



# RADIO AMATEUR

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## NEWS & VIEWS

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An ARRL Special Service Club

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### **ARES and The 2014 S.E.T. In A Nutshell**

*Robin Conway/NIWWW  
Section Emergency Coordinator  
Vermont ARES*

The national ARRL Simulated Emergency Test (SET) is coming up again soon. The SET is a nationwide exercise for the practice and development of emergency communications skills. Participating groups earn points toward an overall SET score, adding a competitive component to the activity. Results are listed in the July QST.



The Vermont Section's exercise will be November 8, 9:00am to Noon. Participants do not need to be members of either the ARRL or ARES, and all are welcome to join in. Activity will take place locally via VHF simplex, local VHF repeaters, the linked 440 series of UHF repeaters, and on HF nets.

A small SET Planning Group has been holding web-based meetings to work on this year's exercise. Since the base function of ARES is traffic handling and we get little practice with it, traffic is the focus for this year. Specifically, the proper formatting and transmission/reception of the ARRL Radiogram and Numbered Radiogram.

Prior study of the radiogram formats will be helpful. This year we will add the National Traffic System (NTS) for delivery of out-of-state messages.

The NTS is the precursor of ARES and serves today as a national traffic transport system for messages originated at the local ARES level and destined for anywhere in the country. Once arriving in the addressee's vicinity, the NTS operator uses telephone, fax, email, USPS, or face-to-face delivery to conclude the message's journey.

ARES and NTS are entirely separate though similarly oriented organization. Both are run under the authority of the ARRL.

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### **NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 14 Computer Security**

This month's topic will be Computer Security. The speaker is Duane Dunston who teaches a course on Computer Security. We are fortunate to catch him with a free Tuesday evening since this is his usual class time!

Everyone is encouraged to come - this is a very timely subject that affects us all! Afterwards we will enjoy some snacks and visit.

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There are 50+ ARES “Sections.” The ARRL provides guidance which is generally followed in the Sections, but there are many, many variants, probably as many as there are Section Emergency Coordinators (SECs). The ARRL gives authority to the SECs to develop ARES within their Sections as will best fit Section needs. A Section may cover one state in its entirety, or a state may consist of several Sections. Sections are further subdivided into local area operational groups typically covering one or more towns, each group supervised by a local Emergency Coordinator (EC). The EC is the primary mover and shaker in ARES—the local level relationship builder, point-of-contact, and promoter of ARES’ emergency communications capability. Most SECs have found it helpful to group a number of towns—by county bounds or other geographical/population criteria—into a District under the supervision of a District Emergency Coordinator (DEC). DEC’s answer to the SEC. This loosely mimics the NIMS/ICS “span of control” concept. When the Section’s number of ECs becomes unwieldy for the SEC to manage alone, s/he is able to appoint an assistant—a DEC—to manage a “span” of ECs. Ultimately, the SEC is subject in turn to the Section Manager.

For more information about VT-ARES or the upcoming SET, contact your area EC or DEC. For those in an area lacking an EC/DEC, feel free to contact me directly by email or phone: Robin Conway/N1WWW, n1www@arrl.net, 802 349-0214.

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## Secretary’s Minutes

**Kathi K1WAL**

Our September meeting began with a brief discussion of the upcoming Maker’s Faire. Due to the lateness of the hour and not enough folks to run a display it was decided to forego it this year. We have drawn the interest of several folks who have become ham and this is a worthwhile and fun event.

Dave KC1APK brought up the topic of a Fox Hunt! A number of members agreed that this would be fun, several who (such as me) have never done this before. However, to make this happen we will need someone or several someone’s to plan and coordinate. We have not had a Foxhunt for several years (at least not in the 7 years I’ve been a RANV member.) We can go small in a park or large using the whole county!

Paul AA1SU graciously agreed to bring snacks for the next meeting.

## **Presentation:** WRTC: Behind the Scenes



Mitch W1SJ and Charles N1CAI described what it was like working at the 2014 World Radio Team

Competition held near Boston this past July. This work began two years ago when they both helped with setting up stations and doing propagation tests.

Mitch began with an overview of the WRTC stating that only the best operators in the world, selected based on points, were invited to compete. Each operator was able to choose his/her partner. There were a total of 59 2-person teams including two wildcards, a youth team, and 4 sponsored teams. Additionally there were 59 referees to keep an eye on each of the teams.

Each team brought their own radio equipment but the sites, power, and antennas were identical.

Mitch was a Station Captain for the Medford Site (the old state hospital). Among the competitors at his locations was a team of YLs from Germany who ended up placing a respectable 21<sup>st</sup> place, an Italian team who focused on SSB so while not scoring well overall they won the SSB trophy, and the W1V team from Siberia. Mitch noted that there is no letter ‘V’ in the Cyrillic alphabet so the callsign of W1V was interesting with “Whiskey One Victor”. Besides, that’s the callsign RANV often uses! (Continue on Page 3)

(Continued from Page 2) Charles was part of the Beam Team. Charles also spent some special time with one team who was unhappy with their original and showed them an alternate location. Due to the amount of trees interfering with the sunbathing of one competitor's XYL they remained at their original site. He spent a lot of time bouncing between sites making sure everyone had everything they needed. He also noted he can put up a tower and a beam in no time – something to remember!

This was a rare opportunity to mingle with the best! Howie K2MME asked Mitch “Did you learn anything?” Mitch replied that he couldn't compare operating CW while driving on I-495 in slow traffic with a paddle strapped on his leg and logging on a piece of paper was to the WRTC teams he was working!

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## Sprites

Jim KE1AZ shared an interesting article from the Sept. 30 edition of the New York Times about Sprites. He first heard about Sprites from Rich WIELL during a presentation to RANV on Lightning.

Sprites are strange weather phenomena where large, as in tens of miles, electrical discharges occur above thunderstorm clouds. They are believed to be triggered by the discharges of positive lightning between the thundercloud and the ground. Sprites are reddish-orange in color in the upper part and blue strands below.

The name Sprite comes from the elusive ‘air spirits’ from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

The article tells of Thomas Ashcraft who uses a radio telescope and sensitive cameras to capture images of Sprites. For an interesting read and great pictures check out <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/30/science/on-the-hunt-for-a-sprite-on-a-midsummers-night.html>!

### CONTACTS

Bob **KB1FRW**, President 434-2517  
mcamp@gmav.net

Jim **KE1AZ**, VP/Treasurer  
jhefferon@smcvt.edu

Kathi **K1WAL**, Sec'y 985-8535  
k1wal@arrl.net

EDITORS  
Kathi **K1WAL** 985-8535  
k1wal@arrl.net

Adam **KB1LHB**  
vtlamore@gmail.com  
*Newsletter submissions to k1wal@arrl.net or vtlamore@gmail.com*

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US Mail: PO Box 9392  
South Burlington, VT 05407

Web: [www.RANV.org](http://www.RANV.org)  
Mitch **W1SJ**, WEBMASTER

Reflector:  
[groups.yahoo.com/group/RANV](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RANV)



## NEWS & VIEWS

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### NEXT MEETING

TUESDAY • October 14 • 7:00 PM  
O'Brien Civic Center • Patchen Rd  
South Burlington, VT

*Computer Security*

### Upcoming, Notices, & Misc

- Elections coming up – are YOU interested in being a club officer?
- Steering Wheel: 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues 6:30; Ninety-Nine Restaurant, Taft Corners, Williston
- VE Exams every 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday; Red Cross Building 29 Mansfield Ave, Burlington
- Dues due? Pay online at [www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html](http://www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html)