

April 2006

The Monitor

Published jointly by the Valley Amateur Radio Association and the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association,

MARA's New President: KN4FM

MARA has had a change in leadership.

For health reasons, President Richard Weaver, W3HXX, felt it best to step down at the March meeting, and the club expressed its appreciation not only for his willingness to serve as president, but also for the many decades of service he's devoted to ham radio in the valley.

Vice President Gerald Nauman assumed the office of president in accordance with the club by-laws. In addition, John Lasher, N3GLZ, agreed to serve in the position of vice-president, filling the vacancy left by Gerald Nauman's moving to the office of president.

This action was approved by the Board, as required in the by-laws, and although not required, was formally ratified and

endorsed by voice vote of the membership in attendance at the March meeting, with no objections noted.

Thanks again to Richard for his service, and a special thanks to Gerald, John, and the other officers for their willingness to serve in these capacities.

**SKYWARN CLASSES IN
WEYERS CAVE ON MAY 13:
See Page 4 For Important
Information!**

VARA President's Message

Spring has finally arrived, although it was hard to tell here recently.

I enjoyed helping with the Bel Monte 50K Race at Sherando Lake on March 25th. With the participation of Darrell (KI4LLA), Gordon (WA4FJC) and my dad, Marvin (KF4KNN), this was a very enjoyable day. With 143 runners leaving in the snow and temperatures hovering around 30 degrees, it seemed a long time from Spring.

Gordon had to provide taxi service back to Sherando Lake for two of the race workers who could not get their vehicle off of Bald Mountain due to the snow! Fortunately most of the runners fared well despite the poor conditions, with the exception of one gentleman who had apparently broke his wrist and had to be escorted by Darrell back to Sherando Lake.

Our March club meeting was another enjoyable evening of fellowship with other hams.

It is always a pleasure to welcome new members into the club. This month we were joined by Bill Blasius (WA1EFY) and Charles Eckman (KI4LHD). Welcome Bill and Charlie!!!

Plans are well on the way for this year's Field Day in June. Thanks to the four who volunteered to be on the Field Day Committee.

A really big thanks to David (AD4TJ) for his talk at the club meeting on HF antennas. It is amazing to me how many different styles of antennas that have been designed for communication.

Our "Quote of the Month" comes from Samuel Morse, inventor of the Morse code, who supposedly sent as his first message; "What has God wrought?"

Marvin, KF4WDI

K4NRA: Pence Middle School Students Get Peek at Ham Radio

The 7th annual introduction of teens to amateur radio took place on March 15th and 16th in K4NRA's classroom at Pence Middle School. A very special recognition is due to several local "hams" that lent a hand in the classroom demonstrations. EC Showalter (KG4KUR), Gayle Shull (KU4XN), Bryan Daniels (K4RMY) and Gerry Brunk (K4RBZ) all made personal appearances at the school and Bob



(N1QEQ) lent materials that helped in the demonstrations. Many other local hams took time out of their busy day to talk with the kids as 'third party traffic' on the local area repeaters. The students really enjoy actually getting to use the microphone themselves.

Students were introduced to many facets of our hobby including personal experiences on ham radio, our individual call-signs and the special language and lingo (Q sigs & CW abbreviations) used on radio.

Students listened to CW conversations on HF and were taught some CW characters by use of a key and Morse machine. They were encouraged to send simple words to the class in code and see if the class could decipher the word being sent. Students thought this was real fun! HF voice communications were made with foreign countries on 20 meters to show the students the distance our radios would reach and how we are able to communicate world-



wide. Our contacts included: Estonia, Croatia, Ukraine, Italy, Germany, Georgia (Russia), Jersey Island (off the French coast), Ireland and Belgium. K4RBZ's fantastic QSL card collection was circulated for students to observe. The process that ham operators use to send and receive QSL cards was explained.



VHF radio and repeater use demonstrated local communications to the class. Third party traffic ensued with many students participating in third party traffic with local hams on the 147.225 and 147.075 repeaters. We did make a contact via echo link on the 147.075 with a ham in New Hampshire.

shire.

We concluded our demonstration explaining how students can become licensed amateur radio operators and encouraged them to obtain study manuals and to start working on getting on the airways. Maybe one day soon we will see some of these youngsters on the frequencies we use. After all is said and done, they are the true future of our hobby and frequency allocations. Be a teacher any chance you get and introduce our youth to amateur radio. We are the only way they will learn about amateur radio and its fun and importance.

Ray Ritchie
K4NRA

N4DSL: New 220 Repeater On the Air

Jason Armentrout, N4DSL, has put a new repeater on Little North Mountain, just north of Singers Glen.

The new machine transmits on 224.500, and uses a minus offset (down 1.6 MHz, or 222.900). Access is via PL tone 131.8.

Jason wants to put out the word that this repeater is open to general amateur use. Try it out.

Field Day Committee Meeting

The next Field Day Committee Meeting will be **Thursday, April 13, at 6:30 pm**. The location is the **Burger King restaurant at Mount Crawford (just west of I-81 exit 240)**.

All hams are welcome and invited to attend. The actual meeting will begin at 6:30 pm.

Message from KF4EXV's XYL

Editor's Note: Sam Pickering KF4EKV, one of the life members of VARA, devoted many years to service to the community. New hams may not remember the newspaper write-up where Sam rescued a family whose house was on fire. Sam also served the local Boy Scout community for many years in many capacities, and now has been voted a life member of VARA. Below is an email received from his wife Margaret to let us know how things are going for Sam's family:

Things have been off to a rocky start this year. My Mom passed away last month, doctors found kidney cancer when they came back from Florida this year. She spent the whole time in the hospital down there.

I'm taking Sam to the VA clinic this morning for his yearly blood tests. He had his diabetic eye exam in Martinsburg last week.

There are over 7,000 miles on my new VUE I just bought the end of Dec. So much for a **new** vehicle!

Margaret Pickering



Thanks to all the hams who helped liquidate the estate of Kenny Harris, KE4GKD, on Saturday March 4 open house.

KD7JDM: Help! Must Sell Immediately...

Bill Jannisch has had a family emergency arise, and is having to liquidate some great equipment in order to keep the house.

Bill has an Icom IC-706-MkIIIG for sale with all the bells and whistles. This radio covers from 160 all the way down to 70 cm, and comes loaded with all the filters, voice module, and MARS/CAP transmit modification (all factory installed), and the price includes the microphone, power cord, all manuals, and (!) the separation kit allowing the control head to be mounted separately from the radio. He's asking \$900, and will even consider stripping the radio of the filters/modules, etc. and letting the basic radio go for \$700.

Bill also has a GE Master II 2-meter FM repeater, with NHRC2 Controller, along with the six-can duplexer for sale. The repeater and cans were tuned to 147.360, but can easily be retuned for the frequency of your choice.

Bill also has an Oregon Scientific wireless weather station WRM-112A, new in the box, with 2 sensors, in/out doors, and extras. This can be purchased for \$175, new in the original box.

If you can help Bill out here, give him a call. He lives in the Stuarts Draft/Staunton area, but is willing to drive just about anywhere in the state to hand deliver.

If you have questions or would like to make an offer, give Bill a call at 540-280-3419.

Legal Limit Amp, Scout Still Available

David KD9LA still has the Drake L-7 legal limit linear HF amp, power supply, and 2kw tuner from John Hochmeister's estate for sale, all for under \$900. He also has the Ten-Tec 555 Scout for sale, too, along with couple of other goodies. Call David at 540-234-0448, or email him at fordhadr@jmu.edu.

February VE Exam Report

Thanks to all who helped with the February 11 VE Examination Session:

Howard (Sandy) Mullins K4PZC

Ray Ritchie K4NRA

Gerald Nauman KN4FM

Jim Lehman W4POL

Jason Armentrout N4DSL

We had a great test session. Gerald Taylro KI4JLJ of Centerville qualified for Extra. Marvin Henderson KF4WDI passed his General theory test, and Dion Bailey of Grottoes became a new ham with a technician license.

Our next test session will be on April 8, 2006

Local SkyWarn Classes: May 13 – Register Early!

Thanks to the efforts of Richard Weaver W3HXH and David Fordham KD9LA, we have been able to schedule SkyWarn classes right here in the Shenandoah Valley.

But whether we hold them or not is up to YOU.

The classes are intended primarily for valley ham operators, but the general public has been invited to try to reach the minimum number of participants necessary to hold a local class.

Minimum Number? Yes, we have to guarantee at least 20 people signed up for the class before the

National Weather Service finds it effective to send a trainer over here to our area! This is why the holding of the classes is up to you.

We have reserved the Weyers Cave Community Center’s Upstairs Meeting Room for Saturday, May 13.

Basics I is required of all SkyWarn volunteers, and is highly recommended for all SkyWarn observers who were trained more than five years ago to retain and update your knowledge. Weather technology is advancing (what isn’t?) and the cur-

rent Basics I class is interesting for newcomers and old-timers alike. The Basics I class will start promptly at 10:00 am and run until about noon.

The Basics II class will be tailored to address the advanced reporting on some specific kinds of weather we have here in the valley, and will be held starting at 1:00 pm and will conclude between 2:00 and 2:30 pm.

Both courses are free.

However, advance registration is required.

We ask, – no, we BEG – that if you plan to attend,

you go ahead NOW and register, to let the Weather Service know that we have enough interested volunteers in the area to make it worth their while to come all the way over here and conduct these classes.

Tell your friends, these classes are open to the general public, who can submit SkyWarn reports via telephone.

To register, contact James Brotherton at the Sterling Park weather office, by sending an email to: James.Brotherton@noaa.gov

SkyWarn Open House April 29-30

As announced in last month’s Monitor, the Sterling Park Weather Office is hosting an open house for SkyWarn volunteers, both presently registered, and those planning to take a course to become an observer or spotter.

The open house was scheduled to be held on April 29, all day, drop in and drop out.

However, due to popular demand, the open house has been expanded to cover both Saturday and Sunday, April 29, and 30.

Check out the Sterling Website for more information:

<http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/lwx/>



Public Service Event: Harrisonburg MD Walk – Saturday April 22

Once again, hams have been asked to assist with the popular, fun, March of Dimes Walk in Harrisonburg.

This is a fun little event that gets started about 8:00 am, and goes until noon, at which time the hams are treated to a free lunch.

Participating hams also get to take home a free T-Shirt. But the most rewarding of this event is a nice slow relaxing morning of “playing radio”, as we man the watering stations and keep track of the last few walkers on the route as it winds around the residential neighborhoods of Harri-

sonburg.

Bring your HT, or alternatively, be sure your mobile rig and antenna are in good working order. We will try to use simplex again this year. Talk-in for coordination and meeting will be on the 147.225 repeater initially, but we’ll likely move to a simplex

frequency once everyone has checked in.

If you can help with this event, please contact David Fordham, KD9LA, by email at fordhadr@jmu.edu, or phone at 540-234-0448 evenings.

Public Service Event: Waynesboro Riverfest – Saturday April 29

Time to mark your calendar for the 2006 Riverfest Run/Paddle/Ride event that is scheduled for Saturday April 29, 2006 in Waynesboro.

I have not received the final details yet, but it

should start about 9 AM at the Kroger parking lot in downtown Waynesboro. This event consists of a several mile run and a canoe paddle down the South river and a several mile bike ride. As in the past, local hams provide

watch and communication for this event. It should finish up about noon. I expect that we will use the 147.075 repeater for communications.

If you can assist in providing communications for this Public Service event please let me know and I will forward the details as I receive them.

73 Gordon WA4FJC

Public Service Event: Waynesboro MS Walk – Sunday April 2

Alas, no one sent the newsletter editor any details about this walk. However, get on the Waynesboro repeaters (e.g., the 147.075, or perhaps the 146.850 PL 131.8) on Sunday morning to see if this event needs more help.

KC4LXI Repeater now Linked on 224.600

Jason Armentrout announces that the KC4GXI 440 repeater on 443.150 is now linked with the 224.600 repeater in Madison.

This link gives hams in the valley a way of contacting hams in the Northern Virginia area, as the 224.600 machine has good coverage eastward as far as Massassas.

And remember, the 443.150 machine also is an Echolink node.

Contact N4DSL for more information.



**MARA and VARA Members should make
note of the club starting times:
Dinners begins at 6 pm,
& the meetings begin at 7 pm.**

Augusta County FoxHunt

We had a great turnout for the February Fox Hunt.

Nine hunters braved the cold and wind on a raw Sunday afternoon to look for the fox.

First place was won by Gordon Batey, WA4FJC, come arrived at 2:32 pm.

In second place was Brad Anderson, KG4YLE, arriving at 2:38 pm

Third place was won by Jason Miller, KG4YLG, arriving at 2:45 pm.

Fourth place was John Lasher, N4GLZ, at 2:55 pm.

From here, they stretched out a little bit. Bob Van Fossen K4DJG arrived fifth at 3:43, followed by Gary Van Fossen (no relation) KI4FZV at 4:11, followed by Steve Ferguson N4PKJ at 4:27. Steve was quickly followed by Jess Hancock W4PQK at 4:33.

Bob McCracken N4JGO had equipment problems and dropped out.

Congratulations to this group of Radio-Direction Finding hams. RDF is a fun part of the hobby, and you never know when you might need to use this skill.



The fox used a two-element quad antenna.



Pictures in Left Column: WA4FJC (top), KG4YLE, KG4YLG, N4GLZ (bottom)

Pictures in Right Column: K4DJG (top), KI4FZY, N4PKJ, W4PQK (bottom)

Rockingham County EmCom Meeting Saturday April 1 – Open to All Hams

The Rockingham County EmComm group will be meeting at the new EOC center in downtown Harrisonburg on Saturday, April 1. All hams are welcome and invited to attend.

Rockingham County/Harrisonburg Emergency Communications Test Saturday April 8

On Saturday, April 8, the local emergency communications hams will be holding an all-day exercise. This is not a full-scale mobilization drill. Rather, this test is intended to evaluate the radio coverage from the county's critical emergency locations, such as RHM, the new county EOC center, and various fire, rescue and other support facilities.

Any ham Interested in Emergency Communication is encourage to participate. No advance preparation, training, or registration is required.

Volunteers will simply be asked to drive to their nearest fire station, rescue squad building, Red Cross shelter, school, or other location (mutually agreed upon by the volunteer ham and the county emergency communications officers), and try to contact some of the other participating stations.

You don't even have to get out of your car!

The tests will involve the 147.225 repeater, the 147.315 repeater (if it's up), the 443.150 repeater, and 146.55 simplex, depending your capabilities.

If you are interested in giving up a half hour of your time to help in this evaluation test, please contact Vic Alger, KE4LKQ, by telephone at 896-25548, or email at ke4lkq@doramefa.us

Free Tours and Training on the New Rockingham/Harrisonburg EOC Center Amateur Radio Station – At Your Convenience!

As part of its multi-million dollar communication system, the new Rockingham County / City of Harrisonburg Emergency Operations Communications Center has a new ham radio station.

The new station is computer-based. All transmitters, TNC's, digital interfaces, and other equipment is now controlled entirely by computer.

Of course, this means that the operator needs to know what he's doing. It isn't quite as easy as picking up the microphone, turning the frequency dial and pushing the PTT button.

We need a pool of operators to man this station during a real disaster. To create this pool, FREE training is being offered, at (hey! Get this!) YOUR convenience!

Unlike past training sessions, this one is going to be done when YOU, the volunteer radio amateur, can attend.

Simply call Dale Showalter, N4DAI, and let him know you are interested in helping out in an emergency. Give him the dates and times you are available for training.

Training will not obligate you in any manner, but it lets us add your name to the list of hams who are qualified to man the station during a real emergency.

Dale will do his utmost best to make arrangements to give you the full training at a time when YOU can make it. He is assembling a schedule now, so get on the phone and let him know you are interested in being included.

This is a great opportunity to see some of the behind-the-scenes action at the EOC. The center is not open to the public, and because of security concerns, there is very little chance of the club, or any other group for that matter, being allowed on tour in this facility. So take advantage of this opportunity to see what's going on inside.

Dale can be reached by phone at: 540-896-6535, or 896-7027, or by email at dale@broadwaymetal.com

Some Battery Tips

How should you charge your battery? Fast? Slow? Should you leave it on trickle charge all the time?

There are three types of charging: fast, slow, and trickle.

Most rechargeable batteries can be left on a very slow trickle charge for quite some time without noticeable effect — **IF AND ONLY IF .the charger is designed for the battery's chemistry.**

As long as the charger is designed to match the battery chemistry, most rechargeable batteries actually have their life extended by leaving them on the charger all the time.

Why is it so important to match the charger to the cell chemistry? Because the each battery chemistry has a different profile of voltage and current during its charging time. You must be sure your charger is designed to deliver the specific voltage/current profile of your battery, and in the case of NiMH and Li-Ion batteries, the charger must actually turn off at certain points in the charging cycle.

Using a charger not designed for your battery's particular chemistry will damage the cells, greatly reducing battery life.

So leaving your battery on a "trickle charge" is fine as long as the charger matches the battery chemistry.

Rapid or quick chargers can be used with NiCd, NiMH and Li-Ion batteries, but again, you **must be sure that your quick charger can handle the cell chemistry.** Check with the original manufacturer of the charger to determine if your cell chemistry is compatible with their charger.

Lead acid batteries do not do as well on quick chargers — they tend to overheat . What's more, the non-AGM types (even the gel-cell and sealed types) outgas

explosive hydrogen while rapidly charging. But if you avoid heating the battery and charge only in a well-ventilated area, you can sometimes get by with occasionally charging one rapidly without significant problem.

Slow charging can be used on all types of batteries.

Voltage/current profile differences are **critical** when **fast** charging and **trickle** charging. The profile issue is not as sensitive when slow charging, but you can still get the longest life out of your battery by using a charger designed for your battery's chemistry.

These are some of the more popular chemistries used in ham radio:

Lead-Acid: These come in the old-fashioned liquid type (car batteries), as well as sealed, gel-cell and the newer Absorption Glass Mat (AGM) types. All types come in "high-current" and "deep cycle" flavors. High-current are using for starting and other uses demanding high amperage for short periods

of time. The Deep Cycle batteries are constructed a little differently in terms of plate structure and while they cannot deliver has high a maximum current, can deliver solid current for longer periods, and are therefore best for most ham radio applications. The lead-acid chemistry is the most flexible when it comes to charging. These batteries do best when left on trickle charge all the time. When discharged, they should be slow charged if time permits They are most cost-effective for huge capacity ratings, such as 5 amp-hours or more, but don't take kindly to total discharge.

Nickel Cadmium (NiCd): This type tends to have a longer overall life, but much shorter run-times, than lead-

acid, NiMH and Li-Ion. They can last up to 1000 charge cycles if properly cycled and are the most cost effective for small capacities (less than 5 amp hours). Ni-Cad's are a very hardy cell. They can handle extreme temperatures and are fairly forgiving when charging becomes adverse. Like all rechargeable cells, they need to be charged before their first use. The major drawback to NiCad's is their memory effect. NiCad cells should always be completely discharged before recharging. Otherwise, their capacity for accepting a charge quickly diminishes.



Nickel Metal Hydride (NiMH): This type offers almost twice as much capacity as NiCd's. This is done without increasing the weight or physical size of the battery. They have quick charging capabilities and great reliability. They are especially good for high drain application, like digital cameras. Although they are not as



bad as NiCad's are in their memory effect, NiMH batteries can still be affected a little from it. As long as they are charged and dis-

charged correctly, or conditioned from time to time, they will perform at their peak capacity. One of the most important factors when using NiMH batteries is that these batteries will suffer if they are being overcharged, so charging currents and time must be watched extremely closely, especially if you're not using a smart charger that detects the NiMH charge state.

Lithium Ion (Li-Ion): This type offers a much lighter package and higher amount of capacity. They are consid-

Battery Tips (continued)

ered the "smart" battery, which means that they communicate with the charger, by letting the charger know when they are finished charging. Another shining feature of Li-Ion is the fact that they are very environmentally friendly. Like NiMH cells, it is essential that Li-Ion batteries be charged in a charger designed for this chemistry. Leaving an Li-Ion battery on trickle charge on a charger not designed for this chemistry is the quickest way to ruin a very expensive battery pack.

Charging Times: "Fast" chargers are considered to be any charger delivering current more than 20% of the battery's amp-hour rat-

ing. For example, charging a 500 milliamp-hour battery on a charger delivering 250 milliamps is considered "fast" charging.

Ideally, a battery should be charged at about 10% of its amp-hour rating. Except for NiMH and Li-Ion batteries (which require their special chargers), a trickle charge is one that delivers less than 1% of the battery's rating. In the case of NiCad batteries, the EMF of a charged battery will in most cases reduce the current from a "slow" charger to this level.

Remember, never leave an NiMH or Li-Ion battery on trickle charge unless the charger was designed for

the battery.

To calculate charge time for your battery, you can use the following equations:

(Note: These formulas can only be used for individual cells and packs **without** a circuit board in them. Circuit boards, depending on their design, will affect how a pack charges. This also applies to packs that are charged through another device such as a radio or laptop.)

Slow charge: (cell capacity in mAh / charger output in mA) x 1.4 = charging time in hours

Fast charge: (cell capacity in mAh / charger output in mA)

x 1.5 = charging time in hours

All rechargeable batteries should be recycled, either through a collection point, or through RBRC (Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation). For your nearest recycling collection point, you can call (800) 822-8837. You can also try contacting your local government for collection.

More for info, visit the Nicad Lady's website at:

<http://nicdlady.com>

Thanks to Ray Colvin KE4HVR for giving us the source of this information.

Dayton Caravan Plans

If you are planning to go to the Dayton Hamvention this year, be aware that a large contingent of hams from the valley will be driving together in a group.

We will be leaving on Thursday morning, and gathering at the usual watering hole in Lexington for breakfast together. After breakfast, we'll leave and keep in contact with each other by two-meter simplex as we make our way westward ho.

The more the merrier. Plan to join us by asking your boss for a vacation day or personal holidays for that Thursday and Friday. Most of us will be coming home on Sunday.

The tickets for Dayton are available online.

Upcoming Events

April 1: Harrisonburg EmCom Meeting

April 1-2: QCWA Spring QSO Party

April 2: Waynesboro MS Walk Public Service

April 2: Chesapeake SpringFest Hamfest

April 4: VARA Club Meeting

April 6: MARA Club Meeting

April 8: VE Exams in Dayton VA

April 8: Rockingham/Hburg EmComm Test

April 13: Field Day Committee Meeting

April 22: Harrisonburg March of Dimes Walk

April 23: York (PA) Hamfest

April 23: Raleigh (NC) Hamfest

April 29: Waynesboro Riverfest Public Service

April 29: Skywarn Open House in Sterling

May 13: SkyWarn Training in Weyers Cave

May 19-21: Dayton (OH) Hamvention

VARA Secretary's Report – March 7 Meeting

The Valley Amateur Radio Association met at Kathy's in Verona on March 7, 2006. The President, Marvin Henderson KF4WDI, opened the meeting at 7:30pm. There were 29 members present and 3 guests, Bob VanFossen K4DJG, Andrew Barbour AG4XN, Dick Smith W4KHV.

Welcome to our visitors, and we would like to see all of you back next month.

The club voted to move the club meeting time 7:00pm to give more time for programs. We will still meet at 6:00pm to eat.

50/50 was won by Richard Huttinger AA4RH.....Congratulations Richard, more money for the camp!!!

We voted two new members into the club. Welcome to the VARA!

Bill Blasius WA1EFY

Charlie Eckman KI4LJD

Applications: We have two new applications to vote on in April.

Hollis Jordan KI4MSL

Steve Ferguson N4PKJ

Upcoming Events: Mark your calendar for Sunday April 2nd for the MS Walk in Waynesboro starting at 2:00pm.

Great Eastern Endurance Race in Sherando on March 25th 6:00am until 4:00pm

Riverfest in Waynesboro will follow on April 29th (time to be announced)

FOX HUNT: A fox hunt is scheduled for April (date will be announced later)

Club Web Page: Charlie Eckman KI4LHD volunteered to help Bob McCracken N4JGO with some new items. Plans are to feature some of the area hams and how they got started into ham radio.

VARA ROSTER is now on the Club Web Page, go to <http://www.qsl.net/w4xd/> click on VARA MEMBERS, at the top click on MEMBERS LOGIN, user name is VARA, password is (lower case) virginia, click on SUBMIT and the roster comes up.

VARA FIELD DAY COMMITTEE:

Cowles Andrus K4EME, Lou Joseph W2LYL, Benny Cook N4BCC and Doug Tippett N8ESW

ON THE SICK LIST:

Queenie, Clinton's (KB4OLM) wife still has health concerns but is improving.

Denny Morland N4XPW is home but his PT at AMC is making him sore for a couple days afterwards so he is reducing his schedule for a while to see if that helps.

Benny Cook N4BCC had some kidney and high sugar problems and was in the hospital a couple days.

Lets keep these folks in our thoughts and prayers.

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 Doug Tippett N8ESW dtippett@ntelos.net Ray Colvin KE4HVR colvingr@adelphia.net and David Fordham KD9LA fordhadr@jmu.edu Also, 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.

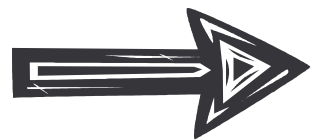
It could be anything you think the group would find interesting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40pm.

Program:

David Tanks AD4TJ did a program on HF Antennas and the method of constructing them for best results during an emergency. During the recent hurricanes the antennas mounted higher in the air were not performing well and the high winds took them down. While some mounted lower to the ground were performing a lot better and stayed up during the high winds of the hurricanes. The radiation angle of the antennas mounted lower to the ground kept the signals more within the surrounding states where they wanted to communicate. The higher antennas received the DX stations and covered the stations they were trying to communicate with. Below is an example of the antenna from the hand-out.

Here is an example of the antenna that worked best during hurricanes.



Respectfully submitted,

Ray Colvin, KE4HVR
VARA Secretary

MARA Secretary's Report – March 2, 2006

The March MARA meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm March 2, 2006. David Fordham KD9LA acting as presiding officer in place of Dick W3HXH who was a little under the weather.

Introductions were made. Secretary's report was approved as printed. Treasurer reported a balance of \$1793.90

Field Day Committee :

Jason had contacted VARA and meeting date will be set.

Nancy Ritchie KG4JAZ was voted in as new member.

Volunteer Examination Report:

The report didn't get in the Monitor due to e-mail problems

ARES/RACES:

Sign up sheet for EOC orientation was sent around. April 8th ECC emcomm test at fire stations and rescue squads will be held using the 147.225 repeater 146.55 simplex 147.315 repeater if available and the 443.150 repeater. RMH for signal reports. Maybe the BUS if arrangements can be made.

Also, work continues on the update of the ARES handbook. Next AEC meeting will be at ECC on Saturday, April 1.

Skywarn:

David Manning from NOAA is setting up Skywarn training for our area. Maybe 12 so far from MARA and VARA and it will be open to public as well, on a Sat. Place to be determined.

Old business:
nothing

New business:

Classes for Technician class discussed. Vic KE4LKQ said Jim Junkins is looking for tutor or class. Others expressed interest. Gerry, K4RBZ suggested an Elmer rather than a class. Gordon Beatty at VARA was also suggested. Gayle KU4XN has books for Technician license for study use. Ray K4NRA, needs folks to talk to a class about ham radio. March 15th and 16th from 8:45am until around until 1:00. contact Ray at: K4NRA@arrl.net

Announcements:

Gerry, K4RBZ had QST magazines from 70's and 80 to give away.

Renewals for membership are needed as soon as possible or you will not receive your Monitor.

The 147. 315 repeater was up and down very quickly

Request for help by Shanon to get a Hallicrafters receiver up and running.

Further new business:

Motion was made to accept Dick's W4HXH resignation as President as of tonight and have Gerald KN4FM take over as Pres. and John Lasher N3GLZ as VP...vote was taken and passed.

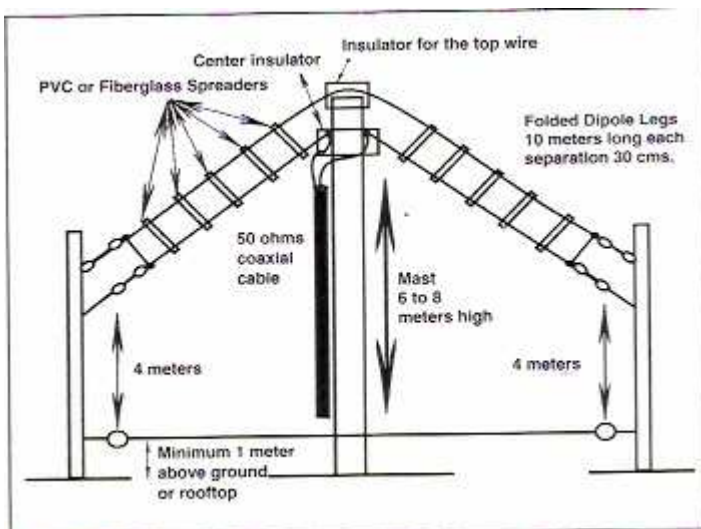
Dick was recognized for his long standing work with the MARA club.

50/50 Drawing was held and won by Nancy KG4JAZ
Pot was \$15.50.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm

Respectfully submitted by

Bryan Daniels, K4RMY
MARA Secretary



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: Gerald Nauman KN4FM
Vice President: John Lasher, N3GLZ
Secretary: Bryan Daniels K4RMY
Treasurer: Sandy Mullins, K4PZC
Board (exp 06): Jason Armentrout N4DSL
Board (exp 07): David Gordon KB4LCI

<http://mara.ws>

MARA meets the first Thursday of each month
The January meeting is at Traditions
Restaurant on Mt Clinton Pike, Harrisonburg.
Meal starts at 6:00 pm.
Business meeting starts at 7:00 pm.

Visitors are welcome.

Dues (\$12 per year) should be mailed to:

MARA
PO Box 1882
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

President: Marvin Henderson, KF4WDI
Vice President: Mike Solomon KJ4RM
Secretary: Ray Colvin, KE4HVR
Treasurer: Doug Tippett, N8ESW
Program Manager: Richard Huttinger, AA4RH

<http://www.qsl.net/w4xd>

VARA meets the first Tuesday of each month
at Kathy's Restaurant on U.S. 11 north of
the traffic light in Verona.
Meal starts at 6:00 pm.
Business meeting starts at 7:00 pm.

Visitors are welcome.

Dues (\$15 per year) should be mailed to:

Doug Tippett
2348 Mosley St.
Waynesboro VA 22980