



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

The Official Journal of the Radio Amateurs of Northern Vermont

December • 2017

An ARRL Special Service Club

Vol. 27 No. 12

Next Meeting – RANV Holiday Party – December 9th

The RANV Holiday Party will be held Saturday, December 9th at the QTH of W1SJ in Essex. Festivities will start at noon and run until 4 in the afternoon.

We have decided to move back to my location as it is a nicer spot for a gathering as opposed to the large room at the Town Office. We are trying to have other activities so that folks hang around for a while versus the classic "eat and run" style.

In addition to food, the shack will be available for QSO's all day. I'll leave the system on FT8 for anyone to play with, but it can be switched to other modes. The 10 meter contest will be running and perhaps something will open up. We can also show pictures and/or videos of Field Day and the many park activations we have been involved with during the year.

The party is open to RANV members, guests and anyone else who has been involved with any of our activities during the year.

Please fill out the survey at <http://www.ranv.org/surpar17.html> and let me know your plans as soon as you read this. I need to know the number of attendees and have time to plan and purchase the food. Please don't keep this a secret!

Everyone needs to bring something. We will supply a few items, but other things like drinks, appetizers and desserts are not supplied. Pick an item and let me know on the survey so I can reduce the number of dupes.

This is OUR party for the ENTIRE club. Make every effort to attend and have a wonderful time.

CONTACTS

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

Adam **KB1LHB**, VP/Treasurer
vtlamore@gmail.com

Duane **WL7CVD** Secretary
dsalaskasep@ak.net

Dave **KC1APK**, Editor
davidblin@aol.com

Newsletter submissions to davidblin@aol.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
Wheeler House
1100 Dorset Street
South Burlington

Repeater: 145.150, PL 100; WB1GQR

New Hams, Mentoring:
RANVMentor@gmail.com

VT State Parks On The Air:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/292829457810746/>

FIELD DAY RESULTS POSTED

Mitch WISJ

The Field Day score postings recently came out. I have to say that I was surprised and mildly happy. No, we didn't win it all. I knew that back in July when I saw a score posting from KS0MO showing a score well beyond 16,000 points. They usually finish 3rd or 4th, and I assumed a number of groups bested us and dropped down to as much as 5th place. We ended up finishing 2nd, barely beating our arch rival K5UZ. For this reason alone, I was happy!

If we go back 10 years, one finds that only two groups finish first or second in 2A – us and the Batesville, Arkansas club, K5UZ. We've finished first 4 times and they've finished first 4 times. It is a domination similar to that of baseball in the 50's when there was always a team from New York in the World Series, whether it was the Dodgers, Giants or Yankees (yes, my baseball history roots are showing). So this year, it was different – someone other than WINVT or K5UZ won the 2A category, and they won it by a fairly large margin. KS0MO, the Kansas City Contest Club has been a relative newcomer to 2A, arriving on the scene in 2014. They are the group who runs the CW Pileup Copying Contest in Dayton, so we know they have some heavy hitters in the lineup.

Some may not like it when I nitpick and get in people's faces about silly little things done at Field Day, since every little bit counts. That "little bit" added up on the positive side for us, as we beat K5UZ by a mere 130 points. That amounts to only 33 CW QSO's! Or put another way, we left 100 bonus points on the table as we could not find any youths to operate. Similarly, we beat K1LY in Rhode Island by 324 points, which kind of makes up for them squeaking by us by only 78 points last year. Yes, every little thing can indeed matter!

How did the Kansas City club rack up such a big score? It was done mainly on CW, as we had way more QSO's than they did. Remember, we were getting our butts kicked all night long on 80 and 40 SSB. If we had reasonable hours then, it could have been a horse race. And for those who say, "Work more CW!" That is easier said than done. First, we weren't exactly setting the bands on fire on CW and we had two tired CW operators, (plus me) to do all the CW operating.

But you have to be proud of the fact that not only did we finish 14th overall (that's across all categories), we managed to finish 5th in total QSO's. That is, only 4 other Field Day groups made more contacts than we did, and they were running many more transmitters. Given the fact that we, a. had to move the site, b. dealt with monsoon rains during setup, c. spent a lot of time getting stuck in the mud, and d. had a compromised tuner in the phone station, you would have to say that we did pretty good! So, it was not a glorious first place finish, but I'll accept the glorious 2nd place finish and spend the next 6 months figuring out how to make it better next year!

And for those who will tell me, "Field Day is not a Contest!" I respond with the classic holiday refrain, "Bah Humbug!"

IT'S NOT FIELD DAY, IT'S SWEEPSTAKES, DOGGONE IT!

Mitch WISJ

Recently, I was operating in the Phone Sweepstakes, and I was one of the very few Vermont stations on the air. Things started OK on 20 meters and segued over to 40 and 80 reasonably well, considering the sunspot number was a big fat zero. But as the evening wore on, the rates just went into the toilet. The frequency was clear, the transmitter was putting out good power, but fewer and fewer people were answering the CQ's. It's like half the ham population left for vacation. By the time I knocked off at 3AM, I was tired and felt very defeated.

I hoped Sunday would bring better results. It didn't. Rates were lackluster and I was begging for contacts. I believe, at some point, I was offering money for QSO's. But I soldiered on and was finishing up a QSO with a station when all went quiet and dark. "Oh, crummy – I blew the fuse!" So I fumbled downstairs to reset the main breaker, which I had hoped would get things going again. It didn't. Green Mountain Flicker and Flash had dropped power in the middle of the SS. Wonderful. I called GMFF to report the outage and they said they would get around to it, sometime. Not a good report. Did that mean an hour, or a week? I came real close to throwing in the towel.

But I didn't. Instead, I said, "Hey, let's play Field Day!" With that, I grabbed a flashlight and dug the Honda generator out of the garage. But I couldn't open the garage door because there was no power, so I had to use the emergency release, which got stuck. After a few choice words which shan't be repeated here, I got the door open. Then I tried to start the generator and it didn't. The Honda is a very reliable starter – when it is warm. Cold starts are another story. For last years' winter activation, I had to keep the generator in the basement to get it started. But finally, after a 20-odd pulls and a few more choice words which shan't be repeated here, I got it running.

I cobbled up 35' of extension cord to get power up to the shack and had most of the station running. But I cannot run the big Dentron amp (240 volts) off the Honda. The large Generac generator should be able to run it, in theory, but that generator hasn't been started in a few years, and the 240 volt plug on the amp did not match the outlet on the generator, anyway.

My phone SS setup consists of two independent stations, running in what is called SO2R – Single Operator, 2 Radio. I CQ on one radio, while looking for stations on the second radio or sometimes alternate CQ's on two bands. The primary station is the K3 and Dentron while the second radio is the older TS-830 and even older SB-200. So, I had to reconfigure the amps, switching the Dentron out and switching in the SB-200 into the K3 and main antennas. I decided to forgo the second station at this point.

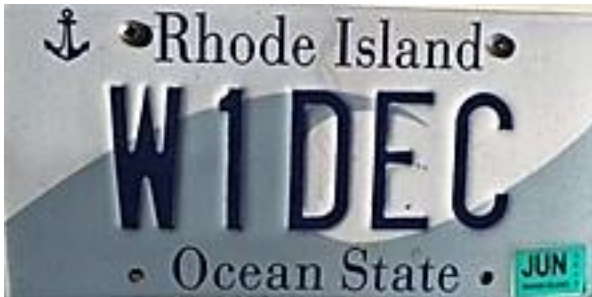
Sweepstakes requires a station to take a minimum 30 minute time off to fit in 24 hours of operation out of 30 total hours. I was able to get the station back on the air with a couple of db lower signal in 30 minutes and started actually working people on 20 meters. I was feeling pretty good until I realized that I hadn't refueled the generator after the City Hall Park 6-hour operation and likely only had 3 hours of fuel left. Well, I'll deal with THAT problem later on.

As it turned out, the power came back after another 20 minutes on the generator. But I didn't trust GMFF – I stayed on generator another half hour to be sure. Eventually I had to switch back to the big amplifier in between QSO's and get the second station running. As the rates were pretty poor, I had ample time to do this.

When the dust had settled, everyone's scores were horrible, except those stations in 3, 8 and 9 land. I ended up with one of the biggest scores in New England, but I didn't feel like celebrating. It was a tough slog. But from an emergency operations standpoint, lack of power did not cancel the show.

We got a late start, getting 20 meters going just before 1 pm and 40 meters around 3 pm. But we still got in 4 hours of activity and put 447 QSO's in the log from a rare park. And it was a super ending to a great hamfest weekend!

FEATURED PLATE OF THE MONTH



Thanks Dave!

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

SECRETARY'S MINUTES

Duane WL7CVD

There were 12 members in attendance. Bob [KB1FRW](#) called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

Program for the evening: movie night.

For future meetings, consider remote media presentations, there is a lot of content out there.

Holiday Party

It was agreed there should be no uninvited police at the party! Carl [AB1DD](#) made a motion to allow up to \$200 for food. Seconded by Paul [AA1SU](#). Passed.

Because of the holiday party, there will be no regular club meeting in December.

Since the meeting took place, the date of 12/9 has been selected with a location of the residence of Mitch WISJ – please see above.

Club Elections

There was a question about possible email ballots, but no indication that any had been collected. Elections were conducted by paper ballot of members in attendance.

Election results:

- President: Bob [KB1FRW](#)
- Vice President and Treasurer: Adam [KB1LHB](#)
- Secretary: Duane [WL7CVD](#)

Field Day Results

Field day results were reviewed. We came in second in 2-alpha. It was reported our club has been in the top 10 for 2-alpha for the past 26 years.

Ham Con

We need ideas for Ham Con. Mike Reys, young hams. 630 meters? Need topics. Video? Adam indicated videos are possible. 100th anniversary, ARRL, Joe Taylor. How to set up a repeater. Ham Con will be Saturday, January 24th.

Miscellaneous

There will be a ham breakfast in late January - Paul will email Mitch. Date TBD.

Snacks

Paul [AA1SU](#) agreed to bring snacks for the January meeting. He requested an email reminder.

Concern was raised about storage for field day equipment. One storage location now in use will become unavailable. A storage rental might be considered. It may be possible to buy a trailer.

Norman [K1EEX](#) passed his Extra test. Congratulations. There were three hams who passed the extra test that night.

[Field Day will be June 23-24, 2018.]

Presentation

Movie - The World of Amateur Radio

This short documentary was produced in the 70's. It was grainy but that didn't take anything away from a pretty comprehensive description of amateur radio that is just as valid today as it was 50 years ago. It featured several famous people involved in amateur radio. Dick VanDyke was a narrator. Barry Goldwater and King Hussein of Jordan were both filmed as operators. Clips were from all over the world. The movie showed every aspect of amateur radio including use by a speech therapist, international communications via satellite, field day, disaster communication, education, international good will, etc.

A few clips from last year's Field Day were also shown.

CONGRATULATIONS!

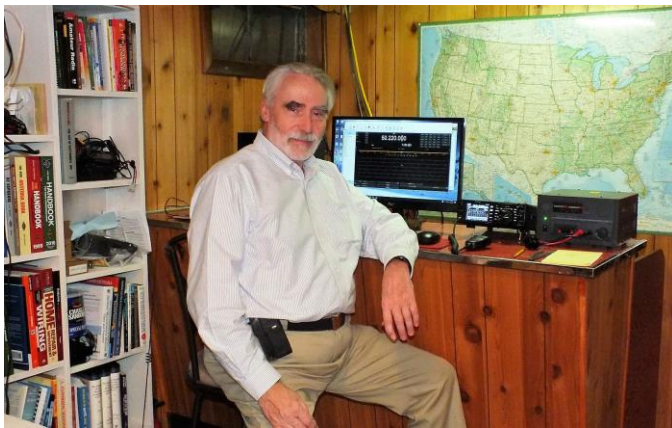
Congratulations to the following new licensees and upgrades:

- **AC1DR** – Steven Platt (Warren) - EXTRA
- **AC1DT** – Benjamin Winstead (S. Burlington) - EXTRA
- **K1EEX** – Normand Nadea (S. Burlington) - EXTRA
- **KC1HOP** – Samuel Moody (Essex Jct.) - GENERAL
- **KC1HOQ** – Joseph D’Arpa (Burlington) - GENERAL
- **KC1HOR** – Kyle Wener (Williston) - TECHNICIAN
- **KC1IOS** – James Armbruster (Quechee) TECHNICIAN
- **KC1IQI** – John Lavoie (St. Albans) – GENERAL
- **KC1IQJ** – Jonathan Rhodes (Fairfax) – TECHNICIAN
- **KC1IQH** – Geoffrey Spence (St. Johnsbury)- GENERAL

WL7CVD BIOGRAPHY

Duane – WL7CVD

As the new secretary and still somewhat of a newcomer to Vermont and RANV, I thought I should share a little about myself. I got my novice license in 1999 in Alaska where I lived for 20 years. I renewed as a novice and had plans to continue renewing until I was the world’s last novice, but that meant building back up to five words per minute. I came to Vermont in 2012, joined RANV, and tested for the technician and general class licenses in March of 2014.



WL7CVD and his station

I worked for over 25 years as a technical writer in upstate New York and Alaska, including on the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. It was interesting work but at the end of the day most readers don’t read the manuals, and that line of work no longer satisfied me. I went to nursing school at the University of Alaska in Anchorage and now work as an RN at the University of Vermont Medical Center.

I became interested in radio in my early teens. My dad bought me a Hallicrafters S38C shortwave radio, and I still enjoy shortwave listening from time to time. Amateur radio has been on my to-do list for a long time. Though a long-time license holder, I must admit it is taking some time for me to be more involved in this hobby, which is one of many hobbies I enjoy. Now that I am semi-retired, I raised my hand at a recent RANV meeting when the former secretary, Kathy, informed us she was moving out of state.



WL7CVD’s tuner and antenna

My station consists of a Yaesu FT-991, a Yaesu power supply, and a Yaesu tuner. The antenna is a 53’ wire on telescoping kite poles about 31’ in the air and oriented at about 336 degrees true north.

FEATURED QSL CARD OF THE MONTH



Thanks Scott and Cesar!

Got a favorite QSL Card? Send us a picture, and we’ll feature it one of the upcoming newsletters.

NOVEMBER ELECTION RESULTS

Congratulations and good luck to our newly elected officers!

Secretary – Duane **WL7CVD**
Treasurer – Adam **KB1LHB**
President – Bob **KB1FRW**

YAHOO GROUPS ISSUES – POTENTIAL SWITCH

Dave KCIAPK

Recently, a variety of our members have expressed concerns about ongoing and intermittent issues with posting items of interest to the Yahoo Groups reflector. In response, the club is considering switching to “groups.io” as a replacement to the Yahoo reflector. The “pros” include improved reliability, however the “cons” include the potential to lose photos during the transfer and a need to get users familiar to the new platform. We welcome feedback about the potential change. Please share your thoughts via the current Yahoo reflector or at the upcoming club meeting.

N1JEZ 78 GHZ CONTACTS IN NOV 16 ARRL LETTER

Dave KCIAPK

Microwavers Report Successful US-Canada Contacts on 78 GHz

Microwave enthusiast Mike Seguin, N1JEZ, has reported several successful 78 GHz contacts between the US and Canada on November 9. “We believe these contacts may be the first WVE on 78 GHz,” Seguin said in a post to several VHF/UHF/microwave-oriented reflectors.



“We hope to extend distances before winter sets in here in the northeast and mountaintop access is limited.” On the Canadian side were Rene Barbeau, VE2UG, and Ray Perrin, VE3FN. On the US side were Henry Ingwersen, KT1J, and Seguin. The first contacts were between FN35ja and FN34jx – a distance of 5 kilometers (3.1 miles), “primarily to test systems,” Seguin said.

N1JEZ’s article in the Nov. 16 ARRL Newsletter

Congrats to Mike **N1JEZ** on his article in the November 16th ARRL Letter to all members. In the article, Mike highlights successful efforts to make what appears to be the first of several 78 GHz contacts between Canada and the U.S.

160, 10, 6, AND 2 METER NETS

Dave KCIAPK

CVARC invited RANV and other ARO to join in a variety of nets with participation from around VT. The CVARC 160 meter net meets on Monday evenings at 8 pm on 1966 KHz. Cathy **NSWVR** notes, “160 meters is one of the most reliable regional band at this point in the solar cycle, especially in winter when noise is low”.

In recent weeks, participants have experimented with making contacts at the other end of the dial on 10 meters and 6 meters on Sunday evenings at 8:30. Even with a simple dipole 25 feet off the ground, I personally had a lot of fun working folks in Cabot, Newark, Barre, Burlington, Plainfield, Morrisville, as well as **W1FP** two blocks away!

The upcoming December 10th net will continue to move up the dial to 2 meters SSB. Specific frequencies to be announced later this week on the RANV reflector.

MIKE N1JEZ REPORTS SUCCESSFUL 630M TXN

Dave KCIAPK

Congratulations to Mike **N1JEZ** for his first successful 630 meter WSPR transmission picked up by N2BJW.

Are you experimenting with 630 meters? Tell us about it!

TROUBLESHOOTING TX ISSUE ON ELECRAFT K3S

Brian WIIR

I had an interesting experience with my Elecraft K3S. It started out as a 10 Watt kit that I assembled, easy and quick. I added the 100 Watt module in Jan 2017. Below the 12W power setting, the 100W module is bypassed completely with a relay.

I used 100W on the local 160m net a few times, but not much else until recently when I found that I lost both TX and RX whenever I tried to use >12W.

Elecraft did a redesign of the 100W module for the ‘S’ version of the K3, incorporating modern MOSFET transistors. There is no schematic of the new KPA3A amp available yet, but it is roughly similar to the old unit, which has a schematic, and in fact can be used in the K3S.

I eventually traced the problem to a surface mount power resistor in the amp's electronic T/R switch. The resistor lifted off the board when I tried to measure its value! It appears that it, and two other identical resistors in the T/R switch, are too long for the solder pads provided, so the soldering is very marginal.

I did an ugly repair and it works fine now, but I will be sending the amp in for a proper rework under warranty, perhaps with wire jumpers added for reliability. Otherwise it is a great radio. I love the built-in sound card and USB interface for rig control and digital modes plus the ability to work 630m with just an external power amp.

EDITOR NOTES

Dave KCIAPK

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

This is your club newsletter. Feel free to submit articles! Items of interest can be short, long, technical, anecdotal, etc. Share your experiences and stories!

NEWS & VIEWS VIA YOUR INBOX

Did you know that 24 of our members have signed up for electronic delivery of the newsletter?

To enroll, just send me an email at davidblin@aol.com. You’ll get fast delivery, the club saves a dollar each month, AND the pictures look GREAT in color!



NEWS & VIEWS

INSIDE

- HOLIDAY PARTY DEC 9th Noon - 4 pm
- FIELD DAY RESULTS
- SWEEPSTAKES POWER OUTAGE
- FEATURED PLATE OF THE MONTH
- SECRETARY'S MINUTES
- CONGRATS – NEW & UPGRADES
- WL7CVD BIOGRAPHY
- FEATURED QSL CARD OF THE MONTH
- NOVEMBER ELECTION RESULTS
- YAHOO GROUP USER ISSUES
- N1JEZ IN 11/16 ARRL LETTER
- 160, 10, 6, AND 2 M NETS
- N1JEZ SUCCESSFUL 630 M TXN
- TROUBLESHOOTING K3S
- EDITOR NOTES

NEXT MEETING RANV HOLIDAY PARTY AT W1SJ

Saturday • December 9th • Noon to 4 pm

W1SJ QTH in Essex, VT

(Bring a dish and enjoy good company)

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