



# RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

The Official Journal of the Radio Amateurs of Northern Vermont

January • 2013

An ARRL Special Service Club

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**NEXT MEETING: JANUARY 8, 2013**

## “N1MM LOGGER”

**N**1MM LOGGER IS THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR CONTEST LOGGING PROGRAM. For CW, phone, and digital modes, its combination of contest-optimized features is unmatched. You can find a Ham Radio Contest on any given weekend. At our next meeting on Tuesday, January 8<sup>TH</sup>, our own Paul Gayet AA1SU will explain the features and benefits of using this very popular, free, logging program.

Among its many features, this Windows-based program can control your radio, send CW messages, act as a voice keyer, keep track of CQ Zones worked, and even aim your rotator to the station that you clicked on in the DX Cluster. It does all this while keeping track of your score and multipliers for a very wide variety of contests.

So be sure to join us at the meeting at 7:00<sup>PM</sup>. And don't forget Snax at Zach's at 6:00<sup>PM</sup> (optional).



## ANNUAL HAM BREAKFAST

**I**N WHAT HAS BECOME AN ANNUAL EVENT, THE HAM BREAKFAST will take place Saturday, January 26<sup>TH</sup>, 9:00<sup>AM</sup> until noon at *JP's Deli, 39 River Road* (Route 117), 1.4 miles east of the Five Corners, in *Essex Junction*. The first hour is devoted to eating and meeting, followed by a semi-organized discussion on some aspect of amateur radio. With 30–40 folks showing up, it's much like a mini-hamfest. Make plans to join us the last Saturday morning in January.



## HAM-CON 2013

**S**PEAKING OF HAMFESTS, THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE WINTER SEASON IS HAM-CON. This year's event will be held on Saturday, *February 23<sup>RD</sup>*. Once again, we'll be at the *Holiday Inn Convention Center*, just off *I-89 exit 14East*. Mitch is putting together an exciting program, as you read this, which will be finalized in early February. Check the website < [www.ranv.org/hamcon.html](http://www.ranv.org/hamcon.html) > for time, admission, directions, and other new information as it evolves.

One thing which we need *everyone* to do is to *sell the show!*

Contact as many friends (both ham and non-ham) as you can and have them come to the hamfest. A great method to get pals to the show is to carpool. That way you can talk about the show before and after and easily get together for lunch afterwards. It's no longer enough to put up some posters and send out e-mails to promote an event.

The method which always works the best is for people to personally invite others. Please do all you can to get other hams (particularly those who have gone inactive) to attend the show and have a great time!



## LADDER LINE LAUGHING

**L**AST WEEK MY HOUSE WAS HIT WITH the weather bureau reported as 70-mile-an-hour gusts.

My antenna is an inverted V up fifty feet in a tree, with a feed that is a hundred feet of ladder line.

All of that ladder line came down, the result of a dozen broken branches.

But it was no problem because I had planned to fail.

**Y**ears ago, the first time I ran the ladder line I tied it to a few trees on the way with parachute chord.

I thought I was smart because the chord would last through Vermont winters and it would save me a lot of tromping around in the snow, climbing ladders.

But I wasn't smart.

When the bad weather happened,  
the tree didn't fail...  
and the chord didn't fail...  
can you guess what failed?

**S**O I was left soldering in the snow, which sounds a lot better than it is (and it doesn't sound at all good).

**T**here is an old folk proverb that says when the storm comes, the tree resists and breaks—while the bamboo bends, laughing before the wind, and lives.

Sounds like baloney—but I needed something like it...

*I needed a plan that was  
engineered to fail gracefully.*

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I had to attach to four intermediate trees.

Each tree has the same setup.

The ladder line is extensively electrical-taped to a six-inch section of garden hose.

Through the hose runs a loop of parachute chord.

Between a hook screwed into the tree and the loop of chord, I run a short piece of string.

Just kite string.

Maybe I should use dental floss.

The point is: *it breaks easily.*

When a branch falls, or the tree sways so much that it overstresses the ladder line... there is a break, *but...*

*it is what I have selected* to break.

The ladder line stays intact, and the parachute chord stays intact, and the tree stays intact.

The string I replace and I am good to go again.

So the 70mph gusts cost me an hour and some cold hands, but it was easy.

*I was back on the air, laughing.*



## FIELD DAY RESULTS ARE IN

Mitch W1SJ

THE RESULTS ARE IN AND...WE DIDN'T PULL OFF THE THREE-PEAT! Despite a tremendous effort, the Batesville club in Arkansas bested us by 668 points. We would have to have made another 167 SSB and 84 CW QSO's to equal that—about another 1.5 hours of operating. We could not improve anything to make up this difference. The laws of the contesting jungle are most unfair at times. I suspect that on Sunday morning when we were begging for contacts on both CW and SSB, the folks in the middle of the country were running up some big numbers. We were fortunate that the last two years had an uncharacteristic Northeast slant to them. This year, things were back to normal as the stations further west did a lot better. It's nothing new—I just saw the same trend in Sweepstakes. Last year, I won it all, and this year I was choking on the smoke from a lot of other stations. So goes the battle.

And the Batesville club, using call signs like K5UZ or NG5M or W5ZN, is no stranger to this. They won it all in 2004 and have been high in the top-ten of 2A for many years—just like us! There are a number of stations like this in 2A and we all seem to take turns sitting on top.

But look at the top-ten of ALL Field Day stations this year. In New England, which Field Day group had the highest score? RANV! In fact, we are the top score in the entire Northeast (1,2 and 3 land) not counting the 27A W3AO group who are really in another league! In doing what we did, we bested Port City (5A NH), Nashua (12A NH) and

West Jersey DX (3F NNJ), all very competitive groups. In other words, on a level playing field, we probably would have won this sucker.

So, we'll declare victory and move on. We'll start a new attempt at a three-peat next June!



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

Repeater: 145.150, PL100; **WB1QOR**

New Hams, Mentoring:  
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## HAM-CON

### FLEA MARKET TABLE

- Free service, RANV Members Only!
- Limit of 10 pieces per person
- All equipment in usable condition, or easily & cheaply fixed
- Sellers provide a manifest of all items, with condition, known issues, and price. Also, buyers often have questions for sellers, so it's a good idea to leave contact info (cell, radio) while at the event.
- Reading material:
  - 2-10 items per bundle, each bundle = 1 piece
  - All magazines sold in bundles, no single copies
  - Books, Service Manuals can be sold as single pieces
- Weight limit of 35 lbs per item, total 100 lbs
- No clothing, boat anchors, computers, printers, monitors, mugs, toys, non-radio-related equipment, etc.
- Unsold items go home with owner!

No charge for this RANV member service, collect your cash when you leave (and any unsold items as well)!

Exception are at the discretion of the Table Attendant. Fell free to contact Robin N1WWW with any questions ([n1www@arrl.net](mailto:n1www@arrl.net), or 349-0214).



## MEMBER PROFILE:

### BOB HENNEBERGER KB1WXM

Kathi K1WAL

**M**ANY NEW HAMS WILL START OUT BY DIPPING A TOE IN THE WATER. Some wade in, others dive in. KB1WXM did a cannonball!

Bob was first interested in ham radio at age 10. He got a book about licensing, but struggled with learning code. Not knowing any hams to help him along, his attention was soon directed towards other things. Although his interest faded, it never went away.

Bob always enjoyed taking things apart and often could put them back together in working order! In high school he repaired old radios from the 1920s and 1930s and built many Heathkits.

In college Bob was a bit of a motor-head and enjoyed rally racing. Although he studied romance languages, his work after graduation was mostly technical. He ran the Language Laboratory and later Computer Services at the University of Georgia before becoming director of the Digital Library of Georgia. Over the years he has traveled extensively and authored several TV scripts, short stories, and novels (you can find his books at Barnes & Noble and Amazon.com).

After retiring and moving to Vermont he rekindled his interest in amateur radio.

Bob earned his Technical and General class tickets in March, 2012, through Mitch W1SJ's class. He joined RANV in April and found lots of friendly folks to help him along. He was introduced to public service as a ham—starting with the Vermont City Marathon. In September he earned his Extra class ticket, and most recently, became a VE.

His equipment includes a Yaesu VX-6 HT and a Kenwood TS 480 HF rig, along with an Icom 207 in his truck. Since he has several neighborhood antenna restrictions, he's installed a Cobra ultralite folded dipole that runs along his roofline. It covers 80m–10m. He uses an MFJ 914 autotuner extender to make up for the low height. After hooking it to an antenna analyzer and checking for the lowest SWR on all bands, Bob then made a handy chart that shows which setting is best for which frequency.

Bob is exploring emergency communications and is a member of RACES. He likes to participate in contests primarily to make contacts. His first log was submitted for the recent 10-meter contest. Current goals are to work all states and to make contacts in 100 countries.

When not fooling around with radio activities, Bob continues to write, enjoys photography, and finds time to volunteer with several (non-ham) organizations.



## UP-COMING ON-AIR ACTIVITIES

Mitch W1SJ

**W**ITH THE HOLIDAYS and all of the craziness over, many of us are sitting around with not much to do. The lull of winter is a great time to get on the air. There is nothing like the warm glow of big vacuum tubes in the amp to warm a shack on a cold winter's day. This, of course, assumes that you have an amp with tubes and even have a shack!

The big event for us is the **Vermont QSO Party** on February 1–3. The activity

starts 7:00<sup>PM</sup> Friday and runs until 7:00<sup>PM</sup> Sunday. RANV is hosting the event, again, this year and we are pushing to get a lot more activity going. Plan on getting on and throwing out a few CQs mid-day. Even with a modest station you should get some action going! Or, if you do not have a working station, I will be hosting a multiop at my station and all operators are welcome stop by and operate. The QSO Party is fun in that there is hardly anyone else on contesting and CQs will attract a good deal of atten-

## REPEATER ACTIVITY HOUR

We've decided to set up an evening and a morning Activity Hour on the Bolton repeater. Let's see how this works out.

*Evenings:* Tuesday 8-9 PM

*Mornings:* Thursday 9-10 AM

Just get on the WB1GQR 145.15 repeater (use a 100.0 tone) and throw out your call sign every 2 minutes until you hook up with someone. Just listening is no good!

Members out of area can reach the repeater via IRLP node 7230 or Echolink node 97406



tion. And if you want to spend more time ragchewing with a contact, you can do that too! Details on the Vermont QSO Party are on the RANV Web.

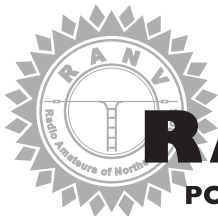
Another fun contest is the **North American QSO Party (NAQP)** on Saturday, January 19<sup>TH</sup>. This is fun because it is a relatively short contest—only 10 hours. It starts right after lunch at 1:00<sup>PM</sup> and for single operators, ends at 11:00<sup>PM</sup>, in time for the evening news. Being a smaller contest, the bands aren't as crazy, but there is certainly a ton of activity at the peak times.

~~If you are a Technician licensee, you can instead opt for the **VHF Sweepstakes** on the same weekend. Many of the mountaintop groups are off the air for this contest, but if you listen carefully, there are more guys at home operating.~~

~~If you are a CW operator, consider the CW version of the NAQP on January 12<sup>TH</sup>. Same rules as the phone contest, but CW only.~~

If you enjoy the Top Band, you will certainly want to focus on the **CQ Worldwide 160 Meter Contest** on January 25–27. This is Friday and Saturday night, all night! The CQ 160 Contest brings out all the big gun DX stations, so it is a good time to pick up those European contacts.





# RANV

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### Upcoming, Notices, & Other Misc

- RANV: February Meeting—2/12/13
- Ham Breakfast: 1/26/13
- HAMCON: 2/23/13
- 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 • January 8 • 7:00<sup>PM</sup>

**O'Brien Civic Center**

**113 Patchen Road • South Burlington**

**“N1MM LOGGER”**

*www.RANV.org*