



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

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NEXT MEETING:

RANV SUMMER PICNIC Our August 15 Meeting

The RANV Summer Picnic will be on Saturday, August 15 from 11AM until 3PM at Camp Kill Kare State Park in St. Albans. If the weather looks like it will be poor, Sunday will be our rain date. Besides Field Day, this will be our only get-together this summer. We will follow COVID-19 protocol with required spacing of 6 feet and masks whenever you are close to others. All food and drink must be brought in by the participants as there will be no sharing. Picnic tables will not be available, so everyone needs to bring their own table and chairs. The table doesn't need to be large – just enough to set your food down on. Or else, spread out on a blanket. If you are able, bring your own grill, as well. We will have some grills, but they will need to be shared according to a schedule. We can't have folks congregating over the burgers on the grill! We are not planning on a large number of people so we will be able to get everyone seated at their tables and spread out enough to be safe. Or else, we can opt to spread out a lot, and use 146.52 simplex to keep in touch!

We plan to do a park activation of Kill Kare with a single station. If you plan to operate (which is encouraged) you do need to bring your own microphone and/or boom headset. There are still a lot of people who will not go out in a group setting and we understand this. We feel that the combination of an outside venue, distancing and masks and a limited number of participants (likely around 10) will keep us all safe. We hope you can join us for our last get-together of the year. After this, it's Zoom-time!

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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

FIELD DAY 2020 – WE DID IT!

Mitch **W1SJ**

In 50 years of doing Field Day, the completion of the 2020 event has to be the most satisfying for me. We didn't score the highest ever, and, in fact, we didn't win the category. But, unlike the overwhelming majority of Field Day groups, our group got together, set up an operation in the field under emergency power and made contacts – 4171 of them to be precise. And we did it safely! At the end of a typical Field Day, I am usually ruminating about how we messed up this item or that. This year, I felt overwhelming joy that we pulled it off and nailed the sucker! Of the over 10,000 logs received at ARRL, over 8300 or 83% were operations from home (D and E). Only a mere 604 (6%) were clubs in the Field (A). Several clubs set up a club station and had operators get on the air remotely. In my world, this just would not do. It is "Field" Day, not "Home" Day! I have the rest of the year to operate from home. So, we worked on a plan to COVID-proof the site, keeping single operators in the tents, not sharing any headphones, maintaining distancing and wearing masks. We had to change how we set up the site, how we operated the stations and how we worked with each other. And we were successful. Despite the inconveniences and limited social interaction, everyone had a great time.

Setup had to be changed to deal with a smaller crew and keeping everyone separated. Most of the changes involved using only one person to lift the towers into place. For most everything else, participants were far enough apart. And setup was quite smooth. We had the towers up in short order without any issues. The wire antennas took a lot longer to complete. The phone dipole, now fed with "True Ladderline" supplied by Brian WB2JIX worked wonders. All stations got on the air on time at the start. Sadly, it became immediately apparent that conditions were not good on either mode. We had to call CQ a lot. Rates were a lot less than usual. Everything was working properly, except the propagation. Signals were weak. The expected glut of stations on the air did not happen.

Finally, in the evening, rates started to climb up, but conditions remained elusive for the rest of the evening. Overnight, we dealt with a virus-infused Murphy evening involving the necessary separate boom headsets and connecting wiring. Missing pieces and broken wires shut down phone for short periods. Fortunately, CW didn't have to deal with this, but had longer breaks between operators for cleaning. Things plodded along until 40 meters (on phone) broke out into some big rates due to short skip. Then 15 meters opened wide. The last two hours were like shooting fish in a barrel, making up some ground from the wretched Saturday conditions. Phone ended up with 57 less QSO's than last year, and 130 QSO's less than our average. CW ended up with 152 less QSO's than last year, and 93 less than our average. Poor propagation will do that.

The fact that we had a GOTA station at all is the important point. Only 62 of over 10,000 entries fielded a GOTA station. GOTA was a rare breed. And there is a good reason for this.

In the virus situation, the GOTA station could not have coaches or anyone helping. The ops were left to sink or swim on their own. They still managed 402 QSO's, compared to the usual 500 and this was with only 4 operators, a lot less than usual. We racked up 800 QSO points and 220 bonus points (1020 total). But that is a lot less than last year's numbers of 1000 and 920 (1920 total). Under the conditions, we really couldn't go there, and we should feel fortunate that we pulled in the 1000 points and gave a few operators the chance to shine. In looking at the rates, we could have improved things by being on FT8 digital. We'll tackle that one next year. In the middle of a pandemic, we safely got on the air, made more contacts than anyone, and put together one of the highest scores, despite losing bonus points which could not be accomplished with the virus around. Outside of a few snafus which we will fix for next time, the site worked perfectly. Antennas worked as advertised and RANV Power & Light provided perfect, uninterrupted power for the duration of the event.

Setup and take down went faster with fewer people than previous years. We're getting smarter! There is a high likelihood that we'll have to deal with the virus again next year. But we have learned a lot and we'll be able to do things a lot more efficiently. For everyone involved with the effort, both on-site and off, hats off for a tremendous effort. We can't promise celebratory cake at our virtual holiday party this year, but we'll figure something out!

2020 RANV FIELD DAY HALL OF FAME

AA1SU Paul – CW op; VHF op; Equipment; Traffic; Set up; tear down.

AB1DD Carl – Set up; Tear down. **AB1T Doug** – CW op, Equipment.

KB1FRW Bob – Phone op; VHF op; Equipment; Set up; Tear down.

KB1LOT Jim – Set up; Tear down.

KB1THX Tim – Phone op; Set up; Tear down.

KC1IFK Stew – GOTA op; Set up; Tear down.

KC1JGM George – GOTA op; Safety; Set up; Tear down.

KC1NED Jack – GOTA op; Set up.

KK1L Ron – Phone op.

N1GGU Bob – Set up.

N1YD Jeff – GOTA op; Safety; Demos; Set up; Tear down.

N1YWB Jeff – Phone op; Tear down.

W1LWH Linn – CW op; Equipment; Set up; Tear down.

W1SJ Mitch – Chairman; Phone op; Satellite op; Equipment; Set up; Tear down; Results.

Off-Site Participants:

K1BIF Bob, K1VMT Joe, K1ZK Zack, KC1VT Shel, KJ1V Ruth, N1JEZ Mike, W4YFJ Bob

**2020 RANV FIELD DAY
BOX SCORE
Mitch W1SJ**

80 CW 196 80 SSB 246
40 CW 407 40 SSB 581
20 CW 536 20 SSB 1122
15 CW 286 15 SSB 356
GOTA Dig 0 GOTA Ph 402
VHF Dig 11 VHF Ph 27
Sat CW 0 Sat Ph 1
Total CW 1436 Total Ph 2735
4171 QSOs 1570 Bonus 12784 Pts
2019 2018 2017 2016
QSO's 4528 4616 4671 3932
Bonuses 2530 2490 2470 2530
Points 14876 14732 14794 13018

**BRANBURY STATE PARK ACTIVATION
Mitch W1SJ**

Our latest activation was at Branbury, a nice little park nestled on the shores of Lake Dunmore, some 8 miles SSE of Middlebury. Following COVID-19 protocol, the four of us (AB1DD, K1BIF, KB1FRW, W1SJ) set up four separate stations, so that no sharing was necessary. In fact, it was a mini-Elecraft Convention with 4 K3's and a KX3 thrown in for good measure. I was on both 40 and 20 meter phone, CW and digital with an all-band dipole. Bif was on 20 meter phone and Bob and Carl shared a 40 meter dipole. The stations were set up fairly far apart, allowing us to be on the same bands at the same time, which helped to confuse everyone else calling us! Conditions stunk. It was worse than stunk. We couldn't work anyone out west on 20 meters. Except for a couple of guys in Idaho, Minnesota and Texas was as far as she went. We worked a glorious 3 DX stations. We could work just as far on 40 meters, but there were a lot less stations on. On a few occasions I was told I had a pileup calling me, but all I could hear was a bunch of very weak signals scratching around below the noise level. I went to FT8 for a bit just to give the weak signal guys a chance to work us since conditions were very challenging for low power guys. With sheer force of desire and guts and glory, we managed to put 577 QSO's in the log. It was a good deal of work. However, it also was a wonderful day at the park!

Duane Sherwood, Secretary

**RANV Meeting Minutes July 14, 2020
Regular Meeting**

There were about 17 in attendance via Zoom including the three club officers. Meeting Notes and Announcements President Bob Allen KB1FRW called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. The RANV August picnic was discussed. A few indicated an interest in attending. In general, the same guidelines that were established for Field Day would apply. People would bring their own tables and food. The club will not provide food. Bob H and Mitch S would go to parks and set up their own antennas, operate from cars. Mitch brought up the idea of doing fox hunts as an activity where social distancing would not be any problem. Other ideas included trainings during the weekly informal chat sessions, e.g., FT8. Presentation Jeff Bonn, N1YD, gave the presentation. He began by mentioning his favorite mathematician, Joseph Fourier, and demonstrated a circuit that outputs sum and difference frequencies based on two input frequencies. The presentation went on to discuss the Othernet Dreamcatcher circuit board. Othernet is a company that provides free news, information, and education via geostationary, low-earth orbit satellites. Jeff built an Othernet Dreamcatcher receiver that receives news, weather, and other information transmitted by the satellite. The Othernet Dreamcatcher uses a WiFi dongle to connect with your computer.
<https://othernet.is/products/dreamcatcher-v3-05>
End of meeting

Richard Dupaw WN1HJW/SK

by Paul N. Gayet AA1SU

You may have noticed an email to the RANV Reflector, just before Field Day this year. It stated that a former RANV member, Richard Dupaw WN1HJW had passed away on Monday, June 22. Mitch W1SJ had forwarded the letter from Beverly, Richards's daughter. Richard had previously informed me in an email, dated December 31, that he had colon cancer. He also wished me Happy New Year in that email. At the following RANV meeting, I had the attending members sign a get well card for him. Many of you are newer members to RANV and are not familiar with him.

Richard was first licensed in the spring of 1998 after having taken Mitch's Technician Ham Radio Class. I took Mitch's class in the spring of 1997, so we were licensed around the same time. His first call sign was KB1CPW; mine was N1YTX. It did not take long for Richard to change his call sign to one that he remembered from his childhood. His neighbor, while growing up, had a ham radio station and tower. Richard wanted to remember him by getting WN1HJW as his vanity call sign. Right away, he wanted to learn as much about ham radio as he could. I bumped into Richard one day at Mitch's house. He had just purchased a Radio Shack HTX-202, a 2 Meter HT. He needed Mitch's help to program it. It took a while, but Mitch got it all programmed for him, and he was so happy. After that, I remember talking to him many times on the local repeaters.

Richard became a fixture at the club meetings. He wanted to help out any way he could. I remember he bought along a coffee maker for a few years, so we could have fresh coffee at the meetings. He would also arrive early and set up the chairs for the meeting. His wife, Karen was always with him, too. When late June came along and it was time for Field Day, Richard showed up on Redmond Road. I know this because I saw him – for a moment that is. We looked around and his car was gone. I asked him a few days later what happened. He said that he pulled up to the site, it was raining, and no one was around, so he figured it was canceled. When I told him what he had missed, he felt badly about leaving early, and attended several Field Days in a row after that. He became the food tent guy, and kept us all well fed.

In November 1999, I was elected RANV club president, and Richard was elected Vice President/Treasurer. I had been club secretary for the two previous years. As you know, the club officers meet monthly at the Steering Wheel meeting. You may have heard stories about how we frequently changed restaurants for these meetings in years past because they would go out of business. Most of our meetings, as I recall were at Friendly's Restaurant in Colchester. It may have had another name for a while, too like Shoney's or something. There is a drug store there now. Richard and Karen (of course) usually would chose not to order food, but they stayed

until the end of these meetings just the same. Richard served as a club officer for one year.

Richard was a RANV member on and off until 2009, but stayed active on the local repeaters. He attended Field Day from 1999 to 2001. It seems like it was longer to me now. I'm going by previous issues of the RANV News & Views. I recall one year, he had purchased a home made grill that was basically half of a 55 gallon drum (cut vertically). He filled it with charcoal and asked for my help to light it. I was a bit busy with other things, but I said "Hang on, I'll be right back". I poured some gasoline on the coals, stood back about about twenty feet, and threw a lit match at it. After the POOF, I said "There you go", and continued with my part of the Field Day set up that year. For years after that, when Richard wasn't at Field Day, I would call him at home the day before and ask him to work us on 2 Meters at 2:15 PM on Saturday. He always happily obliged, and even work us on 446 FM.

I bumped into Richard about 2-3 years ago at Ham-Con. He wanted help finding a 2 Meter all mode transceiver. It turned out that Mr. Mike W1RC was there selling one, and I got the two of them together. They worked out a deal and Richard went home a happy camper, even though all he could really use it for in his tiny apartment was FM.

Richard didn't always get along with other RANV members, including me sometimes. In fact, his daughter wrote to me that he could be 'stubborn, opinionated, and not an overly social kind of guy', but that he did love his ham radio chats. Many of us are like that at times, I think. Those of you that knew him probably remember that about him, too. Still, I'll miss him, and he is one less ham radio operator on the air around here.

The picture below is from Field Day 2000.





NEWS & VIEWS

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NEXT MEETING

Saturday • August 15TH • 11:00am

Meeting Topic
RANV Annual Picnic

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