



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

The Official Journal of the Radio Amateurs of Northern Vermont

October • 2022

An ARRL Special Service Club

Vol. 32 No. 10

RANV October Meeting Logging Software

Bob **K1BIF**

This week we will have a presentation on logging software. What's out there and what's free. After the overview, K1BIF will go into detail on the two programs he uses, and some advice on what to steer clear of. Anyone who's an expert on N1MM will then tell us what it can and cannot do.

ANOTHER 3-PARK WEEKEND! ACTIVATION

Mitch **W1SJ**

I had such a good time doing a 2-day, 3-park event last year that I decided to return to Groton State Forest to put another 3 parks on the air. There are 7 parks in the forest cluster, plus one more not far away. I'll be back next year to finish off the last two.

My schedule pushed this activity out to the first weekend of October. There are two issues – one, many parks are now closed for the season, and two, it gets dark earlier. I decided to activate Stillwater State Park (3145) as it is virtually an all-time new one – only 13 QSO's in one activation previously. I

CONTACTS

Stewart **KC1IFK**, President
stwbll2@gmail.com

George **KC1JGM**, VP/Treasurer
gmayvt1@gmail.com

Bob **K1BIF**, Secretary
bhennebe@gmail.com

George **KC1JGM**, Editor
gmayvt1@gmail.com

Newsletter submissions to
gmayvt1@gmail.com

US Mail: PO Box 9392
South Burlington, VT 05407

Web: www.RANV.org

Reflector: RANV@groups.io

Meetings: 2nd 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

did some prep work to make sure I would be allowed to operate in this closed park.

The entry way of the park has a wide-open area surrounded by big trees – perfect for a nice, high dipole. Everything was in place and the first CQ was issued at 10:30. I had excellent conditions on 20 meters, with many West Coast states ending up in the log. The California QSO Party helped with the numbers. A good smattering of European DX provided more contacts. I had to shut down early – at 4:30 – to allow enough time to take everything down, move over to the next park and get everything running before it got dark at 6PM. I ended up with 629 QSO's – all on phone, in a 5-hour activation.

The next park was Kettle Pond State Park, only 2 miles down the road. While the park has a camping area next to the pond, the tree canopy and close spacing of campers would have made this challenging. Instead, I opted for the day use parking area, just off the main road. There was plenty of open space and high trees to get the antenna in the air, and the peak foliage made this a rather “pretty” parking lot. I started CQing at 6:30, as it was starting to get dark. I had big runs on 20 meters for 2½ hours, followed by insane runs on 40 meters (180/hour) after that. Things slowed up a bit and I decided eating would be nice. Not willing to relive the charcoal barbecue disaster from last year, I brought a pre-cooked burger and warmed it up in my toaster oven. During the 5-minute cook time, I had to shut down the amp, as the draw off the generator went above the allowed maximum. No big deal, I still worked people and was able to enjoy a nice meal in my mobile ham shack. After a restful night, I got on for an hour on Sunday morning on 20 meters before grabbing breakfast and packing everything away. Total haul for this park: 800 QSO's.

I quickly ran up the road to New Discovery State Park to say hello to assistant ranger Karen KA1PFR and let her know I was at Kettle Pond, which she manages. Then it was a 20 minute ride over to Seyon Lodge State Park, the furthest south and west of the Groton cluster. The lodge was built as a guest house by Harry Noyes in 1939 who named the

property Seyon Ranch (Noyes spelled backward). Vermont bought the property in 1967 and got into the hotel business!

There are a lot of pine trees on the property, which I avoided and ended up setting up in the parking area with a nice view of the pond. Conditions were not as good as the day before. It became painfully clear that I wasn't hearing or working anyone out west. Call signs with 6 and 7 were not found in my log! This was made up by working many folks in 4-land. I suspect that I worked every last ham in North Carolina. While the West Coast was dead to me, the Europeans were regularly calling in. I tried 40 meters and was met with an S-7 noise level from somewhere on the property. Ugh! About this time, it also became clear that I was close to breaking 2000 QSO's for the weekend, but it didn't look like that would happen. I kept plugging away and decided to operate until 6, which was the drop-dead time because after that, I'm taking everything down in the dusk. Just around 5:00, I gave 40 meters another try, and voila! I had a massive run going for a full hour. I shut down at 6:02 with 590 QSO's for the day and 2019 QSO's for the weekend. Yikes! I pulled everything down and took a quick relaxing stroll down by the pond.

Some info on the area. Groton is quite an outback area. There are no stores or gas nearby. Someone asked me where the town was. “What town?” There is no cell phone or internet coverage. The cell signal stops at the eastern edge of both Montpelier and Barre and stays dead until New Hampshire. Although there are nearby repeaters in Cabot and Corinth, these cannot be accessed. Only 145.15 Bolton and 145.47 Mt. Ellen provide a usable signal in this area, that that is across 3 mountain ranges! Someone asked me what I would do in an emergency? Heck I'd have to call for help on 20 or 40 meters!

By the way, the weather was perfect for both days. How often does that happen?

The one failing was that no one else has taken up the weekend long activations. Few in our area have taken up ANY park activations. Over the last several years. Most claim to be busy. But really,

what can be more important than playing radio in a campground in peak foliage season with perfect weather.



Last weekend I operated W1NVT from 3 rare parks in the Groton State Forest in Vermont (3145, 3122, 3142) to the tune of 2019 QSO's over 2 days.

Here is the video from that operation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L4BKDStVGk8>



HAM-CON NEXT FEBRUARY

Mitch [W1SJ](#)

HAM-CON will be Saturday, February 25, 2023. Why am I saying this now? At this time, I have to apply to the ARRL for our Convention status, so it is a good time to have everyone weigh in.

Over the last two years, we had a full on-line show in 2021 and a hybrid show this past February and the shows were financially viable. Our plan is to do a full live show, but include on-line access for those who cannot make it. However, everyone needs to know that the vendors did horribly last time because half the attendees were on line. Therefore, we need everyone to attend and to buy stuff. If that doesn't happen the vendors stop coming and we become a forums-only show. Many would not like that. So be sure to save the date and attend HAM-CON on February 25. And attend even if the weather is less than ideal. We'll still have on-line access for shut-ins and those out of area, but we need to locals to be there.

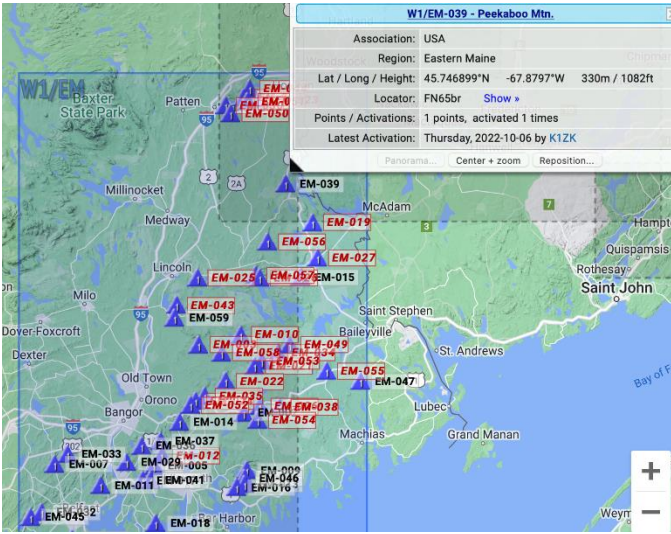


While we are in the early planning stages, please feel free to offer any suggestions or changes which you think will make the show better.

K1ZK was on trip to Aroostook County, Maine
Zach

K1ZK was on trip to Aroostook County, Maine in early October and made a brief stop at Peekaboo Mountain — “Summits on the Air” summit W1/EM-039. Located in grid FN65 near the New Brunswick border, this peak had never been activated before. Completed five QSOs on 20m CW running 10W to a mag loop at the top of a fire tower on the summit.





Farms n the Air Bob **K1BIF**

KB1FRW and K1BIF did a farms on the air while Mitch was away on his POTA sojourn.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ch3-UNtkFNM>

Murphy was there

I decided to do another “Farms on the Air” from my Essex wood lot on September 10th. I had invited a few fellow hams to join me, but they had already scheduled something else for that day. So, I set out alone, arriving at 10am. An Antenna is already set up there, a 160-10-meter Cobra Ultra-light folded dipole. As I pulled out all my equipment from the car, I noticed that I had forgotten the 50-foot extension cord for the generator. Luckily for me, my wife was getting ready to go shopping, so she brought the cord to me – I will be paying her back with many, many chores. I set up the tent, all went well. I set up the station, all went well. I set up the computer, started the generator, and all went well.

I tuned up on 40 meters, then started transmitting. The initial tune put my rig at 1:1, but after I transmitted one CQ, the SWR went to 8:1. I checked all the connections, making sure the RF cables were tight, and connected correctly; they were. I moved to 20 meters, tuned to 1.2:1, and called CQ again; the SWR jumped to 7:1. I returned,

transmitted, and the SWR went to 11:1. Several more tries had the same results. During these experiments, I did get 2 responses, and 2 QSOs; how I will never know. Now, I stopped transmitting and started examining everything. First, using the telephoto lens in my camera, I inspected the dipole; it looked good. Then, I opened up the 4:1 balun; it looked good. Maybe it’s the 500-watt tuner? Next, I removed the amp and its tuner and tried again.

Oh no, I got the same results. I inspected the window line from the antenna to the balun, it looked fine. It’s now around 11:15 am. Putting back the amp and its tuner, checking all the connections, making sure they’re tight and going to the correct spots, took another chunk of operating time. Still I wasn’t able to properly tune the %\$&^@ thing! I do carry a lot of spare cables with me to remote locations, so, it was time to replace them one at a time. I don’t care where one starts, it’s always the last cable you check that’s the problem one, so it was for me. I used that particular order of cables to check because all the other cable were made by me, the last one was the “store bought” cable that has worked in scores of portable operations. About 12:15 I start transmitting and it WORKS! I’m on the air for a little under 3 hours and put 158 Qs in the log. You’d think that was all, but no. Being by myself, I set up my camera to shoot video on a tripod behind me to my left. I carefully focused it on the radio so most of the shot would be in focus, then started it and let it run for about 15 minutes - I was doing about 50 Qs an hour, sometimes more while filming. When I got home and downloaded the video, Murphy struck again. The camera had refocused itself on a chair outside the tent, it’s not even a nice chair. See the results for yourself:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8c5ohdV80Ss&t=20s>

NEAR-FEST is October 14-15

Paul **AA1SU**

This coming Friday and Saturday, October 14-15, 2022, is NEAR-Fest XXXII.

It is held at the Deerfield Fairgrounds in Deerfield, NH.

NEAR-Fest is an international event run by and for all radio hobbyists and enthusiasts, including “hams”, short-wave listeners, scanner buffs, vintage/antique radio fans, etc.

It is held twice annually, spring and fall, rain or shine. NEAR-Fest XXXII hours of operation are 9:00 AM Friday October 14th through 3:00 PM Saturday October 15th, 2022.

Admission is \$15. Persons under 18, and unlicensed spouses are admitted free of charge. Inside parking is available for \$10 and includes a “reasonable amount of flea market selling space”. Parking outside the gate is FREE!

Directions:

From all points North:
Navigate to Manchester NH via Interstate 93.
Look for Exit 7 - Highway 101 East. Signs say Seacoast, Portsmouth, etc. Follow Highway 101 East for 6.9 miles to Exit 3 Highway 43.
Turn RIGHT at the top of the ramp. Look for signs to Candia. Watch for the LEFT turn as Highway 43 splits off towards Candia/Deerfield. Follow Highway 43 for 6.3 miles. Fairgrounds are on your right.

Total mileage from I-93 & 101: 129 miles.

Prizes:

There will be TWO grand first prize drawings, one Friday at 5:00PM and the other Saturday at 2:00PM both at the Relaxation Grove. The two grand prizes are YAESU FT-891 HF/6M transceivers.

Second grand prize to be drawn on Saturday is an SDRPlay DX SDR radio. There will also be a draw for an SDRPlay RSP1A Friday afternoon.

There will also be a gift certificate good for a two-night stay at the Holiday Inn, Manchester, worth \$225.00. It is valid until the end of 2023.

Winners must be present Friday to win. On Saturday you do not need to be there. Prizes will be mailed.

Mitch W1SJ will have his 70 cm repeater on the air after 10 AM or so. The frequency is 440.025+ 141.3 PL. Get on and throw out your call sign.

Hope to see you there.

Please visit the web site for lots more information that I could not list here.

Web site: <https://near-fest.com/>

RANV meeting. 9/8/2022

Bob **K1BIF**

Present on-line : KC1VT, N1LX, KC1JGM, KJ1V, W1EJC

In person: KC1IFK, AA1SU, N1YD, K1BIF, W1SJ, K1KR, KC1PYO, W4YFJ, W1ETV,

The meeting began at 7:10. There was a request for interest in a build day for tennis ball launchers. The approximate cost will be between \$125 and \$150 for parts. If you are interested, contact K1BIF (@arrl.net) – parts must be paid for in advance.

There was a discussion on possible Parks on the Air activations for the rest of the year. Nominations for club officers will take place during the October meeting. The election will take place at the November meeting.

Stew introduced the topics for tonight. Bob, K1BIF discussed the pros and cons on installing a solar generation system in a home. Also, he described the various options, and costs. The main option would be adding a battery backup (power wall) to the system for electricity at night and

during an outage since a grid tied system turns off when the power goes out. After that, Bob discussed the pros and cons of owning an electric vehicle, including costs, repair costs, the cost per mile (equivalent MPG), and charging options.

The Steering Wheel will be 9/15/22 at the Guilty Plate in Colchester.

The meeting ended at 9:08
Bob, k1bif, secretary



NEWS & VIEWS

INSIDE

- ANOTHER 3-PARK WEEKEND!
- Ham Con Next February
- K1ZK Aroostook County, Maine
- Farms on the Air
- Near Fest Oct 14- 15
- October Meeting Minutes

NEXT MEETING

Thursday October 13TH • 7:00 PM
Holy Family Parrish Hall

Meeting Topic:
Logging Software

Upcoming, Notices, & Misc

- Steering Wheel: 3rd Thur Noon; Ninety-Nine Restaurant, Taft Corners, Williston
- VE Exams every 2nd Friday; Contact AB1DD@arrl.net for information
- Dues due? Pay online at www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html