



# Radio Amateur News & Views

The Official Journal of the Radio Amateurs of Northern Vermont

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## FOX HUNTING AND GEOCACHING The July 13<sup>th</sup> RANV Meeting

We have a really special meeting planned for you this month. The topic will be **Fox Hunting and Geocaching**, and the meeting location will be *Wulfden*, the QTH of N1BQ & W1SLR in Underhill. The purpose of this meeting is to bring Hams and Geocachers together. We have a common goal in searching for things, be they radio transmitters or geocaches. By meeting's end we hope to teach Fox Hunting to the Geocachers and Geocaching to the Hams, and vice versa.

Since Zach's (or anything else) is very far away, we will start the evening's festivities at 5:30 with a barbecue. Bring any interesting dishes, if you care. The meeting will get underway promptly at 7:00, starting out with a brief discussion and demonstrations of proper Fox Hunting and Geocaching techniques. We will then reconvene up at the field in the park just up the road to find some hidden transmitters and caches. We hope to do this until it gets too dark or the bugs carry off people. If neither Fox Hunting or Geocaching is for you, you can either stay back and eat, or marvel at the workings of *Wulfden Power & Light*, which has power generation completely off the electrical grid.

Be sure to bring your Fox Hunting equipment and GPS equipment, if you have any of this stuff. Also, bring whatever clothing necessary for crawling around in the field.

*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. This is 9.1 miles from Essex Junction or 3.7 miles from Jericho. You will then 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. If you have your GPS handy, go to: N 44° 31.751 W 072° 51.539. If you don't have a GPS, enter these coordinates into any mapping program on the web to get a map. If you get lost, call 899-4527 or call on 145.15.

## RANV PICNIC AUGUST 7<sup>TH</sup>

Next month, our normal monthly meeting will be the annual **RANV Summer Picnic**. It will take place on Saturday August 7<sup>th</sup>. Festivities will get underway around 11 and run throughout the afternoon.

The location is not yet set as we are considering two locations. While we enjoy Knight's Point State Park, the Ranger there last year made everyone's time pretty miserable, heavily enforcing park rules, both real and imagined. She is still the Ranger, unfortunately. Officers are speaking to State Park management and are hashing out details of what we can and cannot do at the park so that things might be a lot more pleasant. At the same time, we are considering a change in location to Kill Kare State Park, to avoid the personality issues. Evidently, management at other parks seem to think what we do is OK. Kill Kare is in St. Albans Bay, directly across the inland sea from Knight's Point. It has similar facilities and we could also have access to Burton Island, a prime Vermont DX location!

Regardless of the venue, **RANV** will provide the soda, charcoal and admission. You bring the rest. We will have eating, radios, antennas, fox hunts, games, swimming, lounging around and talking (*often with mouths full*). Look on the web in a week for the exact location. The August newsletter will be out early with all the details.

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### ECHO IS FLYING

AMSAT-Echo was successfully launched June 29th from Kazakhstan. Contact was made several hours later by ground controllers. Telemetry can be monitored on 435.15 MHz for now. The satellite will be commissioned and be available in about a week.

# OUR LAST RANV MEETING

by Dave WIDEC, Sec'y

The June Meeting was called to order by president Brian N1BQ at 7:03. Twenty members, a guest, and a new member called out their names and call signs. Shortly thereafter, five more members and another guest joined us to bring the total attendance to 28.

With Field day coming up in a mere 2 ½ weeks, that was a big topic of conversation and activity. Kyle KB1JOO and Brian WB2JIX have stepped up to take care of food.

In addition, 10 members volunteered to help set up, maintain operations, operate and tear down at the site. It appears that the GOTA station will operate on 40 meters during the day and then move to 20 meters in the evening. The higher bands, 10 and 15 meters, don't look promising for Field Day this year. There is a need for laptops for keying, and logging; if you have an extra please bring it! A number of members will be following up with people to procure some needed items. Ed N1UR moved, Dave W1DEC seconded, the appropriation of \$125 for generator fuel and the truck rental.

The July RANV meeting will take place at the Wulfden, the QTH of Brian N1BQ and Sara W1SLR. All are welcome to arrive at this combination Fox Hunt and Geocaching event which will be preceded by a barbecue that should fire off at about 5:30. Ed, N1UR, moved, Bob KB1FRW seconded, to appropriate \$50 towards the purchase of food and snacks.

Ed, N1UR, will be in the Orient again and kindly offered to make contact with all comers who may need 9M6 Malaysia. He will be on 14.260 Thursday and Friday July 9-10<sup>th</sup> at 0630 ET. I expect that many of us would like to work a rare one.

The August Meeting will be the Annual Picnic. We will not meet

# THE PREZ SEZ

by Brian N1BQ, President

Hamdom is recovering from Field Day. The bands are wide open, almost as if the propagation Gods want to reward us for our Field Day efforts with some fine conditions.

You know it's great being a ham in Vermont. So many people want a Vermont QSL card and there just aren't that many of us. Earlier this evening I worked Alexei, RN3KD in Moscow, Russia on 20 phone. He had been operating in typical DX fashion giving signal reports, name, location and then QRZ. But when I said I was in Vermont, he expressed his desire for a card and we spent 10-15 minutes chatting. I was running my new IC-703PLUS to my 40-meter superloop and this guy said he felt embarrassed because he was running 150 watts to a 6-element beam to get the same 59 he gave me. I also worked Portugal, Denmark,

again in South Burlington until September. Paul, AA1SU, who was not present, was volunteered to bring munchies to the September meeting. Thank you in advance Paul!

Jack St.Louis, K1VAS, President of the Vermont Astronomical Society engaged the masses with not one, but two presentations on Amateur Radio Astronomy. He gave a spirited description, supported with photos of his own Observatory (*a swimming pool in its former life*) as well as his shack and what he finds interesting in the skies. He has recorded his endeavors and of necessity had to compare his contacts with the actual schedule of meteor events! Much of his gear was purist tube type gear including his transmitter. For those who are interested in delving further into this aspect of Amateur radio, he mentioned several Web Sites: SAR, NRAO, NOAA, NASA, IAU and JOVE Radio, Thank you Jack!

Norway, and Germany on 20 and 17 phone. You gotta love those band openings when you are QRP!

In this waning sun cycle, six and ten meters have a way of popping up out of nowhere (*and they have this week-ed*) and disappearing just as suddenly. It's worth the effort to swing by the shack, flip on the rig and tune around a little. I was rewarded with six new grid squares on six in 30 minutes for my effort. You cannot begin to work 'em if the rig isn't on.

I would like to give a big thanks to Jack K1VAS for his presentation on Amateur Radio Astronomy at the June meeting. This came about through a specific request from one of our members, John KB1EJC. I would like to encourage you to let Bob KB1FRW, Dave W1DEC, Mitch W1SJ, or myself know if there is something you would like to see that we haven't presented and we will try make it happen.

We will have the next meeting and barbecue at my QTH. We will be fox hunting and geocaching.

## Contacting RANV

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

## ASIA DXPEDITION

by Ed NIUR

Dateline June 27, 2004 – Somewhere over the Pacific.

It was just 22 hours ago that I was sending “CQ FD W1NVT” at the **RANV** CW tent. In fact, someone is still doing that as I write this article. Hopefully, Field Day continued on as successfully as it started. I must say that I was most impressed with the level of enthusiasm and activity, which was represented in the **GOTA/VHF** tent. Hats off to that display of enthusiasm for the hobby. Hopefully, everyone will continue on after Field Day and stay that active with all the bands and modes represented there.

I am on my way to Asia. The first week is all business with stops in Taiwan, Korea, China and Hong Kong. The second week, starting with July 4<sup>th</sup>, is vacation in Malaysia. The first half of the week, Christine and I will be staying at a Shangri-La Beach Resort (*sacrifices have to be made, you know*). The second half of the week it is off to Hillview Gardens in Kennigau, East Malaysia on the island of Borneo. This is the home and hotel of Doris and Alfons (9M6MU). We will be arriving on Thursday evening, July 8<sup>th</sup>, Asia time. Asia is roughly 12 hours ahead of Vermont, so we arrive your Thursday morning. I will probably be too late for the 20M long path opening (*the best one to Vermont this time of year*) on Thursday morning. So after dinner, my time, I will probably be on 30M or 40M CW. The plan is to be on 15–40. 15 will almost assuredly not be open to Vermont, but if it is, it's your best bet to work me. The next best bet, and likely true opening, is 20M long path. This opening is around 1100–1300Z. Turn your beams, if you have them, southeast or northeast (*either one could be open*). This would be Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings.

I will most likely be on SSB for the long path opening at around 14.260 MHz. I will probably be working simplex (same frequency transmit and receive) unless a pile-up gets too nasty. The best way to work me is to count 1 Mississippi, 2 Mississippi, 3 Mississippi, and then drop your call into the pile-up twice (*using phonetics*). I will be listening for 1s (*plus that piss week W4 something station*) anyway. If I happen to go split, meaning I will listen on a higher frequency which I announce probably 14.265, I will actually be listening from 14.270–14.265. Camp out on 14.270 and just keep dropping your call when I am looking for the next person (QRZ? Up 5 Or just 9M6AAC up 5). If you are readable at all, I'll find you.

The later Saturday morning opening and the Sunday morning opening will be during the IARU contest. My callsign will change to 9M6A. My exchange to you will be 59 68. Your exchange back to me would be 59 08. If you do work me during the contest, or any other time for that matter, tune around the band. I won't be the only DX station on to work. Have fun. Who knows, you might just get bitten by the DX or Contest bug! By the way, Christine will be on from that club station as well. Give her a call if you hear her.

QSL requests go to N2OO who is the QSL manager for 9M6AAC and 9M6A.

## FOX HUNT RESULTS

by Mitch WISJ

It would have been a fabulous Fox Hunt last week if more hunters showed up. I decided to properly christen the new Burlington to Colchester Bikeway Bridge by hiding on it for the June Fox Hunt. I had already placed a cache on it, so this was the next step. There was a big concern that mosquitoes would carry off the Foxes, and I brought a tent, just in case.

Debbie and I perched on an observation deck on the Burlington side of the bridge. In the backpack was the 25-watt radio and battery. A mag-mount antenna worked perfectly on the steelwork of the bridge. We were set for the long haul.

Paul AA1SU and Kyle KBIJOO were the hunters. Of course, what they didn't know was that one could not drive to the hiding spot. They would have to walk, bike or blade in. In the first half hour, a biker came by and asked, “Are you the fox?” We were found by a non-ham! He went on to describe someone in a white Neon down on North Avenue, fiddling with some antennas. “Oh-oh, Paul is near!” I grabbed the radio equipment and went into stealth hiding mode under the bridge. However, Paul didn't show. I asked him his location and he mentioned something about St. Michael's. Kyle showed his stealthy fox hunting mode by traveling way out to Williston. This was a strategy I did not understand, but Debbie and I realized this was going to be a loooong hunt.

We took to giving out clues. The first one was a tease: We're hidden right by a cache. Unbeknownst to us, Kyle had coordinates of all the area caches in his GPS. It didn't help, however. Next was the clue “RRR”. Anyone who has traveled the bikeway knows that it is the route of the old Rutland Railroad. Unfortunately, none of our hunters knew this. I looked across the lake and saw the ferry. Next clue: “I can see Bob!” Still no sign of the hunters. I couldn't even hear them on the input!

It was getting close to 9:00 and we were running out of stuff to read. Finally, I gave the clue, “Greek letter”. Paul instantly figured out this meant “Delta Park”, a place he has found me before. We were not in that park, but ½ mile down the bike path. We could hear Paul huffing and puffing as he ran down the path as we climbed under the bridge and hid. The one mistake was that I left the antenna on top of the bridge. Paul found the mag-mount antenna and followed the coax down to us. We weren't sure where Kyle ended up, but he did find us at Zach's, which was the most important find of the night!

Next hunt will be Friday, August 20th, as Paul the Fox will try to foil us once again.

# WOW! WHAT A FIELD DAY

by Mitch WISJ

In 34 years of doing Field Day, I would have thought that I've seen everything and it just couldn't get any better. This year proved me wrong on both accounts. For years, the complaint has been about mediocre participation. This year we had record numbers of participants. Folks didn't just come by and watch. They got involved and did stuff! The pre-Field Day planning paid off in that people knew what to do when they got there. Most years, I dread antenna setup. It is usually hard, hot work, filled with problems, big and small. This year, it was breeze. Cool weather and an abundance of helpers, 18 at last count, made the whole process almost relaxing. Two crews worked simultaneously to get the antennas, 13 of them, up in record time. Not only were they up, but were checked out as well. We had the towers up and complete by 6:30 and I was home by 9.

Saturday setup was equally smooth. The phone station was on the air and functional by 11, CW by noon. The GOTA station gave us



WPTZ's Kelly Reardon interviews AA1SU

some headaches with faulty equipment, but it was on by 2:30. The stations ran up some impressive contact totals for the first few hours, as QSO's were plentiful. The GOTA station proved its versatility in working around the other stations, staying mostly on 40 meter SSB and 20 meter PSK-31. They logged 250 QSO's, 56 of them on PSK-31.

It was a banner year for publicity and visitors. Pre-event publicity was carried in the Essex Reporter and Milton Independent. In the first hour of Field Day, we were honored to be visited by State Representative Ira Trombley, who sponsored the Vermont PRB-1 antenna bill. We were

also visited by Vince Benevento and Ken Stratton from the Vermont State Guard. They have contacted ham radio to provide communications during their events and drills. On Sunday, Ken N1OSJ and Kelly Reardon of WPTZ news channel 5 showed up and interviewed Paul. Carl put a call into work and, before you knew it, Mark Bosma and the WCAX channel 3 were there and interviewed me. Their 11:00 news had 90 seconds of coverage, showing each of the operating positions.

On a more serious note, we had other visitors who were unwelcome. Late Saturday afternoon, we saw a very dark area moving across the lake. Immediately, everyone took to battening down the hatches. I headed over to the phone tent to close the windows. The amount of rain was unspectacular, but the high winds, with gusts of 40 miles per hour, were downright scary. Suddenly, the left front corner of the tent pulled up and the tent was keeling over. I dove and grabbed the tent corner and restaked it. Again, it



K1KD happy after a big hour on phone

pulled out, threatening the operation. Then I heard a loud "clunk". "Oh, no, the tower!" Actually, it was a large branch which blew off the tree and knocked into the tower. The towers and antennas were quite stable and moved little, while the trees were being blown all over the place. Meanwhile, Grant didn't miss

## FIELD DAY HALL OF FAME

**AB1DD Carl** – GOTA; set up; tear down.  
**AA1SU Paul** – CW/VHF, CW equipment; traffic/bulletin bonuses; setup; tear down.  
**AB1T Doug** – CW op.  
**K1KD Grant** – Phone/CW op; equipment; set up; tear down.  
**KA1KLJ Matt** – Set up; equipment.  
**KB1FRW Bob** – GOTA & VHF op; set up; tear down; equipment.  
**KB1ITV Michael** – Equipment delivery.  
**KB1IWK Jeff** – GOTA/VHF op.  
**KB1JDT Johannes** – Field cutting.  
**KB1JOO Kyle** – GOTA/VHF op; food.  
**KB1KPO Jerry** – Tear down.  
**KC1WH Carl** – Phone op.  
**KE1AZ Jim** – GOTA op.  
**KE1FO AI** – CW/Phone op.  
**KE1LP Bruce** – GOTA op.  
**KK1L Ron** – Phone/CW; set up; tear down  
**N1BQ Brian** – Set up.  
**N1OSJ Ken** – GOTA/VHF op.  
**N1QKH Don** – set up; tear down; field cut  
**N1UR Ed** – CW op; set up; equipment.  
**N1YWB Jeff** – Phone op; GOTA/VHF; equipment; set up; tear down.  
**N1ZBH Moe** – Delivery; Set up; tear down  
**W1DEC Dave** – Set up.  
**W1EAT Tom** – CW op.  
**W1MAD Mark** – GOTA/VHF  
**W1SJ Mitch** – Chairman; phone op; equipment; set up; tear down; results.  
**W4YFJ Bob** – Set up.  
**WB2JIX Brian** – Food; setup.  
**WT1L Chris** – Phone/CW op; set up.

Thanks to K1HD, K1IBM, N1DTQ, KA1LEX for equipment loan.

FIELD DAY... continued next page

## FIELD DAY... from previous page

a beat while operating phone. Over at the GOTA station, everyone grabbed a corner of the canopy and held it from going over. No one was at the food canopy and it blew over and was stopped by Jeff's car. This same storm took down trees and power in Williston and knocked down antennas at other sites. Call it high winds, a microburst, whatever, it was sudden, unexpected, and something we must be better prepared for in the future.

Outside of this altercation, the weather was otherwise very pleasant, and actually quite cold overnight. The propagation was very nice. I expected a tough year where only 3 bands would be available. I was quite happy to find 15 meters open late Saturday and took the opportunity to rack up some points there. Over on 20 meters, things were hot all night and we stayed there



**KB1JOO on VHF while AA1SU cools down**

until past 11. On 80 meters, we were pleasantly surprised to find a very quiet band and good conditions, allowing QSO's across the continent. Even 40 meters produced good numbers in the wee hours of the morning. Sadly, we ran out of propagation gas by noon, as signals on 20 meters got weak and the band opened up long, depriving us of the short haul contacts which produce the high rates. We just missed setting a new record on phone and CW ended up with the 4<sup>th</sup> best totals ever.

The food was great once again. No chicken this time, but the burgers

were great! When I sat down to a breakfast of pancakes, complete with the Sunday paper, I knew I was in heaven. Too bad I had to finish quickly and operate!

RANV Power & Light reported no power interruptions from the time the generators were started at 11 AM Saturday until shut down 5 PM Sunday. We amassed 6 generators for the operation, and only used 3, one only briefly. All the antennas stayed up and more or less worked. There were some connector and tuner issues which need to be addressed for next time. Take down was very relaxed and uneventful. The large rented truck made hauling the stuff out very simple. We left the site by 7 PM, made one trip and all was put away by 8.

The best part of Field Day 2004 was the people. We amassed an amazing stable of operators. I was honored to work this year with KK1L and K1KD, forming a triumverate of operators who have been in the top 4 in New England in the Sweepstakes in the last few years. I was very happy to work with WT1L, a former top ten operator himself, who came back to Vermont and ran up monster rates on Saturday night. All three proved their versatility by taking CW shifts as well. On CW, NIUR started out the festivities before he had to catch a plane to Asia! CW regulars AB1T, AA1SU and W1EAT kept the contacts going all night. Early morning relief was provided by KE1FO, N1YWB and KC1WH. At GOTA and VHF, KB1FRW put together a solid stable of operators and mentors and kept the stations running for all except the wee hours. Operators and mentors included KB1WK, KB1JOO, KB1FRW, KE1AZ, KE1LP, N1OSJ, W1MAD, AB1DD and others. There was always something going on!

We didn't do too shabbily! When the dust and pollen had settled, 3680 contacts remained in the log. We amassed all 1600 bonus points, a

### FIELD DAY BOX SCORE

|                 |             |                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 80 CW           | 261         | 80 SSB          | 480         |
| 40 CW           | 326         | 40 SSB          | 330         |
| 20 CW           | 370         | 20 SSB          | 1241        |
| 15 CW           | 85          | 15 SSB          | 325         |
| GOTA PSK        | 56          | GOTA Ph         | 194         |
| VHF CW          | 0           | VHF Ph          | 100         |
| Sat CW          | 2           | Sat Ph          | 10          |
| <b>Total CW</b> | <b>1100</b> | <b>Total Ph</b> | <b>2680</b> |

**Total QSO's**      **3680**  
**Bonuses (all!)**    **1600**  
**Total Points**     **11360**

Last year: 3368 QSO's, 10250 points

large achievement in itself. The point totals is 11,360, which is probably not enough for a 1<sup>st</sup> place, but will very likely be in the top ten. We'll find out for sure in November! Everyone should take a bow for a tremendous job well done.



**KE1LP & KE1AZ crank out GOTA contacts**

### FIELD DAY VISITORS

Zack K1ZK, Willow W1LLW, Joe K2KBT, Fran KM1Z, Nick KB1LBA, Barb KB1LIF, Matt WE1H, Bob WJ1Z, Trish(w/WT1L), Gina (w/K1KD), Karen (w/KB1LBA)  
 VT Representative Ira Trombley,  
 ARRL NE Vice Dir Mike Raisbeck K1TWF,  
 VT Guard: Vince Benevento, Ken Stratton  
 Channel 5 Reporter Kelly Reardon  
 Channel 3 Reporter Mark Bosma

**NEXT MEETING:  
“Fox Hunting and Geocaching”  
Tuesday, July 13<sup>th</sup>  
Barbecue at 5:30, Meeting at 7  
N1BQ QTH, Underhill**

**RANV SUMMER PICNIC  
Saturday, August 7<sup>th</sup>**

**RANV**

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