



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

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PRESENTATION

The June 8th RANV Meeting

Presentation on the Camel's Hump activation, and to drum up interest on doing more VT parks in the future.

FIELD DAY Update

Mitch **W1SJ**

Field Day is 3 weeks away. We need to get serious! I have sent out the Field Day survey. It is at <http://ranv.org/surfd23.html>. Please fill it out if you haven't already. For an operation as large and complex as our Field Day, we need to know exactly when people are on site and when they are not. We are scheduling 3 stations over a 24-hour period. In addition, we need to have extra people as backup and to help with maintenance of the site. The well-worn phrase, "We can't hire enough people", is not going to work here. To be competitive and strive for excellence, we need to have everyone on deck.

Each year we have 16-18 people involved in Field Day. That sounds OK, but when you consider that we are a club of over 90 members, that is pretty lackluster. Where are the hams in our area? It would seem to me that if you are a ham operator, you want to be involved in Field Day in some manner. Too

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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

many people tell me that they are involved with family. Yes, family is important, but for the whole 24 hours? It seems that a compromise can be worked out to be involved with both family and Field Day activities.

Field Day is a well-oiled machine (hopefully). Simply showing up and saying, “Here I am!” doesn’t usually work well. Sometimes we can fit you in with something, but everyone has pre-assigned jobs and everyone is quite busy. Get involved from the start.

The first thing is to fill out the survey. From this we plan the Friday work parties and plan the operating schedule. New this year is that the GOTA station will be pre-scheduled.

The next piece is the Thursday, June 8th meeting. Half of this meeting will be involved with Field Day. It is a good place to find out stuff, if you don’t know.

We have a final planning meeting on Monday, June 19th at my location. This is where we make sure everything is ready. We ask crucial questions like, “Did someone order the porta-potty?”

We have a pre-setup event late afternoon, Thursday June 22nd where we shoot wires over the trees and drive in the anchors. We do this late in the day to avoid the heavy traffic along the road on Friday.

Friday June 23rd , 10AM until 6PM is when we erect antennas and tents. We need 15+ people ready to work. You will learn all sorts of things about antennas which cannot be found in the handbook!

Finally, we need to schedule operators for the 24 hours starting June 24th at 2PM and then for the takedown on Sunday.

By the way, it is very much OK to invite non-club members and even non-hams. If you invite non-hams, they may decide to become a ham after joining us. Or not.

Fill out the survey. Make a commitment to participate with the best Field Day group out there at Field Day 2023!

Soon you will receive a link to our Field Day survey to let me know when everyone can be on site, so we can plan everything out. Remember to put June 23-25 for Field Day on your calendar. Accept no substitutes!

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!

There are a lot of ways to play. In the June contest, everyone focuses on 6 meters since it is Es (sporadic E skip) season, and widespread openings are possible. I emphasize possible – there may not be any opening at all. The only way to know is to show up. When conditions are good, you can work many states on 50.130-50.200 MHz SSB. Or else in lesser conditions, FT8 on 50.313 MHz produces some action. Last June the band was open to Europe and Japan!

If you have SSB capability on 2 meters, 144.200 MHz is the center of activity. Tune carefully – you may hear a few stations. For most of our readers, 146.52 and 146.55 MHz FM is where you can find contacts. Monitor all day and you are sure to hear something.

And where are our SOTA operators? 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.

Warning: VHF contesting is very habit forming. I got hooked working W2SZ from northern Massachusetts while I was driving in Brooklyn many years ago. Now I make a biannual pilgrimage up the mountain just to make QSO's!

CAMEL'S HUMP ACTIVATION **Despite Poor Conditions, We Nailed It!** Mitch [W1SJ](#)

This past Saturday, we activated Camel's Hump State Park, K-3107. This is a challenging park because it is undeveloped and is only accessed through very small parking areas at various trailheads. But it is insanely popular, meaning that the small parking areas (where we put up antennas) fill up fast. Because of this, we planned this activation for early in the season. Bob K1BIF got to the Burrows parking area up from Huntington Center at 8AM to claim a spot. I showed up 50 minutes later and grabbed the last spot. Everyone who came after that had to get creative to park. And the parking area was full all day long past 6PM!

In this small 26-vehicle area, we had limited room to put up our two antennas. We did the best we could, but the antennas were closer than we wanted them to be and we experienced cross-station interference at times. Bob started off on 40-meter phone and had the usual spotty daytime activity: short pileups, followed by silence, and then more short pileups. Over on 20 meters, phone did not happen at all, so I went immediately to CW. Soon, Ron KK1L showed up and he took over on 40 phone and Paul AA1SU came by and took over on 20 CW. Bob and I enjoyed a much-deserved rest all morning!

In the afternoon, 20 CW gave way to 15 phone which was OK for a bit. The 40-phone station went to 20 phone and then the pileups ensued with Paul at the helm. George KC1JGM showed up and jumped in for some QSO's as well. I jumped between phone and CW on various bands. Bob pulled his station down at 3:45 and I went to work on 20 phone continuing with some nice runs. I shut down just before 6 with a grand total of 942 QSO's

in the log. Not too shabby for a day with very mediocre conditions.

A guy from Washington state asked for a card for a QSO at 14:38Z (7:38 AM his time). We had only 10 QSO's from out West all day. Not great. We did manage to work 14 DXCC countries. This was amazing since the path to Europe is directly over 4000-foot Camel's Hump, a takeoff angle of better than 15 degrees! We had lots of QSO's and a good group of ops which made for a very fun activation.





PUBLIC SERVICE ACTIVITIES THIS MONTH

Mitch **W1SJ**

Memorial Day weekend is when we have our public service doubleheader, consisting of the Essex Memorial Parade and the Vermont City Marathon.

Saturday morning, we arrived early at the Fairgrounds, only to find it locked and several of the participants waiting outside the gate. Finally, the gate was open, but the usual place we line everyone up was moved! Confusion reigned for a while until the ham radio marshals figured out where everyone needed to be, and we then directed the participants. Some of the job required backing large trucks and trailers into their assigned spots, always an exciting challenge. One of our operators complained how stressful this job was. But I was having a great time. After all, this is what we are good at. We only had 1 or 2 changes in the lineup which was quickly communicated down to the review stand at the Five Corners. At 10AM, the parade stepped off and continued without incident until it ended at 11:30. We had a slightly smaller field of around 80 groups this year. Hopefully this number will increase as things return to normal. Thanks to operators AA1SU, K3BH, KD2AKK, N1WCK, W1DEB and W1SJ for pulling off this Herculean task. Paul mentioned that we need more hams! Next year, we'll have to buy some.

The CQ DX van was adorned with banners, flags and multiple antennae, culminating in the 80 meter

monster up at 12 feet. A flashing strobe and CW from a loudspeaker complimented the setup. I was in a Go-Kart which terrorized the field, making sure all were safe and well-behaved. I had the most fun mixing it up with the Motorcycle Corps and the Shriners in their Go-Karts! What fun! To top it off, we had a nice lunch at the VFW Memorial Day weekend cookout with some tasty burgers!

Marathon Sunday started early at around 6AM as we got the Vermont City Marathon Net Control Station up and running at the EOC (Emergency Operations Center) at the Burlington Police Department. Bob and Jay handled Net Control duties and I hooked up with the Race Director at the start. Right away things went awry. The aid station at Oak ledge Park communicated that they could not access the water hose to fill the tank. It was behind a locked door. Instead, they were filling cups in the bathroom, hardly sufficient for 3000+ runners who would be showing up in 30 minutes. The Race Director was not pleased and had to put the start on hold for 14 minutes until someone from the Parks Department got over there with the correct key to open things up. That finally happened and the race was off to a smooth start. The six aid stations were very busy, but were able to keep up with demand. There was only 1 medical call, which was amazing for a day when things started to get warm in the afternoon. Otherwise, it was a near perfect day at the race. I had time to bike around the course and get a bird's eye view of what goes on during the Marathon. The amateur radio communications and the repeater were spot on. Thanks to AA1SU, K1BIF, K3BH, N1DSO, N1DTQ, KD2AKK, KC1NWN, KC1PNI, KC1PRO, KC1SFJ, N2KLC, W1SJ and bike patrollers KC1OAH, KC1LVE, N1CCL, KC1ROS, KK1L, KC1HLZ, KC1IZP.



RANV Memorial Day Parade Debbie **W1DEB**



RANV Memorial Day Parade Mitch **W1SJ**

Marathon Pics and Notes Enclosed from North Beach

Paul N. Gayet **AA1SU**

My assignment for the 2023 Vermont City Marathon was North Beach at the Bike Path. This put me at mile markers 11.6 and 24.7. I arrived at 7:15 AM and checked in with Net Control. I was told that my signal was perfect. I was using an old school Radio Shack HTX-202. At this point, I strolled over to the aid station and introduced myself to Denice, the captain. We recognized each other from last year. One medical person was on site, and the other arrived a few minutes later. I was told by Mitch W1SJ that the start was "On Hold", so I relayed that to the staff. After a 14-minute delay, the race was on. The first runner came thru, as scheduled around 8:24 AM. I relayed that to Net Control. Besides that, and a few other pieces of Traffic that I can't remember, it was a very uneventful day. The weather was perfect, and everybody was on their best behavior. (Well, except for when I proposed to the lady in the wedding dress. She told me I was #2.) We had no medical issues at our aid station, but we were ready, just in case.

Towards the end of the shift, I headed for the Port-O-Let, only to find P&P Septic backing down the slope to retrieve it. Once inside, I bellowed out to the driver, "You better not pick me up, or I'll switch to Wind River!". (A competitor that we use at Field Day). He got a kick out of that.

I made a short 5-minute video for YouTube, too.

Paul **AA1SU** Marathon North Beach



Launcher Build

George **KC1JGM**

Thanks to Bob **KB1FRW** offering the facilities and providing technical guidance Mitch, W1SJ, Paul AA1SU and George **KC1JGM** were able to successfully complete our launchers.

We met in 2 sessions, the 1st we glued the high-pressure chamber and connecting U section. These items required time to set up completely.

The following session required machining of the gauge, Shrader valve and relief ports into the high-pressure container. Thanks to Bob's **KB1FRW** skilled use of the milling machine in drilling the ports everyone was successful in mounting the ports without leaks.

The next step was attaching the sprinkler valve and trigger mechanism. I believe we all had some leaks when pressure tested. Bob recommended using grey Teflon tape instead of white and this appeared to fix the leaks.

Bob **K1BIF** demonstrated how to cut and load the tennis balls with weights and affix a leader on the tennis balls.

Paul AA1SU launcher test was a success



RANV meeting. 5/11/2023 minutes
Bob, **K1BIF**

Present on-line was: **KB1NHQ**, **KC1PRO**,
KE2DLA, **W1LWH**, **W1EJC**

In person: **KC1JGM**, **KB1LOT**, **N1YD**, **KC1PYO**,
W1SJ, **KC1KUW**, **AA1SU**, **KC1SFJ**

The meeting began at 7:20.

June 3rd we will activate Camel's Hump, 8:00 am.
Rules for Field Day have changed, GOTA contacts are worth 5 points each and coach is needed for only 10 contacts.

The discussion from new hams began with Logan. He's working on design, antennas, baluns. He bought a nano VNA and learned to use it with antennas. He's learning CW and building an SDR. Anna showed her go bag with her Yeasu 817, antenna headset, etc. Logan began with a SDR, listening to almost everything. He built antennas and baluns. He got a Baofang for repeater use. He participated in the VT QSO party at Mitch's shack. Andy has been doing summits on the air – in winter! He tried a metal window screen as a ground plane; it didn't work.

Anna will bring snacks for next meeting
Meeting ended at 9:00
Bob, **k1bif**, secretary



NEWS & VIEWS

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NEXT MEETING

June 8^h 2023 7:00pm
Holy Family Parrish Hall

Meeting Topic
Camel's Hump Activation / POA

Upcoming, Notices, & Misc

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