



RADIO AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

The Official Journal of the Radio Amateurs of Northern Vermont

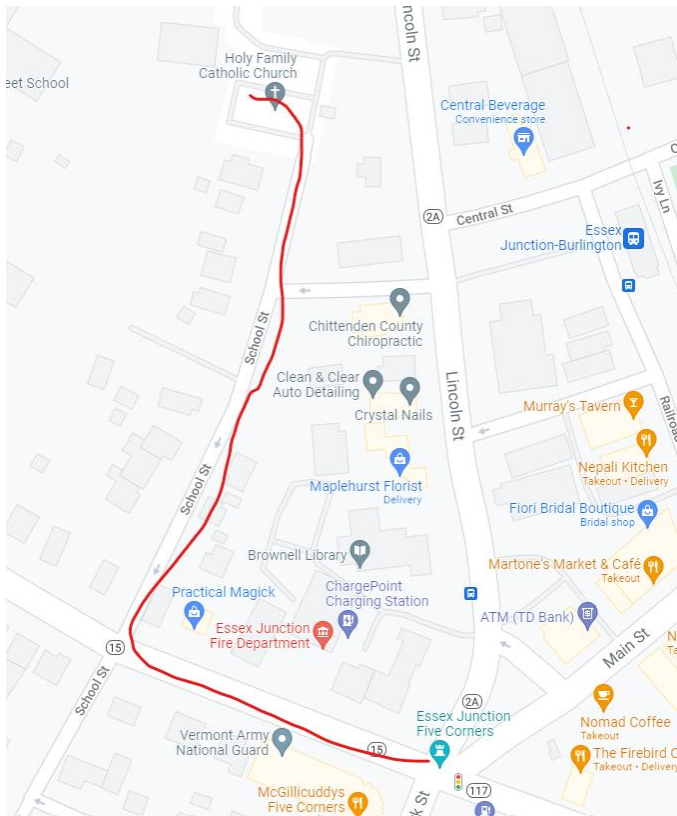
September • 2021

An ARRL Special Service Club

Vol. 31 No. 9

NEXT MEETING:

I have secured the use of the parish hall at Holy Family Catholic Church in Essex Junction. The address is 30 Lincoln Street. Access is from School Street, See map and directions below.



From 5 Corners head west on VT 15 (Pearl Street) past the Fire Station. Take next right and follow School Street straight into parking lot for Parish Hall at the end of School Street

CONTACTS

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Meetings: 2nd Tuesday • 7:00 PM
Wheeler House
1100 Dorset Street
South Burlington

Repeater: 145.150, PL 100; WB1GQR

New Hams, Mentoring:
RANVMentor@gmail.com

VT State Parks On The Air:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/292829457810746/>

Online Dues Payment:
www.ranv.org/ranvpay.html

The agenda is an open discussion. Paul AA1SU has a SCC Certificate to present to our newly elected President, Stewart Corey.

The upcoming elections and by laws.

People can bring in a piece of equipment they have been working on and talk about it.

Plans for the following year.

Annual Meeting and Call for Nominations

Duane Sherwood, Secretary [WL7CVD](#)

Our annual meeting and club elections will be held on Thursday, November 11, 2021. This is a change from our usual meeting night. Official ballots will be mailed out as has been done the past few years. Ballots can be returned by mail or delivered in person at the meeting. Ballots will be counted at the meeting.

The deadline for submitting nominations is October 21st. The offices are President, Vice President/Treasurer, and Secretary. Anyone who is interested in running for one of these positions should email Duane Sherwood at dsalaskasep@ak.net. By stepping forward, candidates essentially self-nominate. It would be good form to find someone to second a nomination. Candidates are welcome to submit a brief statement (1 or 2 paragraphs) describing such things as background, interests, or other pertinent information. Statements will be included with the ballot.

SMUGGLER'S NOTCH ACTIVATION

A Big Challenge Ended Successfully

Mitch [W1SJ](#)

Our latest activation was Smuggler's Notch State Park. Our goal was to do a new park which was still relatively close to home. So far, we have done all the close ones and all the easy ones. The remaining parks are challenging.

Smugglers had a dual challenge. First, it is a notch. That means a steep cut in the terrain – hardly good for radio propagation. It must be noted that locations of State Parks are not chosen based on great propagation characteristics. Second, Smuggler's Notch is kind of a disconnected park. The original park was right at the top of the notch, likely one of the worst radio locations with 1000-foot rock cliffs. There is a new campground further down the valley, but there is no public area and no place to set anything up. Finally, there is the picnic area and several State pull offs along the road. We ended up at the picnic area. This was a very nice idyllic location alongside the west branch of the Little River. The

high mountains required a very high 15-degree takeoff angle to both the U.S. and Europe. We were not counting on tremendous pileups.

We quickly got our dipoles 40-50 feet into the air and got on. Immediately, 20 meters proved to be a disaster. Answers to CQ's were few and those who did answer were usually below the S-6 noise level. I heard the noise level the day before from home, so I knew it was band conditions, but still tried to mitigate the noise, to no success. But the rate on 20 meters was horrible, and only folks in 4-land were being heard. This was also consistent with the fact that we had a reasonable path to the South Southwest, but blocked to the West.

A quick try on CW didn't produce results either. So, I whipped out the computer and set up on 20-meter FT8. The rates were poor (as FT8 rates are) but at least I was steadily working people, both in the U.S. and Europe. The problem with FT8 in a park activation is that one cannot exchange the park number. So, I just made sure to spot the activity often on the cluster and hoped that anyone who was working POTA was able to figure it out.

Meanwhile on 40 meters phone, Bob and Carl were steadily working people with the typical results one finds on 40 meters in the day – quick runs, and then nothing and then quick runs again. The steep mountains did not seem to affect the lower band as much.

I tried 20-meter phone a few times, but it never got out of gear. I then tried something I've never done before during a park activation – 30-meter FT8. It was great! The rates started to pop over 30 per hour, which is about as fast as FT8 will go. And there was a lot of Europe being worked. The beauty of FT8 – I was able have lunch and then chat with both Bob and Carl for quite a bit – something which cannot be done on phone. They left early and took the 40-meter station down. At 4:00, I then said, "Why Not?" and jumped over to 40 meters phone with the multiband dipole. The rates were insane – topping 150 per hour. This was not totally unexpected as I have seen 40 meters come to life in the late afternoon on previous outings.

We ended up with 356 QSO's. This is certainly quite a bit less than our 600-800 QSO blowouts, but considering we were operating out of a hole, it was not too shabby. However, a lot had to do with propagation. All summer, 20 meters has been sick. Park activations in the previous month from much better locations were lackluster. The next day, from home, I could see that propagation on 20 meters out West was very, very limited, with most of the stronger signals coming from 4-land. Ultimately, we were a victim of both poor propagation and poor location. As they say, when stuck with lemons, make lemonade, which is what we did!

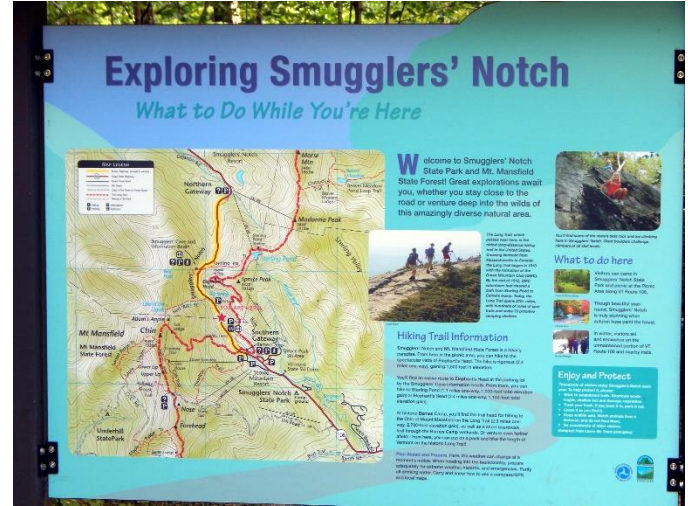
Pictures / Video from Smugglers' Notch SP activation

Bob **K1BIF**

On 9/4/2021 RANV (W1NVT) activated Smugglers' Notch State Park in Vermont, park number 3144. Operators were AB1DD, W1SJ and K1BIF. Smugglers' Notch is a narrow pass through the northern Green Mountains, lined with 1,000-foot cliffs. So, getting a signal out had its challenges. We set up in the picnic area, next to a small creek. We ran 2 stations, both 500w, one on 20, the other on 40 meters. To spite the issues in getting a good signal out, we made 356 contacts; 290 phone, 1 CW and 65 FT8."

Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=THxP3HTKWRo>



RANV Meeting Minutes
RANV SUMMER PICNIC
Saturday, August 7, 11AM-3PM
Kamp Kill Kare State Park
George, **KC1JGM**

We elected Stewart Corey as our new RANV President. Due to Covid lunch was limited. We had a very relaxed social gathering and activation that was cut short due to a midafternoon shower

Official Business

No other official business was conducted at this meeting.



NEWS & VIEWS

INSIDE

- **NEXT MEETING – September 16th**
Holy Family Parish Hall
30 Lincoln Essex Junction
- **RANV Annual Picnic**
- **Annual Meeting Call for Nominations**
- **SMUGGLER’S NOTCH ACTIVATION**

NEXT MEETING

Thursday • September 16TH • 7:00pm
Holy Family Parish Hall
30 Lincoln Street Essex Junction

Meeting Topic

Discuss Future Activities / Election Nominations Discussion

Upcoming, Notices, & Misc

- Steering Wheel: 3rd Tues 6:30; 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