



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

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An ARRL Special Service Club

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NEXT MEETING: Saturday February 8th @1:00pm

Upcoming Events Reminder

HAM-CON

HAM-CON will be Saturday, February 22nd at the Hampton Inn, 42 Lower Mountain Road, Colchester Vt. This is right off of I-89 Exit 16 and 2 exits (2.8mi) north of last year's location at the Holiday Inn

See you at HAM-CON!

Mark your calendars! The 23rd annual Outdoor Family Weekend will be held on September 11-13, 2020 at Stillwater State Park in Groton, VT.

General Discussion and Announcements

Jim Hefferon **KE1AZ**

Substitute secretary's notes for 2020-January meeting

There were 22 present in this unusual timed meeting-- 1-3 on a Saturday. We had to get out more chairs.

1) Some people said the time helped them attend. We will meet the same time next month, on Feb 08 from 1-3.

2) The annual breakfast meeting will be Jan 25 at JP's on River Road in Essex. We will eat and talk.

3) Mitch discussed the annual HamFest. It will be at the Hampton Inn, by Costco in Colchester. The prize this year is an Elecraft KX2.

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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

4) The VT QSO Party is three weeks from now. Please get on the air. People should know that Mitch generously makes his station available for people to sign up for two-hour stints at the mic. I've done it there a couple of times, and when you talk, people answer. It is fun.

5) Carl AB1DD has been in contact with a young man. He moved that the club buy a one-year ARRL membership for this young man. The motion passed. There was talk of doing one of these every year.

6) Club President Bob KB1FRW proposed that any under-18 year old who get a license would get an electronic club membership for a year for free (without having to attend any RANV meetings). The motion passed.

7) Mike N1JEZ demoed a Nano VNA-H Vector Network Analyzer. It costs \$50 and has a large range of features, including the capacity to act as a standard antenna analyzer. It covers 50kHz to 1.5GHz and has a touchscreen interface (it interfaces with a laptop, and there is a newer version with more features but it does not cost much more). It also does Time Domain Reflectometry, so you can find where in your cable the break is.

8) Bob Brown W1YFJ discussed WW II Heroes, people who monitored shortwave broadcasts, for instance to inform parents when German propaganda described their son. He has a magazine article and a book that he circulated.

9) Bob DeVarney W1ICW gave an extensive presentation on weather satellite reception. He covered the background of weather satellites, and noted that the first ones went up in 1960 and the first QST article was in 1965. He described three classes of satellites. The first ones are lower quality, but still a lot of fun. The receivers for these are mostly European, and you can also use a \$10 RTL SDR dongle. The antennas are pretty simple, especially because the frequency is just below the two meter band. The second class of satellite are the Russian Meteor satellites. There are all polar orbiters, with twelve times the NOAA resolution (down to about a kilometer and a half). These are also great for SDR. They take a long time to download and the files are large. He described the software systems and their capabilities.

Finally, the third class is the GOES geostationary satellite. These require advanced capabilities and Bob recommended that if you are interested then you may find it helps to ask someone knowledgeable about the hardware. After a few questions we all had some snacks. Hope to see folks at the breakfast!

Mitch, [W1SJ](#)
HAM-CON 2020 IS COMING

HAM-CON is in two weeks! Remember, we are moving to the Hampton Inn in Colchester this year.

We have another great program lined up for you. Our guest video speaker is Chip Margelli, K7JA. Chip has been in a number of high level ham radio positions including stints as Vice President at Yaesu and Heil, Director of Advertising at CQ, and currently Web Content Coordinator at Ham Radio Outlet. But you likely best know Chip as part of the team who used CW to beat the champion texters on the JayLeno Show! Chip will join us electronically as he tells great stories of his 50 years in amateur radio.

Our other guest speaker is Dan Henderson N1ND from the ARRL. He will present two forums, one detailing the actual sounds heard on amateur radio frequencies and the other on the myriad of amazing things we learn in amateur radio and the new things to learn in the future. And as ARRL Regulatory Information Manager, I'm sure some Rules & Regs questions are also in order.

At the recent ARRL Board meeting, CEO WB2ITX was not reappointed. And Mike Raisbeck, our Vice Director was transformed into a Vice President. Why did these and other things occur? I have no idea, but our New England Director Fred Hopengarten K1VR will be on hand at the ARRL Forum to explain everything which is going on at the League.

John Grow VE2EQL is back with a forum on setting up a remote station from scratch. His has a rather large tract of land up in Ontario and he plans to build a station and plant an antenna farm which will be remotely run from his home in the city. What will it take to pull all this off? Only John can tell us.

Some hams have a lot of fun collecting awards and certificates for their operating prowess. But to do this, you need a good station and good techniques. Mitch Stern W1SJ will present, "Build the Station and Collect the Awards", a hybrid look at station design and how to go after the wallpaper.

And we will have stuff for sale! Roger Webster will be back with a large assortment of goodies. And we always have a good turnout of tailgaters bringing a fantastic array of weird things. No one can predict what will show up, and that is what makes it so much fun.

In the middle of the vendor area will be the new home of our in-house station, W1V. We hope it gets a lot more attention with the heavy foot traffic around. We also hope no one tries to sell off the station in the Flea Market!

Our grand prize this year is an Elecraft KX2, the little mini 80-10 meter radio small enough to pack on an expedition. We also have some 20 prizes to give away. If you attend the closing, you have a reasonably good chance, about 1 in 5, to win something. If you sneak out early for lunch, you don't get the goodies!

HAM-CON 2020 – new location, same great little Convention. And a really great shooow!

Mitch, [W1SJ](#)

VT QSO PARTY INITIAL IMPRESSIONS

While I'm up against the newsletter deadline (and trying to recover from a long weekend of operating), here are some initial impressions of the 2020 Vermont QSO Party.

Wow, what a time! Let's face it, conditions were not very good. My main band, 20 meters was a shell of its former self. Typically, I get on at 8AM and stay put until after 5PM. Not this year! In fact, 40 meters was the big producer this time.

A new program called the State QSO Party Challenge was started this year which takes the aggregate score of each operator in the various State QSO Parties throughout the year. This had the result of bringing a lot of testers out to run up their scores to compete. At as write this, less than 24 hours after the contest, we already have more logs (153) submitted than the full total last year. One of the logs had 61 QSO's with Vermont stations claimed. If it stands up, it will completely smash the old record. In looking at the logs, I see some 30 Vermont call signs represented. Vermont was in the house!

Vermont scores were up as well. At W1NVT, we picked up 2000 QSO's and just north of 200 multipliers. Quite a bit more action was found on CW. When I spotted and went to CW, folks were waiting! Several stations managed to work me on 3 bands phone and CW, and one got me on 4 bands – including 160 meters. Two new operators, Jeff W3JEF and Dirk N1DXM got their trial by fire in the contest seat at W1NVT – and did quite well!

In addition, there were a couple of monster scores out of Addison County. We had not one, but THREE rovers running the counties: K1VIT in all 14, K1IB in the southern 4 and K1BIF in a couple up this way. An increasing number of stations jumped on FT8 or FT4 to make that mode available to all.

It appears that a good time was had by all. I'll have more details and full results next month.

Bob Brown [W4YFJ](#)

Old Radio / Older HAM

My ELMER was Frederick Calvert, W4CMV back in the early 1950's. He was an amazing operator. He could work 30 WPM, work with his stamp collection and talk to you at the same time. He spent years as a radio operator in the U.S Navy during World War II. He had a paper tape machine that I could listen to, to learn the code.

I lived in Arlington Virginia and rode the bus into Washington, DC to the FCC to take my test. I flunked the code the first time that I went. I went back about 90 days later and passed. I do not remember how long that it took to mail

the ticket to me, however, I was very happy to get it. N4FXO was my first call.

My station was a Hallicrafters S 20-R and the transmitter was a home brew with a 6L6 as the final. The radio was built by Hallicrafters between 1939 and 1945. I used a Windom antenna with television twin-lead. I only had two crystals 7189 and 7194 KHz. Radio Moscow was on 7190 at that time and my only option was get up in the morning before school and work thee Hams out in the Midwest. The S 20-R was in perfect shape for one built back in the late 30's. No scratches, rust or dust. The only thing wrong was for some reason it had white paint on the line cord as if someone painted a room and did not move the cord when they painted.

I took my station to Shaw Air Force Base in 1957 and believe it or not we could hear the SPUTNIK satellite on 20 MHz during pass overs.

I lent the receiver to a friend of mine in the early 60's in order for him to learn the code. Never got it back...He moved to Texas and I never heard from again. For some strange reason, I wanted a S 20-R when I was about 65 years old. I had been looking for one in good shape at ham fests here in the Northeast and Dayton and simply could not find one. They all looked as they have been under water for years. I placed a query out on the internet looking for a radio in good shape. I got an answer from some one out in California and he said that he had 15 of them. He answered, send me \$100 and I will send you my best one. I got it in the mail in perfect shape, no scratches, no rust, no dust and it worked. Only one thing wrong...It had white paint on the line cord. I surely wish that I had kept track of the serial number.



Mitch, [W1SJ](#)

Vermont Ham Breakfast

There were 28 hamsters chowing down at the Winter Breakfast meeting:

AB1DD, K1BIF, K1DXM, K1ZK, KB1FRW, KB1IVE + Debbie, KB1LOT, KB1MDC, KC1APK, KC1JCM, KC1LDD, KD2RTJ + Wendy, KE1AZ, KI6ISG, KK1L, N1EQP, N1HC, N1WCK, NJ1S, W1BAP, W1ETV, W1MAD, W1SJ, W3JEF, W4YFJ, WA2LRE.

After announcements of upcoming events, the discussion focused on how to grow amateur radio. This followed up on the topic of RANV's October meeting which featured Fred AB1OC speaking about how his group grew the Nashua (NH) Area Radio Club into the largest in New England and became ARRL's 2019 Club of the year. We discussed how we might better promote amateur radio in our area. Lots of interesting ideas were tossed around and discussed.

In New Hampshire, they focused on recruiting children in schools. This, in turn, got their parents interested in ham radio. However, it was pointed out that this is a difficult process to get invited into the schools, to put on a meaningful demonstrations for youngsters, and then to keep this process going, since youngsters move on to other things. We were fortunate to have a teacher in the room who give us lots of good ideas. Steve N1EQP said he would start working with his local school in Williston, as his work schedule permits.

It was suggested that we continue to stay involved with the Boy/Girl Scouts. We have been involved in some of their activities, and we should continue this. There was discussion about helping out with the radio merit badge this summer, but the planning never came to fruition.

Ron KK1L told us about the Outdoor Family Weekend (September 11-13 at Stillwater State Park in Groton). This is a perfect opportunity to engage with folks who are spending leisure time. And we can also do a park activation at the same time, which is always exciting. Ron will get us more information on setting this up.

Speaking of park activations, we should try to get more people involved so that we have ham ambassadors who can explain our operations to park visitors.

Another opportunity to promote amateur radio is during the VHF QSO Parties. I set up operations from Mt. Equinox. However, with setting up 11 antennas, and multiple stations, and then operating all these bands at the same time, I have zero time to promote ham radio. If we got some hams to visit during the day to do a mini operation, or even a SOTA activation, that would be the perfect way to expose a lot of people to ham radio. The VHF QSO Party is June 13-14 and September 12-13. Who would be interested in organizing a small group to do a light operation and promotion?

The discussion was good in that it identified several specific things we can try. However, it doesn't end here and we must continue to keep the discussion going and find more ideas to strengthen amateur radio.

Beverly, [KI6ISG](#) Pictures

The Northern Vermont Winter Breakfast Saturday, January 25, 2020, 9AM-Noon at JP's Deli, 39 River Road, Essex, Vt.





Jim, [KE1AZ](#)
RANV VP and Treasurer

PAYING YOUR RANV DUES

You get a lot for your RANV membership dues. There are great people, with the expertise to help you when you need it, a meeting each month, a Steering Wheel dinner each month, and being able to be part of national or world-class teams at events such as Parks on the Air or Field Day. Pretty good for \$20 (or \$25 for a family membership). And paying those dues is also easy. Most members these days use PayPal by going to www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html. Besides being quick, it is also secure.

In addition to those advantages, PayPal is also a help for your RANV officer team. These transactions are largely automatic. If you pay another way, such as sending a check by mail or hoping to find me at an event and giving me cash, then we will still work with that of course but it has to be done in a much more laborious way. And, we recently had a member's check go astray in the US mail for a while, which highlighted that there really is a better way. If you've never done PayPal then please do consider giving it a try. Thank you!

Editors Notes:

George, [KC1JGM](#)



NEWS & VIEWS

INSIDE

- **NEXT MEETING** – February 8th
- **HAM-CON** and other upcoming events
- **Additional member topics**
 - Ham Breakfast
 - Vermont QSO Party this weekend!
 - Old Radio / Older HAM
 - Dues Reminder

NEXT MEETING

Saturday • February 8TH • 1:00pm

Meeting Topic

HAM-CON Discussion

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