



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

The Official Journal of the Radio Amateurs of Northern Vermont

December • 2018

An ARRL Special Service Club

Vol. 28 No. 12

NEXT MEETING -- HOLIDAY PARTY December 8th

The club holiday party will be on Saturday, December 8th at noon at the home of Mitch W1SJ. Please contact him to let him know whether you do or do not plan to attend (w1sj@comcast.net).

There will be no meeting on Tuesday, December 11th.

DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

For RANV to remain strong as an organization, we still need dues support from members to help pay for fixed expenses, like insurance and meeting location, and discretionary expenses, like activities and food.

The dues are \$20 regular / \$25 family.

We also need to grow new members! Be sure to tell your ham friends about RANV and encourage them to join.

For best results, please renew on-line at:

<http://www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html> and follow the directions listed there.

You can also still pay by check to the club address at PO Box 9392, South Burlington, VT 05403-9392.

CONTACTS

Bob **KB1FRW**, President
mcamp@gmavt.net
John **KC1DIJ**, VP/Treasurer
john@sheppard.net
Duane **WL7CVD** Secretary
dsalaskasep@ak.net
Dave **KC1APK**, Editor
davidblinvt@gmail.com

Newsletter submissions to davidblinvt@gmail.com

US Mail: PO Box 9392
South Burlington, VT 05407

Web: www.RANV.org

Reflector: RANV@groups.io

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

WE DID IT! - RANV WINS FIELD DAY!!!

Mitch WISJ

We received some really fun and exciting news a couple of weeks ago. RANV, **WINVT** had the highest score nationally in 2A, topping 281 other groups in our class, with a margin of 804 points above the second place finisher.

This was quite unexpected. Although the 14,732 points was the second highest point total we have amassed over the years, there is a lot of serious competition in 2A and we often find ourselves in the runner-up position, even when we break 14 kilopoints. It has been a somewhat long dry spell with the last win in 2014.



| 2A | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|---|----|--------|-----|
| Radio Amateurs of Northern VT | | | | | |
| W1NVT (+W1PU) | 4,615 | 2 | 24 | 14,732 | VT |
| Newport Co. RC Sakonnet 49ers | | | | | |
| W1LY (+W1SYE) | 3,817 | 2 | 76 | 13,928 | RI |
| Kansas City Contest Club | | | | | |
| KS0MO (+KC0MO) | 2,980 | 2 | 11 | 12,480 | KS |
| Tampa ARC | | | | | |
| N4TP | 3,762 | 2 | 35 | 11,972 | WCF |
| Riner FD Grp | | | | | |
| N9NB (+KN4FEB) | 3,149 | 2 | 7 | 10,998 | VA |
| Northern OH DXA | | | | | |
| W8DXA | 2,546 | 2 | 20 | 9,106 | OH |

www.arrl.org **December 2018 73**

How well did we do? RANV is a QSO-making machine and the results bear that out. We had the third highest QSO total of 4615 QSO's out of the 2903 entries, topped only by a group in 4A and 15A. We had the seventh highest point total, and all of those guys were running more stations than we were. And in a category invented by someone who analyzes Field Day scores, in the "QSO's per transmitter category" (Q/Tx), we win hands down with 2307. The highest scorer in Field Day had 10472 QSO's but with 15 transmitters, only rang up 698 Q/Tx. No one makes as efficient use of their Field Day stations as we do!

Why did this all happen? There are two reasons. We were (and always are) competitive. Actually, I thought our score was a bit lackluster, given the conditions. But that is a sense, and never a hard fact. More importantly, we didn't make any mistakes or engaged in any snafus which would have resulted in QSO loss. But even more important was that this was an East Coast year! Normally, stations in the West and Midwest have us for lunch in a stateside contest. They can feast on the thousands hams in the Northeast on 20 meters, who we normally cannot even hear. However, we had a ton of short skip openings on 20 meters for a few hours at the beginning of Field Day. I recall working every one of the 10 call sign districts and all had equal signal strengths. With all these new found stations to work, we ran up dizzying QSO totals for the first few hours. In addition, the guys out west did NOT have the big openings on 10 and 15 meters that we usually do not get. The result was that many Northeast stations were higher in the score totals than usual. Hey, I'll take it!

As you are reading this, I hear that typical whining noise which sounds something like this: "But Field Day is not a contest..." Bah humbug to those folks. Life is a contest. Part of living is competing. As long as it is done cleanly, and no one gets hurt and folks have a choice on what they want to do, it is good. The point totals are a measurement. And, for this year, that measurement says that in our category, we are best at setting up and operating an emergency powered station in the field. We excel at what we do! So, everyone involved with Field Day, take a moment to celebrate the fruits of our hard work

SWEEPSTAKES – WHERE WAS VERMONT?

Mitch WISJ

If you managed to work Vermont in the 2018 Sweepstakes phone, it was likely me! Otherwise, Vermont stations were very rare. Paul **AA1SU** was on for an hour or so on 80 meters and Pete **KC1SS** on 40 meters for a while. Otherwise, I only worked 4 other Vermont stations, and all had very low numbers. I worked almost as many stations in Alaska.

This was a tough Sweepstakes. With the Sunspot Number a big fat ZERO, conditions were challenging to say the least. And given that long exchange, it is tough. Many stations were in the noise and one had to wait for the QSB to pop up to hear their report. Most of the contest was a grind. You had to work for your QSO's. To be honest, it was a real PIA at times. But it is the kind of experience that builds character (I know... I'm already a character...) It also puts hair on your chest and separates the men from the boys, or the super ops from the newbies.

So, I'm carefully watching the cluster for openings (I operate in the assisted category) and what do I see?
FT8.....FT8.....FT8.....FT8!

Enough with FT8 already! You really don't need to spot stations, as anyone on the FT8 frequency will see everyone else working the DX. FT8 does not build character. What skill is there in clicking a mouse? True, this mode is useful when conditions are totally dead (like on the VHF bands) or when few people are around. But here is one of the major contests, with thousands of operators, and folks resort to clicking their mice instead of yelling into a microphone!

But the FT8 gang is not really the problem. At least they are doing something! Of 2200 hams in Vermont, 10 operated the SS, 10 were on FT8 and 2180 never bothered to turn a radio on at all. It is a sad fact that I get more phone calls from people looking to unload equipment than calls from people looking to become hams.

Why is amateur radio not growing? Because we are not out there doing it! Trust me, when you are playing radio (such as during the park activations) and people come over, they get excited from your excitement. But if your only connection to ham radio is your call sign license plate, then that is sad.

Get on and get active!



John KB1QBI and RANV Members at the NWS
Photo Courtesy of Bob K1BIF

SECRETARY MINUTES – NOVEMBER MEETING A VISIT TO THE NATIONAL WX SERVICE AT BTV Duane WL7CVD

Regular Meeting – prior to NWS Tour

The sign-in sheet showed 17 in attendance.
 The meeting took place at the Burlington International Airport with the club president, Bob Allen (**KB1FRW**), calling the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Election of Club Officers

A total of 23 ballots were returned by mail or in person (about 26% of 89 current members). Results were as follows:

- President: Bob Allen **KB1FRW** (23 votes)
- Vice President / Treasurer: John Sheppard **KC1DLJ** (13 write-in votes)
- Treasurer: Duane Sherwood **WL7CVD** (23 votes)

Bob expressed the club's appreciation for Adam Lamont **KB1LHB** for serving as Vice President / Treasurer.

Presentation

John Goff **KB1QBI** of the National Weather Service gave a talk on their services at their facilities at the Burlington International Airport. Working under the Department of Commerce, the weather service's primary mission is to promote public safety. They are not geared toward serving business interests. John described how the weather service is organized and where their various offices are located.

He also talked about the various weather instruments at the airport and the satellites that also provide information. Data is brought in from all over the country and fed into super computers. He pointed out that computer modeling is always supplemented by the personal experience of the forecasters.

He went over some of the resources available to the public via www.weather.gov. They can also receive information via telephone from volunteer reporters who have been given a modicum of training. The service also has a set of radios

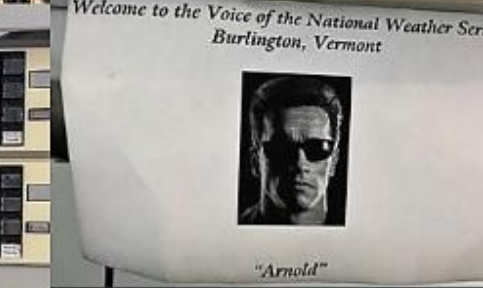
including HF, VHF, and UHF operating in the HAM bands. Anyone who would like more information on how to be involved as a weather reporter can contact John by email (john.goff@noaa.gov).



David KC1APK Examines the WX1BTV Station
Photo Courtesy of Duane WL7CVD



WX1BTV Station – *Photo courtesy KC1APK*



2018 VT PARKS ON THE AIR CONCLUDES

Congratulations to the TEAM for 10 successful activations in 2018. The online version of this newsletter includes links to videos of each activation:

| | |
|----------|-------------------------------------|
| 5/6/18 | Knight Point SP |
| 6/2/18 | Lake Carmi SP |
| 7/27/18 | Mt. Philo SP |
| 8/5/18 | Alburg Dunes SP |
| 8/11/18 | Kill Kare SP |
| 9/1/18 | D.A.R. State Park |
| 9/23/18 | Waterbury Center SP |
| 10/7/18 | Brighton SP |
| 10/13/18 | Mt. Ascutney SP |
| 10/17/18 | Little River SP |

CONGRATULATIONS - New Licensees and Upgrades

KC1KMZ Adam Companion (So. Burlington) TECHNICIAN
N1JYU Russ Brown (Swanton) GENERAL

FEATURED PLATE



THANKS Bob!!!



471 pf black dot mystery solved!

Photo courtesy of Bob KB1FRW

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

30 DAY RANV REFLECTOR HIGHLIGHTS

- Brian WB2JIX is still working to get the Floridians out of AC for FD
- FD results are posted – WINVT placed 1st in 2A
- Excellent conditions on 160 meters
- A change in ARRL NE Director
- Lots of discussion about testing Zener Diodes
- Please RSVP for the Holiday Party
- Don't forget to upgrade WSJT-X!
- Black dot capacitor mystery solved - it's the ground side or outer jacket – great video here

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BnR_DLd1PDI

- K2MME moved back East



NEWS&VIEWS

INSIDE

- NEXT MEETING – Holiday Party
- DON'T FORGET TO RENEW
- RANV 1ST PLACE FD 2A
- SWEEPSTAKES 2018 SUMMARY
- NEW OFFICERS
- NWS TOUR AT BTV
- 2018 VPOTA CONCLUDES
- NEW LICENSEES & UPGRADES
- FEATURED PLATE
- 30 DAY REFLECTOR HIGHLIGHTS
- BLACK DOT CAPACITOR MYSTERY
- RANV LISTSERVER

NEXT MEETING

Holiday Party

Saturday • December 8TH • Noon
W1SJ QTH

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