



# RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

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## VERMONT WINTER BREAKFAST Saturday, January 25, 9AM

Join us for the Vermont ham radio event of the winter. The Winter Breakfast will be held at JP's Restaurant and Deli, 39 River Road (Route 117) in Essex. We will convene at 9AM for breakfast and conversation, the two things' hams are world famous for. Order delicious goodies right off the menu.

At around 10, we will go into a group discussion where we all share what we have been up to in ham radio and also include some thoughts on how to increase activity on the bands.

Don't miss the Breakfast! Eating is important!  
Mitch

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## VERMONT QSO PARTY NEXT WEEKEND

Mitch [W1SJ](#)

The Vermont QSO Party is next weekend, February 1-2 UTC. Specifically, the event starts Friday, January 31 at 7PM, and runs for 48 hours until Sunday, 7PM. This is the event where WE are the rock stars! Be sure to get on and put Vermont on the air.

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Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> 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](mailto:RANVMentor@gmail.com)

The first consideration is where you plan to operate from. If you have a working HF station, that would be an easy choice. But if you do not have a station, there are options. Each year, I open up host station W1NVT for visiting operators. The station runs high power into good antennas and will generate a lot of response. I will be available full time to guide you on how to operate. Note that this is a lot easier than operating at Field Day where everyone is on the air and the QRM is heavy. We will essentially have the frequency and all the callers to ourselves. Don't be shy! The way you learn to operate is to get on the air! I have 2-hour slots on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Contact me right away me to reserve a slot.

Another possibility is to do a park activation in a rare county. This is a bit more challenging because you need to know where to set up and how to set up a station and antenna which works well. But the participants will really love you for putting a rare county on the air.

When should you get on and what should you do? All the HF bands will be in play as conditions are great. If you are serious, plan to start at 7AM on 10 and/or 15 meters. These bands will typically have great conditions into Europe (but no guarantees are made!). Also at this same time, the EUDX Contest will be running and European stations will be out there looking for contacts. They will send you a strange EU code. Don't worry about that. Properly configured software will determine the country from the prefix, and that is what you need. For the EU stations, just give them your ITU Zone (08). Don't bother saying your county to these stations as it will just cause confusion for them.

You might want to do a lot of search and pounce to look for new countries during this time. But remember, if you do that, you are not fulfilling the prime directive of making Vermont easily available to all callers

After 11AM, Europe starts to go away, and there will be more stateside contacts to be made. Here you will have a choice of 10, 15 or 20 meters for awhile with the focus of shifting to 20 meters mid-afternoon. At 5, we are at sunset and 40 meters is

the place to be until around 8-9 PM and then 80 meters takes over.

Do you do SSB or digital or even CW? That is a matter of preference and also a matter of how good the conditions are and how good your antenna is. The more modes you are on, the more multipliers you will rack up.

We are about 1 week out from the Vermont QSO Party. Go to the website <http://www.ranv.org/vtqso.html> and be sure you understand the rules and how to upload your log. Spend some time to set up your station and make sure your logging software is working correctly. In an operating event, preparation is very important.

The conditions are primo – it doesn't get any better. Plan to get on the air and have a whale of a time.

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## **HAM-CON: SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22** Mitch [W1SJ](#)

We are busy organizing HAM-CON, which is only 30 days away! The schedule is still being put together, but I can share some things we are working on. We will be offering forums on Multi-op station design, QRP operation, Digital modes and an interesting microwave digital mode called AREDN (see article elsewhere in this newsletter). We will also bring back the Weakest Link game show and the ARRL Forum with our newly elected Director K1KI. We will have station operations from W1V on HF and we will also have a VHF voice and digital station set up as well. We are working on a few other forums and demonstrations to round out the morning.

NEW this year is the HAM-CON YOUTH PROGRAM. Sadly, HAM-CON has not been a landing spot for young people. We are working to change that! Through a generous sponsorship by Talkpod, we are able to offer several of their A36plus MAX HTs. The raffle is specifically for attendees 18 and younger who have a ham license or have a commitment to get a license (i.e. in a class). As a result, we hope to have a small bunch

of youngsters cruising around the show, visiting the on-air stations, attending forums, watching demonstrations and many of them taking away a brand-new HT to terrorize the VHF/UHF bands. Exciting!

HAM-CON details can be found at <https://ham-con.org>.

This site will be updated regularly as we add new events.

We need you (yes, all of you in RANV-land) to do two things.

1. We need organizational help to run the show. We need help to run the tech, to seat the vendors, to check tickets and a few other items. We also need ideas. I need to hear from a lot of people of what will make a good show. I already think it is (i.e. I will attend it), but I need to know that several hundred others are thinking the same. We have an organizational meeting each Tuesday at 7PM on Zoom. The last meeting had 2 attendees. That will not result in a first-class show! Make a point to show up and help out.

2. We need to promote. And promote. And promote some more. A clipping in the newspaper or a mention on the repeater will not get it done. Yes, I will contact media outlets and try to get publicity. But we need to do more. We need our membership to reach everyone they know who is a ham, or who might want to be a ham to invite them to the show, and perhaps even drive them to the show. We have a very cheap and sweet \$7 deal (very inexpensive as shows go). We need everyone to purchase tickets and either show up or attend on-line. There are two goals here:

1. There needs to be a critical mass of people at the show so that everyone feel that it is worth it,
2. The income MUST be greater than the expenditure for the venue. In other words, if we run in the red, we dead.

Yes, getting hams to march in a single direction for a specific cause is a cat-herding operation. MEOW and get to work!

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## AREDN in Vermont

### Zach **K1ZK**

Several of our GHz range ham bands overlap with Wi-Fi frequencies, and hams have figured out ways to repurpose widely available and relatively cheap Wi-Fi gear to operate under Part 97. The latest incarnation of this activity is the “Amateur Radio Emergency Data Network” (AREDN). RANV is bringing a speaker to HAM-CON to give us more details on AREDN, but here’s a little preview.

Your ham radio license authorizes you to flash the AREDN firmware onto existing wifi devices and transmit/receive high speed data on the available frequencies. The two most common bands for AREDN are 2.4 GHz (we use channel “-2,” which is not shared with consumer devices) and 5.8 GHz (dozens of channels to choose from). These GHz frequencies generally need true line-of-sight — the antennas generally need an unobstructed path to connect.

The AREDN firmware makes each device into a mesh node. Nodes meshed together create a self-healing network for data transmission. Once an AREDN mesh network is running, all kinds of network-enabled applications are available. There is simple text chat, but of course you can do that with old-school packet radio. Where AREDN really shines is high-speed data. You could plug webcams into the AREDN network to create live video streams. Send and receive emails or large data files. Link all your DMR repeaters on a high-speed network that’s totally independent of the internet. There are lots of possibilities!

One thing that I have found interesting is that getting started with AREDN helps you learn about networking. Some folks in our ham community are already computer networking experts. But my skill set in this area is pretty weak. So it’s been fun to try to teach myself a little bit more on this topic while also building some very capable high speed data equipment. Plus I can now say that I’m QRV on two more bands: 2.4 and 5.8 GHz!

See you at the AREDN forum at HAM-CON and then on the air on 2.4 and 5.8 GHz!

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**RANV Holiday Party Meeting Minutes**  
**Jeff N1YD**

Our annual Holiday Party went well. We met on a Saturday at noon, bringing pot luck dishes of all kinds. Linn W1LWH drove up from the Boston area to join us. We got acquainted with our newest member Blair KB1UIY, who works as a financial planner. Mitch brought a chocolate cake to celebrate our club being 14 time national champions for class 2A in ARRL Field Day.





## NEWS&VIEWS

### INSIDE

- Vermont Winter Breakfast
- Vermont QSO Party
- HAM CON
- AREDN in Vermont
- **RANV Holiday Party**

### NEXT MEETING

Vermont Winter Breakfast  
Saturday January 25<sup>th</sup> @ 9AM  
JP's Restaurant and Deli, 39 River Road, Essex

**Meeting Topic**  
**Eating / Conversation on Ham Radio**

### Upcoming, Notices, & Misc

- Steering Wheel: 3<sup>rd</sup> Tue Noon; JP's Essex, Vt
- VE Exams every 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday;
- Contact AB1WG for information
- Dues due? Pay online at [www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html](http://www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html)