

May 2006

The Monitor

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



VARA MEMBERS:
NOTE MEETING DATE CHANGE!

ARRL Section Manager to Address Joint Meeting of MARA/VARA: Thursday, May 4

Glen Sage, W4GHS, the new ARRL Virginia Section Manager, will be the special guest speaker at a special joint MARA and VARA meeting to be held on Thursday, May 4.

The meeting will be held at the normal MARA meeting location: Traditions Restaurant at the corner of Highway 42 and Mount Clinton Pike.

The dinner will start at 6:00 pm. The meeting will start at 7:00 pm, and will probably be an abbreviated business meeting — both clubs will have the opportunity to vote on new members, and some very brief urgent announcements may be made, but the highlight of the evening will be the address from Glen Sage.

Glen will outline the goals of the Section. This will include club sponsored classes, serving as mentors, the use of both training and traffic nets, complying with training that will be expected by some of the agencies that we serve. etc. He will field questions from the group and try to speak to any concerns we have.

It is significant that Glen is addressing a joint meeting of both clubs. The ham community in the Valley is enjoying a spirit of harmony and cooperation, and Glen hopes to build upon this collegial atmosphere and emphasizing reconciliation and working together for our common good.

See page 3 of this issue for directions to Traditions.

Last Minute Skywarn Training Registration Still Available for May 13 Classes

Neither rain, nor sleet, nor anything else can stop the National Weather Service from their appointed rounds as they conduct a very rare Skywarn Training Class in the Valley on Saturday, May 13.

The class will start at 10:00 am at the Weyers Cave Community Center, and will be conducted by James Brotherton, a meteorologist with the NWS Sterling Forecast Office near Dulles Airport.

Almost 35 hams have signed up for the training, many of them for both Basic I and Basic II. Additionally, numerous individuals from the Augusta and Rockingham and Harrisonburg emergency operations centers will be there, as will a number of citizens from the community.

The class starts at 10:00 am sharp, but registrants are asked to be a little early to fill out a formal application (giving your location and weather measurement capabilities, if any).

As far as lunch goes, the Fort Defiance High School Marching Band is holding a chicken barbecue that same day. Prior to the start of the class, Debbie KB4WPE will be taking orders for a

barbecue chicken lunch (including soda) for around six bucks. The lunch will be delivered hot at noon.

Or, if you don't like barbecue chicken, there is a deli grill at the Texaco station, a deli at the Weyers Cave SuperSave grocery store, a Subway at the BP station, and a pizza place at the Exxon station — all within a mile of the Community Center. Ask at the class for directions.

To reach the Community Center, take Interstate 81 to Weyers Cave Exit 235. Take Highway 256 EAST (going towards the Shenandoah Airport) for one mile. After crossing the railroad, go straight through the traffic light and in 1/4 mile you'll see the big light-green metal Community Center on your left. There is a sign on the building itself, and another out by the road. Walk around back, the class is in the upstairs meeting room.

If you want to register, email James.Brotherton@noaa.gov

It is now too late to register by contacting David Fordham, who is now in Europe until the night before the class! But it is NOT too late to register by emailing James Brotherton, or leaving a voice-mail message on 540-568-3024.

VARA President's Message

Driving home from Charlottesville one afternoon in early April, there were some nasty looking clouds all around. I was listening to the 147.075 repeater as Bob (N4JGO) and Frank (KE4ASC) were talking about the storms in the valley. This is a scene that we all can relate to. The weather always seems to be a topic of conversation and a fascination for each of us. Many thanks to David Fordham and Richard Weaver for organizing the Skywarn class on May 13th in Weyers Cave. It would be great to see a large number of our members attend this training class.

As always, it is a pleasure to welcome new members. Welcome to Hollis Jordan (KI4MSL) and Steve Ferguson (N4PKJ). Congratulations to Denny Morland (N4XPW) for being voted a life member of the club. We all wish

Denny the best and hope to see him again at some of the club meetings.

It sounds like plans are progressing nicely for this year's field day. Thanks to the field day committee for organizing this year's event. Everyone should plan on participating in some way in this fun event for the club.

Our "Quote of the Month" comes from my all time favorite author, the apostle Paul. In his letter to Titus he writes, "Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good, in order that they may provide for daily necessities and not live unproductive lives." How appropriate those words are even 2,000 years later.

Marvin Henderson, KF4WDI
VARA President

WA4FJC: April 9 Fox Hunt Report: Brad (and son) Winner!

The Augusta County Foxhunt was held April 9, and we couldn't have asked for better weather. As you can see from the pictures below, the sky was blue and full of sunshine.

A very sneaky and cunning fox thought he was well-hidden. But Brad and his son were the first to sniff him out!

The picture below shows (left to right): Cowles Andrus K4EME, Ray Colvin KE4HVR, Bob Van Fossen K4DJG,

Jess Hancock W4PQK, Gary Van Fossen KI4FZV, and Brad and his son. Also participating in the hunt were Joe Meek KE4FKT, Bob McCracken N4JGO, Carl Haberman W4MFD, Jason Miller KG4YLG.

Sorry I've forgotten Brad's call,

*Names and photos provided by
Gordon Batey, WA4FJC*



K1DB: Support Call

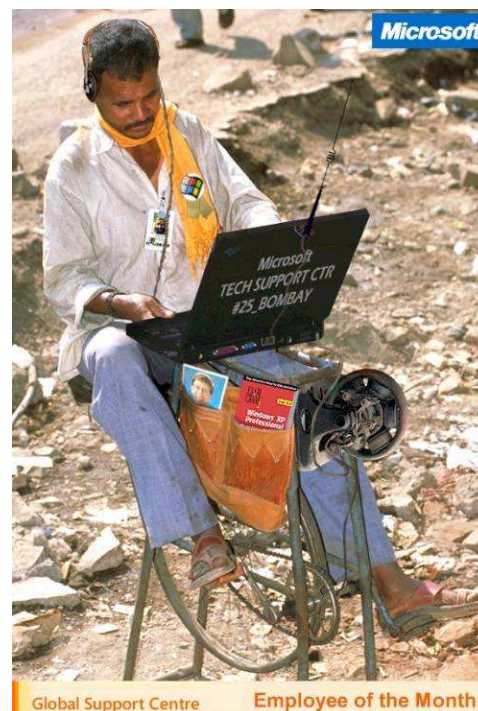
Dave Burgess K1DB sends this photo of the tech support technician at Microsoft he recently talked to about a Microsoft problem.

KU4XN: VE Session Report

Thanks to the hams who helped with the April Volunteer Examination session:

Gerald Nauman KN4FM
Sandy Mullins K4PZC
Hugh Pettis K3EC
Mike McKay W4AZR
Ken High K4KLH
Ray Ritchie K4NRA
Bob Van Fossen K4DJG

Kevin Ward K4BDR earned his General at this session, and Wayne Shifflett is a new Technician ham. Congratulations to these two hams. Our next test session will be June 10, 2006.



KI4MSJ: Need Power Supply

KI4MSJ, is looking for a power supply to use with an Icom 706 MkIIIG. If you know of one that he can borrow for a few weeks, or if you are willing to trade a power supply for something he has (sorry, his Hummer is off-limits), meet up with Scott at the joint VARA/MARA meeting.

Directions to Traditions

To reach the **joint MARA/VARA Meeting May 4**, take Interstate 81 to the Harrisonburg Exit 245 (Port Republic Road). Go WEST on Port Republic Road. Go approximately 1 mile, then cross over Main Street (U.S. 11), cross over one railroad track, cross over the second railroad track, and turn right at the next traffic light (Highway 42, High Street). Go approximately three miles north on 42 to the traffic light at Mt. Clinton Pike (Eastern Mennonite University is on the corner, Neighbor's Exxon on the other corner). Turn left at the light (west on Mt. Clinton), then immediately turn LEFT again into the strip mall parking lot. Traditions is at 625 Mt. Clinton Pike.

KD9LA: Thanks to Hams for March of Dimes Support

Valley farmers and residents were grateful for the long, soaking rain on Saturday morning, April 22.

Also thankful were 300 walkers who were spared the necessity of walking 3 to 10 kilometers as a fundraiser for the March of Dimes.

March of Dimes organizer Christine Bilbrey reported that most of the donors were going to pony up on their promised donations

in spite of the fact that the walk had to be first postponed, and finally cancelled, due to rain and thunder. Ham radio operators were already on station at the various rest stops when the decision was made to call off the activity.

Free eats and T-shirts were provided to the hams who showed up. Thanks go to **Gayle Shull KU4XN** who manned the station on High Street, **Ray Ritchie K4NRA** who was at the old Harrisonburg High School, **E.C.**

Showalter KG4KUR who held down the fort at Buffalo Wild Wings on Main Street, **Norman Benner KA4EEN** stationed at Keister Elementary School, **Bryan Daniels K4RMY** who served as rover and physical investigator riding the route between rest stops, and **James McDowell IV KG4FZY**, who shadowed Christine Bilbrey and the walk organizers. **David Fordham, KD9LA**, served as relay station between the HT-equipped KG4FZY and the remote hams at the rest stops. A good, wet time was had by all.

Rockingham County ARES Net Control Volunteers

	Date	Net Control	Call Sign
Simplex	5/1/2006	Gayle Shull	KU4XN
	5/8/2006	Gerald Nauman	KN4FM
	5/15/2006	Bryan Daniels	K4RMY
	5/22/2006	Hugh Pettis	K3EC
	5/29/2006	Jason Armentrout	N4DSL
Simplex	6/5/2006	Ray Ritchie	K4NRA
	6/12/2006	Vic Alger	K4XTT
	6/19/2006	Jeff Rinehart	W4PJW
	6/26/2006	James McDowell	KI4FZY



K4RMY: Rockingham County ARES News

Net Control Operators

I have compiled a new net control operators (NCO) list until Field Day). It is shown above.

If you are unable to work your assigned NCO night, please let me know and I will get someone else to work.

If you would like to switch with someone, please let me know and/or contact the person you would like to switch with. I'm trying to spread things around so it will not be a hardship on anyone.

Not all ARES members are listed on this NCO list. I have based this list on the ARES leadership and those who have been willing to work as NCOs in the past.

If you would like to be an NCO and you are not on the list, please contact me via email.

The more folks we have willing to do NCO duty the less burden for all of us.

I will be sending reminders to NCOs on the Sat. or Sunday before they are to have net duty on Monday.

If you have any suggestions for improving net please let me know. I think currently, our net is very successful, but there is always room for improvement. One thing I would personally, like to see is more interaction with other local ARES nets.

I'm going to be compiling a list of other ARES nets, with times and repeaters and sending it out in the near future.

Also, I am in the process of working on a modified (simplified) NC script. Once the AECs have approved it. I'll be sending a copy (PDF) to all ARES members and will ask David KD9LA to post it on the web.

I greatly appreciate the time all of you are willing to give to ARES.

Thank you and 73
Bryan Daniels, K4RMY
ARES EC Rockingham Co.

KF4WDI: Thanks to Hams for MS Walk Support

The VARA club had a successful afternoon helping with the Waynesboro MS-Walk. On Sunday afternoon, April 2nd, several hams met at Ridgeview Park to help with the event. Helping were Benny Cook (N4BCC), Bill Shott (W2ZVM), Ray Colvin (KE4HVR), John Lasher (N3GLZ), Marvin Henderson (KF4WDI) and Marvin's daughter, Stacie.

About 60 walkers enjoyed a beautiful afternoon walking around Waynesboro. We hams found out about 20 minutes before the event that we were expected to install the signs to mark the course. Despite a few hectic moments right before the event started for us, everything went smoothly.

In a small way, it is good that we can be involved in a much larger cause. The Multiple Sclerosis Society is leading the fight for a cure for MS. In their promotional brochure for the walk, one new case of MS is diagnosed every hour. It is great that as a club we can contribute by doing our small part.

Marvin Henderson - KF4WDI

K4XTT: ARES Signal Coverage Report

REPORT TO THE AMATUER RADIO COMMUNITY OF ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

SIGNAL QUALITY & SYSTEM LINK TESTS FROM THE HARRISONBURG ROCKINGHAM EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER IN HARRISONBURG, VA. TO THE OUTLYING COUNTY AND CITY FIRE & RESCUE STATIONS.

Overview: volunteers from the amateur radio community performed these tests under the observation and supervision of Captain Jim Junkins of the Harrisonburg Rockingham Emergency Communications Center. The amateur radio equipment installed in the operations center provided the central point from which this exercise was conducted.

Net controls where K4RMY (Bryan) and KN4FM (Gerald). Roving operators where KG4KUR (EC), KI4FZY (James), N1QEQ (Bob), N4DSL (Jason), W3MMC (Bob), K4NRA (Ray), KU4XN (Gayle), and K4XTT (Victor). In addition reports where taken from other members of the community that heard this exercise and joined in as they had time.

The data collected from this test was reviewed and analyzed by the Ares/Races leadership of the county. Recommendations are hereby presented in the conclusion section of this report and a separate recommendations report will be made to the leadership of the county fire and rescue community.

Conclusions:

For Amateur radio communications between HRECC and the stations listed below the MINIMUM requirements for reliable communications have been established as:

For all stations within the city limits as they are now located, a HT with at least 5 watts will be needed for operations. The use of a mobile mag mount antenna is not required but would give an increase in reliable communications.

For Amateur radio communications between HRECC and the stations listed below the MINIMUM requirements for reliable communications have been established as:

1. For all stations within the city limits as they are now located, a HT with at least 5 watts will be needed for operations. The use of a mobile mag mount antenna is not required but would give an increase in reliable communications.

2. For the following stations: Bridgewater Fire & Rescue Stations, Clover Hill Fire & Rescue Stations, Grotoes Fire & Rescue Stations, Singers Glen Vol. Fire & Rescue Stations: A minimum of 10 watts and a mobile type of antenna will be needed. An HT with amplifier attached to give the minimum 10 watts may be used. Any radio capable of greater power would be preferred, especially for simplex communications.

3. For the following stations: McGaheysville Vol. Fire Department, Broadway Vol. Fire Department, Broadway Vol. Rescue Squad, Elkton Vol. Fire Department, Elkton Vol. Rescue Squad: A minimum of 50 watts and some sort of external antenna, e.g. magmount, will be required for reliable communications on simplex. 20 to 25 watts for the repeaters.

In conclusion, this exercise has proven to be very useful in showing where radio coverage (especially on simplex) needs to be improved. Having a new facility in downtown Harrisonburg has changed how we need to view our old assumptions about communication reliability throughout the county.

As a fellow radio amateur I ask that you study this report and make suggestions on how to improve the system.

Also please note that the minimum requirements that we have found during this test are not to be taken lightly in the event that you are asked to participate in an emergency event. If you volunteer or are assigned a station, please use this as a guide until further notice and equip yourself accordingly.

Hopefully we together can provide effective emergency communications for public safety and welfare.

Vic Alger, K4XTT
RACES ERO

(Note Vic's New Call — ed.)

Field Day Committee Moving Along Nicely

The joint MARA/VARA Field Day Committee has met twice now, and is coming along quite nicely with the plans for the most fun event of the year.

It appears that the most likely location for the event this year will be the site we used last year. This site is about a quarter-mile past the site we used for many years, and turned out to be very effective and enjoyable last year.

Next month's Monitor will contain the usual annual Field Day issue with all the details. Mark your calendar now, and don't forget to ask your boss for time off the week before Field Day to join us in some mountain camping!

Dayton Hamvention Caravan

So far, about a dozen hams are planning to carpool and caravan to Dayton Ohio for the hamvention. We plan to leave Thursday morning and return Sunday afternoon. All hams are welcome. If you are planning to go to Dayton this year, come join the fun! Ask for details at the joint club meeting May 4.

VARA Meeting Minutes – April 4 Meeting

The **V**alley **A**mateur **R**adio **A**ssociation met at Kathy's in Verona on April 4, 2006. The President, Marvin Henderson KF4WDI, opened the meeting at 7:30pm. There were 29 members present and 3 guests, Bob VanFossen K4DJG, Dan Hale KC8TEN, Mark Botkin K14OJB, David Pickering KE4JCY and David Grimmett KF4KNM.

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

Remember our new club meeting time is 7:00pm to give more time for programs. We will still meet at 6:00pm to eat.

50/50 was won by Andrew Barbour AG4XN, congratulations Andrew!

We voted two new members into the club.

Welcome to the VARA!

Hollis Jordan K14MSL
Steve Ferguson N4PKJ

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

Dan Hale KC8TEN
Mark Botkin K14OJB

New Lifetime Member: The Club voted to give Denny Morland N4XPW a Lifetime Membership to the Valley Amateur Radio Association. Congratulations Denny!

Upcoming Events: **RIVERFEST** will be held in Waynesboro on Saturday April 29, 2006. For those that can help please meet at the Kroger parking lot on Arch avenue in Waynesboro no later than 9:30am for assignments.

You can their site at,
www.riverfestwaynesboro.org

Club Web Page: Charlie Eckman K14LHD 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.gsl.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.

Nancy Colvin KE4PHP was checked out at the ER for chest, side and arm pain & has an infection in the lower left lung.

Medication seems to be working and she will go back for a CT Scan in June.

Gordon Batey's WA4FJC, Son & Daughter-in-Law have several broken bones from a car wreck recently.

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.gsl.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@imu.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 7:45pm.

Submitted by
Ray Colvin, KE4HVR
VARA Secretary

Don't Forget! VARA May Meeting is THURSDAY, MAY 4 AT TRADITIONS!

Upcoming Events

May 4: Joint VARA/MARA Club Meeting in Harrisonburg

May 7: Hagerstown (MD) Hamfest

May 19-21: Dayton (OH) Hamvention

May 27-28: CQ WW WPX CW Contest

June 1: MARA Club Meeting

June 4: Manassas Hamfest

June 6: VARA Club Meeting

June 10: VE Exams in Dayton VA

June 10-12: ARRL VHF QSO Party

June 17-24: Family Camping at Field Day Site

June 24-25: Field Day

MARA Secretary's Report: April 6 Meeting

The April MARA meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm April 6, 2006. Gerald Nauman Presiding.

Introductions were made.

Treasurer reported a balance of \$1,964.40

Secretary's report was approved as printed.

Committee reports :

ARES/RACES will hold a communications test at 10:00am on Sat April 15th. This will test communication equipment needs for various fire houses and rescue squads in Rockingham and Harrisonburg.

Public service events:

March of Dimes April 22nd

Those wishing to participate can check in on the 147.225 Sat at 8:00 am Net control will set up across from DNR in the public parking lot. It usually lasts until around noon.

Field Day Committee :

1st meeting Next Thursday April 13th at the Mt Crawford BK. Jason is acting as defacto chair

Jason N4DSL announced he has new 220 repeater on Little North Mountain 224.500 PL 131.8. He hopes to have it linked with the 443.150 repeater soon

There was discussion of a joint MARA/VARA meeting in May at Traditions to talk with Glen Sage, the newly elected SEC. A final decision will be forthcoming soon. Watch the Monitor for information

Skywarn Classes will be held at the Weyers Cave Community center May 13th. Basics-1 will run from 10 to 12 noon. Ba-

Thanks and Recognition to K3EC

Numerous members of MARA pointed out that because the program portion of the meeting occurs outside the formal business meeting and is often not included in the minutes of the corporation meeting, the Monitor didn't fully recognize the appreciation of the club to Hugh Pettis, K3EC, who did a fine job of presenting some wonderful programs so far this year. Hugh has presented some very informative and entertaining programs, most recently on his experiences abroad with the federal government in third world countries, including the building (from scratch) of a complete ham radio while in Africa. Thanks, Hugh.

sics-2 will run from 1 to 2:30pm

Both will be held in the upstairs meeting room

Ray K4NRA talked briefly about his Amateur radio day at Pence Middle School

New Business:

There was discussion of having Fair booth for MARA/RACES/ARES or setting up a special event station using the EOC bus. Vic is going to look into it.

VMRC:

Calculations were done on RFI exposure at VMRC for the FCC by Hugh K3EC.

Everything looked good, but he suggested operators take a look at the literature posted on the ARRL site about how do to these calculations.

50/50 Drawing was held and won by Susan Lowe won \$14.50

New members application read an to be voted on next meeting:

Michael Stouwie KY4FOX

Paul Wyse, W4PFM

Phil Long, KI4ILU

To be read next meeting:

Brian Cowger, KI4LLC

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm

Respectfully submitted by

Bryan Daniels, K4RMY

Why is the May Monitor Late?

Of all months to be late, why this one?

The editor apologizes, but he's been on assignment in locations without Internet access: the tiny towns of Merksem, Linkeroever, and Zwindrecht, Belgium. This was unexpected, or he would have made arrangements for a substitute. This issue was put together between 7:00 pm Saturday and 3:00 am Sunday while your editor has flown back from Belgium to be in Washington D.C. for 18 hours to teach a special class. (After the class, instead of sleeping, he put the Monitor together, since he has internet access in his hotel room!) KD9LA apologizes for any inconvenience.

MARA/VARA

c/o David Fordham
131 Wayside Drive
Weyers Cave, VA 24486

Phone: 540-568-3024
Email: fordhadr@jmu.edu

SEE PAGE 1 ABOUT VARA MTG

MASSANUTTEN AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, Inc.

President: Gerald Nauman KN4FM
Vice President: John Lasher N3GLZ
Secretary: Bryan Daniels K4RMY
Treasurer: Sandy Mullins, K4PZC
Board (exp 05): Jason Armentrout N4DSL
Board (exp 06): David Gordon KB4LCI

<http://mara.ws>

MARA meets the first Thursday of each month
at Traditions Restaurant in Harrisonburg
at the corner of Hwy 42 and Mt. Clinton Pike.

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 Tlippet N8ESW
Program Manager: Richard Huttinger, AA4RH

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

VARA meets the first Tuesday of each month
at Kathy's Restaurant in Verone.

HOWEVER:

**See Page 1 for Special Information about
the May Meeting of VARA
at Traditions Restaurant in Harrisonburg!**

Meal starts at 6:00 pm.

Business meeting starts at 7:00 pm.

Visitors are welcome.