



# RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

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An ARRL Special Service Club

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## NEXT MEETING (Picnic) August 10<sup>th</sup>

**RANV Picnic Saturday August 10<sup>th</sup> 2019**  
**Mitch, W1SJ**

The RANV Summer Picnic will be on Saturday, August 10th at Kill Kare State Park at St. Albans Bay. Activities get underway at 11:00. RANV will provide park admission, drinks and charcoal for the grills. You supply the rest! Concurrent with the picnic will be a Vermont Parks On-The-Air activation of Kill Kare State Park. We will have a station set up ready for you to operate in between grilling burgers!

For our pre-picnic warm-up, the St. Albans Amateur Radio Club Hamfest will be taking place that morning, starting at 8 AM at the Elks Lodge on Gricebrook Road off of Route 104. Stop off at the fest and say hello to the gang before heading over to the picnic!

We'd like to get a great turnout at the picnic. The last few years have had so-so attendance. We especially liked to see the folks who we usually do not see at the Tuesday night meetings. We welcome all to the picnic – be sure to bring friends, family and prospective hams!

At Field Day, it was commented that there is not enough opportunity to learn how to operate on the air. We will have a station on the air and provide help for new operators. The station will be on the air between 11 and 4, with 30 minute time slots. Please be sure to sign up for a couple of slots! A park activation is a wonderful and low-key way to get experience operating on the air!

Please let me know if you will attending be so we can have the right amount of beverages on hand.

See you at the RANV Picnic and St. Albans Hamfest!

## CONTACTS

Bob **KB1FRW**, President  
[mcamp@gmavt.net](mailto:mcamp@gmavt.net)

Jim **KE1AZ**, VP/Treasurer  
[jhefferon@smcvt.edu](mailto:jhefferon@smcvt.edu)

Duane **WL7CVD**, Secretary  
[dsalaskasep@ak.net](mailto:dsalaskasep@ak.net)

George **KC1JGM**, Editor  
[gmavt1@gmail.com](mailto:gmavt1@gmail.com)

Newsletter submissions to [gmavt1@gmail.com](mailto:gmavt1@gmail.com)

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US Mail: PO Box 9392  
South Burlington, VT 05407

Web: [www.RANV.org](http://www.RANV.org)

Reflector: [RANV@groups.io](mailto:RANV@groups.io)

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

Repeater: 145.150, PL 100; WB1GQR

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New Hams, Mentoring:  
[RANVMentor@gmail.com](mailto:RANVMentor@gmail.com)

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

Online Dues Payment:  
[www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html](http://www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html)

## Spanish SOTA

### Scott, W1ZU (N1GVT)

I had the good fortune and opportunity to visit Cesar (K1TNT) and his wife for a few days in Spain late in June of this year. Cesar and his wife typically spend time during the summers near Madrid, visiting family. As both Cesar and I are active in SOTA, and working toward the Mountain Goat award, we both thought it would be a good time to squeeze in a few more points on the way to 1000. Summits on the Air (SOTA; <https://www.sota.org.uk>) started in England and as Spain is not far away, there is an active group there and, in fact, throughout Europe. Spain is a mountainous country and there were several summits close to Madrid for us to choose from. Cesar has done several and is familiar with the hikes, so with that knowledge we settled on Siete Picos (EA1/SG-005) and Pena El Aguila (EA4/MD-047), both 10 point summits. As luck would have it, Europe was undergoing a record Heat Wave during my visit. The hikes were hot and we needed a significant amount of water, but once at the top, the elevation and a light breeze made the heat bearable. Cesar and I used our SOTA club call, N1GVT (EA1/N1GVT), to activate both summits. As is usual for us, we activated in CW and focused on 20 meters. The summits of the 10 pointers in Spain are all above tree level, so no natural supports are available for wire antennas. That, and the desire to pack light, meant I put the Elecraft AX1 antenna to use. It is definitely a compromise, but we had no trouble collecting sufficient QSOs for both Cesar and I to comfortably activate both ummits. The chasers certainly have callsigns that differ from what I am used to activating in the states! I have become fairly comfortable with the N, K, W, A prefixes common here. It took a bit to settle in to the DL, EA, PA, G, ON, OK, M, and HB prefixes I copied in Europe. I definitely need more practice! I had a great trip and it was fun to activate a couple of summits in Europe. The chasers were patient and welcoming, as I've come to expect with SOTA chasers across the world. The SOTA community is a wonderful group of Hams, and I am fortunate to be a part it.



Scott – W1ZU (N1GVT)



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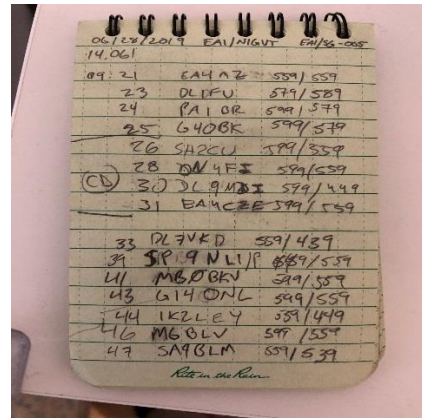
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## RANV Enclosed Trailer for Field Day Equipment

Bob, **KB1FRW**



New RANV Enclosed Trailer

This equipment has been stored for years at Mitch's, W1SJ, and the Lake Champlain Transportation (LCT) facility at the King St. ferry dock in Burlington, due to their generosity being I am a long term employee.

Over the years WCAX and LCT have lent us a trailer and LCT a truck to pull it. Getting all this stuff into the trailer and to the site has been laborious and time consuming, one or two people tend to bear the brunt of this work.

Recently LCT indicated that they want their storage space for other purposes. Additionally, it was recognized about 5 years ago that cutting down the labor that goes into FD would be beneficial. To that end it was decided to get a trailer to put all the FD equipment so all that is required is a truck to pull it from it's storage site to the FD site, maybe 1 ½ hours.

What used to happen was I would get truck midweek and get trailer from WCAX then go to LCT and load 2 towers but not the tent as it didn't fit. Take trailer to W1SJ's in Essex and load the other towers and stuff then leave it there. Someone else would transport the tent (and towers occasionally) on my trailer, recently Doug, N6PRT and this year Bob, N1GVT, who came and got the loaded secondary trailer took it to the

site and then after FD delivered it to my house which then had to be taken back to storage in Burlington.

I could go on and on about the messing around what went on but it is pretty obvious that many hours were chewed up in this process. Now it should be about 3 hours total to retrieve and return, burden eased substantially.

I have been looking for a trailer for 4-5 years that would hold all our stuff, due to antenna lengths it had to be 16 feet long and carry a ton, this left out all single axle trailers. The problem that surfaced was that this particular trailer is kind of rare for a reasonable price near us, finally this one showed up in Wolcott, VT, it was only 3 years old and the price was reasonable. It took 3 trips to Wolcott but finally it was ours in in Burlington registered and insured.

A few lights don't work, the brakes need to be checked (now checked and OK) and maybe we need a new tire but it has come in under budget and should serve our needs for years to come.

Getting this trailer caused us to step back and think about the cost of all our equipment and the fact it hasn't been insured for years, I called our ARRL insurer and he said that we could insure the trailer and it's contents through them for loss for \$123.00/ year which is done.

Total \$ so far:

\$3000 for trailer  
 \$267 for tax, title and registration  
 \$25.87 for gas to retrieve the trailer  
\$123.00 for insurance  
 \$3415.87

Possible additional expenditures:

\$160 two new rear tires  
 Inspection

## **RANV Mt Equinox Repeater Fund Drive Mitch, W1SJ**

Some of us use the 145.39 Mt. Equinox repeater, especially on trips south of here. This is one of the widest covering repeater systems in the east, with coverage typically out to 90 miles away. It is readily accessed from base stations in our area. Brian has provided and funded this system for all to use - there is no club. He has ordered the antenna and hopes to replace it before the weather gets bad in the late fall.

-w1sj

## **Mt. Equinox Fund Raiser**

The 145.39 Repeater on Mt. Equinox is in need of a new antenna. The existing Sinclair antenna is over 30 years old and is at the end of its serviceable life. The harsh climate at the nearly 4000 foot altitude mountain has finally taken its toll and a commercial/military spec antenna is the optimum replacement. While repeater trustee Brian [WA1ZMS] is hoping to get better pricing, he needs to raise almost \$2,000 for the antenna and shipping. Any and all contributions are greatly appreciated. Any money raised beyond the goal will be used to pay the mountain radio site landlords monthly rent and electricity charges. This wide area coverage repeater is essential to serve the amateur radio community in South central Vermont and Eastern NY State. It is hoped the new antenna can be in place this summer/fall pending funds collected. Please address your contributions to:

*BRIAN JUSTIN, WA1ZMS  
1704 COTTONTOWN ROAD  
FOREST, VA 24551-3910*

## **July Meeting**

**From The Secretary  
Duane, W7CVD**

**Jeff, N1YD** filled in for Duane at the July meeting.

RANV Meeting Minutes July 9th, 2019  
The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm.

## **General Discussion**

After introductions, Bob KB1FRW said that we had never voted to approve spending any money for Field Day. We voted to spend up to \$350 to cover Field Day expenses, and it passed unanimously.

Bob told us about an unexpected bill that we got from First Light, the Internet company that replaced Sovernet. Sovernet was the company used to host [www.ranv.org](http://www.ranv.org) for free as a public service. But in 2018, First Light acquired Sovernet, and sent us a bill, charging \$50 per month to host the site. Bob never noticed the bill, and might have thrown it away thinking that it was junk mail. Now First Light wants the club to pay \$450 for nine months of web hosting that they have already provided. Mitch has stepped in, and he is now

hosting [ranv.org](http://ranv.org) for us through his own account. But we might have to pay for the nine months of First Light web hosting.

Paul AA1SU heard from Linn W1LWH, who is going to start radiation treatment tomorrow. Linn operated CW for much of Saturday night and Sunday morning. He thanked us for our help at Field Day, especially our help in packing his Jeep after a long night of operating.

During Field Day, something unusual melted a wire in the ladder line to one of our dipoles. No one discovered the damage until tear down. Mitch did an experiment and found that the break would have reduced the signal strength by 10 dB.

The club does not have a meeting in August. Instead, we have our Annual Picnic on Saturday August 10th at Kill Kare State Park in St. Albans. The STARC Summer Hamfest is held close by, so it is good to take in both events together. The Hamfest goes from 8:00 AM until Noon. The RANV picnic starts at 11:00 and goes into the afternoon. RANV will provide park admission just tell the people at the gate that you are there for the RANV picnic), free charcoal for your barbecue, and soft drinks. Pets are not allowed.

By the way, the STARC Summer Hamfest will be held at Elks Lodge, which is 44 Gricebrook Road in St. Albans.

Brian Justin WA1ZMS is going to replace the antenna on the Mount Equinox repeater. The present antenna is about 30 years old. The new antenna costs \$2000, and he is looking for donations. Bob K1BIF moved that the club donate \$200 to help pay for the antenna and keep the repeater on the air. The motion was seconded by Jim and passed unanimously.

Jim will bring snacks to the September meeting.

## **Presentation "Home Made Vertical SteppIR Antenna"**

**Bob, K1BIF**

Bob used a tape measure to create an adjustable length vertical antenna covering 20 to 80 meters. The SteppIR Company sells one for about \$1500, but Bob set out to build his own for less than \$100. The antenna is 22 feet high, with the tape measure inside of fiberglass reinforced telescoping plastic tubing that he bought at NearFest. In a box at the bottom, Bob installed a coil with taps, a mechanical switch to select the right coil for each band, and a reversible 12 volt geared motor. There is a pulley at the top of the antenna, and the geared motor pulls a string that lifts the tape measure to the needed height. A screw in the center of the tape measure provides the feedline connection. The motor gives an easy way to adjust the length for each band, or part of a band. With four radials installed, an antenna analyzer showed that he is getting an SWR of less than 2.0 all over.

## **Congratulations and Upgrades**

Henry Hryckiewicz Milton, VT Tech [KC1LSA](#)

## **Editors Notes**

**George, [KCIJGM](#)**

**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 35 of our members have signed up for electronic delivery of the newsletter?

To enroll, just send me an email [gmayvt1@gmail.com](mailto:gmayvt1@gmail.com) You'll get fast delivery, the club saves a dollar each month, AND the pictures look GREAT!



## NEWS & VIEWS

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### **NEXT MEETING**

Saturday • August 10<sup>TH</sup> • 7 pm

Statewide E911 System in VT

Wheeler House, 1100 Dorset Street  
South Burlington, VT

### **Upcoming, Notices, & Misc**

- Steering Wheel: 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues 6:30; Ninety-Nine Restaurant, Taft Corners, Williston
- VE Exams every 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday; Red Cross Building 29 Mansfield Ave, Burlington
- Dues due? Pay online at [www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html](http://www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html)