



# RADIO AMATEUR News & Views

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## NEXT MEETING:

### “BUILDING A SUPER-STATION”

OUR JULY MEETING WILL BE VERY INTERESTING, INDEED. Paul W1MD will give us a presentation on his efforts (successful!) at building a remotely operated, high performance station—a full size 2-element cubical quad for 160 meters, a SteppIR MonstIR installed at 90 meters on a former AT&T Long Lines tower in Southwest Maine, reversible Beverage antennas for receive on the lower frequencies. And, of course—a whole lot more. Don't miss this one! After Paul's talk, enjoy snacks and some chat time.



## FIRST TIME AT FIELD DAY

KATHI K1WAL

WE HAD SEVERAL NEW PEOPLE AT OUR FIELD DAY this year. I asked some of them what they were expecting when they showed up, what they learned, and if they would do it again:

“It was more physical work than I thought it would be, but, I enjoyed it and would be willing to do it again. It was also a good learning experience at picking call signs out of static & pileups.” Bob KBIWXM

“I was expecting a little shack and a few small antennas. ... Anytime I had a question someone was always happy to take the time to answer. No question was too silly or stupid. ... I had to listen closely to responses. Here's the fun part—this was fun!”

Melissa KF5MGD

“It was my first operating experience calling CQ and making contacts. The script was very useful. ... It was so organized, like a professional radio camp.” Shane KF5MGC

“Did I want to go? Kind of yes, kind of no. I didn't know what it was. When I got there I liked it. ... I liked the food. ... How old do you have to be to get a license?” Morghan (daughter of KB1THX)

“It was impressive that it all went up, operating for 24 hours, and came down in just 2 ½ days! ... It was interesting to see how many antennas can fit on a single tower! ... I learned about getting on the air and making contacts, using the logging software, and the different



kinds of people and attitudes on the air. ... Without a doubt I would do it again! There was so much I wanted to do but didn't have the time.” Tim KB1THX

“It was an amazing experience. It was totally new to me and everyone was so encouraging. ... It's 'CQ' not 'QC!' ... I will definitely do it again.” Bev KI6ISG

“I learned there can be three ways of doing something, but whoever's way is done first, is done last—as long as it is done right. ... I walked away from the event with enthusiasm for HF and contesting. I hadn't the experience nor interest in operating HF or contesting before, but am now finding myself bitten by the bug!” Jeremy KB1WDM



Morghan (age 7, daughter of KB1THX)



# FIELD DAY 2012—ANOTHER SUPER JOB!

**MITCH W1SJ**

**W**OW! WE NAILED IT AGAIN! We put another tremendously successful Field Day in the books. And we did it with sketchy propagation on the higher HF bands and no propagation on 10 and 6 meters.

For those who count the QSO's and points we ended up with something around 4700 QSO's and well above 14,000 points. This was below our 16,000 point blowout last year, but that was a record setting performance which won't be repeated so soon. We won't know how we placed until November, but I'm quite happy with what we accomplished score-wise.

It was in several other areas that we *really* shined. One of our weak points in the last few years was the lack of young operators. Besides getting bonus points for getting youngsters on the air, it is simply good business to expose young people to the thrill of operating. Just maybe they will remember the experience and decide that making contacts on 15 meters is more engaging than texting on a silly phone. We can only hope.

## 2012 RANV FIELD DAY HALL OF FAME

**AA1SU Paul** – CW op; Equipment; Bonuses; Set up; Tear down.

**AB1DD Carl** – GOTA Organizer; Equipment; Set up; Tear down.

**AB1T Doug** – CW op; Equipment.

**K1JCM John** – Set up; Tear down.

**K1TWF Mike** – CW op.

**K1WAL Kathi** – Food; VHF; Set up; Tear down.

**K2MME Howie** – CW op; Set up; Tear down.

**KB1FRW Bob** – Equipment wrangler; VHF; Set up; Tear down.

**KB1LHB Adam** – Set up; Tear down.

**KB1LOT Jim** – Set up; Tear down.

**KB1MDC Alan** – Set up.

**KB1PDW Spence** – Set up.

**KB1THX Tim** – GOTA; VHF; Equipment; Set up; Tear down.

**KB1WDM Jeremy** – GOTA; Set up; Tear down.

**KB1WXM Bob** – GOTA; Set up; Tear down.

**KB1YGP Dave** – Set up.

**KE1AZ Jim** – Phone op; GOTA Coach; Set up; Tear down.

**KF5MGC Shane** – GOTA; Tear down.

**KF5MGD Melissa** – GOTA; Tear down.

**KI6ISG Bev** – GOTA; Tear down.

**N1YD Jeff** – Demos; GOTA; Set up; Tear down.

**N1YWB Jeff** – Phone op; Satellite op; Set up; Tear down.

**N2EA Jim** – CW op.

**NK1A Nancy** – Food; GOTA.

**W1EBR Gene** – GOTA coach.

**W1LWH Linn** – CW op; Equipment; Set up; Tear down.

**W1SJ Mitch** – Chairman; Phone op; Equipment; Satellite op; Set up; Tear down; Results.

**W4YFJ Bob** – Bulletins; GOTA Coach; Set up.

The GOTA station, ground-zero for new operators, was well staffed and busy throughout Field Day. Last year, if you remember, we totally ran out of operators by Sunday and had to struggle to find operators and worked like crazy to make the 500 QSO maximum. This year, there was still a crowd hanging around the GOTA station and we hit 500 QSO's early on Sunday, despite poorer conditions.

Speaking of bonuses, we got every one of those suckers! This amounts to 2450 points. Put another way, we would have to make 1225 phone or 613 CW QSO's to equal that. We had to do all sorts of crazy things to get those bonuses. Bob W4YFJ copied a W1AW bulletin. Jeff N1YD did an educational demonstration of circuit modeling. Paul AA1SU coaxed various officials to visit us and then passed a whole bunch of traffic. Carl charged up batteries on a solar charger and made sure we had GOTA operators and coaches. And I fought with various newspapers to get Field Day publicity and then fought with drifting satellites to make a contact.

Setup and takedown was quite smooth. The manuals and pre-event training paid off dividends as everyone had a pretty good idea what to do. I was able to take a much needed break during setup to actually look around and see what everyone was doing and how smoothly it was going.

On the operating side of the house, we were doing great for many hours with the rates holding fairly close to last year's results. But Sunday morning both

stations hit a brick wall and the rates went way down, even though 15 meters came back to life for a bit. It was good to see everyone working as a cohesive unit.

As well as everything was planned, there was hardly a food plan in place 3 days before the event! In quick order, we secured a grill (thanks Tim KB1THX), food supplies (thanks Kathi K1WAL) and other food (thanks NK1A). Great job everyone in bringing this all together.

If you haven't submitted feedback, please do so. In addition to what worked well, we are looking for things which were broken, didn't work well, or need to be improved. We have a lot of equipment and it all must be stored and maintained. You may not realize it, but the tents, yagis, towers and much of the phone station all date back 40–50 years. And some of the participants are even older!

Stay tuned next month for Field Day scoring and other details.



## CONTACTS

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Meetings: 2<sup>ND</sup> Tuesdays • 7:00 PM  
113 Patchen Road  
South Burlington  
The O'Brien Civic Center

Repeater: 145.150, PL 100; **WB1GQR**

New Hams, Mentoring:  
[RANVMentor@gmail.com](mailto:RANVMentor@gmail.com)



## VE Exams

Every 2nd Friday  
6:30–8:00<sup>PM</sup>

29 Mansfield Ave. • Burlington

Tech, General, Extra class licenses.  
Bring 2 forms of identification, copies of  
existing license and CSCE (if applicable),  
pens and pencils, and the exam fee  
(\$15—exact amount only please).

### Directions:

[barcvt.net/directionsarc.html](http://barcvt.net/directionsarc.html)

CARL AB1DD@arrl.net

Bring the above, plus form 605 that can be  
filled out on line and printed ahead of time.  
Not required, but very helpful! Find it here:  
[www.arrl.org/files/file/ncvec605-3.pdf](http://www.arrl.org/files/file/ncvec605-3.pdf)

## AUGUST MEETING

As usual each summer, there will be no August meeting. Instead we'll have our Annual Summer Picnic. No details with this issue, but keep your eyes and ears peeled.

## DOUBLE CHOCOLATE ESPRESSO COOKIES

KIWAL

([http://www.food52.com/recipes/1172\\_double\\_chocolate\\_espresso\\_cookies](http://www.food52.com/recipes/1172_double_chocolate_espresso_cookies) [by Kelsy])

These are good contest cookies when operating late into the night! But for younger kids, before bedtime—maybe not so much.

2 ¼ sticks butter, room temperature

1 cup sugar

1 cup light brown sugar

2 eggs, room temperature

2 1/2 cups flour

3/4 cups unsweetened cocoa powder

1 teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon kosher salt

2 tablespoons instant espresso powder  
(I used ¼ cup for Field Day)

12 ounces semisweet chocolate chips  
(some folks prefer to use chunk chocolate)

## BACK UP! BACK UP!!

MITCH W1SJ

WE ALL USE COMPUTER DEVICES WHERE CRITICAL DATA IS STORED on hard drives. I've dealt with hard drive failure over the years and it is never pleasant. But usually, you get a telltale warning—either in the form of file corruption or obvious things like the drive screeching! And when these things occur, you start copying files off the drive like mad, hoping you get it all before the drive totally dies.

Across the table from W1SJ is our sister station WEVT-LP, an FM station playing oldies music. It is a radio station in a box – all of the programming is generated in a computer (sadly, most radio stations work this way). I walked in the shack the other day and heard this weird clicking noise. I finally traced it to the station computer and I thought the noise was coming from the CD drive. When I viewed the screen, no programming content was playing nor could it be made to play. A reboot of the system brought the horrible news, "Drive 1 Not Found!" Upon sticking my head into the computer, the clicking noise was coming from this hard drive. I later learned that this is the infamous "Click of Death," a common catastrophic failure mode. No warning, just total, irrevocable failure.

Fortunately, the failure was in a data disk containing the music, which was mirrored to an external drive. It was easy enough to get the old drive out and point to the external unit to get the normal programming back on. While this went on, the station is set up to default to a memory stick up at the transmitter when the studio programming cuts off. A few days later a new drive was installed.

If you are wise, don't even finish reading this—make sure your stuff is backed up and can be recovered easily. When you realize that a drive has to spin at 7200 RPM and a head has to seek micron-sized information on a magnetic platter, you realize that a lot of things can go wrong! And sometimes, like in this case, it is a situation of here today, gone tomorrow!

Preheat oven to 350

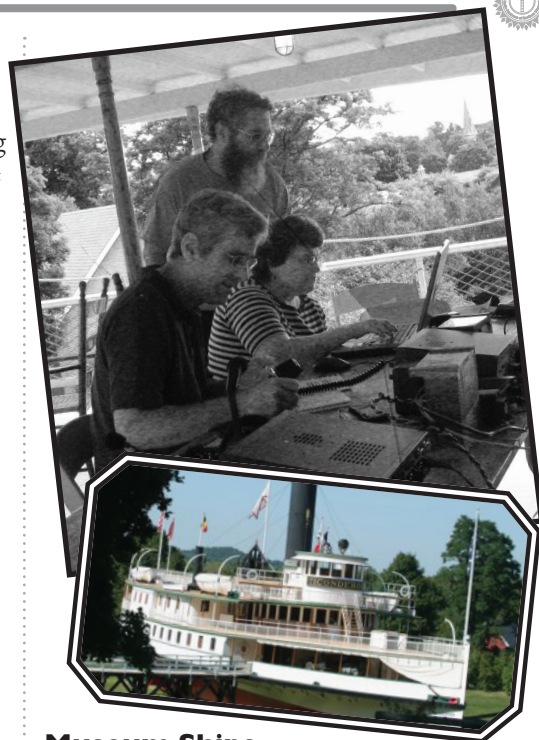
Cream butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Then, add eggs one at time, mixing after each addition to make sure they are well combined.

In a separate bowl mix together dry ingredients: flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, salt, and espresso powder. I use a whisk to make sure the dry ingredients are well mixed.

With the mixer on low, slowly add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed. Mix everything until the ingredients are fully combined, but do not overbeat. Using a wooden spoon, stir in chocolate chips.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Using a 1 1/2" ice-cream scoop, or rounded teaspoon, drop dough on the sheet 2" apart. Bake for 10-12 minutes. Cool on a wire rack and serve.

Makes 50-55 cookies



### Museum Ships

Photos: Kathi K1WAL

Kathi's pics didn't make the last issue, so here they are. Carl AB1DD working with Dick and Cheryl Baker on board the *Ticonderoga* during the Museum Ships Weekend, this past June 2 & 3.



# RANV

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## News & Views

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### Upcoming, Notices, & Other Misc

- RANV: August—Summer Picnic
- RANV: November Elections—11/8
- STARC Summer Hamfest: 8/11, St Albans;  
[starc.org/arns-opening-flyer.html](http://starc.org/arns-opening-flyer.html)
- ARRL New Eng. Div. Convention: 8/24–26, Boxboro, MA;  
[www.boxboro.org](http://www.boxboro.org)
- Steering Wheel: 3rd Tues, 6:30-8:30  
Ninety-Nine Restaurant, Taft Corners
- Dues due? Pay online at [www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html](http://www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html)
- VT Ham Radio Calendar [www.vthrc.net](http://www.vthrc.net)

### NEXT MEETING

TUESDAY • JULY 10 • 7:00<sup>PM</sup>

O'Brien Civic Center

113 Patchen Road • South Burlington

***“Super-Station”***

[www.RANV.org](http://www.RANV.org)