

The Monitor

February 2003



Presidents Message

I'm sure all of you have been following the events unfolding over the weekend. Our thoughts are with the families of the lost astronauts.

It looks like the weather may have broken so we can recover from the bad cases of cabin fever. That means antenna projects, public service events and field day are right around the corner. We've also been asked to put on a demo for a local Boy Scout and Cub Scout group as soon as it's warm enough.

You've seen a lot of activity with ARES in NH lately and the effort to reorganize VT is started. The DEC and SEC for VT will be joining us at the March meeting so have your questions ready.

Also coming up will be the appointment of a nominating committee for club officers. Start think about it so you can make you opinions known to the committee or if you want to serve on the committee let one of the officers know.

As some of you know and the rest may not, the large tower trailer has been sold for the full asking price. It will be picked up by the new owner sometime in March.

Field Day planning needs to get started soon. If you want to serve on the committee or just help out planning. Please let Jack N1MVO know so he can add you to the list. Last year was amazing. Let's do it again.

Verne, N5IEP

Upcoming Events

TSRC Meeting	Feb 8, 2003, 9:00am Ramada Inn, WRJ, VT
TSRC Meeting	Mar 8, 2003, 9:00am Ramada Inn, WRJ, VT
Boy Scout Demo	To be announced

Disclaimer

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WIFN TEAM SETS NEW CLUB RECORD IN 2003 ARRL VHF SWEEPSTAKES!

This year's effort and results on the VHF Sweeps surpassed anything we had expected! We had about a dozen club members and friends participating in the contest Jan 18-19. We had set several general and specific goals this year; to increase the number of contacts and to improve the setup.

We used both tower/trailers to improve our ability to get antennas in the air, we increased the power on all bands and provided improved antennas on 222 Mhz and 432 Mhz. In addition, thanks to Dave KA1UAG and Joe KB1FDA, we were able to install hardline on the 6M and 432 bands. In addition, we had hoped to put a fifth band on the air this year.

The result was that we achieved a claimed score of 31,242 points operating multi-unlimited with five bands! This is even more significant if we compare to last year,s score of 18,358 points and realize that the band conditions on 6 M were not as good this year as last year.

First the operators: Micky K1XH, Rex AA1KL, Ken AC1H, Dave KA1UAG, Mill K1IB, Joe KB1FDA, Bill WB1BRE, Mike N1JEZ, and Chip W1AIM. Providing invaluable assistance with computer installation was Bradley Corrow and lots of help with operations and food were Mary Ann N1DMW and Rich W1HZN. Coordination of all the eating and sleeping logistics was handled by Dot KA1LDS with her usual skill and imagination.

THE STATIONS:

- 6 Meters- Rig- FT920
Amp- ACOM 1000- 1KW max
Antenna- 5 el yagi
- 2 Meters- Rig- TS711A
Amp- TE Systems- 300 Wts
Antenna- 11 el yagi
- 222 Mhz- Rig- FT736R
Amp- RF Concepts- 130 Wts max
Antenna- 6 el yagi
- 432 Mhz- Rig- TR851
Amp- Homebrew amp- 500 Wts max
Antenna- 19 el yagi
- 903 Mhz- Rig- HR2510
Transverter- 8 Wts out
Antenna- 11 el loop yagi

THE OPERATORS

We began operating promptly at 2PM on Saturday with the four VHF/UHF stations on line. Late Saturday night the contact rate dropped significantly and there were few new sta-

tions to find, so the operators got a night's sleep and picked it up again at about 6:15 on Sunday morning. New stations showed up and band conditions favored good contact rates on all bands, and we operated until about 3:45 PM when things slowed again and the bands seemed to be worked out. This gave everyone a chance to pick up gear and other items and head for home before sunset.

Again, the operators included K1XH, N1JEZ, AA1KL, AC1H, KA1UAG, WB1BRE, W1AIM, K1IB and KB1FDA.

Mike N1JEZ provided the 6 M station this year and the ACOM amplifier was very impressive, providing a quiet kilowatt for the duration of the contest. In addition to working SSB and CW on 6, Mike was able to catch an opening on meteor scatter and we watched that mode work by bouncing digital signals off dirty snowballs and bits of rock entering our atmosphere from outer space. Mike was able to pick up a few new grid squares using meteor scatter, which added significantly to our scoring. Mike also brought his 10 Ghz rig, but was unable to make contact with other 10Ghz ops due to a combination of propagation and hills between us and them.

Chip W1AIM brought a home-brew 903 Mhz unit with an output power of about 8 wts into an 11 element loop yagi up on the same mast as the 432 antenna. Although we made only one contact, this established our presence on the fifth band this year and move us into the unlimited category.

Dave KA1UAG's addition of the 500 wt 432 amplifier in a 6 ft rack really increased our performance on 432! He plans to add a 2M amp with muscle in the same rack for the next contest.

The power line to the garage proved very capable of handling the load presented by all these rigs. In addition, we experienced very little interference between bands even though the antennas were all within a circle of about 200 ft diameter. We did computer logging at each station, thanks to the efforts of Micky K1XH and Bradley, and as a result we had the final results on the net and submitted to ARRL by Tuesday morning.

THE RESULTS

Band	2003			2002			2001
	QSO	Points	grids	QSO	Points	grids	QSO
6M	116	116	26	98	98	32	58
2M	103	103	22	122	122	24	75
222	39	78	17	9	18	3	1
432	40	80	16	18	36	8	44
903	1	4	1				
Totals	299	381	82	247	274	67	178
SCORE	31,242			18,358			10,927

THE FOOD!

Now to the other critical part of the operation- Where would we be without UAG's spicy chili! This year Dave added a beef stew which didn't survive the weekend. Now Joe produced a pot of baked beans that included maple syrup in the recipe! It was so good, Dot pried the recipe out of Joe and we will, with his permission, reveal the secret recipe in another newsletter.

Dot supplied her pea soup, which I can attest to from previous meals as one of the best you will ever get! The 20

pound turkey looked like an emaciated pigeon after the initial meal on Saturday night which included the turkey, real mashed potatoes, rolls and fixings.

Most everyone who came brought some munchies or other goodies and drinks which helped fortify the operators during the long hours.

One big surprise was a birthday cake provided by Ken AC1H as it was Dave UAG's birthday last weekend. We all embarrassed him by singing Happy Birthday!!

THE WRAPUP

Our thanks to all who helped with setup and teardown, food, operating and all the many little things that make a contest operation like this work. There is serious talk about doing the VHF contest in September this year as a "warm-up" to January. I hope to be able to raise the aluminum tower and also to extend the existing Rohn 25 tower on the back of the garage another 20 ft this summer. Also, we are looking at installing permanent hardlines and rotor cables within the garage to allow connecting on the exterior of the garage and the shop wall through connectors mounted on metal bulkheads.

Overall, I think this was one of the best VHF Sweeps efforts we have done! The wind held off over the weekend and the sun helped offset the cold temps so that we could work outside for reasonable lengths of time without getting chilled. The wood stove and all the equipment in the shop helped keep the temperature at a comfortable 70 degrees + for all the operating time.

I think everyone had a good time and we were very pleased to have Mike N1JEZ and Chip W1AIM join us this year and add their impressive stations and operating skills. W1FN has staked it's place in another national contest in Vermont! If you think you might be interested in joining us for VHF operations, we will put the call out prior to the September contest.

73, Bill WB1BRE



Marketing

As with any good business strategy, Marketing is pretty much the main method of getting people to know you. Twin State Radio Club (TSRC) has a pretty big deficiency here, to lay everything we need to have published on an already over-worked and underpaid Public Information Officer (PIO) is not really the best solution.

We need to distribute the load amongst the membership in order to begin and maintain an effective marketing campaign. Certainly there are those who are much better at some things than others, and here is where we need to exploit the talents of these exceptional members. This will be first and foremost in any public oriented endeavor, whether it is public service or even fund raising.

Take for example the most recent attempt to start another Amateur Radio class in the Upper Valley. While this is probably not the best example, it has a lot of the elements I am trying to showcase and is still fresh in our minds, so please bear with me...

While the intentions of the TSRC and the people involved are well and good, the reason for the failure of this class to take off and gather the necessary students boils straight down to marketing. How can anyone expect to attract anyone to an event if no one knows about it? Personally I did not see a single advertisement or notice about the intent to establish a class other than the internal club emails about such. We in the club are NOT the ones who need to take a class (some might beg to differ...), advertisements for the class need to be seen by the general Upper Valley public. Notices need to go to schools, papers, businesses and supermarkets. Follow-ups need to be scheduled to insure the materials or information reach the intended recipients. We need to put as much effort into planning for marketing of the class as we do in actually planning for the class itself.

That was only a partial example of the points I am trying to make, we should look at everything we are doing and need to do from a marketing perspective. Times have changed considerably as of late, things are much more expensive and we have to appeal to a much larger and broader base of public than before. Gone are the days when word of mouth was all that was necessary to gain more than enough interest in any particular project. We cannot sit back and wait for people to come to us, we need to be active on several fronts in order to achieve the goals we have set.

As with anything else, you need to have redundant systems in place to make up for the failure of any other system. Instead of handing the PIO officer a notice to be published, there should have been a backup plan or other means to advertise this particular event. I can think of at least 4 different newspapers that could have printed a notice or even done an article about a class, and several other means to get the word out. Sometimes all it takes is a phone call. As far as I can see, no other method was devised to disseminate this information other than handing it off to someone else. Putting all your



eggs in one basket is never a good idea. Don't get me wrong here, the most recent class is only an example, those involved should all be commended for their desire to further the hobby and promote Amateur Radio in the Upper Valley.

In the coming months we will need to get our collective act together as far as marketing is concerned, we will need to let everyone know who we are and what we do if we expect to reap the rewards of an active fundraising campaign. We will need to get as many as possible involved with this effort, even though it may not be their strongest suit. We need a full media blitz, including printed material as well as possible TV exposure, there is no end to what we can do as far as this is concerned. We cannot expect 'someone else' to do this for us, unless some marketing firm offers to take on this task. We also cannot expect one person to bear the brunt of this job, it is going to take several people or even a committee in order to do an effective job.

With as many members as we have, it should be relatively easy to distribute the load as evenly as possible. We need to exploit the talents of the membership as best we can, for example those with a lot of time on their hands should be able to tackle the time-consuming tasks such as compiling lists or preparing materials. We will need to get members in all geographic areas to contact their local schools and papers, doing whatever it takes to get the word out. But first and foremost, we need to have a plan for attack. We need to have a goal in mind that is reachable, and then devise the steps necessary to reach that goal.

We have several events coming up that would be perfect for television and newspaper coverage, but we don't necessarily need to promote anything other than ourselves to start with. We need to let the Upper Valley (as well as other areas...) know who we are. Unfortunately, it usually takes a disaster to gain such recognition, and then the spotlight soon fades as electricity is restored to the devastated area. We need to take steps to get into the public eye, and remain there. Maybe we NEED an antenna construction lawsuit or some other unfortunate means to get noticed. Certainly we won't get any recognition at all for sitting around doing nothing and expecting someone else to do everything for us.

Publicity extends much farther than you might think, we will need to employ these marketing strategies to everything else we do, one excellent example is that of membership. What will happen if we only expect current members to renew each year? We will only get those members who choose to renew as members. Sure a new member may trickle now and again, but by and large it will remain a closed group. As President of the Southern Vermont Amateur Radio Club (SOVARC) I single-handedly raised the membership from less than 30 members to over 90 members in the period of only 1 year. Do you understand what tripling the membership can do to a club? The influx of new ideas alone was overwhelming. Why can't we as a club rise to the challenge?

How do we do this, you might ask. Certainly that is a valid question, but you need to remember, I do not have all

the answers. The purpose of this editorial is not to burden people with work, but to light a spark of imagination or desire to help the club for the common good. If I can get only one person to look at things differently or to provide a bit of help where none previously existed I have fulfilled my tiny little goal. One way to raise membership numbers is to spend a little bit on postage and mass-mail Amateur Radio operators in the entire area with a nice letter from the president as well as a membership application on the back side. It has worked in the past, and I am absolutely certain it can work in the future.

I think it is more of a case of people not knowing what to do, generally our club is pretty energetic as far as new and exciting tasks are concerned. As I have mentioned in the past, we are not marketing or publicity experts, we are communicators. We do what we know how to do very well, and are generally smart enough to hand off what we do not know or cannot accomplish to other people. One area where we can all do better is that of planning. Setting a goal is not particularly challenging, I imagine we all have dreams or other lofty goals, but actually planning the steps to reach them is often put off for another time or for someone else to figure out.

It is time for us to put our heads together here and come up with a plan. I am personally demanding on behalf of all of us that the leadership of this club to present us with the steps we need to take to reach our goals successfully. We then as a group need to execute them. We can document things if necessary along the way, but we need to re-check it after we are done so that we don't make the same mistakes again next time. Because I am not an expert in this field, we should (if necessary) seek out the advice and recommendations of others who actually are experts in this field. I am certain each one of us knows someone we may be able to gain a tidbit or two of information from, and if we put all of it together, we should be able to accomplish this as well as many, many other similar tasks very easily.

Micky Corrow - K1XH

Vermont Radio Happenings

Winter is here, and with it, a whole bunch of amateur activities coming up. Here is some information on what's happening.

1. MILTON HAMFEST AND VERMONT STATE CONVENTION - FEB 22

The Milton Hamfest will be Saturday, February 22nd, from 8am until 1pm at Milton High School, Route 7 Milton. This is also the ARRL Vermont Station Convention. Milton

is 500+ hams and teckkie types and thousands of square feet of hamfest goodies for sale.

Milton is a wonderful educational experience as well. This year's special guest is Ed Hare W1RFI of the ARRL Technical Staff. His 11:00 forum is on "Interference to Hams", where he will talk about tracking down and resolving the various form of Interference hams have to suffer with from computers, fax machines, modems, power lines etc. At his 9:30 Forum, he will bring back the infamous Antenna Forum, where he will build a 2-meter yagi out of pieces of copper plumbing. The QRP Forum has expanded to 1-1/2 hours and will feature special guest Dave Bentsen of Small Wonder Labs, a manufacturer of QRP equipment. The Microwave Forum will feature, "How to Get on 10 GHZ Without Breaking the Bank." The Contest Forum is back, along with the YCCC regional meeting. The ARRL Forum, headed up by Vice Director Mike Raisbeck K1TWF and VT SM Paul Gayet AA1SU, will offer information and discussion on amateur radio and the ARRL.

Vendors who require time to set up their stuff can enter through the back entrance starting at 6:30am. The admission at this entrance is \$10. The main entrance will open at 8am and the admission remains \$3. There is still no charge for tables or for youngsters under 18. The VE Session at Milton will be at 9AM and 1PM. Please bring 2 forms of ID, your Social Security number, pen, pencil, copy of license/CSCE and \$12. Before you leave the house in the morning, please check that you have all of these items so everyone can be processed quickly. If you have questions, write to me at the above E-mail address.

ARRL QSL Card checking for DXCC, WAS and VUCC will be available. Instead of mailing hundreds of cards to the ARRL, you can bring them to Milton and have them checked locally. BUT, you must READ the RULES at the ARRL Web for the conditions of Field Checking and provide the proper paperwork.

For all details on the Milton Hamfest, go to:<http://www.ranv.org/milton.html>

2. HAM CLASSES Mar 22-23 & Mar 29-30)

Weekend Ham Radio Classes will be offered on March 22-23 in Essex, VT and March 29-30 in Manchester, NH. There are 3 Course Options:

1. TECHNICIAN CLASS (Saturday class only)
2. GENERAL CLASS (Saturday and Sunday)
3. GENERAL UPGRADE CLASS (Sunday only - for licensed Technicians)

Students must pre-enroll for class. A package of material is sent out which includes textbooks, workbooks and CW practice software. CW is not taught in class, but students are instructed on how to use the software to practice the 5 wpm code.

For details on the Weekend Technician Class, go to: <http://www.ranv.org/milton.html>

[/www.ranv.org/weekend.html](http://www.ranv.org/weekend.html) or contact W1SJ at: w1sj@arrl.net.

3. THE VERMONT AMATEUR RADIO DIRECTORY

The 2003 Vermont Amateur Radio Directory will be out in Milton. It has all the addresses, phone numbers and E-mail addresses on all Vermont amateur operators. It also has all the club info, repeater info and dealer info. It still costs \$5. Stop by the hamfest information table and pick up a copy for yourself and your friends. I'll have a limited number available after the fest for \$6 mailed.

Addresses in the Directory come from the FCC database. Please take this time to check your callbook listing. If your information is incorrect, let me know about it so I can make the corrections, AND also file a 605 form with the FCC and update your address.

4. FEBRUARY 11th RANV MEETING

Those of you who are in NW Vermont might want to check out the February 11th RANV Meeting. This meeting will be on Internet Repeater Linking, including IRLP and Echolink. Mike WB1FUV and myself will give details on how to make full use of the IRLP features on 145.15 (also 145.13 in Norwich). In Part 2 of the meeting, we will have a demonstration on Echolink from a computer set up in the meeting room. The RANV meeting is Tuesday, February 11th at 7 PM at the O'Brien Civic Center, 113 Patchen Road, South Burlington.

5. HOSSTRADERS NEWS

Per the Official Hosstraders site (Jan 23), we have an unconfirmed, "tentative" date for Spring Hosstraders as May 3rd at the Hopkinton Fairgrounds. Everyone keep your fingers crossed that all goes well so we will have a show then.

I hope that something in all of this has been useful to everyone. If you didn't get this E-mail, that means I don't have your address, it is incorrect, or you're just plain lucky!

If you respond, please do TWO things:

1. Set your E-mail to JUST respond to me at w1sj@arrl.net only. Massive responses will annoy everyone. That's not good.

2. Set your E-mail to not copy back what I have sent you, or else, erase it in your response. Many large E-mails will just clog everyone's access up.

I can be reached by phone at 879-6589 at limited times: M-F Mornings 10-12, Evenings 9-11. I look forward to seeing all of you at these many upcoming events.

73, Mitch W1SJ w1sj@arrl.net

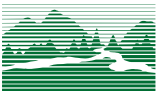
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Part 97 <http://www.arrl.org/field/regulations/news/part97/>

Don't forget to check the TSRC Home Page!
Make it your default start page!
<http://www.w1fn.org>



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