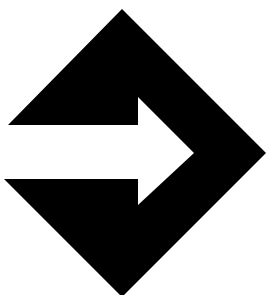


January 2004

The Monitor

Published jointly by the Valley Amateur Radio Association and the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association,
Dedicated to serving those interested in Amateur Radio in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley

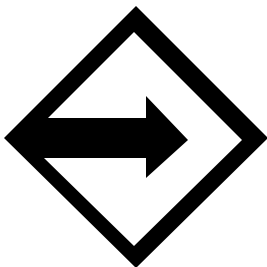


MARA Holiday Banquet – January 8 – Families Invited!

Don't forget! The MARA Holiday Banquet this year is Thursday, January 8th!

All spouses, and even children, are invited! The meal will be the normal Ever's fare, including the optional oysters.

There will be no business meeting or ham radio program. However, there will be some presentations, and also some very special entertainment, arranged by K4RBZ! Meal starts at 6:30 pm!!



How Long Has It Been Since You Walked Around In The "Renewed"?

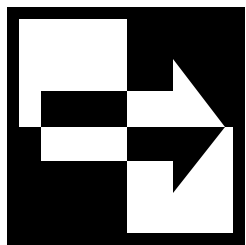
Renew today! Only a handful of members responded to the threats published in last months' issue of the Monitor. To date, the MARA club has received less than a dozen renewals.

What are you waiting on? A Round Tuit?

Fill out the form on the last page of this

issue, and mail it in, or bring it to the January meeting of your club. If you can't make the January meeting, **don't** wait until the February meeting — mail the dang thing in. It is worth the \$0.37 stamp to get it over with and not have to listen to any more childish whining from KD9LA.

Like the Nike commercial says, Just Do It!



VARA Officers Are Now Official

A correction from last month's Monitor:

The new officers of the VARA Club are as shown to the right.

Congratulations to these hams for having the courage and willingness to serve.

President: Billy Hooke, KG4JOF

Vice President: Greg Czerniak W4GRC

Secretary: Ray Colvin KE4HVR

Treasurer: Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW

Program Chair: Richard Huttinger AA4RH

MARA President's Message

Where is this month's centerfold?

If you receive the Monitor in the black-and-white hardcopy (postal service) version, you may be asking why this month's issue has a staple in the corner rather than the center.

The answer has to do with the fact that the JMU print shop was closed for the holidays, and the editor had to resort to commercial for-profit printing, and the rates for 8x17 folded paper are more astronomical than the Hubble Space Telescope.

As an accountant, I'm always trying to save a buck here and a buck there.

And speaking of bucks, don't miss our February MARA meeting. Captain Jim Junkins is going to explain to us why the city and county need the 16-million dollar communications system you've been reading about in the papers.

Getting back to the Monitor, I'd like to urge all MARA members (who do not already receive the electronic copy) to please, please, consider signing up for the email version rather than the paper version. If you have an email account which can accept attachments up to 1 megabyte, you can receive a full-color copy of the Monitor about five days earlier than you receive the paper black-and-white version. It is easier to store, more colorful, and you can magnify it on your screen. Plus, it saves the club about a dollar and a half per month! It is only because of these electronic copies that we've been able to keep the dues to the same rate for the last ten years!

Don't forget to bring your XYL and family to the Holiday Banquet on January 8. I'll be at a conference in Florida, but I hear that Gerry has some great music lined up!

73, Dave, KD9LA



VE Report (Hey, — We're Not Talking Canada, Here!)

A Hale and Hearty "Thank You" to the loyal volunteer examiners who helped with the local VE exam session in December.

- GERALD NAUMAN KN4FM
- ANDREW J BARBOUR AG4XN
- JAMES LEHMAN W4POL
- JASON ARMENTROUT N4DSL
- E C SHOWALTER KU4KUR
- NORMAN BENNER KA4EEN
- RICHARD HAXTON KC3AN

We served seven individuals, and the session produced four new licenses, plus a ham who passed the Morse Code test.

Congrats to the New Hams:

- Nevin Blankenship, KI4DMF
- Jerry Hampton, KI4DME
- Richard Knupp, KI4DMD
- Charles Larrie Kline, KI4DMC



2004 VE Schedule Released — Mark Your Calendars Now!

VE Exams are held the second Saturday of every "EVEN NUMBERED" month. The exception is December, where there was a conflict with the building.

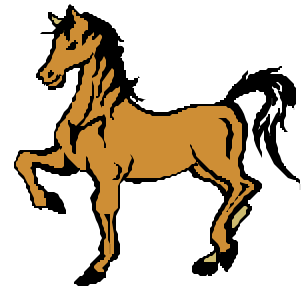
- **Saturday, February 14**
- **Saturday, April 10**
- **Saturday, June 12**
- **Saturday, August 14**
- **Saturday October 9**
- **Saturday December 4**

“Thank You, Hams”, — from Camp Still Meadows

The following letter was received by the president of MARA, in appreciation for the ham radio public service provided in October.

“Massanutten Amateur Radio Association: Thank you all so very much for helping us at the ride-a-thon. You all did a fantastic job in keeping our riders safe. I hope you can help us again, October 3, 2004. Thank you again, (signed) Janet Maasch, President, Camp Still Meadows, Inc.”

Camp Still Meadows is a non-profit special needs camp serving children and adults with mental retardation and/or physical disabilities. The organization holds an annual horse-back ride in the mountains of western Rockingham County each fall, as their primary fund-raising activity. Hams provide support communications around the 20-mile ride course, reporting on accidents and hazards, as well as keeping track of rider progress.



News From Our Neighbors to the North — Shenandoah County Hams Organizing!

Jim Stamper KG4LDY, of Woodstock is one of numerous hams in the Shenandoah County area who is interested in possibly creating a formal, organized, ham radio presence in that area.

Hams in Shenandoah County are always welcome at both VARA and MARA meetings, but realistically, it is a very long way to drive, especially if you don't live near the Interstate.

The group held an informal meeting in November to see if there was enough interest in forming a club.

Eighteen people attended. It was a good gathering. The hams decided to meet again for breakfast in January.

Esther Miller, KK6AD, was there. Esther is Chair of the Red Cross Board and will try to arrange to have Dave Ferguson, Shenandoah County's Emergency Coordinator, come speak to the meeting in January and, afterwards, give a tour of the Communications Center in the County Building.

The group bemoans the fact that there are no 2 meter repeaters that can be hit from all over the County and agreed to try some simplex on an experimental basis. Jim will be sending out a roster, list of nets etc. in a few days and will suggest some times for the group to meet as a simplex net.

Thanks to Bob Van Fossen K4DJG for providing this information.

News From Our Neighbors to the South — Waynesboro Repeater Association

The Waynesboro Repeater Association of Virginia (WRAV) held their once-a-year meeting (yep, that's right, they only meet once per year!) at the Waynsboro library in December.

This is the group which maintains the W4PNT repeater on Bear Den Mountain, on 147.075. This repeater has great coverage of most of the valley, plus a lot of the piedmont region from just west of Richond, down towards Amherst, and up to Madison.

The officers were re-elected: President Charlie Garner WA4ITY, Vice President Frank Green KE4ASC, Secretary Alf Bogden KF4AGT, and Treasurer Gordon Batey, WA4FJC.

This repeater also has EchoLink capability and autopatch privileges for club members. Dues are \$30 per year. For more information on this club, get on the repeater, or check out their website at:

[Http://www.qsl.net/wrav/](http://www.qsl.net/wrav/)

Get Your First Choice of Dates! Call Norman at 289-5801

Norman, KA4EEN, would like to schedule the Monday Night ARES Net Control stations a few weeks in advance.

The net script is on the web, or you can pick up a copy at any MARA meeting.

Give Norman a call and volunteer to serve as Net Control. It is good practice for public service events.

Norman's phone number is 289-5801, or you can catch him on the net or at a club meeting.

Movers and Shakers on Ten Meters

*"The Old and the
New,
Together in Perfect
Harmony...

Well, almost..."*

The moving and shaking was done on the antenna!

The 10-meter contest group met again at the home of KB4OLM on the second weekend in December, to work the 10m contest.

The 10-meter vertical (also known as Old Reliable) decided to quit right at the start of the contest, so the group improvised, and constructed a home-brew 10m dipole on the fly, which put out a nice silky smooth signal for the duration of the event.

The old and the new mixed together, as the group used an Icom 756 Pro II radio, coupled to an antique Heathkit SB-200 amplifier. The group used the venerable CT logging software, but used the Windows version instead of the DOS version so popular at Field Day. They used a Heil Headset and the rig's voice memory "keyer", and a good old-fashioned footswitch.

A lot of fun was had by everyone, and although the score was down slightly from last year, that can be blamed on

the snowstorm which kept most of the hams snug in their beds on Sunday morning.

Participating were:

- **Jeff Rinehart W4PJW**
- **David Tanks AD4TJ**
- **Clint Campbell KB4OLM**
- **Jason Armentrout N4DSL**
- **Benny Cook N4BCC**
- **Richard Huttinger AA4RH**
- **Greg Czerniak W4GRC**

K3EC Leading the Effort to put VMRC On The Air

Hugh Pettis, K3EC, is working hard with the administration of the Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community to put a ham station on the air from the facility.

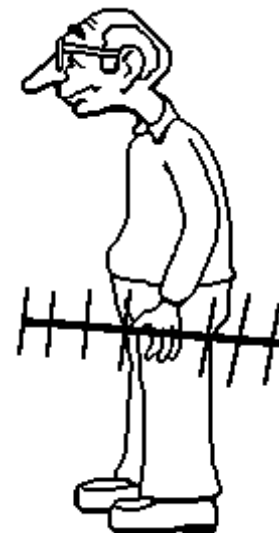
After the MARA club passed a resolution endorsing the creation of a community station, Hugh

wrote a letter to Karen Barnes, vice president of residential and community services. In the letter, K3EC explained the advantages of having a working ham radio facility active on the premises.

The MARA club has volunteered to assist in the construction and physical

setup of the station, and many local hams have also pledged their help, but official permission needs to be gained to help the numerous hams who are residents at VMRC.

Stay tuned for news of progress on this very worthwhile endeavor.



The MARA December meeting was "snowed out", and no business was conducted. Hence, no Minutes this month.

VARA Secretary's Report

The **V**alley **A**mtateur **R**adio **A**ssociation met at Kathy's in Verona on December 2, 2003. The President Benny Cook N4BCC opened the meeting at 7:40pm. There were 22 members present and 5 guests, Steve Davis KI4CGI, Ron Burch W4ZEE, John Bottemiller N4SYH, Doug Tippett N8ESW, and Roger Sack N9ARC. Welcome to our visitors, and we would like to see all of you back next month.

50/50: The 50/50 was won by Doug Tippett N8ESW.... Congratulations Doug!

Three New Applications: Ron Burch W4ZEE Roger Sack N9ARC and Doug Tippett N8ESW paid and will be voted on in January.

New Member: Steve Davis KI4CGI was voted into VARA.....Welcome to the VARA!

2004 OFFICERS:
President: Billy Hooke KG4JOF
Vice President: Greg Czerniak W4GRC
Treasurer: Jeff Rinehart W4PJW
Secretary: Ray Colvin KE4HVR

AMATEUR RADIO BOOKS: Alby McCutchen AD4KZ has completed the Ham Radio book distribution to the local libraries and is gathering information to access the library from the Internet and find the location of the books you would like to check out or read at the library. Alby will have that information for us at the January meeting. Thanks to Alby for his time and effort in getting this project completed.

Next VARA Meeting: We will meet at Shoney's in Staunton for our January meeting and decide if the club wants to change the VARA meetings to Kathy's in Verona.

SWAP SHOP: This will be for Ham related items only. You can send a list of items you have for sale, swap or something you would like to buy, to Billy Hooke KG4JOF at: KG4JOF@arrl.net Also a picture of the item would help it sell. Go to VARA Web Site at: <http://www.qsl.net/w4mus/>

Highland County ARES Net will be on the Monterey repeater 147.180+ and tone of 100.0 at

8:30pm on the 1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month. They would like to welcome everyone to check into the Net.

ADDRESSES!!! Keep your e-mail address up to date. You can send your e-mail address to: Billy, KG4JOF@arrl.net Jeff, jmrinehart@yahoo.com Ray, colvingr@rica.net David, ford-hadr@jmu.edu

ON THE SICK LIST: **Dan James W4DLJ** is getting around without his walker part of the time but he said he was not sure when he would be able to join us for the Friday lunches. **Marvin Henderson's (KF4WDI) Daughter** recently had an operation and then had complications and spent another eighteen days in the hospital, she came home on Wednesday before Thanksgiving and is doing well at this time. *Lets keep these folks in our thoughts and prayers.*

ARES NET: David Tanks AD4TJ is looking for Net Controls for the Augusta County ARES Net. The Net will be held on the 146.850 repeater on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 8:00pm. This repeater has a minus offset and a tone of 131.8 when needed.

PROGRAMS NEEDED: Richard AA4RH, Program Chairman, is looking for anyone that would like to do a program for the club. Give him a call and set up a date to present it. It does not have to be HAM related. It could be anything you think the group would find interesting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23pm

Submitted By:
VARA Secretary
Ray Colvin KE4HVR



Calendar of Upcoming Events

- January 3-4: RTTY Roundup
- January 4: Ham Radio Kids Day
- January 6: VARA Club Meeting
- January 8: MARA Holiday Banquet
- January 11: NA QSO Party CW
- January 17: NA QSO Party SSB
- January 17-19; ARRL VHF Sweepstakes (according to page 98 of the January issue of QST)
- January 24-26: ARRL VHF Sweepstakes (according to the ARRL website, — hey, what can we say!)
- January 24: CQ 160m Contest CW

Remember, local ARES Net schedules and frequencies can be found on the MARA website on the schedule page.

- February 3: V ARA Club Meeting
- February 5: MARA Club Meeting
- February 9-13: ARRL School Roundup
- February 14: VE Exams Dayton Virginia
- February 14-15: CQ-RJ RTTY WPX Contest
- February 21-22: ARRL DX Contest CW
- February 22: Richmond Frostfest
- February 28: CQ 160m Contest SSB
- February 29: Vienna Hamfest

The Opinionated One — Are You a Qualified Valley Ham?

In order to become a CPA in the Commonwealth of Virginia, you not only have to pass the national CPA examination, you also have to pass a second, state-designated exam, and have a full year's experience working in the field. This is to ensure that you are really qualified to practice public accounting in Virginia.

Why don't we have a two-stage testing procedure for hams? Think about it. In addition to the national FCC VE exam, shouldn't prospective radio amateurs be required to take a second exam after practicing for a year, to make sure they are qualified to be a real ham here in the valley?

Below are my ideas for a local test. See how well you score...

1. You have actually seen, in person, with your own eyes: Bill KE4FM, Bob W3MMC, Donnie N4RAG, or Dee W4PNT. (3 points each)
2. You know where the 146.67 repeater is located. (1 point)
3. You've actually *worked* the 146.67 repeater (1 point). Or the 146.70 repeater (1 point). Or the 147.18 repeater (3 points).
4. You are at the Field Day Site more often than you are at ham club meetings. (3 points)
5. You're familiar with the FCC rule that lets you engage in a full five-hour-long QSO *without once* transmitting your callsign, — as long as you are on the 147.225 repeater after 10 pm. (5 points)
6. You've actually *been* to Bob's Knob. (2 points)
7. You have even used the two-seater at Bob's Knob. (10 points)
8. You know that KE4ASC can read and write, regardless of what all the guys in the Staunton club say. (1 point)
9. You knew that there was a Waynesboro Repeater Club before you read about it in this issue of the Monitor. (1 point)
10. You've worked Dale Enterprise for DXCC credit (subtract 1 point)
11. You've finally realized the guys in Woodbridge are always out of stock in what you came for, and even if they do have it, they aren't interested enough in selling it to you to make it worth your drive over there to get it. (2 points)
12. You know that N4DSL has experimented with more advanced communications technology in the last year than AT&T's Bell Labs did in the last quarter century, — and he still isn't even old enough to buy beer. (2 points)
13. You know what the "EME" stands for in K4EME's call. (1 point)
14. You've eaten at Burger King on East Market Street between 11 am and 1 pm on a weekday (1 point)
15. You've eaten at the L&S Diner and parked beside the big green dump truck in the far lot. (2 points)
16. You had the *macaroni and cheese* at the L&S Diner and went all afternoon without eating a Tums (10 points).
17. You've eaten at *both* Kathy's restaurants. (2 points)
18. You received an invitation to join WB4YEX on a contest camping trip. (2 points — but subtract 10 points if you went.)
19. You've connected to "The Cluster" more than ten times in the last week (5 points)
20. You get all happy and excited when you hear a hurricane is coming ashore near Virginia Beach (1 point)
21. You spent more time maintaining your RV last year than the total time you've been on the bands since 1970. (2 points)
22. You have your hair (what little there is of it) cut at Charlie Suter's in Bridgewater (2 points)
23. You know the frequency of a 440 repeater you can hit from the valley. (5 points — plus 2 extra if you know the PL!)
24. You do "Bike Virginia" every year, even though you don't have a clue as to what its real name is nowadays. (3 points)
25. When KA4EEN checks into the Monday night ARES net with an announcement, you know, exactly, word for word, what he's going to ask for. (5 points)
26. You get patriotic emails from W4DLJ every day. (5 points)
27. You have no idea what the difference is between ARES and RACES, but you are smart enough to realize that discussing it in public will start an argument faster than having the United Nations ordain a gay bishop to stop NRA members from buying handguns to perform abortions on Rush Limbaugh's doctor under a confederate battle flag at a pajama party hosted by Michael Jackson at the White House on Janet Reno Day (25 points)

Add up your points. If you score between 85-100 points, you are a real valley Ham. If you score 75 to 85 points, you need to get on the local repeaters more often. If you score 50-75 points, you should come to a club meeting every now and then. Less than 50 points, you really ought to move to Northern Virginia!

Membership Renewal Form

NAME: _____ Call: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: *(print legibly!!)* _____

MEMBER OF ARRL (y/n): ____ REGISTERED MEMBER OF VA -RACES (y/n): ____ RACES TRAINED (y/n): ____

SKYWARN ID *(if SkyWarn trained)* _____ Are you available for Workday Daytime Emergency Callup? (y/n) ____

Do you want to receive the Monitor via PDF Email? Yes/No/I already Do _____

CURRENT ABILITIES & CAPABILITIES: Do you have the technical ability, knowledge, experience, know-how, and the equipment to **reliably** operate the following modes or activities? Check all that apply.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> HF CW slow-speed | <input type="checkbox"/> 50 Mhz FM | <input type="checkbox"/> APRS, base WX or digipeating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HF CW high-speed (15 wpm and up) | <input type="checkbox"/> 50 MHz — other modes | <input type="checkbox"/> APRS, mobile transmitting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HF SSB | <input type="checkbox"/> 2m FM | <input type="checkbox"/> Simple GPRS positioning capability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HF Mobile from vehicle | <input type="checkbox"/> 2m weak signal, AM, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> EME or Meteor Scatter or JT44 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HF Portable or QRP | <input type="checkbox"/> 220 FM | <input type="checkbox"/> Microwave (902 Mhz or higher) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NTS HF Message Handling ability | <input type="checkbox"/> 220 other modes | <input type="checkbox"/> Satellite Operations (analog modes) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HF Slow-Scan TV | <input type="checkbox"/> 440 FM | <input type="checkbox"/> Satellite Operations (digital modes) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional RTTY | <input type="checkbox"/> 440 weak signal | <input type="checkbox"/> RDF — Direction Finding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PSK31, | <input type="checkbox"/> 440 fast scan television | <input type="checkbox"/> Ham equipment diagnosing/light repairing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other HF digital modes | <input type="checkbox"/> Simple Packet | <input type="checkbox"/> Tower climbing/antenna installation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weather Station & Monitoring | <input type="checkbox"/> DX cluster and/or BBS | <input type="checkbox"/> PIC programming & circuit design |

Other abilities and capabilities: _____

WHAT TOPICS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE ON THE CLUB MEETING PROGRAMS? (check all that apply or add more.)

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> HF operating and Etiquette | <input type="checkbox"/> Weather Stations, Weather Monitoring & Reporting | <input type="checkbox"/> Innovative Mobile Rig Installations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HF DXing | <input type="checkbox"/> Skywarn: What's it all about? | <input type="checkbox"/> Microwaves (902 Mhz or higher) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contesting | <input type="checkbox"/> Ultra-Simple Antenna Designs | <input type="checkbox"/> Satellite Operations (analog modes) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> QSL'ing methods, hints, tips | <input type="checkbox"/> 2m weak signals | <input type="checkbox"/> Satellite Operations (digital modes) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comparisons of Logging Software | <input type="checkbox"/> 220 or 440 operations | <input type="checkbox"/> RDF — Direction Finding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile, Portable or QRP operations | <input type="checkbox"/> Fast scan television: How To... | <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Response Kits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NTS HF Message Handling skill | <input type="checkbox"/> Simple Packet: How To... | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio Operations in Emergencies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HF Slow-Scan TV: How To... | <input type="checkbox"/> DX cluster and/or BBS | <input type="checkbox"/> Ham equipment diagnosing/repairing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional RTTY: How To... | <input type="checkbox"/> APRS: Getting Started | <input type="checkbox"/> Tower climbing/antenna installation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other HF digital modes | <input type="checkbox"/> Simple GPRS introduction | <input type="checkbox"/> PIC programming & circuit design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> What's on 50 Mhz? | <input type="checkbox"/> EME or Meteor Scatter | <input type="checkbox"/> Traders Day, Homebrew Fair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Logbook of the World | | <input type="checkbox"/> A modest Valley Hamfest |

Other interesting subjects for meeting programs: _____

VARA Renewals: mail with \$15 to Jeff Rinehart, 1344 Hankey Mtn Highway, Churchville VA 24421

MARA Renewals: mail with \$12 to VARA, PO Box 1882, Harrisonburg, VA 22801

MARA/VARA

c/o David Fordham
131 Wayside Drive
Weyers Cave, VA 24486
Phone: 540-568-3024
Email: fordhadr@jmu.edu

Return Service Requested

MASSANUTTEN AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, Inc.

President: David Fordham KD9LA
Vice President: Bill Karle KG4UPN
Secretary: Todd Harrison, K4TMH
Treasurer: Sandy Mullins, K4PZC
Board (exp 04): Richard Haxton, KC3AN
Board (exp 05): John Nelson N3JN

<http://mara.ws>

MARA normally meets the first Thursday of each month, but in January will hold a Holiday Banquet January 8 at 6:30 pm At Ever's Restaurant on U.S. 11 South of Harrisonburg

Visitors are welcome.

Dues (\$12 per year) should be mailed to:
MARA
PO Box 1882
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

President: Billy Hooke, KG4JOF
Vice President: Greg Czerniak, W4GRC
Secretary: Ray Colvin, KE4HVR
Treasurer: Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW
Program Manager: Richard Huttinger, AA4RH

<http://www.qsl.net/w4mus>

VARA meets the first Tuesday of each month At Shoneys Restaurant on U.S. 250 east in Staunton. Meal starts at 6:30 pm. Business meeting starts at 7:30 pm.

Visitors are welcome.

Dues (\$15 per year) should be mailed to:
Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW
1344 Hankey Mtn Hwy
Churchville, VA 24421