



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

The Official Journal of the Radio Amateurs of Northern Vermont

September • 2023

An ARRL Special Service Club

Vol. 33 No.9

The September 12th RANV Meeting

WRTC VISIT TO ITALY Mitch [W1SJ](#)

For our September meeting, Mitch W1SJ will do a presentation of his visit to Italy and activities at the World Radio Team Championship (WRTC). The talk will have two directions – one on the WRTC event itself, and the other on visits to various tourist sites in Italy. Don't miss it!

ELMORE STATE PARK ACTIVATION Mitch [W1SJ](#)

Join us on Saturday, September 16th for our last activation of the year at Elmore State Park. Elmore has nice facilities, including a beach on the lake, just in case you get tired of operating. Bob and Mitch will set up two stations on 40 and 20 meters, allowing plenty of opportunity for everyone to get on the air.

Elmore is just over an hour drive from Essex Junction. You can either go up Route 15 to Morrisville, then go through town on Route 100 South to end up on Route 12 to Elmore.

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Meetings: 2nd Tuesday • 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

Or else you can take I-89 to Route 100 North to Morrisville and pick up Route 12. Be sure to check this on your GPS as the Morrisville area is tricky.

Plan to be in the park by 10AM when we will start setup, with a planned on-air time of around 11. We'll operate until around 5, or when folks get tired. Be sure to bring food and water.

With a lot of rain this season, we will check the weather on the day before and may move to Sunday if it looks like steady rain.

If you are planning to join us, please let Bob K1BIF know.

VHF CONTEST THIS WEEKEND

Mitch [W1SJ](#)

This weekend is the ARRL VHF QSO Party starting at 1800Z (2PM) Saturday and running until 0400Z Monday (11PM Sunday night). In this event, you can operate on any amateur frequency above 50 MHz. Technician class operators have the same access as Extra Class operators in this event!

Much of the activity takes place on 50.130 MHz SSB, 50.313 FT8, 144.200 SSB and 146.52 FM. Monitor during the day and you may hear some stations.

And, if you do a summit activation on VHF contest weekend and get on 146.52 MHz you will get a pileup. Bring plenty of paper to log. Another hint – do this on Sunday when everyone is worked out. You will become what we call “fresh meat” and stations far and wide will go crazy trying to work you.

I'll be operating as WB1GQR from Mt. Equinox. You should have no trouble hearing me on 50.128 and 144.200 SSB. If you cannot get through, wait for the top of the hour when I turn the beams north. I also pop on 146.52 MHz FM at various times, so keep a radio on.

THREE-PARK ACTIVATION

Mitch [W1SJ](#)

I just finished activating another trio of parks in the Groton State Forest of Vermont. This area comprises 7 State Parks (plus another nearby). The area is only 15 miles from the state capital in Montpelier, but it is an unpopulated area with no food, no stores and no cell service. Each year I take a two-day trip to activate 3 parks (2 during the day and one overnight). This year, I finished up the group by activating Boulder Beach (K-3102) on Saturday, New Discovery (K-3135) overnight and Molly's Falls Pond (K-4589) on Sunday.

I operate out of a minivan, which is quite comfortable. The station is an Elecraft K3 paired with a vintage Heath SB-200 amp, powered by a Honda 2000i generator. The staff at New Discovery (KA1NQY and KA1PFR) lets me plug in overnight, so I don't have to make noise running the generator. The antenna is a 66' long folded dipole fed with ladder line. This is hoisted up into the highest trees (over 40') with a compressed air launcher. I can get the antenna up in around 20 minutes without help. This setup provides a formidable station with a reasonable setup time.

The first stop was Boulder Beach, a day area on Lake Groton. This park closes on Labor Day and is not available in the off-season. I set up 30' above the beach looking west over the lake. However, daytime conditions were not great on 20 meters and 40 meters was even worse, with a high noise level and no conditions into New England. I still managed over 500 QSO's, but it was a lot of work as everyone was in the noise.

I shut down at 6 to go over to New Discovery and I got the antenna up just before sunset. I started with a tremendous hour on 20 meters, and then had even a bigger hour on 40 meters. The pileup died down after midnight and I popped on to FT8 for a bit as I made up the bed. I even managed a quick run on 40 meters in the morning before tearing down. Amongst the many contacts were QSO's with stations in Australia and New Zealand!

At Molly's Falls Pond, I had super high trees at one end and low trees at the other. So, one end of the dipole was 80 feet up and the other end more like 40 feet. Coupled with great conditions, this setup kicked butt. With 500 watts, high antenna and great conditions on Sunday, there were plenty of QSO's to be made. I called CQ at 11:30 and a pileup ensued for the next SEVEN hours! Sadly, there were hardly any stations worked on the West Coast, but there were tons of 4's and 9's worked, in addition to a good number of DX. I needed to get on 40 meters to pick up the guys in the skip zone and had a monster run over there for 30 minutes right at the end. The day ended with an insane 811 QSO's, which might be a record for a single day / single transmitter activation. I had to quit and pull the antenna down as it was getting dark and I hate to do antenna work with a flashlight!

Here are the results:

Park QSO Time States DX P2P

Boulder Beach K-3102 516 5:45 40 11 30

New Discovery K-3135 568 5:00 45 6 18

Molly's Falls K4589 811 7:15 44 18 36

Total 1895 18:00

Some suggestions for other activators:

1. Put up a good antenna and run moderate power. Don't skimp. Not being heard is a drag.
2. Set up in a comfortable position. If you are outside, you deal with rain, wind and sun.
3. Don't yell "Park 2 Park". There are many P2P's calling and I cannot tell you apart and I need to log your callsign anyway. Just give your callsign phonetically and slowly. I'll pull you through if I can hear you.
4. Operating 18 out of 33 hours over two days is crazy. Bring relief ops. I tried but no takers on this trip!

Look for video on this in a week or so.

To date, our group has activated 31 of the 56 Vermont State Parks. We have activated virtually all of the parks in Northern Vermont. Next week we will activate Lake Elmore, leaving just Crystal Lake in Barton and Maidstone, way over on the Connecticut River. There are also two island parks on Lake Champlain. As soon as we secure a boat, we are there! Starting next year, I will plan weekend expeditions to activate the southern parks as well.



W1AW/1 FROM VERMONT BACK ON THE AIR **Mitch W1SJ**

W1AW/1 made its second appearance from Vermont August 16-22. Each state got two cracks at this from a schedule put out by the ARRL. Immediately, I found that a mid-summer activation was not a very good idea as many operators were on vacation. Recruiting a team was tough, and it wasn't until the last moments that we had everyone in place. Eventually, we had 11 stations on the air signing W1AW/1.

Not only were the operators hard to find, but propagation was strange. Normally, 20 meters provides a ton of contacts during the day. But daytime contacts were hard to come by, even with a kilowatt, yagi and the special W1AW/1 call sign. I quickly learned that all one had to do was to wait until after 4PM and things kicked into high gear. It quickly became apparent that 20 meters stayed open all night long, with some great DX runs at sunset and after midnight (Europe sunrise).

Friday, I was joined by Marc-Andre VE2EVN and Jonathon VA2XZA, who drove down from Quebec and did most of the operating that day. Things were slow during the day but when the DX started rolling in, Marc-Andre had his hands full pulling weak DX stations out of the pileup.

On Saturday, the North American QSO Party started at 2PM and W1AW/1 was in the fray. Between the QSO Party and the big European opening between 5-7 PM, an average of 150 QSO's per hour was maintained for 10 hours!

On Sunday, I took the day off, and Joe K1VMT and Zach K1ZK picked up the slack with big runs on 20 meters all day and evening. And while the big numbers were on phone, several operators run up some great QSO totals on both FT8 and FT4.

When all the logs were collected, we uploaded 7820 QSO's from Vermont, the little mouse that roared! We amassed 50 states and over 60 DXCC countries. W1AW/1 was certainly available for anyone to work who wanted to. The breakdown in QSO's was

5854 on phone, 1334 on digital and 632 on CW. This result is slightly better than the 7002 QSO's we made in late March.

Thanks to operators AA1SU, K1BIF, K1EP, K1VMT, K1ZK, K2LE, KE1VT, KC1SFJ, N1CFO, N1JEZ, VA2XZA, VE2EVN and W4YFJ for a job well done!

2023 NORTHEAST HAMXPOSITION **Mitch W1SJ**

At the end of August, I ran down to Marlborough, Massachusetts to attend the Northeast HamXposition (formally known as Boxborough). This is a fun convention for me as I mostly meet people and attend a few forums. Friday was a rainy day and the flea market was washed out. It wasn't all that good on Saturday, and virtually non-existent on Sunday. The dealer room was very small, with most of it consisting of displays of some of the local ham radio clubs. Like our own HAM-CON, the focus was clearly on forums with 13 rooms of forums running all day Saturday and Sunday morning. I attended forums on revitalizing clubs, the ionosphere, the upcoming solar eclipse next year and an introduction to contesting. I presented "The Nuts and Bolts of a Super Portable Operation" where I detailed how we build great stations with wire antennas and small amplifiers and work hundreds.

The HamXposition is also known for the MMRA Fox Box, which is hidden in various spots around the grounds. This year, I did my searching in the evening and during off hours so I could concentrate on this. I was first to find the box in both hunts.

Much of my time at the show was spent meeting with and speaking with other hams across New England. When hams get together and talk, hours can go by!

This trip was a semi-vacation with Debbie and we had some great meals eating out. On Sunday we walked through Boston up to the St. Anthony's Feast in the North End where we sampled gelato

and Italian ices. Amazingly, the rain held off and we didn't get wet!

Remember, NEAR-Fest is in 4 weeks, on Friday-Saturday, October 6-7.

Bob Brown [W4YFJ](#)

My Elmer was Frederick Calvert, W4CMV back in the mid 1950's. He was an amazing operator...He could work 45 wpm, work with his stamp collection and talk to you at the same time. He spent many 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. 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. WN4FXO was my first call.

My station was a Hallicrafters S20-R and the transmitter was a home brew with a 6L6 as the final. I used a Windom antenna with Television twin-lead and had a great time. I only had two crystals 7189 and 7194 KHz. Radio Moscow was on 7190 at that time and my only option was to get up in the morning before school and work and work the Hams out in the Midwest. Still had a great time. The S20-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 lent this receiver to a friend of mine in the early 60's in order for him to learn the code. Never got it back. For some strange reason, I wanted a S20R when I was about 65 years old. I had been looking for one in good shape at hamfests and simply could not find one. I placed a query out on the internet looking for one in good shape. I got an answer from some one out in California and he said that he had 15 of them. He said 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.

Bob Brown W4YFJ

RANV Picnic 6/8/2023
Bob, [K1BIF](#), George [KC1JGM](#)

The RANV Annual picnic was held at Kill Kare State Park. Bob K1BIF provided pictures and video of the event.

We set up an additional tent with the treat of rain but remained mostly dry throughout the day. I had not set up the blue tent since my son was in high school (he is now 40). I found the hammer in the bag I thought I lost over 20 years ago. So nothing is ever lost, it will turn up some day.

Video proof that it happened, and it was fun.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaSuGIJ8qgk>







NEWS & VIEWS

INSIDE

- **WRTC Visit to Italy**
- **Elmore State Park Activation**
- **VHF Contest This Weekend**
- **Three Park Activation**
- **W1AW/1 FROM VERMONT BACK ON the Air**
- **2023 HAM Exposition**
- **My Elmer**
- **2023 RANV Picnic Video Pictures**

NEXT MEETING

September 12 2023 7:00pm
Holy Family Parrish Hall

Meeting Topic
WRTC VISIT TO ITALY

Upcoming, Notices, & Misc

- Steering Wheel: 3rd Thur Noon; JP's Essex
- VE Exams every 2nd Friday; Contact AB1WG for information
- Dues due? Pay online at www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html