



# RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

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## July Presentation Bob KB1WXM

KB1WXM will be give a presentation on the ARRL's National Parks on the Air event. Where we can do it, how we can do it, and what we need to do it will be explained in some detail. Also, after the presentation, pictures and videos of the 2016 RANV Field Day will be shown. If anyone wants copies of said pictures and videos, bring a memory stick.

## FIELD DAY – WE DID OK! Mitch W1SJ

It seems like, for the last 2 months, every time I tried to plan for Field Day, storm clouds started brewing. It was so bad that I threatened (to myself) to blow it all off, and operate 1B battery (something I've been threatening, on and off, for the last 44 years). We lost 3 of our 5 big CW and Phone operators, everyone else who could replace them were out of town, we had no overnight ops, we had few setup people, oh, and someone was going to dig a big hole and put in a road right through our site!

Fortunately, at least for us, I'm too pig-headed to give up on anything. I begged and groveled for operators, and where that didn't work, I promoted operators from our farm team (GOTA). I got the minimum number of setup people and further streamlined the operation to make it even more efficient. And, we got a stay of execution from the hole diggers. Those storm clouds I mentioned cleared away and we were treated to perfect weather all Field Day weekend long.

## CONTACTS

Bob **KB1FRW**, President  
mcamp@gmavt.net

Adam **KB1LHB**, VP/Treasurer/Editor  
vtlmore@gmail.com

Kathi **K1WAL**, Secretary  
k1wal@arrl.net

*Newsletter submissions to* vtlmore@gmail.com

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US Mail: PO Box 9392  
South Burlington, VT 05407

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

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

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

Repeater: 145.150, PL 100; WB1QR

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New Hams, Mentoring:  
RANVMentor@gmail.com

We really need to all share in the credit for an amazingly executed Field Day, given the conditions. It would have been very easy to “scale back” (as many clubs ultimately do) and Field Day could wind up being nothing more than a radio setting on the picnic table. That’s not acceptable to me - we have a picnic for that.

Looking at what transpired, setup was tiring, but somewhat relaxing. We had all the towers up by 6, even with a smaller crew. By 9:00 the dipoles were up, the tents were up, the ground rods were in place and we were ready to build stations Saturday morning. It was nice not having to fix coax connectors as we always seem to do!

The best planned Field Day means nothing if the propagation doesn’t throw us a bone. That’s what happened last year, and I was concerned we might see a repeat performance. Alas, with the sunspot number reported as ZERO, I wasn’t expecting much. The first two hours on 20 meter phone were good – not great, but certainly not the disaster it was last year. Our rates were running a bit behind, but that was to be expected – our All Stars from last year were not in the game!

It was pretty much a “one-band” Field Day. With 15 and 10 totally dead, and 40 meters only good for locals, we had all three of our stations on 20 meters all afternoon and into the early evening. Our layout and radios fortunately allow this to work. On phone we pounded 20 meters right up until 11 PM. After that it was tough sledding on 80 and 40 meters – the latter, wall-to-wall signals, the former, wall-to-wall noise. By Sunday afternoon, 20 meters became a “dupe fest”. The band was totally worked out, and there was nowhere else to go. A pop opening on 15 meters right at the end provided some excitement, but didn’t change things much.

The June meeting on Field Day and GOTA seemed to have worked. The GOTA operators and coaches executed the plan nicely and maxed out the number of allowed QSO’s. We had a bunch of operators rack up bonuses, a few guest ops and even a few youts as well. Not bad for slack conditions.

The grounding initiative really worked. There were virtually no issues with RF getting into things, except a UPS reset from 15 meters (UPS wasn’t grounded!). On the dark side, the CW generator went off line twice (running out of fuel, among other things!). This was a classic, “I thought he was supposed to do that!” It didn’t make a big bang in the score, but it is just plain stupid and embarrassing, and we will not let that happen again!

Takedown was long, and hot and dirty and we got it done without sacrificing any personnel or equipment. Bob may have gotten home by 10PM, which may be a new record!

How did we do? With putting everything away and travel, I haven’t had a lot of time to work on the numbers, but I know this: We landed just shy of 4000 QSO’s and just around 13,000 points. This was certainly better than last year’s disaster, but still quite a ways off from our 10-year average of 4500 QSO’s and almost 14000 points. We won’t see those big numbers again until the sun grows some more spots (if it ever). Of the 4 groups who beat us last year, one wasn’t seen in the logs, one changed category and one we’ve already eeked by. That leaves our arch nemesis the K5UZ group in AR who usually wins it when we do not, plus whatever other dark horses are in the mix. I can tell you that no one seemed to have the big 10 and 6 meter openings – and that gives us a fighting chance!

Next month I’ll have all the numbers and gory details. Stay tuned!

## **SUMMER HAM RADIO ACTIVITIES**

### **Mitch W1SJ**

You would think that after Field Day, there is nothing left this summer. Not true!

Saturday August 6th is the running of the MS-150. Bicyclists will be riding down to Crown Point and back while raising money for Muscular Sclerosis. Amateur operators are needed to provide communications at aid stations. If interested, contact John N1WQS at [jollyjohn@comcast.net](mailto:jollyjohn@comcast.net)

Saturday, August 13th is the STARC Hamfest, 8AM-1PM at the VFW, 353 Lake Street, St. Albans. As that is winding down, head over to the RANV Picnic, 11AM-4PM at Kill Kare State Park, just down the road from the fest. It’s the perfect doubleheader - a little flea market and ham radio socializing in the morning followed by burgers and hotdogs at the beach all afternoon. RANV will supply park admission, drinks and fire up the barbecues, and you bring the rest. As is customary, we will have several HF stations set up to make contacts.

Our July meeting will discuss National Parks on the Air. We plan to put one or more of these parks on the air this summer. The idea is to do a group effort with multiple bands and modes and good antennas. No date has been set, but I’m sure we’ll discuss this a lot at the meeting!



## NEWS & VIEWS

### INSIDE

- Field Day
- Summer Radio Activities

### NEXT MEETING Parks on the Air

Tuesday • July 12th • 7:00pm  
O'Brien Civic Center • Patchen Rd  
South Burlington, VT

### Upcoming, Notices, & Misc

- 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)

*www.RANV.org*