinate food. If you can, please bring one or two folding chairs.

Wulfden is at 101 Harvey Road in Underhill Center. From Route 15, go to Underhill Flats and bear right at Big John's store to go to Underhill Center. You will go 3 miles on River Road and come to a stop sign. The road goes to the left and becomes Pleasant Valley Road. Harvey Road is 2 miles further, on the right. For detailed maps and instructions, either call the number above or go to www.wulfden.org/nvqs/n1bq-qth.shtml.

FIELD DAY 2002

by Mitch W1SJ

In 6 weeks, on June 21-23, we will once again tackle our biggest undertaking of the year – *Field Day*. In terms of planning and executing, it is larger than the MiltonHamfest, larger than a trip to the repeater site and larger than all of the local public service events combined. Some 20 people will be involved in setting up 5 tents, 5 towers and masts, 3 generators, 11 radios, 14 antennas and hundreds of feet of coax and power cable. And then these stations are operated for 24 hours around the clock.

It goes without saying that we need your help. In fact, we need your help even more this year. Our Field Day setup gets more complex each year as we strive to stay competitive. Where we were the only Field Day operation several years ago, we now have 6 Field Day groups operating within 20 miles of here. The more signals on the bands, the more operators needed!

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FOX HUNT PRACTICE

by Bob KB1FRW

Would you like to hone your hidden transmitter radio direction finding skills or just see how it is done?

Then come to the Fox Hunt practice at 6 PM, May 17th at Perkins Pier, the foot of Maple St. Burlington.

Talk in will be on the 145.15 repeater. We will all meet, then depending on the number of participants, one or two hams will be given 10-15 minutes to hide. We will do this a few times as time allows.

The object is that this is a learning experience and will not be terribly difficult at first. Maybe we will do one hunt in the open and one around buildings. All the details can be decided when we meet.

Let me know if you are going to be there and/or have any suggestions. Reach me at mcamp@together.net.

Remember this is your opportunity to learn how to beat Mitch!

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OUR LAST RANV MEETING

by Charlie W1CHG, Sec'y

The meeting was called to order by Paul AA1SU at 7:15 PM and started with introductions of the 24 members present. The May meeting will be at Brian N1BQ's QTH. Refreshments will be provided by the club. There was some discussion of Field Day. Per the new rules, the Novice station is now replaced with a "Get On the Air" Station. This is done to provide an operating experience for the new, non-experienced and non-active hams. There was discussion on planning for the Demonstration and VHF Stations. We also need a new Field Day chef! Debbie W1DEB gave the monthly jacket report. Contact her before ordering, as she may be able to get the best price for you. It was suggested that the club look into raising the dues slightly to offset increases in postage. However, the dues are still expected to cover our operating expenses for the foreseeable future.

We learned that Paul AA1SU, our current president, is resigning effective July 1st as he must concentrate his focus and energy on his new post as Vermont Section Manager. Brian N1BQ will step into Paul's shoes and Debbie W1DEB will fill in as Vice-president and Treasurer for the remainder of the term ending in November.

The speaker for the evening was Mike KB1FUV who spoke about the IRLP (*Internet Repeater Linking Project*). He explained that it is a system to link radio systems (*primarily repeaters*) together using the Internet and the Linux operating system. Windows had been tried but was fraught with numerous crashes. The system was first started in Canada in November 1997. Specific repeaters can be linked directly to each other, or many can be linked together on what is called a *Conference Server*.

The IRLP starts with an A/D converter board at the user end which converts audio into digital words. This is passed to a computer using Linus based *Voice-over-IP* (VoIP) streaming software called *Speak Freely*. The information is sent to the IRLP Web Site which directs the information to its destination, based on the address the software placed in it. Finally, the information ends up at another computer running *Speak Freely*, goes into an A/D board and the digital data is converted back into audio which is fed to a radio or repeater. The talk was accompanied by great handouts explaining the system. If you missed getting the handout at the meeting, contact Mike for a copy.

The talk ended at 8:35, which was followed by the consumption of the soda and cookies.

THE PREZ SEZ

by Paul AA1SU, President

As some of you may have heard by now, I will be resigning as President of RANV, effective July 1st, 2002. This was due to the fact that I will become the ARRL Vermont Section Manager on that day. I felt that trying to do both jobs until the November club elections would be a strain. The League actually suggested it at first, and I resisted the idea. I wanted to try and do both duties with all my heart. However, I have had to hold down two jobs lately, and I realized that with all that is going on in my life, that this would be for the best. Brian N1BQ will step up to President, and Debbie W1DEB will take on the duties of Vice President/Treasurer for the remainder of the club year. I am confident that they will do an outstanding job, and I will give them all the support that they need. Please join me in welcoming them into their new positions later this year.

In the meantime, we still have many exciting club events to take on this year. The biggest and most pressing is of course, Field Day on June 21-23. This will require the attention of the entire club. Some of you may be at other sites, and we understand that. At least you are at a Field Day somewhere. At RANV, we take Field Day very seriously, and it shows in our winning scores, year after year. However, we cannot do it without you - the club member. We have trained many hams to be good contesters over the years, and we have lost some of those good operators. We need to bring on, and train new people each year, in order to have a pool of operators to pull from. For example, this year, CW operators are in short supply. I will be in the CW tent this year. But what about next year, when I might be touring Field Day sites around the state, as Section Manager? Who will we put in the

tent then? It is important that you visit the GOTA tent this year, and operate as much as possible. It will be on phone most of the time, but we will also have CW, Satellite, VHF, and other modes for you to see and experiment with. This is your premier opportunity to get active. It is also an emergency preparedness exercise, something that we, as hams have to constantly improve upon.

We still have many exciting meetings planned for the next several months. The turnout at the meetings has been phenomenal! It makes me very happy to see so many of you there month after month. I am also pleased to see new members making a regular appearance. This is very important to the growth of the club, as a whole.

Contacting RANV

In Person: Meeting, April 14, 5:30 pm,
N1BQ QTH
101 Harvey Rd, Underhill
By Mail: PO Box 9392,
So. Burlington, VT 05403
By Radio: 145.15 repeater
WW Web: <http://www.ranv.org>

President	Paul	AA1SU	860-1134
		aa1su@arrl.net	
VP/Tres:	Brian	N1BQ	899-4527
		n1bq@wulfdn.org	
Secretary:	Charlie	W1CHG	434-5995
		cccharly@wcv.com	
Editor:	Mitch	W1SJ	879-6589
		w1sj@arrl.net	

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

2002 VERMONT CITY MARATHON

by Carl KCIWH

On May 26th, the 14th annual Vermont City Marathon will be held in Burlington. This 26.2-mile race starts at Battery Park, takes a complicated route around the city, and ends at Waterfront Park. A 5-leg relay race runs simultaneously with the Marathon.

There are several significant changes for 2002. Each marathoner must now wear a special computer chip on his or her shoe, and a new timing system features sensor strips on the road surface, automatically tracking each runner as he moves through the course. So much for taking the subway to shorten your running time! VCM management says that the technology is absolutely reliable. Runners stacked behind the crowded starting line benefit from this technology: the official start time for each marathoner is recorded when he or she crosses the start line sensor — NOT when the starting gun is fired. Other changes this year include one additional aid station, and the replacement of the Lead Car with new Burlington Police motorcycles, providing lead-vehicle support on the Bike Path and other narrow locations inaccessible by car.

Registration for both the Marathon and relay teams filled and closed in January. The physical limitations of the course necessitate a 5400 runner limit. VCM is a very popular race, voted among the top ten marathons in New England, and recently voted among the top twenty in the US.

The Vermont City Marathon has the largest amateur radio team supporting a public service event in Vermont. Two repeaters are used to simultaneously run two controlled nets. Hams provide communication support for aid stations, shadows for race officials, and a variety of other locations.

Amateur Radio operators are needed to join the communications team. The only radio gear required is a 2-meter HT and an extra battery. Volunteers get a T-shirt and an amateur radio cap. Please call me at 878-8232, or send an E-mail to kc1wh@hotmail.com. Have a great time, make some new friends, and use your radio skills!

CHARLOTTE HALF MARATHON

RANV has been asked to help provide communications for the *Charlotte Covered Bridges Half Marathon*. We are looking for amateur operators to help out at this race, which will take place **this Saturday, May 11th**, from 8:30 until 11. The 13.1-mile course forms a loop around Charlotte and is quite scenic. This Half Marathon is also an official training race for the *Vermont City Marathon* on May 26th.

Please contact Paul AA1SU at aa1su@arrl.net or 860-1134 if you would like to help. Volunteers will need to arrive at the Charlotte Central School by 7:30 AM. Take Route 7 to Route F5, and turn **left** at the light onto Church Hill Road. Go up over the hill and bear right. The school will be on the right side. Volunteers will get a T-shirt and all the bagels they can eat!

This should be an exciting day of amateur radio public service as this event and the *NCAA Bike Race* will be occurring at the same time. Please help out and have fun.

WELCOME TO RANV

Bob W4YFJ of Essex has been in Vermont for several years and works at the 911 call center.

Matthew KB1IGZ just got his Technician license at the Weekend Class and joins dad Steve KA1JUN, who took Mitch's class 20 years ago!

ESSEX PARADE

By Mitch W1SJ

Amateur operators will once again help out in the Essex Memorial Day Parade on Saturday, May 25th. Our job will be to serve as parade marshalls and we will be responsible for lining up and accompanying the marchers down the parade route.

This is the easiest public service event for hams to do and is highly recommended for new operators. If you don't have equipment, we have some radios for you to use. We also will give you some brief training on what to do during the event.

Operators will convene at 7:30 AM at St. James Church, outside of the Route 2A entrance to the Fairgrounds. At that time, we will have a brief meeting with the parade organizers. At 8:00, we go out to the staging area and help to line everyone up. The most important task at this point is to note any changes in the official program so we can call our station at the reviewing stand at the Five Corners and let the Parade Announcer know. When the parade moves out, each operator will march along with his or her respective parade division to watch for any safety issues. The route runs 1 mile down Route 2A through the Five Corners and up Route 15 back to the Fairgrounds. And you won't even have to wait for the traffic light! Operators will be done by as early as 11 or as late as noon. It's a nice short day!

For anyone who hasn't done this before, there is nothing as exciting as having crowds of people cheer you as you walk by. In the middle of the Parade, we'll have the "official" RANV Float decked out with as many antennas I can find. And, I'll still find some time to make a few contacts on 40 meters while rolling down the Parade Route.

If you are interested in helping out at this year's Parade, contact Mitch at w1sj@arrl.net or 879-6589.

FOX HUNT

By Mitch WISJ

For the first Fox Hunt of 2002, I had all sorts of ideas for novel hiding places to foil the hunters. But, I also remembered the long night in Westford last October when no hunter found me, so I opted for an easier spot. I also chose a spot which would be more interesting than just sitting in the car in the middle of the woods. From these criteria, we ended up on the Boardwalk on the Burlington Waterfront. This wasn't exactly a new hiding spot. Years ago, I hid on the BoatHouse and John N2YHK hid at the Coast Guard Station, nearby. Our first choice was to take over one of the swings, but we ended up with a bench overlooking the sunset. We had a switchable 25/5 watt transceiver with power supply in a case, using a ¼-wave mag mount conveniently stuck to the arm of the metal bench. For an hour and a half, Debbie regaled the troops with all sorts of etiquette and stories from *Good Housekeeping* while I walked around to see who was about. A couple of cars with big yagis were seen going down Lake Street, but their occupants were not seen. I suspected that they walked all the way down the Bike Path to North Beach, which we later learned, was true. Finally, at 7:40, Dan N1PEF popped up behind Debbie and found her.

With it getting dark (*and cold*) after sunset, we moved to a more lit area right in the circle at the end of College Street, hoping that some of the hunters would trip over us. Lots of non-hams "found" us and asked questions. Hunger set in and Debbie went on a food run to the Burlington Bay Café down the street. Meanwhile it was apparent that the hunters were circling around but just not looking in the right spot. I was able to hear some of them on the HT with no antenna, so I knew they were within several hundred feet. With 9:00 approaching, it was time for drastic action. So I gave the key clue, "take the trolley to the end" and within minutes, several groups of hunters were swarming around us. Well, at least the clue was good. Everyone recounted their fox hunting stories later at the gathering at *Al's French Frys*.

In looking back at how the hunt went, it was apparent to me that the hunters could not resolve close-in direction. Some of the hunters had the right direction but refused to believe it. Others did not determine direction at all, but just drove around until the signal got strong. The winning team used this method, and I often use it too. But, you really need to know what you are doing, otherwise you will end up touring the entire county! When I hunt, I either use a map or know the terrain well enough to visualize a map. While hunting, I use all of the direction finding clues to build evidence for or against certain spots and literally build a "box" in which the hidden transmitter would be. Then I work on whittling this box down to the point where I run into the hidden transmitter. This takes practice – the more the better. Bob KB1FRW is planning some quick practice sessions. Drop him a line if interested. The next **RANV** Fox Hunt will be Friday, June 14th at 6PM with N1PEF and crew presiding.

ARRL FIELD ORGANIZATION

Bulletin Manager & Net Manager

by Paul AAISU

In our ongoing effort to educate Vermont Hams about possible volunteer ARRL Field Organization appointments, we once again have a short description of two more positions. You can find more information about any of these positions when you check them out on-line. The minimum requirement for any appointment is to be a full ARRL member in good standing. Some positions, like *Bulletin Manager*, require a Technician Class or higher license. An official badge goes along with the position.

Considering a fun way to put your previous management techniques to work? As we mentioned in an earlier article, the *Official Bulletin Station* (OBS) rapidly disseminates ARRL Bulletins to the local ham radio community. This is an important position, as not all hams are ARRL members, or on the Internet. The *Bulletin Manager* (BM) is responsible for recruiting and supervising a team of OBSs to disseminate the news. He or she will also funnel news and information of a local and regional nature to OBS appointees. This is done by maintaining a close relationship with other section level officials, and the Division Director. In some cases, the BM will need to copy ARRL bulletins directly from WIAW, and retransmit them for the OBS appointees. The BM will also recruit a team of OBSs in the Vermont Section for each major repeater, and PBBS in the state.

Would you like to get more involved with Ham Radio Traffic, but remain in the background? The *Net Manager* (NM) coordinates and supervises traffic handling activities in the Section. There can be more than one NM, depending on the Section's geographical size, number of nets operating, or other organizational factors. In some cases, there may be only one NM for the whole state, or there could be one for the phone net, one for the CW net, one for the RTTY net, one for the VHF net, and one for the Packet nodes. It is unlikely that we will need that many here in Vermont, however. The NM works under the *Section Traffic Manager* (STM), in a coordinated section traffic plan. He or she may also test candidates for *Official Relay Stations* (ORS), that we also covered a while back, and they also make sure that all traffic handled through an NTS net is in proper ARRL form.

Now these are both manager positions, so they may not be for you just yet. You may want to go back and read about the OBS and the ORS appointments again and volunteer for one of those to get your feet wet. After some time in one of those positions, you may want to step up to one of these manager appointments. Of course, if you are a ham that is previously familiar with the Field Organization, this may be your opportunity to get back into the swing of things with the League. We could really use some experienced help. So why not consider an appointment with the ARRL?

FIELD DAY... continued from page 1

This year, the ARRL changed the rules regarding the Novice station. This is now replaced with what they call a *Get On the Air (GOTA) Station*. The rules call for this station to be operated by new hams, inexperienced hams, inactive hams and prospective hams (*with appropriate control operator*). This station will use a different callsign than our club call and will likely operate mostly on 10, 15 and 40 meters. It would be nice to see this station on a variety of modes, including CW, but that will largely be up to the operator. We want to make the effort this year to get more people involved in operating. The GOTA station, if we design it properly, will be a user-friendly place for folks to try their hand at HF operating.

Another station, which is a natural for newer hams, is the VHF Station. This station will cycle between 6-meter SSB, 2-meter SSB and 2-meter FM. The contact rates will be slower than HF and there is usually less noise. We are looking at a plan to put the GOTA and VHF Stations in the same location. We also would like to include the Satellite and Demonstration Stations in the same place as well. One stop shopping – it should be wonderful! However, to do this will require a fairly large tent or trailer, which we haven't located as yet.

What we need – what works the best for everyone – is for people to make a commitment for various Field Day activities. It doesn't work very well to just show up when all activities are going full tilt. Instead, pick the setup and/or operating times of interest. Between now and Field Day, we will provide you with details on where to go and what to do. Otherwise, Field Day can be a confusing and bewildering experience.

Here are the sign-up times. Pick one. Pick many!

Antenna setup: Friday 2-9 PM

Station setup: Saturday 10 AM - 2 PM

GOTA station: pick a 2 hour block between 2 PM Sat.-2 PM Sun.

VHF Station: ditto

Tear Down: Sunday 2-6 PM

In addition to personnel, we have the following equipment needs:

- large tents or trailers for operating stations
- a fairly sizable truck to help transport equipment
- all sorts of radios and antennas
- generators: 1.5-5 KW

The **RANV** Field Day (*preceded by the Silicon Junction Field Day*) has a long and storied history of success since we started operating in the field in Williston in 1984. Over the years, over 100 different people contributed to efforts which have finished in the top ten 14 times and finished first 4 times, a feat which which very, very few groups can claim. We hope to have you join us this year at Field Day on June 21-23! Check the website at <http://www.ranv.org/fd.html> for all the details!

CONTESTING CORNER

By Paul AAISU

This month, you should try your hand at contesting to help get ready for Field Day. There are a few good offerings to choose from. For instance, on May 24-26th is the *CQWW WPX CW Contest*. The complete rules are in January *CQ*. It helps to have contesting software with a CW interface from the computer to your radio. The exchange is simple: RST plus serial number, starting with 001. There are many categories to choose from when entering this contest. For example, in addition to the usual classes, there is the *Rookie* category, and the *single tribander* category. There will be many powerful stations calling CQ. Try to listen high in the band, as CW speeds tend to be a bit slower there. Listen over and over again to get the guy's call sign and number sequence right. Then throw out your call sign at a comfortable speed. If he hears you, he will come back with your call, 5NN, and a number. You then send 5NN, and your contact number. You must also practice listening to your call sign at a high rate of speed ahead of time, so that you know what it sounds like when it comes back to you. The other station should slow down to your speed, but they don't always. I have had to send QRS (*slow down*) to some operators, just so that I could copy their call sign. Some of them go too fast. Another helpful feature of contesting software is the practice feature. Use this all you can during the year to keep your CW contesting speed up to snuff.

On Saturday, June 8th, at 2 PM, is the ARRL *June VHF QSO Party*. It goes until Sunday night at 11 PM. The exchange is simple; grid square, which for most of us is FN34. This is mostly a phone contest, and a good place to hang out on is 146.55 MHz FM with the squelch turned off. You can do this while driving. Of course, if you have SSB capabilities, other bands, and a decent home antenna, you will have a ball with this one. Mitch WB1GQR always operates from atop Mt. Equinox in FN33. This is a great way to get familiar with these bands before Field Day arrives. Plus, if you want to work on your VUCC, this is the place to start.

Another thing that I should point out, is that Fred N1ZUK has that great DX Packet Cluster up and running. Please check into it, and get familiar with it. It can be used for most contests, but you usually have to claim Single Operator Assisted, or similar category. You can use it to enhance your score by seeing where needed contacts are, and you can also spot your friends when you hear them. They will certainly appreciate it.

Next month: what is IARU?

NEXT MEETING:
Field Trip to Wulfden
Tuesday, May 14th, 5:30 PM
N1BQ QTH
NOT AT OUR USUAL LOCATION

FIELD DAY
Fri.-Sun., June 21-23
Redmond Rd, Williston

RANV

P.O. Box 9392

South Burlington, Vt 05407

<http://www.RANV.org>