



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

The Official Journal of the Radio Amateurs of Northern Vermont

August • 2016

An ARRL Special Service Club

Vol. 26 • No. 8

August Event

SUMMER PICNIC AT KILL KARE STATE PARK

It's time for the Summer Picnic! We'll be at Kill Kare State Park in St. Albans, on Saturday, August 13th. This is the same day as STARC's Hamfest at the St. Albans VFW, 353 Lake Street. Why not make a whole day of it by heading over to the hamfest first (opens at 8 AM) then come to Kill Kare at 11 AM and show us your new toys!

RANV will supply park admission, soft drinks and charcoal for the grills. You bring the rest. Be sure to bring family and friends. This is a family event, so bring people - this should be more than just a ham gathering. Also bring food to eat, appropriate sporting goods and clothing, and any radio stuff you would like to play with. Leave pets at home since the park doesn't allow them, and it is too hot to leave a pet in the car.

We will set up a couple of radios and antennas. Feel free to bring your own toys, or use what we set up. There is no contest ' we'll just get on the air and have fun.

Directions: Take I-89 North to Exit 19, St. Albans. Go past the light and down the access highway 1 mile to Route 7. Make a right and head 0.5 miles into downtown St. Albans. Look for Taylor Park (big green) on your right and then look for Lake Street and make a left. Go 3 miles on Lake Street until you see The Bayside Pavilion at your left and a Shell station at your right. Make a right turn and head north. You will pass St. Albans Town Park. Keep going!

You will only go 0.7 miles from the turn and will cross a small bridge. Right after this bridge, turn left on to Hathaway Point Road. After the left turn, go 3 miles down the curvy road to the Park entrance.

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

US Mail: PO Box 9392
South Burlington, VT 05407

Web: www.RANV.org

Reflector: groups.yahoo.com/group/RANV

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

Repeater: 145.150, PL 100; WB1QR

New Hams, Mentoring:
RANVMentor@gmail.com

FIELD DAY 2016 FINAL REPORT

Field Day 2016
Mitch W1SJ

Field Day 2016 took on a more serious challenge: Do a little bit more than last year with significantly less staff. Weddings, travel and other activities took away key players. We were challenged to keep Field Day at the same level as previous years and not pair it down like other groups have been forced to do. In this one regard we were quite successful.

Setup started with 10 people, down from a usual 16 people. Knowing this, we took several steps to make the operation more efficient and as a result, setup ran smoothly. The CW tower was up inside of an hour and all of the towers were up by 6. By 8:30, all of the antennas and tents were up and ready to go. Station setup was also pretty smooth. The stations came on line without incident.

We knew that operating the phone station would be a challenge. We had poor propagation and less experienced operators. It was pretty much a one-band operation for much of the time. Despite this, we were able to turn in fairly high rates on 20 meters at the start. As we got into the later afternoon, the band started to get worked out and our less experienced operators were struggling to deal with that. As we got into the early evening, rates started to climb slowly back up until 20 meters ran out of gas around midnight. Unfortunately, 80 meters was in its usual summer conditions with noise levels around S-9. The rate started to drop dramatically as neither 80 nor 40 meters produced much. Rates on Sunday morning were solid, but unspectacular. Our 2080 QSO's were better than last year's horrible 1792, but well off our usual 2400-2500.

The CW station managed a consistent 70 QSO per hour rate with four operators straight up until midnight. True, we missed the 90+ hours obtained during the glory days of 2010-2012, but we also didn't have some of the bad hours and snafus of past years either. By midnight, we had around 700 QSO's in the log, which was better than the previous 3 years and matched our 10-year average. For two hours, Tom and Paul dual operated on 80 and 40 meters, maintaining a 62 rate – great! Unfortunately, Tom didn't feel well and packed it in just after 2. With a single op, the rate languished at 29 until 4AM when Paul and I dual operated a 52 rate in the dead of the morning. I threw in the towel at 5 and the rates went down the dumper. Finally, by 8, we got reasonable, but unspectacular rates before a last hurrah on 15 meters in the last 15 minutes. We had a major exposure which was lack of overnight operators, and this came to bite us.

We spent a good deal of time at the meeting before Field Day talking about running the GOTA station. It paid off. Past years had all sorts of confusion and snafus, but this year I didn't see nor hear about any. Having a committed schedule of operators and coaches posted really helped. Everyone knew what they had to do – call CQ and work people – and they did that! We put 7 regular operators on, along with 5 visitors and maxed out our QSO's at 500.

Our GOTA bonus was 920 out of a possible 1000. To get the maximum bonus everyone needs to make 20, 40, 60, 80 or 100 QSO's. Stopping in between will lessen the bonus. We got 60 out of 100 points for the youth bonus. This is better than last year, but still falls short. Outside of GOTA bonus and Youth Bonus we got all of the other possible bonuses, ultimately adding 2530 points (out of a possible 2650 points).

I'm happy to report that there were no casualties with personnel or equipment at Tear Down and we got everything down and packed away in record time with a smaller crew. We have come up with a methodology for all of this, which has been spelled out in the Field Day Manual.

The 13018 points we scored is better than last year, but below average. But then, conditions have been way below average. I do not know how the other groups scored. I can tell you that the reports I have seen did not indicate much activity on 6 and 10 meters. We will have to wait until November to find out who did what. But based on all the challenges we had this year, the reduced number of participants and the poor propagation, I feel we did really well. Thank you to all the folks who worked real hard for this, and I trust you all had fun doing it. At least I haven't received any complaints, so we're doing pretty good.

You can read the full Field Day summary at www.hamclass.net/fd/fdplan.html.

2016 RANV FIELD DAY BOX SCORE				
80 CW	177	80 SSB	313	
40 CW	481	40 SSB	302	
20 CW	624	20 SSB	1421	
15 CW	25	15 SSB	44	
GOTA CW	0	GOTA Ph	500	
VHF CW	4	VHF Ph	30	
Sat CW	1	Sat Ph	10	
Total CW	1312	Total Ph	2620	
3932 QSOs 2530 Bonus 13018 Pts				
	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>
QSO's	3675	4548	4547	4639
Bonuses	2170	2410	2150	2450
Points	12202	14016	13876	14802

2016 RANV FIELD DAY HALL OF FAME

AA1SU Paul – CW op; VHF op; Equipment; Bonuses; Set up; Tear down.
AB1DD Carl – GOTA spvr; VHF op; Set up; Tear down.
K1TWF Mike – CW op.
K1VMT Joe – CW op.
K1ZK Zach – CW op; VHF op.
KB1FRW Bob – Phone op; VHF op; Equipment; Set up; Tear down.
KB1LHB Adam – IT; GOTA op/coach; Set up; Tear down.
KB1LOT Jim – Set up; Tear down.
KB1MDC Alan – Set up.
KB1THX Tim – Phone op; GOTA coach; Set up; Tear down.
KB1VNA Eric – GOTA op/coach; Set up; Tear down.
KB1WXM Bob – Set up; Tear down.
KB1ZEB Larry – GOTA op/coach; Set up; Tear down.
KC1CZA Chad – GOTA op; VHF op; Set up; Tear down.
KE1AZ Jim – Phone op; GOTA coach; Set up; Tear down.
KI6ISG Bev – GOTA op/coach.
NK1A Nancy – GOTA op.
N1YD Jeff – Demos; Safety spvr; GOTA op/coach; Tear dn.
W1EAT Tom – CW op.
W1SJ Mitch – Chairman; Phone op; Satellite op; Equipment; Set up; Tear down; Results.
W4YFJ Bob – Bulletins.
WL7CVD Duane – Tear down.

Secretary's Minute

Kathi K1WAL

This was our last meeting at the O'Brien Civic Center! The building is going to be torn down due to a poor foundation, lead paint, and many other things that happen to old buildings. The cost to renovate was more than the cost to tear down and rebuild. The footprint of the new building will include the current old O'Brien farmhouse, the garage, and other outbuildings. It will take about 2 years for the construction to be completed. For our September meeting we will try out a new location at the Wheeler House at 1100 Dorset Street, just south of the Cairns Arena. This is a brick building which contains several meeting rooms, the South Burlington Community Garden, and the Friends of the Community Library.

Our next meeting will be our club picnic on Saturday August 13 at Kill Kare State Park. Before heading out to the park be sure to stop by the STARC Hamfest at the VFW on Lake Street in St. Albans!

Mitch W1SJ gave some numbers from Field Day and a recap. See the article in this edition of *News & Views*.

Larry KB1ZEB graciously offered to bring snacks for our September meeting.

Presentation:

Bob KB1WXM gave a great presentation about his activities with the National Parks On The Air, or NPOTA.

NPOTA is an Amateur Radio event which celebrates the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service running from Jan 1, 2016 through Dec 31, 2016. Like the Summits On the Air (SOTA) NPOTA has Activators and Chasers.

Bob first directed us to the NPOTA link on the ARRL website which covers the Rules, Leaderboard of the Activators and Chasers, a useful FAQ that gets updated periodically, the List of NPOTA units, and other information.

The list of NPOTA units is searchable by name or by state. The full list is assessable from the Leaderboard link. There are three NPS units in Vermont: TR01 Appalachian National Scenic Trail; HP26 March-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park; and WR26 Missisquoi and Trout Wild and Scenic River.

Bob led us through how to select WR26 and register an activation. This is where you enter the date and time you plan on being at the site plus a notes section to list frequencies you plan to be working. This information will appear on the On The Air page for Chasers to check and make contact with you. The Leader Board shows the Rank, Callsign, and score for Activators and Chasers (this can be sorted by state for a smaller list.)

Bob showed pictures of the equipment he uses. Unlike SOTA you don't always need to lug around your own power so parking in a vehicle works very well. Bob used both his Elecraft KX3 and his mobile Kenwood. Since some site do not allow generators and running a car for 4+ hours isn't always feasible, Bob used batteries (either Lithium rechargeable pack which don't weight a lot or a lead acid car battery which does.) A small car battery gave him 100W for over 3 hours.

Bob used a variety of antenna, depending on where he was. If trees were handy putting a dipole up high is a good option. A portable Vertical as handy when a tree wasn't around. But his favorite was using a ham stick attached to the bed of his pickup which allowed him to luxury of operating from the cab in relative comfort.

Bob strongly recommended using a computer for logging. Even with the best intentions of logging with pen and paper you can never scribble fast (or legibly) enough. And of course, a computer is necessary for using digital modes.

He showed pictures of his WR26 excursion with Larry KB1ZEB. Bob showed how afterward he uploaded the ADIF file from his logging software to the Logbook of the World.

At the end of Bob's presentation those in attendance discussed having a club NPOTA outing. We went over possible days and places we could set up and operate and who would bring what equipment.

The time selected for a club NPOTA event is August 7 at Davis Park in Richford, VT where we will be activating WR26, Missisquoi and Trout River. Since this will occur by the time the newsletter is in your hand, and if you were not able to participate, you can read about in the September newsletter.

Upcoming MARS Interoperability Communications Exercise on August 15

Kathi K1WAL

Amateur radio operators are welcome to participate in a MARS Interoperability Communications Exercise on Monday, August 15 from 1200 UTC to 2359 UTC.

The purpose of this exercise is demonstrate radio-only communications under simulated conditions of denial of cyberspace, electrical, and telecommunications infrastructure.

As part of the exercise MARS stations will attempt to connect with hams locally and regionally. Information may be requested such as status of roads, power, communications, etc. Hams should respond with actual conditions.

While local VHF/UHF frequencies will be monitored during the exercise by VT MARS members, HF frequencies will also be used. This includes the 60-meter channels. When using 60m during the exercise you may hear MARS operators using their MARS call signs rather than their amateur call sign.

If you are interested or would like more information on the exercise, please contact Kathi at K1WAL@arrl.net.



NEWS & VIEWS

INSIDE

- Kill Kare Picnic
- Field Day 2016
- Secretary's Minutes
- MARS Event

NEXT MEETING Picnic at Kill Kare Park

Saturday • August 13th • 11:00am
O'Brien Civic Center • Patchen Rd
South Burlington, VT

Upcoming, Notices, & Misc

- Steering Wheel: 3rd Tues 6:30; Ninety-Nine Restaurant, Taft Corners, Williston
- VE Exams every 2nd Friday; Red Cross Building 29 Mansfield Ave, Burlington
- Dues due? Pay online at www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html

www.RANV.org