



# RADIO AMATEUR News & Views

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## FIELD DAY 2022 – WE DID IT AGAIN!

Mitch **W1SJ**

Going into this year, we were coming off of last year's effort where we blew everyone away. In addition, we were able to add some new participants, bringing fresh blood to the operation. The challenge was that Bob KB1FRW was going to be out of town, which meant I had to organize not only the stuff I have, the stuff in the trailer, but also the stuff Bob brings. It was the opportunity to get very focused and organized, or else have missing stuff on Thursday and Friday setup.

As it turned out, setup was very smooth. On Thursday, the guy anchors were screwed in, the yagis were all built and ALL of the wire antennas were in the trees by the time we left. On Friday, the scheduling of the trailer, unloading, tower erection and tent assembly all went off like clockwork. I had some concerns as we had many new people, but all went according to plan. But late Friday, all antennas and tents were in place and most of us left by nightfall.

On Saturday, we were ready to go by 12 noon, certainly a record. No disasters had to be dealt with. This allowed some time to attend to some last-minute tweaks.

At 2:00 we were off with phone and CW on 20 meters and GOTA on 40 meters. There was some concern that the phone station wouldn't do as well with the rule change down to 100 watts. This was quickly put to bed as I ran up 200 QSO's in the first hour – always an amazing accomplishment. But each and every station was in the noise and it did take a good deal of skill to pull everyone out in quick fashion. After that, the rates dropped and the duplicate contacts came in like a tidal wave, even a few hours into the event. My theory is that we accomplished what we needed to do – be the beacon in the

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Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday • 7:00 PM  
Holy Family Parrish Hall  
30 Lincoln Street  
Essex Junction, Vt

Repeater: 145.150, PL 100; WB1GQR

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

middle of the band that everyone calls. Well, they did that – over and over and over again!

Over at CW, the same thing was seen. Great rates most of the afternoon, but the contacts were dwindling at times with some short “dropout” periods where the rate really fell off.

But the overnight was terrible. When 20 meters started going out around 11:30 PM, 80 meters did not pick up the pace. And 40 meters went long and did nothing. It got worse as the night wore on. There were so few contacts made on phone that it was hardly worth running the generator! Conditions on 80 and 40 meters were wretched on both phone and CW all night long. Fortunately 15 meters popped open Sunday morning, providing a tremendous 90 minute run on phone and a more limited run on CW.

As an aside, I carefully measured the fuel consumption on the phone generator and found we used less than 2½ gallons to make 2362 QSOs for a non-EPA rating of 1000 QPG (QSOs per gallon)!

GOTA was far improved over last year’s equipment disaster. We added 4 new operators this year, which really helped. They started and stayed on 40-meter phone for the first 8 hours – perhaps too much. But with weak conditions on 20 meters, this might have been a good idea. Unfortunately, there were some problems and it took a long time to get the station on FT8 in the evening, which cut down on contact totals. We had operators going until around 3AM doing FT8. And then early Sunday morning, they were back on phone. GOTA logged a record 645 QSO’s this year and generated 960 out of 1000 bonus points, which certainly helped the shortfalls we had on CW and phone.

VHF and the Satellite stations generated very close to the same number of contacts as last year. Six meters was very fleeting on Saturday, but finally opened up for a time on Sunday. Despite the loss of several satellites, we were still able to work a bunch of QSO’s.

Take down had its ups and downs and we are discussing ways to improve that. But we left the site at 6:30 – a lot early than the 7:30-8:00 departure from past years.

Despite significant drops in CW and phone number from last year high-water mark, GOTA helped pick up the slack and we netted 15334 points – down 566 points from last year’s blow out. But how did we do overall? We won’t know that until everyone submits their logs and the results come out in November.

We had a fairly newer crew this year who all reported having a load of fun. It is great to see new faces at Field Day and we hope it is the start of a new trend.

## THE SECRET WORLD OF FIELD DAY BONUSES

Mitch [W1SJ](#)

While we cover many of the Field Day activities in the newsletter, one aspect which gets hardly any mention is the pursuit of bonus points. The bonus point program is much like a scavenger hunt where a group “hunts” for extra points by completing certain tasks. Most of the bonuses award 100 points each. Currently, there are 2650 points up for grabs, so this is nothing to sneeze at.

The first bonus we always work on is media publicity. This used to be a press release to various media outlets inviting the public to our Field Day site. However, this year, we were required to make sure a media outlet actually published the information. Not so easy. The Free Press doesn’t do this, and hardly anyone reads that. Seven Days requires a long lead time (which I always miss) and then they rewrite the press release and make us look like weirdos. The Williston Observer often sends their photographer (AI NIDIQ) to take photos of the operation, but that publicity is after the fact. This year, I decided to use Vermont Digger, who publishes press releases for a donation. So much for a free press, but it got the job done.

The next two bonuses are interrelated – Public Location and Public Information Table. With our location right along the road (to the dump), we do have people stopping by all day and asking, “What are y’all doing”. If they decide to visit with us, one of our staff will walk them around, showing off the operation. We have signs explaining the various aspects of Field Day. This is where we can use some help. The signs are 30 years old and are quite beat up. This is a great opportunity to for someone to help “dress up” the site.

There is a bonus for originating formal message traffic to 10 different people. Paul generated this traffic some years ago, which basically says, “Greetings by Amateur Radio from Field Day”. The ten people we send it to have changed somewhat over the years, but it remains similar. Sadly, there is no Field Day group we know of who handles traffic. Paul sends the traffic via 2 meter packet to his automated station at home and then forwards the traffic after Field Day. In the same vein, we get another 100 points for traffic sent to the Section Manager. A long time ago, I generated such a message and Paul, our Field Day traffic coordinator, sends it to himself, as he is also the Section Manager. Hey, it works!

Paul also coordinates the site visits. We get 100 points each for visits by a served agency (i.e. Red Cross, Weather Service, etc.) and also by an elected official. Paul invited Robert Haynes from the Weather Service (KC1MYT) who stopped by on Saturday, and then got State Senator Ginny Lyons to visit us on Sunday. We had a very good discussion with her on how we can use amateur radio to provide for better emergency service.

There is a bonus for copying the ARRL special bulletin sent Friday night and during the Field Day period. Bob W4YFJ handles this important task as he copies the digital bulletin from W1AW on Friday evening. This certainly beats whipping out a radio at the site and copying the bulletin on 80 meter CW, as I had to do in year's past.

Jeff N1YD handles a couple of bonuses. He is our site safety coordinator and makes sure we do everything safely. We had no injuries reported, so he gets high marks! He also sets up the educational demonstration in the corner of the GOTA tent, which is the first stop by visitors to the site.

There is a bonus for working a station through one of the ham radio satellites. Frankly, this should be a 1000 point bonus based on all the work which has to be done. Ham satellites can be finicky and unpredictable at times. To assure we get the bonus, I set up a satellite station at home the week before and attempt to work through each of the available satellites. You find some interesting things. Some are turned off. Some are intermittent. Some are plain broken. Based on my findings, I use a prediction program to determine which satellites will have the best availability during Field Day, at times when I'm available. Working a satellite is rather challenging. You have to listen for your signal through the satellite while it is drifting rapidly due to Doppler shift. Sadly, no one else in our area is active on the satellites. Perhaps this should be a club project for this year.

A couple of bonuses are involved with the Internet. There is a bonus for posting on social media. Both Stew and I uploaded our Field Day information to Facebook. And we get another bonus for uploading the logs, instead of the rather cumbersome task of mailing out a package to the ARRL.

There is a bonus for using alternate power. Many years ago, I rebuilt a bicycle with a belt which drove an automotive generator (back before alternators became popular). This had the advantage of simultaneously making power and reducing waistlines (often large). These days, Bob K1BIF charges a battery at home (he generates power via solar) and we use that to make 10 contacts on GOTA.

Speaking of GOTA, there are all sorts of bonuses available. Few Field Day groups understand the process. Even Bruce, who runs the ARRL Field Day log upload site, was confused by this last year. The GOTA ops get a bonus of 20 points for every 20 QSO's they make, up to 100 points. But if we use a coach (which we do), this is doubled. We had 4 GOTA operators each making 100 QSO's, and that is 800 points right there, plus a few others with smaller bonuses adding up to 960 points out of the 1000 maximum. There is also a 20-point bonus for each person under 18 who makes a contact, and we picked up 40 points out of 100 available.

We managed to pick up 2550 points out of 2650 points, learned about techniques we normally would not notice and got several of our members involved. Will you be helping out with Field Day bonuses next year?

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## Field Day Pictures

Bob K1BIF

Also the link to the video is: <https://bit.ly/3yq3a6A>













## 2022 RANV Field Day Hall of Fame

Mitch **W1SJ**

2022 RANV FIELD DAY HALL OF FAME	
AA1SU Paul – CW op; Phone op; VHF op; Equipment; Traffic; Set up; Tear down.	
AB1DD Carl – Set up; Tear down.	
AB1T Doug – CW op; Equipment; Set up; Tear down.	
AC1CG Hank – GOTA op; Set up; Tear down.	
K1BIF Bob – Phone op; Equipment; Set up; Tear down.	
K1ZK Zach – CW op.	
KB1LOT Jim – Set up; Tear down.	
KC1IFK Stew – Phone op; GOTA op; Equipment; Set up; Tear down.	
KC1JGM George – GOTA op; Set up; Tear down.	
KC1PYO Anna – GOTA op; Set up; Tear down.	
KK1L Ron – Phone op; Set up; Tear down; Transport.	
N1CFO Erik – GOTA op; Set up; Tear down.	
N1YD Jeff – GOTA op; Safety; Demo; Set up; Tear down.	
N1FF Mike – GOTA op; Set up; Tear down.	
N2KLC Jim – Set up; 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:	
W4YFJ Bob – FD Bulletin.	

## 2022 RANV Field Day Score

Mitch **W1SJ**

2022 RANV FIELD DAY BOX SCORE			
80 CW	228	80 SSB	259
40 CW	398	40 SSB	204
20 CW	849	20 SSB	1606
15 CW	83	15 SSB	293
10 CW	1		
GOTA Dig	64	GOTA Ph	581
VHF Dig	86	VHF Ph	22
Sat CW	1	Sat Ph	7
Total CW	1571	Total Ph	2972
Total Dig	139		
4682 QSOs 2550 Bonus 15334 Pts			
	2021	2020	2019 2018
QSO's	4945	4171	4528 4616
Bonuses	2130	1570	2530 2490
Points	15900	11214	14876 14732

## Field Day Experience

Anna **KC1PYO**

Friday was mostly antenna and GOTA tent setup. I felt like seeing and setting up the large antennas in person was a great learning experience for me because until now I realized I had not seen any really big antennas in person. It helped me better understand the antenna size needed for effective HF communications. I also learned a bit about antenna positioning and the different types of antennas (especially wire antennas).

On Saturday, I really enjoyed getting to operate on HF for the first time. It really helped me bring together all the radio knowledge I had read about in books/studied for the license exam. Suddenly a lot of the concepts I had heard about (contesting, logging, etc) made sense once I started operating at the GOTA station. It didn't take long for me to start to feel at home calling CQ and logging QSOs. I definitely noticed that confidence on the mic yields results when it comes to contesting. My experience at the GOTA station definitely helped me get over my new ham "mic-fright" and has made me a lot more confident about putting my callsign on the air since Field Day. I also appreciated that FD is a 24 hour event as it demonstrated to me the difference in band activity between day and night. This is now something I think more about when I operate from home.

On Sunday I enjoyed hitting a 120~ QSOs to help with the club score. It felt like the whole thing went by too fast by the time it was time to pack everything up. Needless to say, I am really eager for next year's Field Day and I hope to come back with even more experience!

## 2022 RANV Picnic

Mitch **W1SJ**

The RANV Summer Picnic will be Saturday, August 13 th , 11AM until 3PM at Kamp Kill Kare State Park at St. Albans Bay.

This is a multi-faceted event, starting off with the St. Albans Radio Club hamfest in St. Albans from 8 until noon. The event is at the VFW at 373 Lake Street, which we have to drive by anyway to get to the picnic! It is a lot of fun to get out and meet some of the gang and peruse the boat anchors.

After you leave, continue driving west on Lake Street to St. Albans Bay and continue past the Town Park to Hathaway Point Road, the road leading to the State Park. RANV will cover admission to the park if you don't have a Vermont Passport, (many of us have). We'll also provide the charcoal for the grills. You bring the rest, including food, drinks and sporting equipment. Leave pets at home – they are not allowed in the park and it is too hot to keep a pet in the car.

The event will happen rain or shine. We have plenty of shelters to keep out the rain, if that is an issue.

We'll set up a station to do a park activation and there will be plenty of opportunity to get on the air and have fun. We are also planning to have a fox hunt, but only if folks tell me that they are interested in doing this.

Over the last few years, the attendance at the picnic has been quite lackluster due to the pandemic and other concerns. We hope to have a lot better turn out from members, families and friends this time. We trust that getting the word out early will help in planning.

Hope to see you at the picnic!

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## RANV meeting. 6/9/2022

Bob **K1BIF**

Present on-line was: W1TEO, W1LWH

In person: KC1IFK, KC1JGM, AA1SU, K1BIF, W1SJ, KK1L, KC1PYO, KC9ZKF, N1CFO

The meeting began at 7:29, due to technical problems. After introductions Stew introduced the topics for tonight. There was a discussion on how to tow the trailer to the site for Field Day. Also, we discussed the GOTA setup. Anna will bring snacks next month. August 13th will be the club picnic at Camp Killcare. Mitch began a discussion on the Echo/IRLP and Allstar enhancements to the Bolton repeater. The remote RX for the repeater is in Port Kent, NY and the tone for that is 131.8. The IRLP node id 7230, echolink is 97406 and the allstar is 56882. IRLP is a repeater-to-repeater system. Reflectors allow multiple connections through IRLP. Echolink works through the internet from one repeater to anybody connected to our node. Dial # plus the number, then 73 to close it. Echolink computer is a point-of-sale box, running Linux. Allstar is an open network. Users can setup unlimited connections. It is run through a Raspberry pi. Before connecting, be sure you're full quieting. Also, ID before each tone. To end call, type in \*10. Make sure you call at an appropriate time – not west coast at 7am eastern time. Drop your network connection when call is complete. Then the discussion went to Field Day. Mitch gave an overview to RANV field day; location, dates and where stations are located.

The meeting ended at 9:10

Bob, k1bif, secretary

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### NEXT MEETING

Thursday • July 14<sup>TH</sup> • 7:00pm  
Holy Family Parrish Hall

Meeting Topic:  
Balloon Launch

### 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; Contact [AB1DD@arri.net](mailto:AB1DD@arri.net) for information
- Dues due? Pay online at [www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html](http://www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html)