



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

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An ARRL Special Service Club

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NEXT MEETING APRIL 9th - Generator Maker Space *Duane WL7CVD*

Our next meeting will be held at the Generator Maker Space located at 40 Sears Lane, in Burlington.

Need a custom brace for your antenna? Looking to borrow an oscilloscope? Want to make a new bench for your equipment? Looking for a unique project box? The Generator Maker Space is a non-profit community that offers a full spectrum of tools and trainings for making almost anything. This includes a metal shop, wood shop, electronics lab, a vinyl cutter, a laser cutter, 3-D printers, and other equipment. All of these items can be used with a monthly membership after a required training session. (Heck, I even took a sewing class.)

The metal shop includes a mig welder, a tig welder, an oxyacetylene setup, a computer-controlled plasma cutter, and machine tools. The wood shop has radial arm saw, table saw, band saws, router, a lathe, and a computer-controlled cutting system. The electronics shop includes a wide variety of test equipment, parts for testing, soldering stations, and more.



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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

I made myself a custom-designed tool caddy which now holds all my tools, and the new-found convenience in my basement shop is truly amazing. Let me know if you would like a copy of the plans.

RANV QSO PARTY – CALLING ALL LOCALS

Mitch W1SJ

This is an announcement of an on-the-air operating event sponsored by RANV, and is open to all hams in Vermont and adjacent communities in adjoining states.

Bring life back to the FM repeater frequencies! Participate in the RANV QSO Party!

The RANV QSO Party is a fun event to promote FM and DMR activity on the 2 meter and 70 centimeter bands in Vermont. Anyone in Vermont or in the surrounding communities around Vermont (up to 10 airline miles from the Vermont border) can participate.

The event runs for an entire week, starting midnight April 1st (Sunday night/Monday morning) and running 168 hours until the next Sunday night. Operate for as long as you care to.

Stations should indicate their presence by just giving their call sign (i.e. "W1SJ listening"). Don't call CQ on a repeater! When someone answers, send your name and county. You can then continue to talk, or else, move on to find other stations to contact.

There are several ways to re-work the same station! You can change frequencies to work the same station on other repeaters or on simplex. There is a limitation on this, though. Repeater networks count as one repeater. So if you use the linked Central Vermont repeaters or the linked NFMRA repeaters, you cannot claim QSO's for the various inputs. Likewise, any DMR contacts count as one repeater, no matter what node or talk group you use. You can use IRLP or Echolink to link repeaters within Vermont to make more contacts, as long as this is allowed by the local systems. If you are not sure whether a repeater is a repeater or not, just make the contact and we'll figure it out for you.

You can also repeat a QSO with the same station if you sign off for at least 30 minutes.

So if you are in QSO in the mobile and reach your destination and sign off, and then come back on and hook up with the same station, you can count that QSO again. You can do this a maximum of 3 times a day, each day. So you could possibly set up a sked with a buddy to QSO 3 times a day for 7 days, if that is what you wish to do. But, it's really more fun if you talk to others! You cannot use off-air means to set up schedules during the event - this includes phone, texting, E-mail, Internet, cluster, etc. You can make arrangements before the event starts on April 1st.

It is recommended that you have some type of audio recording device in your mobile for collecting QSO data, as opposed to trying to write things down. Avoid distracted driving.

Keep good records of your contacts (date, time, frequency, call, name, county, etc.) and compile these either into a Cabrillo log or a simple text file where the information is in forward chronological order. You do have to do this on the computer as I am not willing to pour through a bunch of hand written scraps of paper! Send your log to ranvvt@gmail.com within one week. The 3 highest scorers will receive certificates and suitable bragging rights. And we all win by building a bunch of activity in place of dead repeaters. Be sure to invite all those new guys who recently got licenses!

Full rules can be found at:

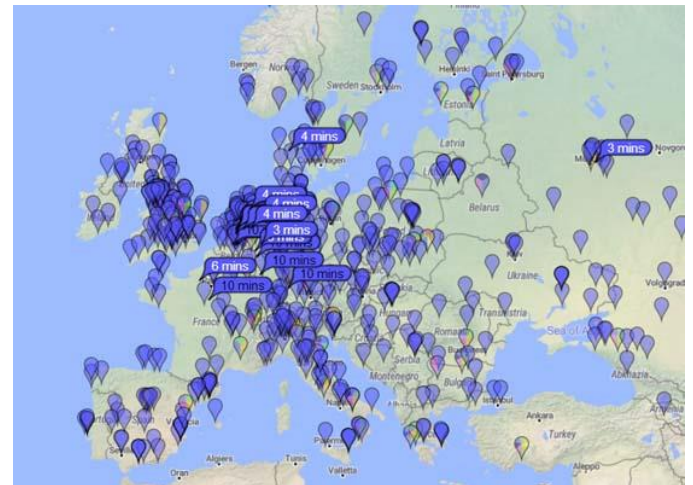
<http://www.ranv.org/ranvqso.doc>

Get on and have fun!

LEARNING PROPAGATION WITH PSKREPORTER

Mitch W1SJ

PSK Reporter is a system which collects reception reports from digital communications modes and presents the information to all who are interested. CW operators use the Reverse Beacon Network to check spots of CW stations received by listening stations worldwide. PSK Reporter takes this the extra step further by collecting this information for all the digital modes and providing usable maps to see just what is going on. I first learned about this program last year when I was doing an FT8 demonstration at Deerfield and not working much. Someone held up a phone showing that I was banging a signal all over the place!



40m 1951Z (3:51PM) I'm already lighting up a good piece of Central Europe

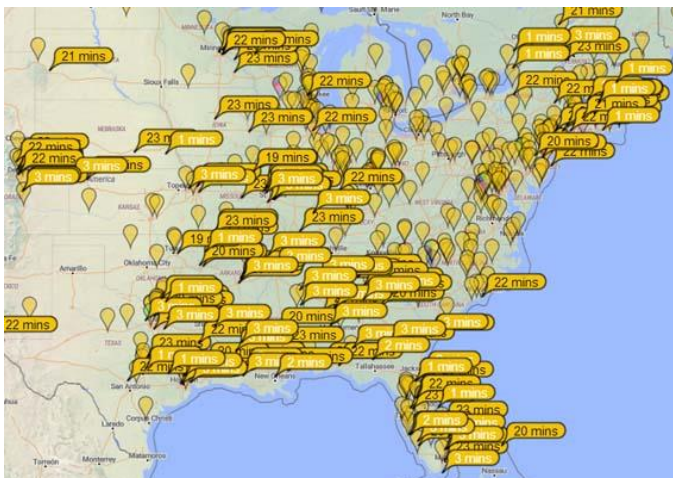
If you haven't noticed, HF propagation has been, well, quite poor lately. So poor in fact, that on many days, 17 meters hardly shows up, even on FT8. Fortunately, 20 meter is still plugging away, but the European openings are quite lame. I'm finding that 30 and 40 meters are the money bands in the afternoons if you are looking for DX.



20m 2001Z (4:01PM) Definitely a Mediterranean path over Europe

So while trying to chase DX and not finding any, I fired up PSK Reporter to see what it would do. After CQing for a few minutes on 20 meters, I told the program to look for my call sign to see where it was received. I could clearly see that I had a signal over the Central U.S. and much of southern Europe. What happened to Northern Europe? I dunno. Being we are just past equinox, latitude should not play as big a role as it usually does, but on this particular afternoon it did.

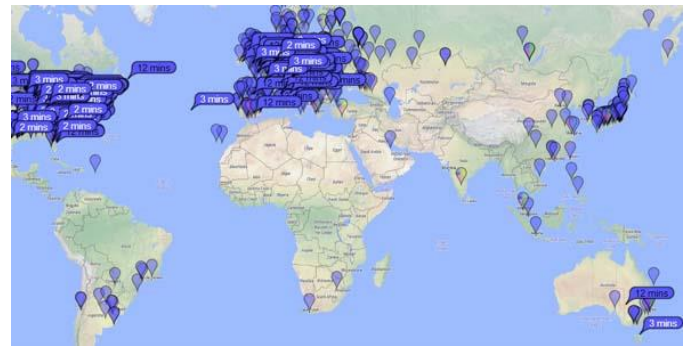
I jumped to 40 meters and although it was just before 4PM, I was being received all over Europe! Sometime around 5PM, I saw VK7AC calling CQ. That's Australia, specifically where the Tasmanian Devil comes from. I immediately worked him with a +00db signal. Yikes! Not bad for a 14,000 mile QSO via long path. And when I pulled up the map, I saw my signal spotted all over Europe, nothing in Asia and 2 signal reports out of Australia. The path quickly closed down and no further reports were seen.



20m 2000Z (4:00PM) The 20m skip zone out to 600 miles is clearly evident.

The stations in NE hear me because the beam is NE

Not only can you see where your signal is going, but you can spy on your neighbor hams and see who are hearing them. So, if few stations are hearing you and your antenna is a rusty wire hanging from a dead tree and your neighbor is being heard everywhere and has a big, high dipole, you know what you have to do! Get that antenna launcher and shoot wires high into the trees.



40m 2110Z (5:10PM) Plenty of NA and EU spots, nothing in JA, but VK?

The program is easy enough to use and you don't have to sign up for anything. Simply go to pskreporter.info/pskmap.html and at the top fill in the information you are interested in – like the monitored call sign, the band, the mode and the time period. For best results, stick to one band and mode at a time. The map will show all the monitor stations on line and if there is a balloon with a number like (1 min) in it, that means that they heard you! There are all sorts of other neat things to do, but I'll let you explore those on your own.

There is also a tabular site at pskreporter.de over in Germany. Here you can generate lists of stations hearing other stations along with signal reports. Great if you like to read lists (like I do) or you want to input all of this into a computer program and do some serious number crunching.

So, instead of complaining how bad the bands are, pull up the PSK Reporter maps and learn the mysteries of HF propagation. You'll be fascinated for hours on end. Maybe.

FROM THE SECRETARY

RANV Meeting Minutes March 12, 2019

Duane WL7CVD

The sign-in sheet showed 12 in attendance.

President Bob Allen (**KB1FRW**) called meeting to order at 19:08

Official Business

Election to Fill Vacancy

Bob announced that John Sheppard (**KC1DIJ**) tendered his resignation as Vice President / Treasurer and asked if anyone would be willing to fill the remainder of the term. Bob Henneberger (**K1BIF**) indicated he would be willing if nobody else came forward. He was nominated by John Clift (**N1LXI**) and seconded by Jeff Bonn (**N1YD**). Bob withdrew his nomination as another member has agreed to do this.

Bob Allen (**KB1FRW**) nominated Jim Hefferon (**KE1AZ**). Duane Sherwood (**WL7CVD**) seconded.

Carl Dow (**AB1DD**) moved that we suspend a written ballot. Seconded by Bob Henneberger (**K1BIF**). Passed by voice vote.

The vote to accept Jim Hefferon (**KE1AZ**) as the new Vice President and Treasure passed by voice vote with no opposing votes.

Meeting Notes

Treasurer Duties and Related Matters

Bob indicated that the job of Treasurer is not that difficult. We would like to have a report at each monthly meeting indicating income, expenses, and balance. This information would not be included in the newsletter as this is club business and the newsletter is publicly distributed. Once a year there should be an audit of the books by a club member. We also should develop an annual budget.

Bob also indicated he has done a thorough review of the books for the past several years to resolve concerns raised when the books were transferred from the previous treasurer.

Newsletter Editor Resigning

Our club newsletter editor, David Blin (**KC1APK**) wishes to hand this responsibility over to someone else. He explained that generating the newsletter is easy when content comes in. Our club is one of the few that maintains a monthly newsletter. Newsletter costs should be included in an annual budget.

Anyone interested in taking this over should contact Bob (**KB1FRW**).

Ham Con

Mitch Stern (**W1SJ**) reported that our annual Ham Con seemed to go well. People were happy. About 25 people helped. Carl Dow (**AB1DD**) did a great job on the door prizes. There was a comment that a lot of people took the free license exam but were not prepared for it. This added to the workload of the Volunteer Examiners proctoring the test.

Vermont City Marathon

Mitch Stern (**W1SJ**) attended the kickoff meeting for the Vermont City Marathon, which will take place on Sunday, May 25th. An email will come out soon with a survey to be completed by people willing to volunteer. Our role is to provide communications for course captains as well as backup communications for medical issues or other emergencies. It is a good opportunity to practice handling radio traffic on an emergency communications net.

<https://www.vermontcitymarathon.org/>

April Meeting

The April meeting will be a tour of the Generator Makerspace located on 40 Sears Lane in Burlington, just off of Pine Street. (See separate article for details.)

Other Upcoming Events

Field day, Essex Memorial Day parade, various Parks-On-The-Air activations, RANV QSO party. The first Parks on the Air activation will be in May at Knights Point State Park.

Concern was expressed that we get new hams but the repeater activity is very low, so they don't participate. Are there ways to generate predictable periods of activity? There is a RACES net on Sundays.

The idea of a separate tech night was proposed.

Snacks

No snacks next month. Duane Sherwood (**WL7CVD**) volunteered to get snacks for the May meeting.

Presentation

Bob Brown (**W4YFJ**) gave a presentation on the Vermont Enhanced 911 system. We were the first in the nation to offer statewide 911 services in 1998. There are six Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP). Westminster and Williston are the biggest. Williston covers 40% of the state. Westminster covers most of the southwest part of the state.

Any PSAP can answer any call in the state. All get the same training. The training for answering calls consists of 20 modules. The person answering the call immediately connects the caller to the appropriate agency via a touch-screen system. The system shows where the call is coming from. Map symbols can indicate whether the call comes from a business, school, factory, house, or apartment. The system can provide geographic coordinates.

In a one-stage system, the one who takes the call is also the dispatcher. In a two-stage system, the one who takes the call transfers the call to the appropriate agency and their dispatcher. For example, there is a poison control set up in Maine.

The receiver can also field calls regarding a water incident, which may involve the fire department, coast guard, marine division.

The 411 number is for information. The 211 number is for social services. The system is all on internet. There is backup power and duplicate fiber links. It has gone down 1 hour total in 20 years of service. There is no plan to bring in hams if they system goes down.

The presentation was well received with many questions and good discussion.

CONGRATULATIONS - New Licensees and Upgrades

KC1LDD Jonathan Landell (Richmond) **TECHNICIAN**
KC1LDC Ashleigh Kreider (Richmond) **TECHNICIAN**

EDITOR NOTES

Dave KCIAPK

It is important to remember that Amateur Radio is a hobby, and I've decided to spend more time with family while the kids are still around.

It has been an honor and privilege to serve as the RANV Newsletter Editor over the past 2 years. Looking back, I hope you've been entertained at the past 28 issues.

Although there is some debate about mailing lists, I'm very proud of our transition to an electronic pdf format with excellent color pictures and an ever-growing email distribution. Not only has this saved the club a lot of money in printing fees and postage, but it also allows us to reach club members quickly. I hope that we continue in this direction.

Please remember that this is YOUR club newsletter. For the most part, compiling each edition has been fun and easy – especially when people send in their articles and pictures. We have a diverse club from QRP SOTA, to QRO Contesting, to VPOTA, to operating while on vacation - all items of interest are welcome as we celebrate the many aspects of Amateur Radio!!!

As mentioned previously, we are looking for a new editor. I will be happy to provide assistance over the next couple of months for anyone interested.

If you're wondering... here's how the process works... It is easy!

1. Send an email asking to the membership 10 days before the next meeting. Ask for items of interest
2. Gather the articles and pictures
3. Open a template in WORD, change the month and volume/number on the header
4. Copy and paste what people have submitted
5. Clean up typos, highlight call signs, and make sure the formatting looks good
6. Add some filler items to round out the edition (pictures, QSL cards, license plates, trivia, etc.)
7. Print and give it one more quick review
8. Email a copy to the people who signed up (there's an email list)
9. Email a copy to the UPS store, a copy Bob **W4YFJ**, and a copy to Mitch **W1SJ**. You're done

Bob **W4YFJ** and Duane **WL7CVD** take care of the labels, folding, and mailing.

If you would like to help the club as the editor, please contact our club president, Bob **KB1FRW**. I am also very happy to answer any questions.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to serve the club!!!



NEWS & VIEWS

INSIDE

- **NEXT MEETING – April 9TH**
GENERATOR MAKER SPACE – 40 SEARS LANE, BURLINGTON
- **RANV QSO PARTY – CALLING ALL LOCALS**
- **LEARNING PROPOGATION WITH PSKREPORTER**
- **FROM THE SECRETARY**
- **NEW LICENSE AND UPGRADES**
- **EDITOR NOTES – THANK YOU!**

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday • April 9TH • 7 pm

Generator Make Space Tour

40 Sears Lane, 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