



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

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An ARRL Special Service Club

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Vermont Winter Breakfast

Mitch [W1SJ](#)

The Vermont Winter Breakfast is this Saturday, January 31, 9-11 AM at JP's Deli, 39 River Road (Route 117) in Essex. You can order off the menu. There is a full selection of breakfast and lunch items. After eating we will have an impromptu ham radio discussion.

If you haven't done so already, you can buy HAM-CON admission tickets and/or renew your RANV membership for those who haven't done so yet. I will have no ability to make change, so bring exact amounts (\$8, \$16 or \$28 for various HAM-CON tickets or \$20 for RANV membership).

Speaking of HAM-CON, be sure to ext/email/phone all your friends and get them to the show. This is important as we need attendance to offset the cost of running the event.

Next week is the W1AW/1 activity and on February 7-8 is the Vermont QSO Party. Plan to be active. If you don't have a station or have a minimal station, I welcome you to join me at the W1NVT and W1AW/1 station at my QTH on Saturday and Sunday. Training and bad comedy are included at no charge.

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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

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RANVMentor@gmail.com

Here is important news for our New York attendees. The Charlotte ferry is shut down for the foreseeable future due to ice buildup. Unless it gets very warm very fast, don't count on it being available during HAM-CON. Options are the Champlain Bridge (30 miles south) or the Grand Isle Ferry (38 miles north).

So..... stop texting, put down stupid phone and get over to the breakfast this Saturday. Get out and get some fresh air and good eats and good companionship. See you Saturday, bright and early.

VERMONT QSO PARTY NEXT WEEKEND

Mitch [W1SJ](#)

The Vermont QSO Party is next weekend, February 7-8 UTC. Specifically, the event starts Friday, February 6 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.

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.

This year's QSO Party will run concurrently with the W1AW/1 activation from Vermont which runs February 4-11 UTC. Stations who are authorized to operate as W1AW/1 will be on during the QSO Party with both their callsign and the W1AW/1 callsign at various times allowing more stations to be worked.

When should you get on and what should you do? All the HF bands will be in play as conditions are good. If you are serious, plan to start after 7AM on 10 and/or 15 meters. These bands will typically have good 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 a while 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 very good. Plan to get on the air and have a whale of a time.

HAM-CON,

Mitch [W1SJ](#)

The ARRL Vermont State Convention will be Saturday, February 28 at the Hampton Inn Colchester, conveniently located at I-89, Exit 16. HAM-CON is unique as it is the only hybrid convention. If you are unable to travel, you can join the forums and demonstrations on-line from the comfort of home.

We have another great show planned. Elecraft co-owner Wayne Burdick N6KR will do a presentation on the various Elecraft radios you might consider. The World Radio Team Championship (WRTC) will be held in England this July and chairman Mark M0DXR will be available to tell us about it. Brian WA1ZMS, one of the premier low band operators will talk about what it takes to get on the 630-meter (472 kHz) and 2250-meter (137 kHz) ham bands. Matt AC1RI will share some of his insights on what it takes to do a successful POTA activation. I will jump in to present how to set up and operate on the ham radio satellites. Tom K1KI will give a short talk and run a Q&A session on what is new at the ARRL. Having fun at a show is always important and we have two events – “Work That Pileup” and the trivia contest, “Do You Know Your Ham Radio.” Be sure to stop by and join the fun.

HAM-CON is also known for its short form (10 minute) demonstrations. We will have

the W1V remote ham station, a microwave set up with AREDN, a UHF station with DMR and a short talk on emergency operations. Add to this the flea market, ham exams, door prizes and hundreds of hams and you have a great time in the making. If you haven't yet, buy your tickets now, as it is only \$8. Not sure you will be going? Buy your ticket anyway. If you cannot attend in person, watch the event on-line either during or after the event. Go to the web site for all the intricate details.

HAM-CON Web: ham-con.org

HAM-CON Tix::

ham-con.org/hamconpay.html

We need everyone to be promoters of this event. This is critical. The venue keeps raising the price. The attendance does not go up. It takes a lot of wheeling and dealing and a bit of magic to keep this show viable. We need bodies in the door, or on-line. Make a list of every ham you know. And then contact each one, inviting them to HAM-CON. Use the telephone (old-fashioned, but far more enjoyable), E-mail, text, social media or even smoke signals. Besides helping to get more people to the show, you will have a ton of fun reaching out to folks you haven't spoken to in a long time. For those who need travel, form car pools. Over the years, I have had the most fun traveling to shows with a bunch of hams in the car!

Ham radio gets its strength through our activity. Don't just sit home and talk about the good old days. Get out HAM-CON and have fun! Or else, make sure you attend on line. Hope to see you!

SUPER ACTIVE!

Mitch [W1SJ](#)

I'm winding down towards the end of the 3-month “contest season”. For me, this starts in November with the two Sweepstakes events, through December with the 160 meter, 10 meter and Stew Perry contests, across 4 straight weekends in January with the RTTY Roundup, the two NA QSO Parties and the CQ Worldwide 160 Meter Contest. This will all come to a stunning conclusion with the Vermont QSO Party and W1AW/1 event. If you had any inkling that I am certifiable, this totals 9 weekends, 9293 QSO's, 172 hours and we haven't gotten to the Vermont QSO Party yet! To be honest, after this is done I won't even look at the radio until June!

Each contest has its own flavor. Four are CW, 3 are SSB and 1 is on RTTY, which in itself is strange. The Sweepstakes events have a typical fast start for

8 hours and then become a slog for the rest of the time. The three 160-meter events require both skill and stamina to stay up from sunset to sunrise picking weak CW signals out of the noise. On 10 meters, if it is open as it was this year, it like shooting fish in a barrel. And the 10-hour NA QSO Parties are an insane scramble with rates over 100 per hour for the entire contest.

Why do all this? The simple answer is that I enjoy it. Each contest is a sporting event. There is no prediction on how it will turn out. The only thing I control is keeping the equipment and the operator working in top form for each event. Keeping on top of this is not trivial.

Isn't this nuts? Not for me. Look at the news and observe how some people behave themselves. By comparison, contesting seems downright normal. And you know what? I pretty much work the same call signs each weekend. I'm not the only one spending time on this.

Ultimately, I keep getting better at all this, hoping to keep one step ahead of senility. It would be curious to see a study on whether contesting keeps Alzheimer's at bay. I get to say hello to a lot of folks each week, even if it is brief. We always catch up on the details on line or at Dayton. And when totally focused in the heat of a contest, all the nonsense in your life gets put on hold and it can be relaxing – until some doofus tries to take your run frequency.

So get active on some contests or real activations (i.e. you make a lot of contacts). Here is your opportunity! Next week is the Vermont QSO Party. My station will have the dual role of the VTQP Host Station and also W1AW/1. I have two stations and I need help keeping them on the air for many hours. Pick an operating time and come on over. I will walk you through what to do and then let you have fun. And this is way more fun on the air than Field Day. As a Vermont station in the Vermont QSO Party, we are the king of the band. This means two things – folks are specifically looking for us and the QRM is fairly low.

Contact me and let me know what 2-hour block between noon and 6PM on Saturday or Sunday you would like to operate.

Chittenden County Region FM Simplex Net Zachary [K1ZK](#)

QST: The February 2026 edition of the Chittenden County Region 2m FM simplex net will be at 6:00pm EST on Saturday, February 7, 2026, on 146.55 MHz. NCS will be running the special call sign W1AW/1 for all those who want to log it on 2m simplex. This net will also be right in the middle of the Vermont QSO Party & will follow the announced 5pm 40m “activity hour” for Saturday. Stop on by, test your simplex gear, work W1AW/1, and log some points in the VTQP!

73 de [K1ZK](#)

The Annual Tower Dream, Trap Surgery, and the Road to the VT QSO Party

Logan- [KC1SFJ](#)

I have been meaning to put up my Mosley TA-33JR beam since I acquired it over a year ago. My last attempt occurred the day before the 2025 Vermont QSO Party, which was perhaps an overly optimistic schedule. This year, I decided to be responsible and start a month early on my annual antenna enterprise.

Truth be told, my favorite part of amateur radio is the setup experience. I enjoy the chaos, logistics, and satisfaction that come with getting something built and on the air. Field Day, POTA, and SOTA all represent that spirit of immediate deployment and operational readiness. Of course, I do occasionally take the simpler route and put a vertical on the commuter to work FT8 to and from the office, but it simply is not the same as a full ground-up install.

Obviously, I would like to install a proper tower. However, before convincing the powers that be that a tower is a necessary structural enhancement to the home, it seemed wise to prove that simply replacing the old TV antenna with a tribander was not an elegant long-term solution. So, I mounted the beam along the roof ridge on the metal roof. Functionally, this is about as effective as installing the antenna three feet off the ground, but it did serve a purpose. It allowed me to test functionality, demonstrate the size and presence of the antenna system, and refine the assembly process.

The first attempt did not go well. I mixed up the trap elements and ended up with resonance on 17, 23, and 25 MHz. The second attempt improved, with corrected traps producing resonance near 28 MHz, although 14 and 21 MHz still showed a stubborn 4:1 SWR.



great to catch up with hams that I do not see very often. The Holy Family Parish Hall is just the right place for such a gathering, and I could see that everyone had a good time.

Due to weather and darkness, January is the other month of the year in which we do not have a meeting. Instead, we will have our Ham Radio Breakfast on a Saturday morning at JP's in Essex Junction. We will eat, talk about the upcoming HAM-CON, etc. Don't miss it.

RANV Holiday Party December 20, 2025



The December Holiday Party

Jeff N1YD

Our Holiday Party was a big success. We had 23 people attending, and a wonderful variety of dishes and desserts. We even had venison stew! It was



Jeff Bonn N1YD





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NEXT MEETING

Tuesday January 12th

Vermont Winter Breakfast
Saturday, January 31, 9-11AM
JP's Deli, 39 River Road (Route 117) in Essex

Meeting Topic

Breakfast / HAMCON Discussion

Upcoming, Notices, & Misc

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