



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

The Official Journal of the Radio Amateurs of Northern Vermont

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An ARRL Special Service Club

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NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 8

“ECHOLINK & IRLP”

THIS MONTH WE'RE GOING TO FOCUS ON ECHOLINK AND IRLP—mostly Echolink. Some feel that using Echolink or IRLP is not *real* radio, others love it. As with most things it pretty much boils down to personal preference and how it's used. There is a place for just about everything, and we're going to look at how it works and how it can be used.

Afterwards, stay for some refreshments and visiting. But first—why not stop by Zachary's Pizza, around the corner on Williston Road, where some of us gather for dinner around 6:00.



CLUB OFFICER NOMINATIONS

OCTOBER'S MEETING is our annual Call for Nominations. If you are interested in being part of the club's leadership please speak up! As always everyone is welcome to attend the Steering Wheel meetings on the third Tuesday of each month at the 99 Restaurant in Williston at 6:30 pm. This is a great opportunity to steer the direction of our club with your thoughts and ideas!

We are also in need of a newsletter editor or co-editors.



ANNUAL ARRL ARES SET

THIS YEAR'S S.E.T. (*SIMULATED EMERGENCY TEST*) will be held in November, in conjunction with NH ARES. The scenario and other details are still being finalized. Vermont ARES members will be contacted soon with the SET plan and instructions as soon they're ready for prime time. Every year, ARES groups across the country organize various exercises focusing on emergency communications and our ability to respond when called upon. Exercises range from simple to complex and are held during October and November, each group picking its own time. Several years ago, VT ARES held an exercise with NH and we thought it a good idea to do so again. Although an ARES exercise, everyone is welcome, and encouraged, to check into the Nets and participate.



RADIO CLASS OCTOBER 26

Mitch W1SJ

THE WEEKEND HAM RADIO CLASS RETURNS to our area on Saturday, October 26. This will be the first class in Burlington in 18 months. The Technician class runs 8:30 AM until 6 PM on Saturday. The General course runs on Sunday, same times. Unlicensed students can take the Technician (one day) or the General (two days) course. Licensed Technician operators can take the 1-day General course on Sunday to upgrade. The courses come complete with the on-line course training system which allows students to prepare for class at their computer. A course workbook is also provided. Exams will be given at the conclusion of class both days, at 6 PM. Pre-registration is required for this course. Students should enroll at least a few weeks prior to class to allow time for study. Register by calling Mitch at 879-6589, or go on-line to www.ranv.org/weekend.html.



SECRETARY'S REPORT

Kathi K1WAL, SECRETARY

*The best laid schemes of mice and men
Often go awry ...*

SOMETIMES THINGS DON'T GO as planned. The September meeting was one of those times. We had scheduled a tour with the National Weather Service at the Burlington Int'l Airport with a quick business meeting at the O'Brien Civic Center afterwards. Monday evening around 5:00 I received an e-mail from John Goff at the NWS that severe thunderstorms were in the forecast for Tuesday evening. Due to being understaffed he couldn't guarantee his full attention so he cancelled for a future date. I told him I'd try to reach the membership in time but warned him that he might still get some visitors.

We were scrambling for a last minute meeting topic! Mike N1JEZ came to the rescue with a fantastic presentation about two of his recent projects!

First was his Refloleo Kickstarter project for an "Easy to use controller to reflow your own PCBs in a simple toaster oven." For those who don't know, [kickstarter.com](http://www.kickstarter.com) is a website where creative project of any kind—from films, games, and music to art, design, and technology—can be funded by the direct support of those who find it interesting and worthy. There are guidelines which must be followed for each project. Not all the projects meet their funding goals but many do. Mike showed us the controller he built from the project's kit. At meeting time he was still shopping around for the toaster oven. Adam KB1LBH commented that perhaps a convection oven or a fan could reduce hotspots. Full details on this project can be found at <http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1034145369/refloleo>.

Secondly, Mike discussed and demonstrated his Apache-labs ANAN-100 all digital 100W transceiver which is based on the open HSDR Hermes DDC/DUC transceiver board. This is an amazing rig! Much of the technicalities went over my head! A good website for more information is <http://www.n9vv.com/N9VV-Apache-Labs-ANAN-100.html>.

Incidentally, there were no thunderstorms that evening. I received an e-mail from John Goff later that night who reported that five RANV members showed up at the NWS office and had a wonderful tour. If you were one of the five I'd like to know what you thought!



THE FIRST TOWER

Gene W1EBR

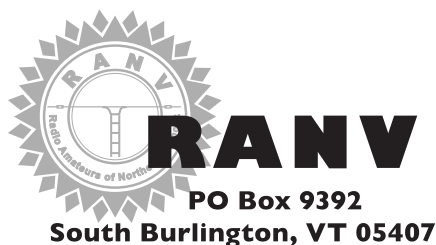
PUTTING UP YOUR FIRST HAM RADIO TOWER IS a journey that starts off with “I wish I had a tower” and winds up at “it’s really up!” Some journeys are short and direct, others, like mine, are anything but. Looking back, I think I took the long way because I wanted to be proud of what I had accomplished, and because I made several expensive (both time and money) mistakes.

Like most neophytes, I thought that the most expensive part of installing a tower was the cost of the tower itself, so when I was able to find one on eBay for what I thought was a good price, I honestly believed I was at least half way to having a working installation. I never suspected that, in the end, it would be less than 1/10th of the total cost of the project.

What could possibly cost so much money? Paying for the town permit, buying the material needed to construct a suitable base for the tower, buying and installing the copper needed to provide a ground ring and ground-

ing rods for the tower (that was about \$500 dollars alone), digging a trench and laying the pipe to run the coax and control cables from the house to the tower, buying the coax cable, connectors, RF chokes, static discharge units (don’t forget one for the rotor), and rotor and switchbox control cables. I still haven’t included the cost of a mast, rotor, and antennas! You may also be tempted to buy an amplifier now that you have a tower (don’t forget you also need a high-power tuner to go with it). And...don’t forget to include the cost of the cabling/wiring inside your house.

If there is enough interest, I will share what I have learned with the hope that it will be informative, entertaining, and—should you decide that you want to build a tower—not cost you as much time and money as it cost me. I propose as my first topic: “Designing and Constructing A Tower Base.” In my one-tower experience, this is the subject area that contained the greatest set of challenges.



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- License Class

Upcoming, Notices, & Misc

- RANV: Nov Meeting/Elections—11/12
- NEAR-Fest 10/1 & 2, www.near-fest.com/
- Steering Wheel: 3rd Tues, 6:30-8:30; Ninety-Nine, Taft Corners
- Dues due? Pay online at www.ranv.org/granvpay.html
- VT Ham Radio Calendar www.vthrc.net

NEXT MEETING

TUESDAY • OCTOBER 8 • 7:00^{PM}

O’Brien Civic Center • Patchen Rd
South Burlington

“EchoLink/IRLP”

www.RANV.org

VE Exams

Every 2nd Friday
6:30–8:00^{PM}

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:
barcvr.net/directionsarc.html
CARL ABIDD@arrl.net

NOTE:

**No VE Session October 11
—we’ll all be at NEAR-fest.
See you in November!**