



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

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An ARRL Special Service Club

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PEOPLE JUST WANT TO MESS WITH THEIR PHONES

The October 13th RANV Meeting

Mitch **W1SJ**

Our October meeting will be all about cell phone applications that we are using to make Amateur Radio work better for us. Sadly, I was reminded that it was I, hater of all things cell phones, who mentioned this tongue-in-cheek suggestion. So if you don't like the meeting, blame me! But we will have a camera setup to show cell phone screens on the big screen so that everyone at the meeting and the folks at home will be able to see just what is going on.

In addition to this excitement, October is the meeting where we take nominations for club officers – President, Vice-President/Treasurer and Secretary. Any paid club member who agrees to this honor is able to be nominated. Fictitious or cartoon characters, Klingons, Cardassians, non-humans or non-living people are not eligible.

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Holy Family Parrish Hall
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Repeater: 145.150, PL 100; WB1GQR

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MAKE YOUR PLANS FOR THE RANV HOLIDAY PARTY

Mitch **W1SJ**

The RANV Holiday Party will be **SUNDAY, December 20**. Why Sunday? Someone beat us to it in scheduling the room for Saturday at the Holy Family Parish Hall. Why not the first or second weekend? Those are the 160 meter and 10-meter contest weekends. We don't want folks to not operate because they have a party to go to! Everything will be the same as previous parties, but we may make a change in the start time.

The Sunday church service runs until noon, which will make parking difficult at our usual start time of 11AM. It might make more sense to start at noon, thereby moving away from parking issues. If we start at noon and everyone is prompt about showing up, we can start lunch around 12:30, which would only be a 30-minute difference than previous years. Nothing has been decided yet, so please do comment on what you would like to see as a start time.

The format will be the same. The club will provide a sandwich and cold cut platter and everyone else brings everything else. Look for a sign-up E-mail at the start of December.

Plan your schedule NOW so that you can be at the party! This is 10 weeks away – it shouldn't be that hard to do. For most of the club (who haven't been at meetings lately) our meeting attendance has been dismal. Let's reverse that trend, especially for the Holiday Party. Bring family and even more important – bring potential hams. There are no plans to set up any radios, but I'm sure most people are happy when they are eating!

Again – The Holiday Party will be Sunday, December 20. I'll remember – my mom would have been 100 that day! I'm sure you all can find your own great reason to attend.

THE FALL W1AW/1 OPERATION

Nearly 9000 QSO's of Fun!

Mitch **W1SJ**

Between September 22 and 29, nine hams helped put W1AW/1 on the air from Vermont. The first W1AW portable activations took place in 2014 and the pileups were legendary. The program came back in 2023 and the activity was a bit more subdued. This year, with lower sunspot numbers, and a previous activation in February, the activity was a bit lower. Add to this was that many of our key operators in Vermont were not available this particular week. I messaged everyone on my Vermont ham radio list, some 400 of them. I even offered folks the ability to operate from my station. There were few takers. I don't get it – this is supposed to be fun and an honor. I guess everyone has more important things to do. Eventually, we fielded a group of nine operators.

Because of our small group, I decided to make sure I was on phone every late afternoon and evening. My station has the ability to be on two bands simultaneously. I took advantage of this by running on 20 and 40 meters each evening, running up very large hourly numbers. People ask me how I can do pileups on two bands at the same time. It's not easy! On some days, I was also on late mornings on 15- or 20-meters running DX pileups. On Friday, there was a solar event, closing the high bands all morning. At those times and during some late nights, I ran FT8 on two bands simultaneously. On Monday, 20 meters was insane – virtually everyone in Europe was S7 and stronger – even the weak guys!

Over the 7 days, I clocked nearly 5100 QSO's across all 50 states and 65 DXCC countries. I was very happy that I was able to provide W1AW QSO's with many folks on the West Coast and in Europe.

I found that most of the people I worked were sporting fairly recent callsigns. Some were thrilled to work W1AW. Others had no idea about W1AW or who the ARRL was. Some had great difficulty saying their callsign, with or without phonetics! The

majority of operators were courteous during the pileups, which was a good thing. There was one character who objected to W1AW/1 working people on 40 meters and he carried on a verbal tirade. Unfortunately for him, I didn't get to hear his viewpoints, as I simply switched the headphones over to the 20-meter radio and continued there with the pileup while still working a few on 40 meters. After a while, I suspect he got frustrated that he was having absolutely no effect, so he moved on to a different activity.

Operating phone is always a lot of fun. When I worked someone in New Jersey or Long Island, I would often ask, "What exit?" referring to the Garden State Parkway or Long Island Expressway. One guy in Long Island was right near where I went to school! I worked several folks in the UK who were near where I visited WRTC there in July. It was nice using a greeting in the DX station's own language, such as "Ciao" in Italian "Merci beaucoup" in French, "Dosvidanya" in Russian, or "Shalom" in Hebrew. I was surprised and thrilled to work Ravi VU2RVE in India on phone – something which is normally quite hard to do! I also ran into many ham radio pals from over the years. I cannot tell you how many folks said, "I used to live in Vermont..." If all those people didn't leave, Vermont would likely be the largest state, instead of the smallest. And finally, someone asked me this question, "When you operate normally, what callsign do you use?" I wasted no time in replying, "There's nothing ever normal about any of my operations!" I did tell him my callsign though.

Why do I keep doing this at an active level for 57 years? Because it's fun! There's nothing like holding court in a big pileup where I have the ability to talk to many people. Digital modes and texting be damned – live speech conversation is always special!

The other operators filled in the bands and modes I did little on. Joe K1VMT was our primary CW operator and he ran up some big numbers there. Zach K1ZK also had the ability to be on multiple bands simultaneously, and he operated just about everything. Paul AA1SU put W1AW/1 on during the WPX RTTY contest. On the very last day, Kevin KE1VT showed up and provided activity on

17 meters, a band which saw little activity during the week.

All told, the W1AW/1 crew logged in 204 hour-long band segments resulting in 8727 QSO's. Not too shabby for a week's work!

MORE COMMENTS FROM W1AW/1 OPERATORS

Zach K1ZK:

I was extremely busy with work and other obligations during the September W1AW/1 week, so I tried to focus my limited on-air time to maximize QSOs and fill in bands and modes that maybe had less coverage from our other dedicated operators. I was able to run a 100-watt 30-meter FT8 station while simultaneously cranking out CW, SSB, or FT8 QSOs on the main radio. By this point in the game, most of the big guns who wanted W1AW/1 in Vermont already had us in the log, so I made the effort to work the mostly weaker (and some QRP) signals that I was hearing. I was able to generate some fairly decent runs to JA on 17 meter FT8 around sunset and also got a small pileup going on 160-meter FT8. We did a good job making Vermont heard on the airwaves with our limited number of operators. Nice going!

Kevin KE1VT:

It was fantastic to represent Vermont, and the one day I was able to participate was a lot of fun! I worked KH6, KL7, VY0, and plenty of other DX, along with numerous states on 17 meter SSB and CW. JA runs were definitely the highlight for me, and I'm very thankful for the opportunity to participate!

Joe K1VMT:

Band conditions weren't great after the first few days. Seems FT8 is always open most times even on 15 meters in the morning. On CW about 50% of my contacts are DX. What does that tell you? I Enjoy FT8 and I like it too - but not in this instance.

Rob N1TRK:

I found the sign-up process to be seamless. It assisted me in choosing another band if I chose to operate longer than I had originally anticipated. It was extremely well organized. It was a bit disappointing to see so few operators take advantage of this amazing opportunity. I wonder if we missed people or clubs that could have had volunteered but didn't know how to actually join in the fun?

Craig W1ZN:

17 meters was only alive for 1 of 3 days. Europe stations were not aware of W1AW/1 for the most part. It was fun to use W1AW/1.

Bob K1BIF:

Bob didn't write anything up, but left us with this YouTube video to be remembered by:

youtube.com/watch?v=--YE6cdZu8U&t=452s

Towers On The Air In Vermont**Peter, N1KJ**

This summer I made plans with Matthias, AC1RI, to hike to several peaks in Vermont as part of Parks On The Air (POTA) and Summits On The Air (SOTA), and especially to peaks with fire towers. In planning a campaign of hikes, I made a list of towers, but discovered to my surprise that some fire towers were outside of POTA or SOTA boundaries, which seemed to exclude them from consideration. Then a conversation with Bob Henneberger, K1BIF, sent me down a rabbit hole of Bunkers On The Air (WWBOTA, not to be confused with BOTA, Beaches On The Air). And after numerous emails, I helped redraw the WWBOTA map of Vermont - which now includes missile silos in Swanton and Alburgh, one radar station in the North East Kingdom, and fallout shelters in Burlington, Montpelier, Woodstock, Windsor, Springfield, White River Junction, Saint Johnsbury, and Richford. (I was offered the job of US coordinator of WWBOTA, but politely declined.)

It eventually occurred to me that there must be a Towers On The Air (TOTA) and a quick web search confirmed it, though I was sorely disappointed to discover that, apart from Puerto Rico, the US was not represented. I sent my list of Vermont towers to the organizers and soon found myself as co-organizer of the US K1 Region. I spent a few weeks scrubbing the list till I was happy with it and it went live earlier this month along with towers for New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Let me describe that made it into the Vermont list and what did not.

A qualifying tower is a man-made, permanent structure or construction that offers a view of the surrounding landscape and is open to the public, at least sometime during the year. Towers without a viewing platform, for example communication towers or water towers, are excluded from consideration. All of the existing fire towers in Vermont made it into the list, with the exception of Killington, because access is restricted, and West Mountain, because it resides on a patch of private land. The Ethan Allen Tower in Burlington and Hubbard's Tower in Montpelier are included. These are both historic stone towers. However, the Owl's Head Stone Tower in Groton State Forest did not, because despite the name, it is a shelter, not a tower. The Brattleboro Retreat Tower is not open to the public, so didn't make it into the list. I included the tower in the forest canopy walk at the Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS) in Quechee. I also added the Prospect Hill Tower at the Old Stone House Museum in Brownington. The Bennington Battle Monument is included, though the observation level remains inaccessible until repairs to the elevator are completed.

The rules are similar to POTA, but not identical. To "activate" a tower you must be within 200 m (650 feet) of it. There are two categories of activation, either HF or VHF. For a VHF activation you need at least three QSOs on simplex that include signal reports. For an HF activation you need at least 13 QSOs. As with POTA, the activator is responsible for submitting logs.

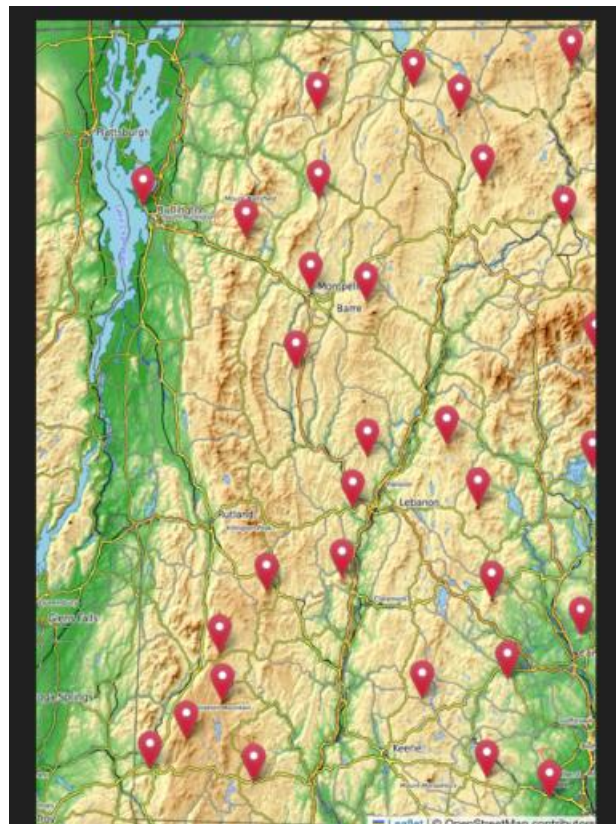
Scheduling an activation is also similar to POTA. You input your plans on the TOTA Cluster. The difficulty is that TOTA is so new, it is almost

invisible. To my knowledge, none of the towers in Vermont have yet been activated yet, but I'm sure that won't last for long.

It's possible to combine TOTA, SOTA, and POTA for simultaneous activations where there's a tower on a mountain in a park, such as Bald Mountain or Mount Elmore. You can even combine TOTA and WWBOTA, by activating the Hubbards Tower in Montpelier near the Old Bomb Shelter in the State Capitol Building nearby the fallout shelter of the Washington County Sheriff's Office. Now if there was a lighthouse with a fallout shelter by a beach on a mountaintop in a park, that would be cool ...did I mention World Lighthouse On The Air?

73,

Peter, N1KJ
K1 Coordinator for TOTA
<https://www.rozhledny.eu>



Chittenden County region 2m FM simplex net

Zachery [K1Zk](#)

QST: The November edition of the Chittenden County region 2m FM simplex net will be on **Thursday, November 19 at 8pm on 146.55 MHz** As always, all amateur radio stations are welcome; you don't need to be in Chittenden County. Mark your calendar today and we'll see you on 2m FM!

73 de K1ZK

Minutes September RANV Meeting

Jeff [N1YD](#)

World Radio sport Team Championship -- The September Meeting

Mitch gave us a talk and slide show about his trip to England to take part in WRTC. It is an international amateur radio contest held every four years in July. This time it was in Wyboston, UK. Mitch was there to help with setup and to observe. He has been to the last three events.

The contest is set up so each team is given identical equipment, identical radios, and locations that have equally good propagation. At a designated start time, the contestants contact as many stations as possible, with various multipliers available.

After helping to set up a station at Eaton Estates (with a 35-foot mast and an inverted V antenna), Mitch and Debby had time to do a little bit of UK tourism. Since the contest is held in farmland, they traveled by car and train to get around. They saw Dover, Canterbury, Warwick castle, Bletchley Park, and other fun places. He also had a chance to use the event's GB26WRTC guest station.

Mitch found that British traffic is bad, the roads are narrow, and gas cost the equivalent of \$7.82 per

gallon. They were driving a rented MG. He assured us that "Vermont does not have the highest taxes and the worst roads." They found that many British hotels do not have air conditioning, so they made sure to find one that did. He also noted that it is a seven-hour flight to get from the US to the UK.

This year's WRTC had a surprising outcome. Four teams were disqualified due to cheating. There was evidence of cheating in four different ways. Some of the suspicious results looked like blatant cheating, and while others were not as certain. Mitch knows at least one contestant who lost points but might not have been cheating at all.

We voted to have Larry bring snacks to our October meeting.

WBCQ IS FOR SALE

Paul [AA1SU](#)

WBCQ "The Planet" has placed its flagship 500 kW shortwave mega-transmitter facility up for sale for \$2 million. The sale announcement, made on October 9, 2026, represents a massive shift for the iconic free-speech shortwave station based out of Monticello, Maine.

Owner and radio pioneer **Allan Weiner** is parting with the station's massive high-power assets following the departure of its primary lessee, the religious organization *World's Last Chance* (WLC), which reportedly lost its funding assets in early 2026.

Key Sale Details

- **Asking Price: \$2,000,000**
- **Core Assets Included:**
 - The **500-kilowatt Continental Electronics transmitter**.
 - A 260-foot, 360-degree **Ampegon rotatable curtain array antenna** (the only one of its kind in North America).

-
- A **2-megawatt diesel backup generator** and medium-voltage switchgear.
-
- A **3,000-square-foot transmitter and studio building** sitting on **100 acres of land** in Monticello, Maine.

-
- **Regulatory/Operational Conditions:** The \$2 million price tag covers the physical real estate and equipment. If a buyer wishes to operate the high-power station from its current Maine location, they will need to apply for a **new broadcast license from the FCC**. Alternatively, the buyer has the option to dismantle and relocate the equipment elsewhere.

What Happens to WBCQ?

WBCQ is **not shutting down entirely**. The sale is specifically restricted to the 500 kW mega-transmitter infrastructure. WBCQ will retain its legal broadcast license and continue to operate its adjacent lower-power auxiliary shortwave transmitters (such as those broadcasting *Radio Angela* on 5130 kHz).

AA1SU OPERATING AS W1AW/1 VERMONT

Paul [AA1SU](#)

On the first evening, I took over for Mitch at 9 PM on 20 Meters SSB. I managed 86 contacts in one hour before I had to call it quits at 10 PM; my bedtime. Not much DX here, only Costa Rica and Mexico.

Wednesday evening found me on 30 Meters CW from 7-9 PM. Although I found a clear frequency rather easily, I was taunted throughout the evening by some LID that kept sending dits with his keyer at about 40 WPM. I tried different things, like ignoring him and listening through it, leaving the radio for a few minutes, and changing

frequency, Unfortunately, he kept finding me. At one point, I went to the top of the band. He didn't find me there, but neither did anyone else. I went back low in the band and operated until 9 PM. The rate had dropped off by then, and I was getting pretty tired.

On Day 3 Thursday, I chose 40 Meters CW. I got a 20 minute late start because I could not key the rig, even though nothing had changed from the night before. Or did it? After much investigating, I finally realized that the amplifier was interfering with the setup somewhere, even at a really low power input setting. I finally settled on 100 watts and worked 95 people by bedtime.

On Friday evening, I switched to the CQ WW DX RTTY Contest at 8 PM. I started on 20 Meters and was a little disappointed by the results. I managed only 15 contacts in the first hour, and 9 for the next 23 minutes. Saturday morning found me doing various chores and errands. I finally got back on the air at 2:25 PM and worked 17 people on 15 Meters. At 3 PM, I switched to 20 Meters and things immediately picked up. Here, I had my best hour: 80. The rate stayed strong until dinner. After that, I had continued success on 40 and 80 Meters until bedtime. Sunday, I awoke early and managed a few more contacts between 4 AM and 6 AM on 80 then 40 Meters. Around 10:15, I tried 15 Meters for a couple of hours, followed by 20 Meters until 8 PM with a few breaks for meals and such. In the end, I made 786 contacts, including 57 countries and 45 states.

On Monday, I was too tired to operate after work, and Tuesday left me with only one hour to operate after work and dinner, so I gave both nights a rest.

In conclusion, I thought my SSB rate was just okay, and my CW results were poor. RTTY started out slow but picked up great the next day. I guess I was just expecting the insane pileups like we had in 2014 for the Centennial. But that was different. It was new, exciting, and there was a point system. Vermont made 33K+ QSOs in week one that year as W1AW/1. I was worth 250 points during the rest of the year, so I was a very popular boy. Still, I had a lot of fun putting Vermont on the air as W1AW/1!



NEWS & VIEWS

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NEXT MEETING

Tuesday October 13th
Holy Family Parish Hall
30 Lincoln St, Essex Junction, VT 05452

Meeting Topic

PEOPLE JUST WANT TO MESS WITH THEIR PHONES

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