



# RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

The Official Journal of the Radio Amateurs of Northern Vermont

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## OUR NEXT RANV MEETING....

...will NOT be this month! Remember that we replace the December meeting with the Holiday Party, which was held December 3<sup>rd</sup>. We'll return with another exciting RANV meeting on January 10<sup>th</sup>.

## THE FINAL MISSISQUOI RIVER ACTIVATION Mitch W1SJ

The RANV NPOTA Dream Team decided to return to our "neighborhood" park, Missisquoi River, WR26, for a final activation before the program would end in 2 weeks. To make things interesting, I announced to the world that we were striving to make 1000 QSO's in this activation (an average NPOTA activation is around 60). At the time, the total NPOTA QSO count was around 970,000, and it was hoped this would go a long way to help put the total over the magic 1 Million QSO Mark.

But it wasn't going to be all that easy. This was going to be a winter activation, and plans had to be put into place to deal with cold and snow to drive up, set up the antennas and stations and operate for several hours. We looked at two different weekends, and chose the day with the least likelihood of snow, least wind and warmest (!?) temperatures. We also had to consider the actual station locations. We have erected tents for this in the past, but that would mean more stuff to do outside in the cold weather. So, we had to carefully consider the ergonomics of fitting equipment and some of our larger operators comfortably into vehicles to make contacts.

But it was the cold that wreaked havoc on some of our equipment, particularly our pneumatic ball launcher used to put up the antennas. The cold made the units brittle and also caused the monofilament line to break. We also had difficulty starting the trusty Honda EU2000i generators in the cold. Fortunately, we learned about that issue the day before.

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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  
Wheeler House  
1100 Dorset Street  
South Burlington

Repeater: 145.150, PL 100; WB1QR

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New Hams, Mentoring:  
[RANVMentor@gmail.com](mailto:RANVMentor@gmail.com)

So everything was kept warm overnight in basements and warm garages. The generators started and ran without a hitch.

The other issue we had to deal with was a truncated operating schedule. We could not operate past 5PM like we have done in the past. We had to make a hard stop at 4, quickly rip everything down and pack it away before it got dark (and colder) at 4:30. We all arrived before 10AM, where the local temperature was a balmy 11 degrees. We exchanged many jokes about this becoming a FYBO operation. FYBO is Freeze Your Butt Off - an outdoors Field Day type activity where you get a large multiplier for the cold temperatures. We got to work to set everyone up and got going on 20 meters at 10:30 and were on 40 meters about 30 minutes later.

The station setup was essentially the same as our August activation. The 20 meter station, in Mitch's van, was a K3 feeding an ancient SB200 amplifier and tuner to a 20 meter dipole at 40 feet. The 40 meter station 150 feet further east, was comfortably tucked into the back seat of Bob's Toyota and was a K3 feeding a KPA amplifier and tuner to a 40 meter dipole at 40 feet.



WR26 has been activated many times before and is not all that rare. And while the propagation this past week appeared to be good, I didn't know what to expect. Would anyone bother calling us? I got my answer just after the second CQ. The pileup started and quickly became nuts. Stations were calling on top of me, making it hard to respond to stations. People would continue to call on top of others. Fistfights broke out. Chairs and other objects were thrown into the fray. The pileup had all the elegance of a Wrestling cage match. I even had to scold some for their bad behavior. And the whole time, I'm laughing my butt off, because I do really enjoy working pileups! We logged a 186 QSO's per hour rate for the first couple of hours. As the afternoon wore on, we worked out the band somewhat and the rate dropped, but it also became easier for the weaker stations to get through. We were actually able to work a number of stations in the Northeast who were in our skip zone.

40 meters started a bit more slowly, but it built up to keep a steady 110-120 QSO per hour rate all afternoon. The noise

was virtually non-existent - just a little bit of band noise, and not much else. And with 40 meters going long early in the afternoon, we were working everyone in the eastern half of the country, clear down to Florida.



Around 2:30, I polled the stations to see how many we had in the logs. "Sweet Jesus", (sometimes that is used for my phonetics), "We did it - over 1000 QSO's!" So we kept going to see how many more QSO's could be put into the log. Just after 4:00, the pileups pretty much stopped on both bands and this was sign for us to shut it down, pull it down and get our butts outta there.

We totaled 1250 QSO's, 49 states (no AK), 11 Canadian Provinces, 15 DXCC countries, including rare ones like Mozambique, Azores and the Canaries, and several park QSO's. It was a wildly successful activation and we all had a ball.

Pictures and videos of the operation can be found on the RANV web.

### **Secretary's Minutes Kathi K1WAL**

Since our Holiday Party was earlier than usual this year our November and December minutes are combined.

#### **November Minutes:**

Business – We held our election for club officers and all the incumbents won. We also have a new RANV Newsletter editor! A big "Thank you" goes out to Adam for all his hard work (and to Adam's mom for helping with getting the newsletter ready for mailing!)

Our club officers are:

President – Bob KB1FRW

VP/Treasurer – Adam KB1LHB

Secretary – Kathi K1WAL

Newsletter Editor – David KC1APK

Chief Snack Officer – Paul AA1SU

#### November Presentation:

Bob W4YFJ introduced our video presentation by Denny Avers W3DRY called How To Get Those QSLs given at a meeting of the Albemarle Amateur Radio Club in October 2016. Denny is an old friend of Bob's from Virginia. Denny is on the DX Century Club (DXCC) Honor Role for mixed and CW mode on 9 bands 160 through 10 meters. He also earned the DXCC Challenge Award with 2500 confirmed band countries as well as Worked All Zones (WAZ) for 7 bands! He made all his contacts on a wire antenna.

Denny's presentation covered the different methods of using QSL cards, logging software, and DXing. He started by talking about DX being the foundational activity of ham radio from Day 1. As years went by the distance of DXing got longer. He discussed how those who do a lot of DXing tend to be the Go To Guys in emergency communications and other phases of ham radio since they have the skills for listening and taking a message.

Types of QSLs are paper cards, Electronic Confirmations, or a hybrid approach of both. He stated that serious DXers use all three methods. The sending of QSL cards goes back to the early days of ham radio.

Some general guidelines are to log every contact you make whether using a paper log or electronic in use Universal Time (UTC.) Electronic is certainly preferred. He also went over how to create QSLs in the various formats.

He discussed various programs for logging and how he uses them. He encouraged using the ARRL's Logbook Of the World (LOTW). His recommendations were very similar to those of our RANV members who have spoken on this subject.

Denny gave some DXing hints such as getting a good headphone/mic set to maximize your hearing ability and voice clarity. He claimed this was the best money he ever spent on ham radio. He suggested that you can compensate for a modest antenna by adding power. He also suggested to log on to a DX Cluster to see who is on the air and where in the world they are working. He mentioned the Reverse Beacon network and to try to work DXpeditions on multiple bands and modes. With low powered and a poor antenna PSK is a good mode.

This was a wonderful presentation that makes you want to get on the air and start DXing!

The link to this presentation is:

<https://www.albemarleadio.org/2016/10/14/denny-avers-w3dry-how-to-get-those-qsls-11-oct-2016/>

#### December Minutes:

We had a party! The location at the South Burlington City Offices Conference Room was outstanding! The food was great (except not enough roast beef) and the company (21 in attendance) was outstanding! There was a bit of a snafu organizing an HF station but we were able to cobble one

together. Mitch W1SJ showed a slideshow of some of our NPOTA adventures as well as his excursions in and around NYC. A great time was had by all!

Welcome our new RANV Newsletter Editor!

Dave KC1APK will be taking over the reins of newsletter editor beginning January 2017. We all give Adam KB1LHB a big thank you for a job well done.

Let's support Dave. This is your club newsletter. Feel free to submit articles! Articles can be short, long, technical, anecdotal, etc. Share your experiences and stories!



## NEWS & VIEWS

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- Secretary's Minutes
- Officer Election Results

### NEXT MEETING To be determined

Tuesday • January 10th • 7:00pm  
Wheeler House, 1100 Dorset Street  
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*