



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

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An ARRL Special Service Club

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NEXT RANV MEETING - May 9TH

Introduction to Foxhunting

The May RANV meeting will be an intro to foxhunting for those wish to gain a skill they never had or those who have done it in the past but it has been a while.

What is this good for? It helps find transmitters that are locked on and interfering with a repeater or a frequency commonly used. You can help locate a downed aircraft, a mariner in distress or a lost hiker.

Admittedly these are rare occurrences, but the fun of doing it is high. There is definitely an amount of practice and skill required. Hopefully we can give you some of that practice and train you in the skill.

We will have a fox box (hidden transmitter) on the grounds. Bring your HT and directional antenna (if you have one), and we will break up into teams to find the transmitter.

Mitch, **W1SJ**, a fox hunting expert will lead this meeting.

PS: Bring a few paperclips.

ESSEX MEMORIAL PARADE – MAY 27TH

Mitch W1SJ

The Essex Memorial Parade is Saturday, May 27th from 7:30 until noon. Hams are needed to serve as Parade Marshals who line up the participants, report any changes and march with them to make sure they all behave. This is a fairly easy, low-key event. And it is fun to march down Pearl Street with everyone cheering at you. If interested in helping out, please contact Mitch at w1sj@arrl.net.

CONTACTS

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Web: www.RANV.org

Reflector: groups.yahoo.com/group/RANV

Meetings: 2nd Tuesday • 7:00 PM
Wheeler House
1100 Dorset Street
South Burlington

Repeater: 145.150, PL 100; WB1GQR

New Hams, Mentoring:
RANVMentor@gmail.com

2017 VERMONT CITY MARATHON – MAY 28TH

Mitch W1SJ

The Vermont City Marathon is Sunday, May 28th. There are still a few open slots open for communicators. There is one key job still unfilled: Trail Bike. This position requires riding a bike at the end of the Marathon to keep track of the runners at the end of the race. Their pace is very slow, so there is no need for high speed cycling – in fact their speed approaches walking speed. If you love to combine ham radio and cycling, and interested this assignment, contact Mitch at w1sj@arrl.net immediately. Remember that the Marathon will start 1 hour earlier – at 7:02 this year, to avoid problems we had with high temperatures last year. That being said, it will probably be cold this year! The good news is that many jobs finish up before noon with the latest ending at 1:05, allowing time to do other things in the afternoon.

The Marathon is the largest event ham radio supported event in Vermont, consisting of 8,000 runners, 30,000 spectators, 1,000 volunteers and 32 licensed ham operators all compacted into a 7 hour event.

FIELD DAY 2017 – JUNE 23RD THROUGH 25TH

Mitch W1SJ

Field Day is the activity which brings us all together to learn the myriad details of running a large operation as well as having fun in a group setting.

Last year, we had a very small crew to keep things going. Hopefully, we'll have more of a full complement of participants, making it less work for everyone else involved.

We need a large support staff to make the operation run like a well-oiled machine. Besides the operators, it takes many setup and takedown people, as well as support people to keep the generators, computers and foodstuffs running.

Very soon, we will be soliciting your input on when you will be available. Field Day activities fall into these categories:

- June 19 - Planning Meeting
- June 23 - Setup
- June 24 & 25 – Operating and Support
- June 25 - Takedown

Choose which activities you will like to do. Choose all of 'em if you can!

One opportunity for improving our scores over previous years is to get more youths to the Field Day site and obtain the bonuses. Even more important is to sell amateur radio to young people. With 2 months before Field Day, see what you can do to invite a few kids to the event. Perhaps this will be the year we turn this around and improve our bonus opportunities!

FEATURED PLATE OF THE MONTH



Thanks Steve – A real classic!

Got a ham plate or Amateur related vanity? Send us a picture and we'll feature it one of the upcoming newsletters.

VERMONT PARKS ON THE AIR – UPDATES

Bob KB1WXM

I have spoken to the Vermont State Parks folks in Montpelier, and they are on board with the Vermont Parks on the Air concept. At the present time they are filling some vacant park ranger positions, but they will inform all the rangers of this program, and to expect amateur radio operators to set up stations in Vermont state parks this summer.

Paul, AA1SU, sent me an email about a U.S. program, Parks on the Air, <https://wwff-kff.com> which is affiliated with the world wide program, World Wide Flora and Fauna, <http://wwff.co>. WWFF has been around for some time, and is quite popular in Europe, so, if an activation is posted there, expect activity from Europe in the afternoon on 20 meters. The "Parks on the Air" program has already assigned numbers to all of our state parks, for example, KFF-3140 Sand Bar. So, most of the infrastructure is in place for this to happen.

A Facebook page is in the process of being created for us to post future activations, pictures and comments. This Facebook posting will serve to notify the rangers when an activation is coming to their park. So, using the Parks on the Air designators, and posting an activation on the "to be made" Facebook page, then posting it on the WWFF website, all we need to do is just get out there and have fun. Remember to be respectful of the parks and follow the rules posted.

REPEATER PROBLEMS

Mitch W1SJ

Something happened to the repeater last Monday causing the receiver to be quite deaf. I know things were working normally last Sunday night as I checked in from Concord, NH at 8:30 and from several other spots along I-89 later in the evening. Then, on Monday afternoon, around 4pm, I wasn't able to hear Carl and he wasn't able to hear me in spots around town where the repeater should work.

Measurements show that the receiver is down 15-20 db. In layman's terms, that's 3-4 S-units, or else, consider that your 50 watts mobile will now work like a 1 watt mobile. The transmitted signal is not affected. We were able to have someone who was at the site mid-week check things and found nothing obvious - antenna is in place, duplexer not messed with, no one broke into the building, etc.

The problem is likely to be in one of the receiver components - preamp, helical resonators, front end, etc. GE's are notorious for tin whiskers growing across the resonators, and the MO certainly looks a lot like that. However, we changed the system to a newer model which should not have that problem.

The really BIG problem is getting to the site. It is crossover season - meaning lots of snow, water and gooey mud making a difficult ride even worse. We often can catch a ride with someone else going up there, but that was not possible this week, and it is anyone's guess when they will be going back. I'm beyond the point where I'm willing to hike up 3 miles with a 30 pound pack. So, we wait for an opportunity and hope someone with the right equipment will need to go up there soon.

For now the repeater is working, but not hearing very well. It is still working better than many other repeaters, though! Until we get things fixed, follow some simple rules:

- No HT's - you won't get in, and if you do, you won't be very readable
- High power mobiles should work, but know where your weak spots are and stay off the air when driving through them
- Don't TEST the repeater - we already have done that and know what is going on. You'll just make more noise and give people a headache.

We will attempt to put the Marathon remote receiver on a bit earlier this season, which will give us good coverage in Burlington and along the lake.

Pray for a solution to come our way to get up there safely!

FEATURED QSL CARD OF THE MONTH



Have YOUR card featured... Send us a copy and we'll highlight it one of the upcoming newsletters.



Congratulations to Zach **K1ZK** for a very well written and detailed review featured in the May 2017 QST! In his 4 page article, Zach describes how “with 5 W CW on three bands, the tiny LNR Precision MTR-3B is ideal for operating from remote spots.” About the size and weight of a deck of cards, the rig is perfect for operating on 40, 30, and 20 meters from just about anywhere. Zach wrote about his experiences working FL, AL, South America, and Europe with an indoor antenna, doing SOTA work in the mountains of VT, and NPOTA activations from Manhattan. As someone who also owns a MTR-3B and uses it extensively for SOTA activations, I can honestly say that Zach’s article is spot-on! Be sure to check it out!

WAYS TO PREVENT DUES INCREASE
Dave KCIAPK

We really ARE very fortunate to have an active club and one of the best repeater coverage areas! Dues are used to pay for our meeting location and to keep the repeater on the air (*and to fix it!*). At last month’s meeting there was considerable discussion about the possibility of needing to increase dues – something we all want to avoid!

Currently dues are \$15 per year. A good portion of this (about 12 dollars) goes to printing and mailing the monthly newsletter. Did you know that many members are now opting to receive the newsletter by email – it’s free, timely, and looks great in **color!!!** [Just email me to get on the list, and it's like donating \\$12 of your dues back to the club!](#)

The other challenge is chasing folks that are overdue. Nobody likes receiving a reminder, and I hate having to track, print, and mail renewal forms – it takes a lot of time! Instead, consider renewing at an upcoming meeting or online.

Thank you for doing your part to support this great club!

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to the following new and/or upgraded licensees:

- **KC1HLZ** – Luis Vivanco (Burlington) - **TECHNICIAN**
- **KC1CZA** – Chad Loseby (Burlington) - **GENERAL**



NEWS & VIEWS

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NEXT MEETING

An Introduction to Foxhunting

Tuesday • May 9th • 7:00pm
Wheeler House, 1100 Dorset Street
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