

The Monitor

September, 2005

Published Monthly by the Massanutten and Valley Amateur Radio Associations



Monitor From ON Land Again...

Once again, the newsletter editor is living in Belgium. And once again, via the magic of e-mail, the Monitor continues relatively uninterrupted.

The word “relatively” is appropo... the computer being used by KD9LA for this issue does not have the normal authoring tools on it, so we are having to make do with what we’ve got. Hopefully the product is acceptable to most readers.

At left, we see Dianna, harmonic of KD9LA and KB4WPE, standing in front of the Zimmertoren in the town of Lier. The 13 dials on this astronomical clock chart 13 different natural time cycles, including the sunspot cycle! Wouldn’t it be neat to have one of these in your shack!

VARA President’s Message

I hope everyone has managed to stay cool this summer. It has been almost unbearable at times. I am looking forward to our activities coming up in September and October, but I need to reflect briefly on Field Day.

This was my first Field Day to actively participate in. I enjoyed very much helping set up the antennas and equipment on Friday and Saturday. I learned a lot from Jeff (W4PJW) about HF antennas. I learned if I am ever in a fight with Goliath and I need someone good with a slingshot, I am calling Bob (K4DJG). I was impressed with the mobile packet station that David (AD4TJ) had in his vehicle. Thanks Herb (AA2BF) for breakfast on Saturday morning. Also, thanks to Dale (N4ATF) and Dick (W3HXX) for their music on Friday night.

I have been anxiously awaiting September 17th. This is the day of the Great Eastern Endurance Race that the VARA club will be helping with. I have met with the race director, Francesca Conte, on two occasions and feel this will be a good event for our club to help with. The race will be 62 miles. I know some people thought that this was 62 miles on a bike, but this is actually running 62 miles. A good way to think of this is running from I-64 split at Staunton (exit 221) all the way north to Woodstock (exit 283). I hope we have a lot of volunteers that date.

On a personal note, I wish Kenny (KE4GKD) and Denny (N4XPW) a speedy recovery. We are looking forward to hearing you two on the radio again! !! Thanks Ray (KE4HVR) for keeping us updated on them.

In conclusion, our “Quote of the Month” comes from the great American poet, Robert Frost, who wrote in his poem, “The Road Not Taken”, these immortal words: *“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.”*

Marvin Henderson, VARA President



Waynesboro Repeater Association Meeting October 3

Christmas isn't coming early this year, but the annual meeting of the Waynesboro Repeater Association sure is! Instead of December, the group will hold their annual meeting on October 3, at the usual place: The meeting room in the basement of the Waynesboro Public Library.

All local amateurs are invited to the meeting. There is usually a drawing for a prize, and you learn about the many good things that this group is responsible for.

You can also gain autopatch and Echolink privileges on the 147.075 machine by joining the group for a nominal annual dues. Come on out and enjoy the meeting.

FOR SALE: Everything for \$100

MFJ - 1270C TNC-2 Packet Controller (w/manuals)
MFJ - 1272M Mic Switch (w/manual)
Mirage B-310-G VHF Linear Amp (w/manual)
Heathkit HW-101 SSB Transceiver (w/manual, mic, and 17 spare tubes)
MFJ - 949B Deluxe Versa Tuner II (w/manual)
Zenith G500 TransOceanic Receiver (w/photocopy manual)
Zenith Royal D7000Y Trans-Oceanic Receiver - Solid State (w/manual)

Contact Bob McCracken, at dbcmc@cfw.com



Shenandoah County Net Now On the Air...

The Shenandoah County Two Meter Simplex Net meets Tuesdays at 8:00 PM, 146.55 MHz. Checkins from Page, Rockingham and all other outhern Shenandoah Counties are welcome to help test emergency linking/relaying possibilities.

Continued Best Wishes...

... to Ken KE4GKD and Denny N4XPW, as they recover from medical situations described last month. Kenny is still in the hospital as of this writing, with infections, and Denny is putting up with some really tough Physical Therapy, which is another word for modern day torture. Get well soon, guys!



Message Forwarded to Monitor From Don Landes, WX4C

Behind the visible signs of homeland security, the airport screeners and the border guards is a second layer, an invisible web of communications strung together by ham radio operators.

If a terrorist attack or natural disaster knocks out power and telephones, these men and women step in to help coordinate police, fire and other emergency services.

But now, some believe, a bill introduced by **Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa.**, threatens weather information crucial to SkyWarn and other groups that make up the fabric of that web. Critics say the legislation would restrict the duties of the National Weather Service, stopping the agency from providing service that can be handled by private weather-forecasting companies.

Joe and Bev Beichner, emergency coordinator and co-coordinator for Clarion County, are among those concerned.

They are part of the global network of ham radio operators trained to assist police, firefighters and other emergency responders should a terrorist attack, extreme weather or other emergency knock out communications. They have been trained to work with the Incident Command System, a national structure for handling emergency communications.

The Beichners have talked to hams in New Zealand, Greece and Antarctica. Bev once spent 20 or 30 minutes conversing with the Sultan of Oman, also an amateur radio buff.

Hams hail from 350 entities around the globe, exchanging greetings and information 24 hours a day. The United States alone has 700,000 amateur radio broadcasters.

They belong to a number of organizations with long names and acronyms. Some agencies work with the Red Cross. Others require government members to have clearances and background checks to prevent false information from hampering emergency efforts.

When the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center demolished 37 cell phone antennae on top of the twin towers, ham radio operators stepped in to help coordinate police, fire and other services.

And, in the aftermath of December's fatal earthquake and tsunami in Asia, Barathi Prasad and a team of other amateur radio operators on Adaman and Nicobar islands were able to convey hundreds and hundreds of messages daily to India, Thailand and other places in the region.

ESSENTIAL COVERAGE

When disaster strikes, ham radios are often the only means of communication left operational.

Those who use them depend on weather forecasts available on weather scanners and radios to warn them when severe weather may be headed their way.

The Beichners have a weather scanner that picks up National Weather Service reports covering a 100-mile radius around their home in Knox.

These broadcasts are vital to their work with SkyWarn. By tuning to various frequencies, they and other SkyWarn volunteers can track

dangerous weather like severe lightning, tornadoes, hail, high winds, and ice and snow storms in winter.

Any SkyWarn member who sees severe weather reports it to the National Weather Service on a special phone line reserved for that purpose, and the NWS adds the information to their broadcasts.

If Santorum's bill passes, the weather service will be forced to stop broadcasting except when dangerous conditions develop.

"Volunteers might lose interest if there's no station to listen to," says Joe Beichner. "People will not have their radios on, listening to dead air space." That could mean the end of SkyWarn.

A spokesman for the weather service said the agency cannot comment on pending legislation, but Ed Johnson, the weather service's director of strategic planning and policy, has been quoted as saying: "If someone claims that our core mission is just warning the public of hazardous conditions, that's really impossible unless we forecast weather all the time. You don't just plug in your clock when you want to know what time it is."

Beichner also expressed concern about the elderly and people in rural areas who may not have cell phones or Internet access.

"Without the National Weather Service, they can't get information if the power goes out," he said.

The general public will not have free access to local weather via battery-operated weather radios, Bev Beichner said.

Another issue Beichner raises, which is echoed by Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., is Santorum's contention that his bill will save taxpayers money.

"We've already paid for this. The equipment is in place," Beichner said.

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association contends the government and private industry have had an ongoing relationship in providing weather data to the public. "NWS provides the information to these companies at no charge."

Bev Beichner believes the government should consider doing more: "If anything, National Weather Service transmitter coverage should be expanded to include terrorist activities and emergency situations like chemical spills, train derailments or earthquakes," she said.

PILOTS, MARINERS AFFECTED

A search of the Internet finds a high level of concern among boaters and pilots, too, since they depend heavily on the weather service for flight and marine forecasts.

A small thunderstorm can be fatal to a pilot who doesn't have good weather information.

The weather service Web site includes such detailed information as icing conditions and turbulence reports used in flight planning. Pilots are concerned that they may have to purchase this and other, more basic, data from private companies.

Santorum introduced the bill in response to a change in National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency policy enacted in December 2004. NOAA is the parent agency of the National Weather Service.

Since 1991, NOAA policy had banned the weather service from offering services available through the private sector. However, the agency's new policy, written in response to recommendations contained in a National Research Council study and extensive public comments, affects all of NOAA's programs.

It recognizes that the capabilities and services of universities, private companies and the public sector in providing "environmental information" often overlap and states that NOAA will give them "due consideration."

Santorum responded to the change with S.786, which would, according to a press release from his office, "restore the NWS non-competition policy."

He expressed concern that competition from the government would eliminate hundreds of jobs in the private sector.

Santorum has also accused the NWS of favoritism in their dissemination of information. His office has not responded to questions about specific times and places where favoritism occurred.

Santorum's home state of Pennsylvania is also home to AccuWeather, a private weather information company. AccuWeather and its employees have contributed thousands of dollars to Santorum's campaign fund over the last five years.

BIPARTISAN RESISTANCE

Santorum's bill was assigned to the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, which is composed of 12 Republicans and 10 Democrats. It languishes in committee without a co-sponsor, due primarily to the opposition that has been building since the bill's introduction.

Christine Hanson, a spokeswoman for Commerce Committee member Nelson, said, "Sen. Nelson feels this is something taxpayers have already paid for and should not have to pay for again."

She added that the National Weather Service Web site had "9 billion hits during hurricane season last year," not all of them from Florida.

She says Nelson is also concerned that this bill, if passed, would set a dangerous precedent, inviting companies to pressure Congress into shutting down other government Web sites.

"You wouldn't shut down the post office because FedEx offers a competing product," Nelson said in a press release about the legislation.

August VE Test Results

A big Thank You to those hams who came out to assist with the August VE testing session:

- **HUGH PETTIS** **K3EC**
- **JOHN SPILLMAN** **KT4CB**
- **E.C. SHOWALTER** **KG4KUR**
- **JIM LEHMAN** **W4POL**
- **GERALD NAUMAN** **KN4FM**
- **JASON ARMENTROUT** **N4DSL**
- **ROBERT VANFOSSEN** **K4DJG**
- **MICHAEL MCCAY** **W4AZR**
- **GAYLE SHULL** **KU4XN**

Individuals who sat for the tests included:

DARREL LITTLE new technician
112 LAMBERT ST.
STAUNTON VA. 24401
dlittle@intelos.net

JOHN SCHLABACK GENERAL
671 MT TORRY RD.
LYNDHURST VA. 22952
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BRYAN.FLEMING@EARTHLINK.NET

BRIAN COWGER TECHNICIAN
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HARRISONBURG VA. 22802
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DOLAN WOLFORD CODE
PO. BX. 37
5636 PARKER HOLLOW RD.
BAKER WVA. 26801-5571

Our next testing date is Saturday, October 8.
See you there!

GAYLE KU4XN

Script from Virginia District 1 ARES/RACES Net

As discussed at the last MARA meeting (August), below is the script provided by James Stamper, KG4LDY, of Shenandoah County. This may be discussed at the September MARA Meeting.

Calling the Virginia RACES district 1 Net, Calling the Virginia RACES District 1 Net. The Virginia RACES District 1 Net is a directed net of Virginia RACES. I request that all routine use of this frequency remain suspended until the net is deactivated. Your net control station for this session is (*your call here*), my name is (*your name here*), and I am located in the county of (*your county*).

Stations with emergency or priority traffic please call now.

Is there any formal traffic to list for the net? Call now.

The purpose of this net is to help organize the Virginia District 1 ARES/RACES operations at the VHF/UHF level, by presenting news, activities, and testing our communications equipment for emergency preparedness. This net meets every Sunday at 1900 local time on the 449.175 WA4RS repeater and the K4QJZ linked system on 145.21 and 51.94 MHz. The net may also be called on other repeaters or FM simplex frequencies as specified by net control. All amateurs both in and out of Virginia ARES/RACES District 1 are invited to participate.

At this time, I will begin calling for check-ins within Virginia ARES/RACES District 1 jurisdictions. Please state in the following order: your call using phonetics, your name, your location, and your ARES or RACES appointment, if you have one. If you are using 8 hour or greater emergency power during this net, please state the amount of available hours. Check-ins are asked to remain for the duration of the net, unless excused by net control.

After calling to all District 1 Jurisdictions:

At this time, further check-ins will be solicited from anyone, anywhere. Please state your call using phonetics, name, location, district, and your ARES or RACES appointment, if you have one.

NOTE: *Begin with initial roll call for Clarke, Frederick, Page, Shenandoah, Warren, and Winchester City, followed by anyone/anywhere. Then accept a round of comments, starting with DRO/DEC and ERO/EC's, then in the order of checked-in. Periodically solicit late check-ins during the round of comments.*

Conclusion:

There being no further traffic for the net, I would like to thank you for your participation, and invite you to join us next Sunday at 1900 local time on this repeater.

The Virginia ARES/RACES District 1 Net is now closed, and we are returning the frequency back to normal use at (*current time*). This is (*your call here*) and I am clear.

MARA Secretary's Report – August 4 Meeting

The August MARA meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm Aug. 4, 2005. Bill Karle KG4UPN Presiding. Introductions were made. Sick and injured: Kenny is in isolation at AMC. Feeling better but still not out of the woods. No new calls or upgrades. Treasurer's report not available.

Announcements: Hamfests- Saturday in Vinton, Sunday in Berryville

Committee reports:

VE Testing: Test session Sat. 13th

ARES: Fox Hunt in Augusta County Sunday Aug. 14, 2:00pm. Also, Highland Co. Saturday. needs assistance for Mt. Momma Bike Race 7:00am High School in Monterey....

Other Public Service Activities: 100K foot race Sept. 17th from 6:00pm to 12:30am Afton to Sherando to Blue Ridge Parkway This is just communications at 5 check points. Also, on Oct. 16th and 17 we have the Fall Foliage bike race.

There was a Discussion of RACES in Rock. Co. and ECC. There was a Discussion of ARES Vs RACES and the MARA net. A change in the script may be upcoming.

QRP Group: Meeting next tuesday

VMRC: No change Still Looking for a place for outdoor antenna.

ARRL has a set of videos. Maybe go in with VARA to use when there are not any programs. A brief discussion of future programs was held.

Skywarn- Trying to get a class together. Basic class renewed every two years. If you are interested contact AG4XN Andrew.

Old business:

-Lifetime Membership proposal - working on it

-FD Results - about same as last year: 6770 points. See n4dsl.com for pictures

Bridgewater parades went very well. \$300.00 for repeater groups was donated for our services.

New business:

Discussion of possible new location for meeting. Bill KG4UPN will check on the last charge from Ever's. The possibility of Golden Coral as our location was discussed – they have no minimum, will book month to month, and have an enclosed room. Action was tabled until next month at which time Bill will report on the Ever's situation.

50/50 Drawing was held and won by Jim Stamper \$12.50 The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm

Respectfully submitted by
Bryan Daniels, K4RMY

Don't Forget These Public Service Events!

September 17: Great Eastern Footrace, Afton, Virginia: A super event, requiring LOTS of ham operators! Contact Marvin KF4WDI

September 24: Bike Shenandoah, a great Rockingham County event. Contact Gerald Nauman, KN4FM

October 2: Camp Still Meadows, a really fun morning horse ride, covered with half a dozen hams. Contact Ray Ritchie K4NRA

October 15-16: Fall Foliage Ride, one of the most popular events among hams. Contact just about anybody!

VARA Secretary's Report – August 2 meeting

The **V**alley **A**mateur **R**adio **A**ssociation met at Kathy's in Verona on August 2, 2005. The President, Marvin Henderson KF4WDI, opened the meeting at 7:30pm. There were 22 members present and 8 guests, Bob Van Fossen K4DJG, Bill Karle KG4UPN and Andrew Barbour AG4XN, Jason Armentrout N4DSL, Darrel Little (not licensed), Bill Jones KE4FM, Heidi and Tria Cope (grand daughters of Joe Pehan W4LIG. Welcome to our visitors, and we would like to see all of you back next month.

50/50: Winner was Gary VanFossen KI4FZV. Congratulations Gary! More fuel for the model planes????

Field Day: No official field day report at this time but we are told the totals look to be close to last year.

Richard Huttlinger AA4RH mentioned the available CD's and Tapes that can be purchased from ARRL. You will soon be getting an e-mail with a description of what is on the CD's. Look these over and see which ones you are interested in and we will discuss if we want to purchase individual CD's or a set of 12 CD's for club programs.

HELP NEEDED Saturday September 17th is the date for the 100Km "Great Eastern Endurance Run". Your help will be appreciated very much. This begins on Afton Mt. at 6:00am from the first overlook south on the parkway from the Waynesboro entrance and ends at 12:30am Saturday. Hams are needed at several points along the way and after the runners pass your location you may be asked to move forward to another location if you can or secure your station. We will have more information at the next meeting and a schedule of times and locations for our stations.

If you can help send an e-mail to Marvin Henderson KF4WDI at: marvista@ntelos.net

ON THE SICK LIST:

Ken Harris KE4GKD is now at the Skilled Care Unit at AMC trying to clear up the VRE. He is in better spirits now.

Queenie, Clinton's (KB4OLM) wife still has health concerns at this time.

Denny Morland N4XPW is in Avante Nursing Home doing therapy 5 times/week for his leg that's broken near the hip.

Lets keep these folks in our thoughts and prayers.

Remember: We are in Hurricane Season, keep your batteries charged and radio's programmed for local repeaters and simplex frequencies in case you are called out.

SWAP SHOP:

This is 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/w4xd/> PLEASE notify Billy when your item is sold.

ADDRESSES!!! Keep your e-mail address up to date. Please send them to: Marvin Henderson KF4WDI marvista@ntelos.net Jeff Rinehart W4PJW jmrinehart@yahoo.com Ray Colvin KE4HVR colvingr@adelphia.net and David Fordham KD9LA fordhadr@jmu.edu Also, it's good to keep QRZ updated when call signs and e-mail addresses are changed.

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. Fox hunts are also scheduled for some months as weather permits.

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 8:15pm.

Submitted By:
VARA Secretary
Ray Colvin KE4HVR

Thanks to Mike KG4OON for printing this issue of the Monitor on short notice! -- KD9LA

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