



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

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An ARRL Special Service Club

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NEXT MEETING – PART 97 RULES & REGULATIONS – FEBRUARY 13TH 7 PM

How well do you know your Part 97 Rules & Regulations? We bet there are a lot of things you DON'T know. This month, we present a tag team presentation on... da RULES! Duane **WL7CVD** will start us off with an overview of the rules and what they really mean. This will be followed by Mitch **W1SJ** who will enlighten us with his quest "Worked All Rules" (WAR). In reality, it is more like, "broke all rules", but it will serve to emphasize what is acceptable and what is not. Be sure to join us for an informative and fun evening!

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HAM-CON?

Mitch W1SJ

The ARRL Vermont State Convention, known as HAM-CON, will take place Saturday, February 24th, 8 AM until 1 PM at the Holiday Inn Convention Center in South Burlington.

We have another great show planned for you! Joining us this year is ARRL Lab Director Ed Hare **W1RFL**. He will do a presentation on the ARRL Lab, in particular, sharing some of the inside stories that you won't find out anywhere else. Ed will provide a lot of information on this, and he is always very funny and entertaining. He follows this up with a forum on Antenna and Propagation Modeling. Want to know what antennas will work best for what propagation conditions? Ed has the software to give us the answers and to decide whether we go with the dipole or the vertical. Bring all your hard antenna questions!

Speaking of antennas, they don't work very well if you cannot put them up. Trevor Lewis **KD1YT**, our ARRL Volunteer Council, will talk about how to wade through the myriad assortment of rules and regulations to make your dream antenna a reality.

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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/>

Online Dues Payment:
www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html

Not only do you have to keep the legal people happy, but different types of antennas require the use of a good balun. John Grow **VE2EQL** will talk all about the good, the bad and the ugly of baluns. You'll learn where to use 'em, how to pick 'em and even how to build 'em!

It seems like everyone is talking about the new digital mode FT8 these days. For those who want to learn about it, or learn more tricks of the trade, Mitch **W1SJ** will present a forum on how to use FT8 for both beginners and experienced operators so that they are better equipped to pick up those much sought after states and countries.

On the more serious side, hurricane Maria took a direct hit on the island of Dominica this fall and virtually destroyed everything. But they had someone to help them recover. Brian Machesney **K1LI/J75Y** goes there each year to operate and enjoy the island life. His forum will talk about how he has trained operators and helped put in some of the radio equipment which was used to relay information when the phones all went down. He and his wife then raised money to help rebuild the ham radio infrastructure on Dominica.

We have a very special treat for everyone. Jeff Briggs **K1ZM/VY2ZM** will take some time off in the middle of the CQ 160 Meter contest to join us from his shack in PEI to do a talk on Marconi's 1901 Transatlantic Test. There has been a lot of speculation over the years that this really did NOT happen. However, Jeff will share some very interesting data in his presentation on what he hears from his station, which sheds new light on this hot topic. And just seeing some pictures of his super-station **VY2RM** is worth the price of admission.

Finally, New England Division Director Tom Frenaye **K1KI** will present the ARRL Forum. It's been a rather strange and interesting trip in Newington over the last few months and Tom and Vice Director Mike Raisbeck **K1TWF** are the perfect people to explain what is happening now and what the future looks like for amateur radio.

Add to all this, the vendor room, demonstrations, the tech table, **W1V**, VE Session and hundreds of hams from the North County and you have one hell of a Ham Convention. How can you not attend? Don't answer that – just be there!

VERMONT QSO PARTY 2018

Mitch W1SJ

Going into the 2018 Vermont QSO Party, things weren't looking all that great. We lost a few operators from previous years, no one showed any interest in operating at **WINVT** and the conditions leading up to the event were horrible. It looked to be a long weekend.

But contesting is just like any other sporting event. Predictions are fine, but you still have to play the game until the final out or until the clock runs out to determine the result.

The horrible conditions segued into great conditions and I ended up with 2456 QSO's - just shy of the record set in 2014 (when the ARRL Centennial was going on). To be sure, 15 meters was mostly dead and DX was lackluster on 20 meters, but smart operating kept the multipliers coming in. What was totally unexpected was intense long term short-skip openings on 20 meters, allowing many contacts to be made in from places like NY, PA, MD, DE, VA over paths around 400 miles. The normal skip zone on 20 meters is typically 600 miles, so the result was that this added tons of QSO's which wouldn't have been made normally. And 40 meters had short skip (and long skip) all day and well into the evening. I worked people in New England at the same time I was working guys in CO and KS – during the day on 40 meters! And when the pileups subsided after 11 PM, I was able to dabble with RTTY and FT8 to keep the QSO's coming.

One of things I really enjoy about the Vermont QSO Party is running into guys who I haven't spoken with in years. Despite the bad rap that testers are all about hello-goodbye contacts, I will stop and chat for a few minutes with other guys on occasion. Saturday evening I worked Lou **W3LPR** who is in North Carolina. Lou was one of our CW operators at Field Day in the late 80's when the group was called the Silicon Junction Radio Club and used the call sign **K1VT**. Sunday afternoon, I ran into Lanny **K1LEC**, who is also in North Carolina. Lanny used to live in Springfield, Vermont and owned Idlenot Dairy with his brother. He was a regular at many of the hamfests here.

One of the complicated (and probably fun) things about this contest weekend is all the various contests with their different rules and different exchanges. The better operators know of all these details to help generate the maximum of number of QSO's. The Minnesota QSO Party requires the operator name and county. Not too bad, except that many of their counties are French or Indian names and are totally unpronounceable by any of us! The British Columbia QSO Party doesn't use counties – they don't have those there. Instead they use the BC Federal Election Districts. But many of the BC hams do not know their district! OK, so I ask, "Where do you vote?" They then reply they don't vote and my head starts to spin. We also share time with the Mexican RTTY Contest, which should help put many digital contacts in the log. But the problem is that their report is just signal report and serial number. No location is sent, which means I have to ask for it and then they get confused as to why I am asking that.

But the strangest contest to deal with is the CW Sprint on Saturday night. Not only do they require name and number, but their rules compel you to QSY after you make a contact from CQing. So, I went quite high up in the CW band on 40 meters to hopefully avoid this issue. Sure enough someone from the Sprint answers me and asks for my name and number. I gave CHI for my name – easy enough since I was already sending that as the abbreviation for Chittenden County. Then they would reply CHI?? And I respond yes. Hey, why not? There are all sorts of weird names used in the Sprint. So after this rather long exchange, the guy takes my frequency anyway, which didn't make me happy. But the

funny part is that he cannot get an answer to his CQ because we are way high in the band, away from the rest of the Sprint activity. You gotta love it!

Without guest operators, it was a long 28 hour contest, but I was doing what I love to do. I was very disappointed that no one came out to operate and increase their operating skills. We make amateur radio strong by being active. If we are not active, then we are not helping the hobby. That aside, I did manage to work **Z60A** in Kosovo, so it wasn't a total loss!

FEATURED PLATE OF THE MONTH



No road salt on this plate - Thanks Brian!

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

WB2JIX SENDS GREETINGS FROM FLORIDA

DAVE KC1APK

I was very pleased to hear from Brian **WB2JIX**! He recently wrote that...

"We are very happy here at Jacksonville Beach. It's frustrating to have a nice pool and have to wait to use it. We moved in here on my birthday in November, and at that time we had some nice weather. The water made it up to 64 degrees and I decided I had to jump in. It's 54 now and I'm told that the folks from the North, consider April to be warm enough to start using it.

We have several good radio clubs in the area and I was voted VP of the Beaches ARC. They need some help. Dues were at \$5 for the entire club life. We're at \$20 now and I'm taking charge of some basic "marketing" to find new members.

I'm headed to Orlando Hamcation this year for the first time and looking forward to it.

Tell people I say hello and someday we'll get on the air."

SECRETARY'S MINUTES

Duane WL7CVD

Bob **KB1FRW** called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. There were 19 members and guests in attendance.

Ham Con - February 24th - We need volunteers to staff the RANV table, ticket sales, door monitors. Mike will do tech analysis. Email Mitch W1SJ at w1sj@arrl.net to let him know if you are willing to volunteer. There will be a for-sale table to be staffed by one person and a helper. No big, heavy items. Jeff Bonn **N1YD** volunteered to help with locating door prizes. Assistance with antenna set-up and tear-down will be appreciated.

A review of upcoming events included the Ham Breakfast - January 27th and the VT QSO Party on February 2nd through 4th. Mitch offered up his station and invited volunteers to help with this contest.

Jim Goodwin **KB1LOT** volunteered to bring snacks to the February meeting.

Program: Bob **KB1FRW** gave a presentation on how to build tennis ball launchers for putting wire antennas into trees. Tennis ball launchers are safer and more accurate than bow-and-arrow systems, sling-shots, or stones tied on a string. The presentation included a display of several launchers and parts to make them, as well as a PowerPoint talk. Be sure to use schedule 40 PVC pipe.

K1ZK'S RECAP OF A GREAT 2017

Zach K1ZK

It was another busy and fun year at **K1ZK** & **W1JXN**. Captured 2nd place in the 2017 VTQP. Did some casual operating from Rutland, VT throughout the year, and also experimented with FT8. The April *QST* included an article on the 2015 4U70UN activation, where I was one of the operators from VT, together with **KT1J** and **N1JEZ**. I wrote two articles for *QST* reviewing LNR Precision QRP transceivers. The June and September VHF contests at **WE1P** in FN22 were a blast, as was my activation of Mt. Equinox for the CQWW VHF contest in July. Helped **N1SZO** install a new 2m beam (he's VERY loud on 2m now). Several fun SOTA, IOTA, and VT state park activations, including activation of Vermont's oldest state park (Mt. Philo) and Vermont's newest state park (Taconic Mountains Ramble). Attended the ACARA picnic in Addison, VT. Just finished some casual operating in the Stew Perry contest on 160m, and looking forward to a nice casual conversation for Straight Key Night. My RF safety analysis is complete, so I'm also looking forward to going QRO with my new KPA500 amp in 2018. The ARRL's international grid chase 2018 operating event doesn't seem as exciting to me as NPOTA was, but I expect to be on the air for contests and other events anyway, so we'll see what happens.

Happy New Year, everyone!



Great looking rigs and lots of antennas in the parking lot of JP's Deli during the Ham Breakfast – Thanks Tim **KB1THX**!

ANNUAL HAM BREAKFAST – GREAT COMPANY & GREAT FOOD

Dave **KC1APK**

Wow! It wasn't hard to find the annual Ham Breakfast at JP's Deli on River Road in Essex on January 27th. All you had to do was to look for all the cars and trucks with extra antennas!

Although attendance was a little bit less than last year, the turnout was still strong with 24 people attending as we took over the back half of the room. Attendees included Mitch **W1SJ**, Dave **KC1APK**, Mike **N1FBZ**, Moe **N1MHG**, All the Bobs... **KB1WXM**... **W4YFJ**... **KB1FRW**, Tim **KB1THX**, Jim **KE1AZ**, Alan **KB1MDC** and his brother Bruce, Tony **WA2LRE**, Horace **N1HC**, Chris **KC1DTH**, Brian **W1IR**, Carl **AB1DD**, John **VE2EQL** and Ella & Emily, Trevor **KD1YT** and Katherine, Ross **K1ZDR** and Alix, and Cathy **KB1ZVH**

After breakfast, folks introduced themselves and announced what they'd done for Ham Radio this past year. Some weren't very active but did manage to attend the breakfast – great to see you, while others were very active. Accomplishments included new antennas, rebuilt rigs, VT Parks on the Air, Activation of City Hall Park in Burlington, Summits On The Air, new licensees, and a couple of upgrades! Further discussion included friends who have passed away this year, friends that moved, and upcoming events – Don't forget to attend Ham-Con... A special thank you to the great staff at JP's Deli and we hope to see YOU there next year!!!



CONGRATULATIONS - New Licensees and Upgrades

KC1IWA	Nicholas Stapanowich (Brookfield)	GENERAL
KC1IWB	Kevin Cafferky (S. Burlington)	TECHNICIAN
KC1IWC	Guy Magnano (Bristol)	GENERAL
KC1IWD	Robert Litch (New Haven)	GENERAL
KC1IVZ	Alfred Thomas (S. Burlington)	TECHNICIAN
KC1IXH	Kurt Eckert (St. Albans)	TECHNICIAN
KB1RWB	Nick Flora (Swanton)	EXTRA
N1BCD	Carl Brandon (Randolph)	EXTRA

ANOTHER FEATURED PLATE FOR THIS MONTH



No road salt on this plate either – Thank you Kathi!

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

GREETING FROM NORTH CAROLINA!

Kathi KIWAL

Aunt Betty **KB1WDN** and I joined the local Franklin Amateur Radio Club. They are not as active as RANV and get together weekly at various restaurants to eat. I guess you could say we have “Eatings” instead of meetings. Some of the guys came over and helped put up my antenna and scouted possible locations for a tower. FARC does radio related things throughout the year, but for real “meetings” a club in the next county over is pretty good.

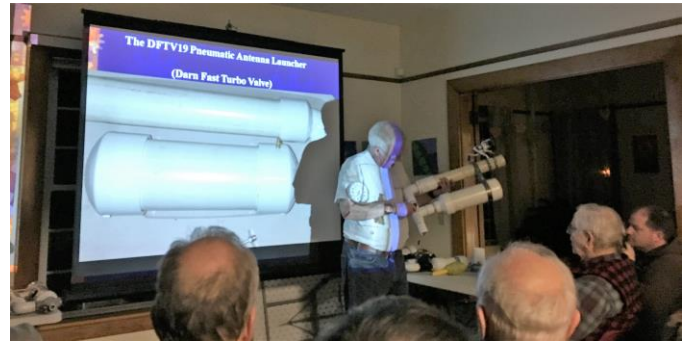
Aunt Betty and I are still RANV members. Folks are free to contact me. I am doing a bit more on amateur HF instead of only MARS and my new dipole can handle 160 meters!

73 to all Kathi KIWAL - Franklin, NC 28734
kwalbridge@morrisbb.net or k1wal@arrl.net

REMEMBER - RANV GROUP HAS A NEW HOME

Here are the important addresses you need. Feel free to ask me directly if you have any questions, AB1DD@ARRL.NET.

Post: RANV@groups.io
Subscribe: RANV+subscribe@groups.io
Unsubscribe: RANV+unsubscribe@groups.io
Group Owner: RANV+owner@groups.io



Bob KB1FRW shows off the Darn Fast Turbo Valve on his Tennis Ball Antenna Launcher during the January Presentation – Thank you Bob!

EDITOR NOTES

Dave KC1APK

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 25 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!

A very special THANK YOU to Bob Brown W4YFJ for his dedication and support in preparing each month's newsletter for mailing. This involves hours of folding, labeling, and affixing postage prior to mailing – THANK YOU BOB!!!!



NEWS&VIEWS

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NEXT MEETING

Part 97 Rules & Regulations – What to do & What Not to do

Tuesday • February 13th • 7 pm

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