

# The MARA/VARA Monitor

Published monthly by the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc., of Harrisonburg, Virginia for radio amateurs in the Shenandoah Valley.

## PRELIMINARY RESULTS FIELD DAY INITIAL REPORT

Due to the deadline for printing, we could not obtain the official report of the Field Day results. However, several people have offered unofficial numbers for the clubs' performance. It appears that the combined MARA/VARA Field Day effort set a new record for points earned!

The CW station made **838** QSO's, each one of which counts two points. The Phone station racked up **1031** contacts (give a take a few). The Novice/Tech station made **505** contacts (with 1 made on CW and counting 2 points). The VHF/UHF station made **125** contacts. The Satellite station made another **51** contacts.

The above 3407 points get multiplied by two, as a power multiplier. Then, on top of the 6814 QSO points, the effort racked up a whopping 900 bonus points for everything from having a satellite contact to copying the field day bulletin. We had a natural power station, and the entire effort was performed independent of commercial power mains.

The bottom line score was a grand total of **7,714 points**, the highest Field Day score for MARA/VARA in history!

Elsworth Neff did an excellent job of obtaining publicity, which added to the bonus point total. The *Shenandoah News* was even on-site on Sunday.

The fireworks provided by nature (e.g., a severe thunderstorm) on Saturday interfered only slightly with the operation.

Best of all, no one was injured, no one got sick off the camp cooking, and no major accidents befell the operation. Even Mr. Murphy was strangely absent most of the time.

More details, along with an official score, will appear in next month's *Monitor*.

## MARA MEETING: JULY 9

Due to the Independence Day holiday, the July MARA club meeting will be held on  
Thursday, July 9<sup>th</sup>,  
at Ever's Restaurant,  
US 11 south of Harrisonburg.

## CALENDAR

**July 4: Bridgewater Lawn Party**

**July 8: VARA Meeting**

**July 9: MARA Meeting**

July 11-12: IARU HF Championship

July 11-12: CQ WW VHF Contest

July 25-26: IOTA Contest

August 1-2: North American CW QSO Party

**August 15: VE Licensing Exams**

August 15-16: North America SSB QSO Party

**August 16: Bob's Knob Bash**

**August 22: Roanoke Hamfest**

**October 3-4: MS 150k Bike Ride**

**October 3-4: Johnny Appleseed Ride**

**October 17: VE Licensing Exams**

**October 17-18: Bike Virginia Ride**

October 24-25: CQ WW SSB Contest

November 28-29: CQ WW CW Contest

**December 3: MARA Christmas Party at Pano's**

If your family is looking for something to do on the Fourth of July to avoid the crowds, Paul Helbert WV3J is having a Free Pottery Workshop and Pottery Sale here at his home. Those (kids included) who want to throw a pot can do so and can glaze it and fire the glaze while here. There will be a door prize. The location is Tenth Legion (about twelve miles north of Harrisonburg right on Route 11...watch for the red and blue blimp and banner.) There might be an antenna attached to the blimp...a vertical this time.

Call 896-1271 for more information.

## MARA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings, fellow club members! We had a super turnout for Harry Dannals W2HD, and his program. 35 members, hams, and visitors were in attendance! Thanks for coming and listening to Harry's talk -- "Amateur Radio: The Challenges It Faces Today". If you have a topic for a program or have something you would like to present to the club as a program, then please let me know. I'm always looking for ideas.

Of course, this was written before Field Day occurred. Was it a good Field Day, a so-so FD, or did the WX kill it? How were band conditions? Did 20 stay open all night, or did it shut down? Was there any double-hop on 6 meters?

The main question, of course, is: Did we have fun, and did we learn anything? I hope the answer to both was YES! With several new hams joining the club the last couple of years I hope they came and learned what we can do when we put all our resources together in an emergency-type situation, and that they got to operate.

I remember my first couple visits to the Field Day operation were quick tours to see what was going on, then back down the hill I went! I was a little shy, you might say! But after being around the guys awhile, I lost my shyness then pitched in with all my energy. It's an experience, for sure.

Mark your calendar for December 3rd's Christmas Banquet at Pano's. We had an outstanding attendance for last year's, with the help of the weather.

We are in the midst of the tornado and bad weather season, with the hurricane season fast approaching. Are you prepared for emergency communications? Get your stuff together now, before you are needed. Check those batteries, cables, antennas, etc. Have a plan ready.

See you at the meeting!

*David AD4TJ  
MARA President*

## VARA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello to all. I was glad to see everyone at the last club meeting. We had a nice crowd and a good time. Several visitors attended the meeting and we had two make application into the Club for membership.

We talked about Field Day 1998 and I sure was glad to see all the interest in the event. We should have the Club's patches by the next club meeting. It was decided that they would sell for \$5.00 each. Joe WD4LIG has agreed to sew them on for club member at no charge. We want to THANK Joe for this.

Next month we hope to have some video tape of the Field Day Event. We welcome all to come and see what went on, if you did not get a chance to make the event.

For the August Meeting Vince K2VJ has agreed to give a presentation on the book he wrote (Tornado-Wise) and we want to invite all to come and listen to him. Vince has also come up with a few more of his books that he gave to the club. We will again auction them off to anyone interested. (Thanks again Vince)

The Club's Yard Sale on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June was a nice event for us and I would like to thank all those who donated items to be sold. The money goes to the club's treasury. We made **\$387.50** after expenses and we had very few items left and they were given to a local church, with the money they made from their yard sale going to the needy in the community. We had a lot of club members that came by to visit the sale, and also some other area amateurs to stop by for it. There were too many for me to recall each and every one but thanks to all that made this sale possible. (I even cooked some food and nobody complained or got sick!!!)

Well I need to close and as you read this Field Day will be over for 1998 and I sure hope all had a nice time and will return in the years to come.

*73 from  
Ken KE4GKD  
VARA President*

**The Deadline for the August Issue of the  
Monitor is Friday, July 17<sup>th</sup>.**

**VARA  
VICE-PRESIDENT'S  
MESSAGE**

**YARD/BAKE/CRAFT SALE  
HUGE SUCCESS!!!**

Thanks to all those who participated and contributed to the sale. To all the club members, *you* made this venture a success and without your help it would not have been as successful. Each of you was an integral part of making this all work. We need more people willing to lend a hand, even if it's only for an hour. Please pat yourself on the back for all your hard work..

Kudos - Kudos - Kudos!!!

A special thanks to **Nancy Colvin (KE4PHP)** for organizing and planning the event.

Honorable Mentions:

- **Jeff Rhinehart (WB4PJW)** Tables (Ask Kenny about that..) and Sale Items
- **Benny Cook (KF4CZK)** Pickup and Setup
- **Ray Colvin (KE4HVR)** Pickup and Setup
- **June Waldmuller (KC4PKJ)** Baked Goods, Sale Items, and Organizing
- **Joan Pitsenbarger (KF4CWR)** Baked Goods and Sale Items
- **Betty Ralston (KF4EKU)** Laundry Basket of Homemade Bread

And anyone else who took part -- THANK YOU!!

Finally, Thank you very much to **Janice Harris** for opening your home and yard for our event. We appreciate all your hard work and help.

Thanks again to everyone who helped, made purchases and donated items and TIME.

*Karen Zirk (KE4WIE)*

**RIVERFEST 1998**

Riverfest 1998 was held on May 31<sup>st</sup> in Waynesboro.

They had a nice crowd. and nice HOT weather.

This event is different from the Walks or Bike Virginia or other events that we help with. This event is actually a combination of three events, all three of which are timed. Thus, the participants are under pressure, and thus it is even more important to have assistance standing by in case of emergency.

The participants run, then float down a river and then end with a bike race. Again, all three events are timed.

The event came off without any one getting hurt or injured.

I would like to thank the following amateurs that helped provide communications support for this public service event.

- Gary – KF4PFR,**
- Ray – KE4NNV,**
- Joan – KF4CWR,**
- Pat – KD4WWF,**
- Joe – WD4LIG,**
- Pat – KE4CKE,**
- Alan – KE4CKG,**
- Tom – KB4ONZ,**
- Joe -- N4TRH,**
- Ken -- KE4GKD**

I hope we can support this event next year. They were pleased with our support, and they are already asking for our help.

*Ken, KE4GKD*



Remember, the Monitor is available electronically if you have an email provider. For more information, contact the newsletter editor, KD9LA, at 540-234-0448 or email him at [fordhadr@jmu.edu](mailto:fordhadr@jmu.edu)

# BOB'S KNOB BASH

August 16th

It's that time again!

The 1998 Bob's Knob Bash.

(AKA, the Big Mountain Repeater Association's annual Picnic, open to all hams and their families and friends!)

Date: Sunday, August 16th starting at 1:00 p.m.

Bring a covered dish & a 2-litre bottle of your favorite soft drink. A folding chair is also suggested.

The famous bean pot will be fired up and sirloin beef burgers and beef franks will be the usual entrees - along with iced tea and lemonade. No need to bring flatware, cups, plates, etc. -- it will all be provided.

Mark your calendar now and look for the road map to be published next month. It will have road names added to the old route numbers.

The bean kettle will need to be started by 9:30 but the burgers and franks will be grilled at 1:00 pm.

Talk-in on 146.550 MHz when you reach Fulks Run (from the East) or the West Virginia line (from the west).

Oh, one more thing: Tailgating! Enough said!

For additional info: contact W3MMC, Bob, at phone (540)-852-3289, or on the 146.625 MHz, the Big Mountain Repeater.

## FOR SALE

BAYPAC BP1 Packet Modem with molded coiled cord connection direct to many popular H-T's. \$30.00

CUSHCRAFT A270-6S 2 mtr/440 beam antenna. Three elements ea on 2.8' boom. going for \$70.00 in AES catalog, yours for \$45.00, never used outside.

Bill KE4FM (289-9801) wwjones@gte.net

Icom 706 Mark II vs. Kenwood TS-50S

## The WA4E Comparison...

Back in the Springtime, Mark Payne, WA4E, along with some friends, conducted a comparison of the Icom IC-706-Mark II, and the Kenwood TS-50S.

Both of these neat little rigs cover the HF bands, and both are fairly unique in that they are just a little larger than a peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich. Yes, these two rigs are *tiny* to be full-featured HF rigs. But they are great for sticking in today's cars, where the crowded dashboards make mobile HF work difficult.

Mark compared the two radios, side by side. Below are his comments on the performance of the two rigs.

1. Both have near the same sensitivity.
2. Both are very close on selectivity.
3. The Icom 706 MK2 receive audio is better for understanding the voice of the other station because of the 706's higher frequency response.
4. The TX audio (as reported by the other station) on the 706 MK2 has a higher frequency sound than the TS-50. (The TS-50 has more bass tone on transmit *and* receive.)
5. The Icom 706 MK2 has the 2-meter band. The TS-50 does not.
6. The Icom 706 has the control head that comes off, making for more versatile mounting in a vehicle. The TS-50 does not.
7. The Icom 706 has DSP option. The TS-50 does not.
8. The Icom 706 is a little smaller in size but costs a lot more than the TS-50.

Final Comments: I think it is simply a matter of what you want the radio to do for you and how much \$\$\$\$\$\$\$ you want to spend. These comments may help a person pick the unit that fits their need.

Bottom line: both are great little radios for the price.

73  
Mark

Annual trip to Greenbank

## **NATIONAL RADIO ASTRONOMY OBSERVATORY HOSTS LOCAL AMATEURS**

On May 30th another group of hams and friends took a trip to Greenbank, West Virginia, to tour the National Radio Astronomy Observatory.

The day was a beautiful, warm Spring day and a good time was had by all. We had approximately 19 hams and friends that attended.

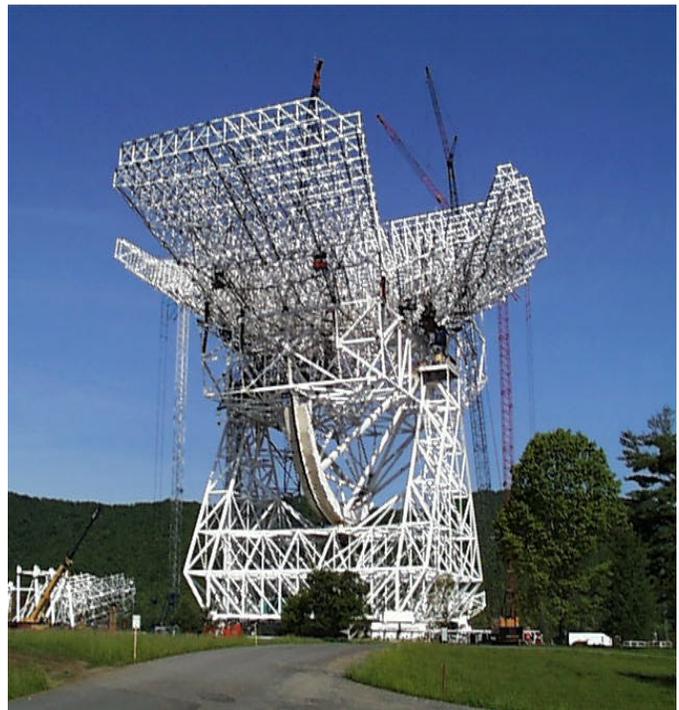
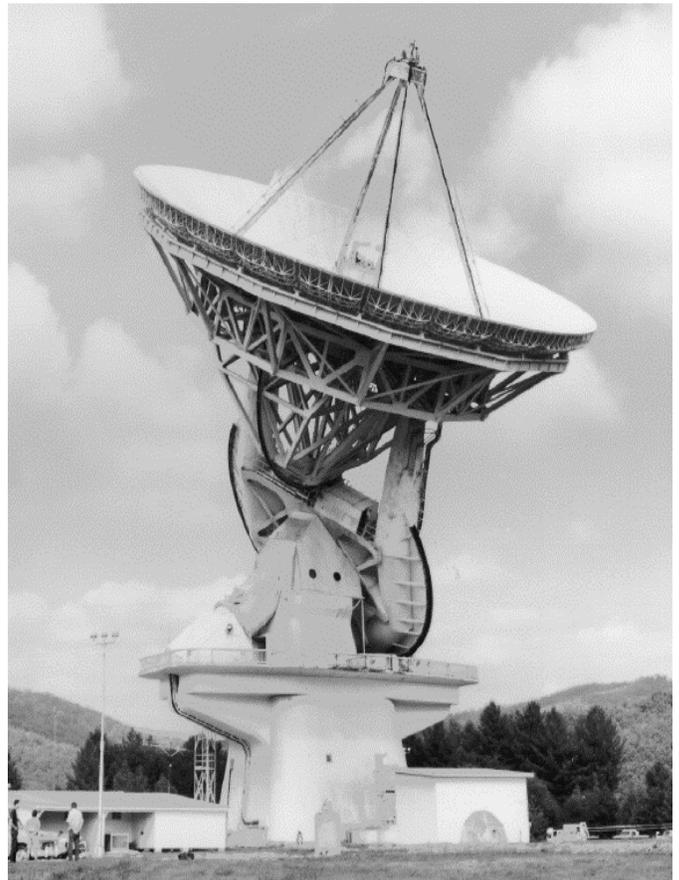
We were met at Greenbank by three West Virginia hams that traveled from their homes to meet us and start the tour. **Rick Fisher KE8DH**, an employee of NRAO, graciously led us on a very thorough tour of the entire facility, with special emphasis on the "GREENBANK TELESCOPE". The "GBT" is the telescope that is under construction to replace the old 300' telescope that fell in 1989. The GBT is somewhat behind schedule but is getting very near completion.

We will make another trip next year in May and maybe see the "GBT" nearly done. So put on your calendar for next May another trip to "Wild Wonderful West Virginia".

*Submitted by  
Joe Meek KD4FKT*

**Top Right:** *One of the currently-operating radio telescopes at the Greenbank National Radio Observatory.*

**Bottom Right:** *A recent photo of the new giant radio-telescope under construction and scheduled for completion in 1999.*



## WANTED TO BUY

*A good '486 computer wanted for friend.*

*Do not need monitor or printer.*

*Do need Windows 95 and enough HD space to add*

*MS Word.*

*Modem would be nice.*

*Vince K2VJ, 540 248-0810 or vincek2vj@rica.net.*

## BRIEFS FROM ALL OVER

*For more information on any of these items, contact the newsletter editor, KD9LA.*

ARRL members in Virginia can request to have the ARRL diamond logo on their license plates, starting July 1. Including a call sign on the plate is optional. As with similar "logo" plates in Virginia, the ARRL logo plates cost \$10 per year, and there is no additional fee to include your call sign. ARRL logo plates will read "ARRL" below the call sign or plate number, instead of "Amateur Radio,"--*Dennis Bodson, W4PWF*

Last April, Virginia's governor Gilmore signed into law what is arguably the most powerful pro-amateur radio legislation in the entire country. In a nutshell, the new legislation says that no city, town or county may place a law on the books which forbids a tower for a licensed Amateur Radio Operator. Here is the URL of the full story:

<http://rbnet.com/~hamcotec/sb480.html> --*Chuck Rippel*

A new General class examination question pool becomes effective July 1.

As of January 1, 1998, only FCC Forms 610 dated September 1997 or later are acceptable to the FCC or to VE teams.

Congressional bill HR 3572, the Amateur Radio Spectrum Protection Act, now has 39 cosponsors (including the original sponsor). The bill, introduced March 27 at the request of the ARRL, would protect existing Amateur Radio spectrum against reallocations to or sharing with other services unless the FCC provides "equivalent replacement spectrum" elsewhere. HR 3572 has been referred to the House Commerce Committee. An effort is under way to enlist additional cosponsors for the measure. Amateurs are encouraged to contact their Representatives and urge them to support the bill or to sign on as cosponsors. The full text of the bill is available at

[http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c105:H.R.3572:](http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c105:H.R.3572)

AMSAT has announced that Phase III-D will not fly this year. As announced earlier via the AMSAT-BB, the Phase 3D satellite will not be launched on the third scheduled test flight of Ariane 5.

TMSAT-1 and SEDSAT-1 are two new amateur satellites which will probably be launched within the next month or two.

The vanity call sign application fee will drop to \$13 effective September 14, 1998. The current vanity call sign application fee is \$50. The FCC says it has no plans to refund the difference between the current fee and the new fee for applicants who submit applications before the new fee schedule goes into effect in September. The Vanity fee has always been an annual fee paid ten-years up front.

VE Patches - VE Patches are available for ARRL VEs. To obtain one, send a self addressed envelope and a copy of your ARRL VE Badge with \$3 to: ARRL/VEC, VE Patch Request, 225 Main St, Newington CT 06111 USA. Additional patches can be obtained. The cost is \$3 per patch. ARRL will pay the postage.

The new prefix for Pitcairn Island in the South Pacific is VP6. The British possession changed its callsign prefix from VR6 to VP6 on May 1st as part of the reversion of Hong Kong to China. Old timers may recall that VP6 used to belong to Barbadoes before it became independent. Callsign suffixes on Pitcarin will remain the same.

The Radio Amateur Callbook now lets you update or correct your listing in the CD-ROM by e-mail. Station licensees may send changes to [103424.2142@compuserve.com](mailto:103424.2142@compuserve.com) or [ral@injersey.com](mailto:ral@injersey.com).

Worldwide ham population: According to the annual statistics collected by the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU), there were 2,777,000 amateur radio operators in the world in 1997.-- *Nao Akiyama, NX1L*

Blinking CW -- Word that not knowing the code can be expensive an expensive proposition. At least it was for one branch of the U.S. Military. In the conflict between the pro and no-code segments of our hobby, one side usually brings up the argument that the military has abandoned the use of cw. In a recent set of sea trials by two vessels of the U.S. Navy, a combination of tests resulted in a total breakdown in conventional communications. Messages concerning maneuvers, course and speed had to be relayed in morse code by blinker lights. This once common naval communications mode is evidently a lost art. Because the inability to quickly transmit and receive the messages involved resulted in an aircraft carrier backing into a cruiser at considerable speed. Damage to both ships totaled over \$10,000,000. It's not known if the problem with the Navy's blinking light CW was on the transmitting or the receiving end. (Via *Amateur News Weekly*)

## VARA SECRETARY'S REPORT

*June 10, 1998 Meeting*

The Valley Amateur Radio Association (V.A.R.A.) club meeting was held at Gavid's Restaurant in Staunton on June 10, 1998. The meeting was opened at 7:35 p.m. by the club president, Ken Harris (KE4GKD). A round of introductions was made. There were 26 members and guests present.

The 50/50 winner was Sam Pickering (KE4EKV). The total amount raised was \$31 with half going to Sam and half towards the club.

Jeff Rinehart (WB4PJW) presented a treasury report and it was accepted as read.

Sam Pickering (KE4EKV) discussed the current status of the club patches. They have ordered 250 patches at \$1.34 each. The club voted to sell them at \$5 each. The profit will go to the club treasury.

Vince Luciani (K2VJ) brought more of his books, "Tornado-Wise" for auction to raise the club money. All four of them were sold and raised the club \$20.

William Dodge Jr. (N4ZSG) was voted in as a new member in the club.

There was discussion about Field Day.

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting of the Valley Amateur Radio Association (V.A.R.A.). The motion was accepted and the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

*Submitted by:  
Douglas S. Zirk (KE4RMD)  
Secretary*

***Sorry, but the minutes from the VARA May meeting still have not arrived at the newsletter editor's desk.***

## MARA SECRETARY'S REPORT

*June 4, 1998*

The regular monthly meeting of Massanutten Amateur Radio Association was held at Evers Restaurant at Mt. Crawford, VA on Thursday evening, June 4. Those who came early enjoyed the buffet dinner and the meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by the president, David (AD4TJ).

There were thirty-five members and guests present. Each introduced themselves with name, call sign, and location.

The Field Day Committee made their report and plans and details for a successful field day were discussed and decided. David (AD4TJ) reported that he had checked on getting liability insurance for field day but that all insurance agents wanted to sell insurance for a whole year and the cost was prohibitive.

The question was raised as to when the change of repeaters would take place. Dale (N4DAI) reported he had the necessary crystals in his car, they had just arrived, and that the change over would take place as soon as the group could get up to the mountain site to make the switch.

Two new applications for membership were read. They are Kevin Barb (KE4WWM) from Broadway and Douglas Alder (KF4YGO) from Harrisonburg. Also we received an application from Warren (Rusty II) Rothgeb (KF4QAV) of Weyers Cave.

Announcements were made as to the contests and hamfests coming up in the next couple of months. It was also announced that our Christmas meeting will be with spouses and will be at Pano's Restaurant in Harrisonburg. A choice of menus will be presented at a future meeting.

The 50/50 drawing was won by our Guest Speaker, Harry Daniels (W2HD).

Following the adjournment of the business meeting, Harry (W2HD) of Charlottesville and former president of the American Radio Relay League gave a most interesting presentation which he entitled, "Amateur Radio-The Challenge It Faces Today."

Our July meeting will be held on July 9, 1998 at Evers. The reason for the change is because of our regular meeting night being so near to the July 4th celebration.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Wilton B. Thomas, (KF4BFL)  
Secretary*

## MASSANUTTEN ARA

President: David Tanks, AD4TJ  
Vice-President: Walt Lam, KF4BFB  
Secretary: Wilton Thomas, KF4BFL  
Treasurer: Matthew Huffman, KD4UPL  
Board (exp 98): Sandy Mullins, KE4PZC  
Board (exp 99): Bob Hughes, KF4BFC

MARA meets the first Thursday of each month at Ever's Restaurant on U.S. 11, south of Harrisonburg. Meal starts at 6:30 pm, Business Meeting starts at 7:30 pm  
Visitors are welcome.

Dues (\$12/yr) should be mailed to the Treasurer,  
Matthew Huffman, KD4UPL, 5166 Mt Clinton Pike,  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

## THE VALLEY ARA

President: Ken Harris, KE4GKD  
Vice-President: Karen Zirk, KE4WIE  
Secretary: Doug Zirk, KE4RMD  
Treasurer: Jeff Rinehart, WB4PJW

VARA meets the second Wednesday of each month at Gavid's Restaurant on US Route 11 South in Staunton. The meal begins around 6:30 and the business meeting begins at 7:30.  
Visitors are welcome.

Dues (\$15/yr) should be mailed to the Treasurer,  
Jeff Rinehart, 1344 Hankey Mtn Hwy, Churchville, VA 24421

The *Monitor* is published monthly by the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc., a non-profit organization under the Internal Revenue Service regulations. The *Monitor* is distributed to all full current members of the Massanutten and the Valley Amateur Radio Associations under reciprocal agreements of the two clubs. Sample copies are sometimes sent to other hams in the Shenandoah Valley to invite them to join the club of their choice. All change of address, articles, comments, and material for the *Monitor* should be sent to the Editor, David R. Fordham, KD9LA, 131 Wayside Drive, Weyers Cave, VA 24486-2421, phone 540-234-0448, email: fordhadr@jmu.edu.

Massanutten Amateur Radio Assn, Inc.  
c/o David R. Fordham  
131 Wayside Drive  
Weyers Cave, VA 24486-2421

NON -PROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
Harrisonburg VA  
PERMIT NO. 60

**MARA MEETING CHANGE: JULY 9**