



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

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N1MM Logger Plus

The world's most popular Ham Radio Contest logging program

Paul **AA1SU**

Join me on Tuesday, May 12 (7 PM) at the next RANV meeting, as I go over the features and benefits of using N1MM+ for your ham radio logging needs. I'll go over how to download and personalize it. I'll show you how to maximize contacts and find multipliers. We'll go over what contests are supported (hint: it's all of them), rig control, spotting networks, how to record and send your exchange with Function keys, and so much more. I'll even show you how to make CW QSOs without even knowing the code! Did you know that N1MM+ also supports general logging?

At the end of the contest, we'll go over how to generate and upload a Cabrillo and ADIF file for the contest sponsor and Logbook of the World. This can be accomplished with one click. Later, I'll show you how to subscribe to a weekly email that will keep you informed on the upcoming contests.

Operating a contest is valuable to you and your station because it teaches you about propagation, geography, operating under adverse conditions, and

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Holy Family Parrish Hall
30 Lincoln Street
Essex Junction, Vt

Repeater: 145.150, PL 100; WB1GQR

New Hams, Mentoring:
RANVMentor@gmail.com

keeps you familiar with your radio operation and features. Plus, it's just a whole lot of fun.

WATCH THAT POWER SUPPLY!

Mitch W1SJ

This may come as a surprise, but a power supply at or near your operating station may be wiping out weak signals. I've noticed this over the last few years of doing park activations. I would end a transmission and a weak carrier with decreasing frequency would be heard for a few seconds. Many signals during an activation are weak – typically S5 which is right at the noise level of a K3 using a high dipole. With this added carrier, the signal would then not be copiable and I would have to ask for a fill. And then that carrier would come back. It was most annoying.

This carrier was never heard when operating in the shack. At first, I thought it was something in my SB-200 amplifier, since that is not normally used at home. But no, when I shut it down, the carrier was still there. I then suspected something in my second K3, which is the radio I used for park activations. Elecraft mentioned to me that sometimes the placement of the internal wiring harness can cause noise. This was disproven as I used my other K3 and the same problem continued.

The power supply I was using during activations was a small Chinese 30 amp switching supply. The unit I have has a “tuning” knob on it. This is used to change the frequency of the internal oscillator necessary for the power supply to work. I turned the knob and the carrier went away – for a while. But it came back. I turned the knob and it disappeared – and later came back. I tried a different switching supply and the same carrier kept bugging me. Finally, I hoisted my big linear power supply into the van. Problem solved – no more annoying carriers. And I get some weightlifting exercise to boot.

Fast forward to last Sunday when we did an activation at Knight Point. I was visiting Bob's 40-meter station and heard that silly carrier. Bob was also using a Chinese switching supply. But he insisted that the carrier was coming from his phone charger and he unplugged it. Problem solved – for 5

minutes. And there it was – back again. I trust Bob will change supplies for the next event.

Beware of switching power supplies. They have oscillators in them which can cause issues. All computers use switching supplies and they can drive you crazy. The power supply from my netbook computer absolutely destroys 60 and 40 meters with noise. I have a large switching at the Colchester location which puts a wicked carrier across WVMT on 620 kHz which is only 2 miles away!

Be suspicious of ALL electronic devices which are powered up when you get on the air. Power supplies, solar charge controllers, computers, routers and other devices should all be suspect. You will be surprised how many weak signals you cannot hear because of something else creating noise.

KNIGHT POINT STATE PARK ACTIVATION

RANV activated Knight Point State Park Sunday, May 3. The goal of this activation was to train new operators, activate park US-3125 and activate rare Grand Isle County in the New England QSO Party.

The exchange was problematic as we both US-3125 as POTA and VTGRA as NEQP. We used various combinations of both.

We had a two-station setup, both with Elecraft K3's and Cobra Ultralight antennas up 35 feet. Bob K1BIF arrived quite early and was on the air by 10:45. His station stayed on 40-meter phone. It was operated by Cathy NQ1B, Andrew KC1VWU and David KA1DMA. This was Andrew's first time operating HF. He was shaky at first as all new operators tend to be. By the end of his shift, he was a trooper! Dave lives down the road and activates this park regularly, so he fit right in. This station stayed on until 3:05 and logged 200 QSO's in a bit over 4 hours.

The second station was set up by Mitch W1SJ and was on the air at 11:40. It was supposed to be on 20

meter phone all day. Unfortunately, 20-meter phone did not sign off on this plan and the QSO's were slow going. Cathy came over from 40 meter and took the first shift, working hard to get around 40 QSO's in an hour. Spotting the frequency helped a bit, but the rates weren't there. Mitch popped on 20 meters CW and was greeted by a big pileup! Apparently, many of the NEQP operators stayed on CW and pounced on us when we showed up. Another run was tried on 20-meter phone, but again, the pickin's were slim. By 3:00, Bob's station on 40 meters shut down so we switched over to 40 meter CW which was quite productive. Paul AA1SU showed up and got on 40-meter SSB, for just under an hour and a much better 83 rate. The second station tallied 208 QSO's in a bit under 4 hours.

	40p	40c	20p	20c	tot
Station 1	200				200
Station 2	69	33	59	47	208
Total	269	33	59	47	408

Total was 408 QSOs, which is not too shabby, considering that 20 meters was lackluster all day. We had one new operator and a few more experienced operators on line. Others were expected, but were not seen. Visiting was Alan KB1MDC and Stew KC1IFK.

The next activation will be Saturday May 30 at the Essex Tree Farm. We plan to have better conditions. Be sure to stop by!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzNB0lr9ROM>

FIELD DAY PLANNING

Mitch [W1SJ](#)

Field Day 2026 is in a mere 7 weeks. It is time to start planning. The site has been secured. I have a few items to take care of, such as tuning the 15 meter CW yagi and changing the oil in the generator. I also want to spend some time to come up with a plan to allow quick changes to FT8 during the graveyard hours at the phone station. Otherwise, we will essentially have the same setup as last year. The remainder of the planning involves having personnel in the right places to get the job done. Of

primary concern is finding someone to oversee the network on Saturday. Ron will set things up Saturday morning, but someone has to be available to make sure the network stays working throughout the rest of the weekend. Free training will be provided. Any network engineers out there looking for a challenge?

A number of our previous operators will not be with us this year or will have reduced availability. That means that our existing operators will have to operate more hours, or we need to bring new people on board. Nice plan, but getting the few new people to operate is difficult. We will have operator training during an upcoming park activation on Saturday, May 30 at the Field Day site. Be sure to set aside some time to do some operating on that day. We ALL can stand to up our game and do better. If you are new and have done little phone operating previously, it is very important to get in some time on the air to get familiar with everything. Field Day is a 3-ring circus and is not a great place for newcomers to learn.

Next week, I will send out a E-mail with the link to the Field Day signup survey so we can assess who will be on site at what times. Be sure to fill this out promptly so we can get to work with the planning.

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

QST: The May 2026 edition of the Chittenden County Region 2m FM simplex net will be at 6:30pm EDT on Wednesday, May 27, 2026, on 146.55 MHz. This month's net will be immediately before the 80m digital net at 7pm. We have several stations running good antennas in the area, so chances are good that stations in the area will be able to work us on simplex. All amateur radio stations are welcome to join.

73 de [K1ZK](#)

Fun on 5/4 Meters Zachary [K1ZK](#)

There's life beyond 2m/440! An increasing number of radios have at least some capabilities on 1.25 meters FM, and there is fun to be had on FM and other modes on this band here in northern Vermont. Our 1.25m band behaves similarly to 2m, but the antennas are almost 50% smaller (think more gain for the same amount of metal) and there is significantly less noise on this band because there are fewer users of nearby spectrum and harmonics. Here are some other good reasons not to neglect this excellent band:

Local repeaters. The K8MOT (formerly N1VT) 224.96 repeater in Wells, VT has been on the air for many years and has excellent coverage for the west-central part of Vermont. More recently we have the W1XIV 223.86 repeater in Shelburne, VT and the WA2LRE 224.02 repeater on Lyon Mountain, NY. The W1XIV repeater carries some interesting nets most weekday evenings, and also airs the ARRL audio news at 10:15am on Saturdays, and a "science net" on Saturdays at 9pm.

Simplex! Don't forget to program and monitor the 1.25m FM national call frequency into your rigs: 223.50MHz. And give a shout from time to time — folks won't know you're there if you don't transmit.

Weak signal modes: if you build up capability beyond FM, there's much more to be found on 1.25m. There is a weekly "activity night" on Tuesdays at 7pm centered around 222.100 for SSB and CW. With a modest beam and a few dozen watts of power, I routinely work New England stations as well as stations in PA, NJ, VA, and beyond. The WSJT-X modes are also used to great effect for tropo, meteor scatter, aircraft scatter, and moon bounce.

Hams lost the 220-222 MHz chunk of 1.25m back in 1988. The remaining 222 - 225 MHz portion of the band is still allocated for amateur radio use, but if we aren't using it, the commercial interests may have a stronger argument for getting the other 3 MHz of the band.

Contests: 1.25m is an essential band for racking up multipliers in the VHF contests. The big VHF contests are ARRL's June and September VHF events, The June contest is just around the corner, on June 13-14. That's a particularly good weekend for a VHF SOTA activation—bring a rig that covers 1.25m!

Jeff [N1YD](#)

The Tools of Amateur Radio, The April Meeting

Eleven people came to the April meeting. George has reserved the Hampton Inn for next year's HAM-CON. We will buy a \$50 permit to use the Essex Tree Farm for Field Day in June. We are planning to get together for a park activation on May 3rd at Knight Point, and later in May at Sandbar State Park. The idea is to get our operators on the air and totally skilled by Field Day.

The Vermont City Marathon is Sunday May 24th, and we also help out the day before at the Essex Memorial Parade.

The meeting started with a giveaway. Mitch had been given an assortment of radio equipment by Rich Lang. You might remember Rich's presentation from a few years ago. He built a turntable preamp of his own design. He analyzed exactly what audio range was needed for the old records that he was trying to preserve, designed a circuit for the best fidelity, used battery power to eliminate power supply noise, drew his own circuit board design, sent the Gerber file to a company in China that makes individual circuit boards on demand, and got it his design to work without revising the board. As someone who has tried to

build my own circuits, I can tell you that it was an awesome success. Anyway, in the giveaway, we each got a chance to pick something out. We took home some Raspberry Pi's, Kenwood transceivers, QRP transceivers, Baofeng radios, etc. I took home a Baofeng and spent the next few days working out its quirks.

The topic "The Tools of Amateur Radio" was a kind of show and tell put on by Bob Henneberger, Paul Gayet, and Jeff Bonn. We saw an ancient tube tester, Arduino based transistor testers, a fox hunting antenna, and an active attenuator used to reduce strong signals when fox hunting. Something about that meter on the tube tester reminds me of the Willy Wonka movie.

Paul will bring snacks to the next meeting. Don't miss it!





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NEXT MEETING

Tuesday May 12th 7:00pm
Holy Family Parish Hall
30 Lincoln St, Essex Junction, VT 05452

Meeting Topic

N1MM Logger Plus

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