

The MARA/VARA Monitor

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

VARA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It was nice to see everyone at the last Club Meeting. We got a lot accomplished and had a very nice presentation on license plates given by Dr. Gordon White and his wife Linda. I know it was enjoyed by everyone present. I for one sure learned a bunch of information, seeing all the different plates and a story about them. I learned that the Virginia Amateur Plates were first issued in 1951. Dr. White had a handout with some history of the plates he collects, as well as informative data on many other plates. Dr White and his wife are world travelers and they sure seemed to have collected plates from afar.

We also had David (AD4TJ), the new Augusta County Emergency Coordinator, give a talk. I hope that all support David in this role of Amateur Radio. As we all know, Amateurs in an emergency can play a big role in communications for our local Fire, Rescue and Police Departments.

Next month Richard (KF4QZG) will be giving a presentation on his three visits to China. He will have some slides for us to view as to their living conditions, transportation, daily life and tourist attractions, so plan on attending the meeting and enjoying his presentation.

We still need a President and Vice-President for the club for the 1999 calendar year. Next month is our last official meeting for the year, since the Christmas Party will take place of the December meeting. So let's get this issue settled so we can continue along with business.

Speaking of Christmas, the plans have been made for our party. There will be more information in this newsletter as to the date, time and location. I hope to see a large turnout for this event, as we have in past years.

Remember, winter is just around the corner. We need to check all of our equipment and make sure it is ready in case of an emergency.

That's all for this month. I will see you at the next meeting on November 11th.

73

*Ken Harris, KE4GKD
VARA President*

MARA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello fellow hams, club members, etc.

What a busy month for Public Service events! Of course, as you're reading this, they are all over and done with! I hope you will take the time to read the reports in this issue of the newsletter and see how much we hams contribute to our community! And to think we have fun while doing it, too!. Thanks to all who helped out.

Well, another year has gone by. Here are the officers for 1998:

- President- (Looks like me again!) AD4TJ
- Vice-Pres- Sandy K4PZC
- Secretary- Wilton KF4BFL
- Treasurer- Matthew KD4UPL
- Board '99- Bob KF4BFC
- Board '00- Walt KF4BFB

For those who didn't make the meeting, we are now covered with a Liability Insurance plan from Auto-Owners Insurance Co. This plan covers us for liability in our activities as a club, including public service events, Field Day, meetings, emergencies, etc.

Remember, the Christmas Banquet will be on December 3rd at Pano's Restaurant at 6:30 pm. The menu will be the same as last year, meaning no reservations are required, and no prepayment is required, so if the weather is bad, you're not out \$20 or so. As of this moment, 69 people have signed up, and I'm sure there are others who will come who can't make the meetings but can make the banquet. Come out and enjoy the meal and the fellowship!

QRP? What can you do with 5 watts or less on HF? Find out at the November meeting, when Paul WV3J will be presenting the program.

See y'all November 5th!

*David AD4TJ
MARA President*

AD4TJ Named New Emergency Coordinator

AUGUSTA COUNTY HAMS HAVE NEW ARES E.C.

If you haven't heard by now, I've accepted the position of Emergency Coordinator(EC) for Augusta County.

I've received lots of support from hams in the Augusta County area, and I really appreciate it. I hope I can do a decent job.

Mike KO4EA, my predecessor, has done a very good job of planning, so I don't have as much to do as if I was starting from scratch. Addresses, some call changes, phone numbers, etc, need updated. We also need to start a ARES Net for Augusta County. When I meet with my Assistant EC's we'll discuss that, and other things that need addressing.

Please welcome my Assistants:

- Jeff W4PJW, Assistant EC/Skywarn
- Ken KE4GKD, Assistant EC/Nets
- Frank KE4ASC, Assistant EC/MARS
- Joe KD4FKT, Assistant EC/General

I issued some new ARES cards at the VARA meeting Oct. 14, and hope to see others in the county/cities who would like to support the ARES so I can get info from you and get you an updated card.

Thanks for your continued support of ARES!

*David AD4TJ
Augusta County EC*

Another Loss...

JOHN HARVEY, WB43KIT, SK

John Harvey WB4KIT, became a silent key Tuesday morning, October 20, at Augusta Medical Center. John succumbed to a heart attack. Funeral arrangements were handled by Reynolds Funeral Home in Waynesboro. The services were held on Thursday, October 22, with several hams attending and paying their respects. John was a generous mentor of hams, and was single-handedly responsible for many of us entering the hobby. Burial was in Augusta Memorial Park, also in Waynesboro. John will be missed.

*Information provided by
Ray Colvin, KE4HVR*

UNDER THE WEATHER...

We are sorry to receive word from Dan, KE4JSX, that VARA member Sam Pickering, KF3EKV, has been in the hospital recently and is still under active treatment and doctor's care. We all wish him the best.

Also, word has been received via Ray, KE4HVR, that the mother of Ken Harris, VARA President, recently suffered a stroke and is requiring full-time care. Ken regrets that he won't have as much time for ham radio as he assists his mom.

Your newsletter editor was out two weeks with pneumonia and high fever. (That is the reason why this edition is coming to you first class – he didn't have time to wait for the slower but cheaper bulk mail.)

And finally, word reached us that Bob Hughes, KF4BFC, had a tractor drive out from under him, breaking some ankle bones and bruising other a whole lotta other places.

We appreciate your keeping these (and others we may not know about) in your thoughts.



It's Not Too Late to Comment

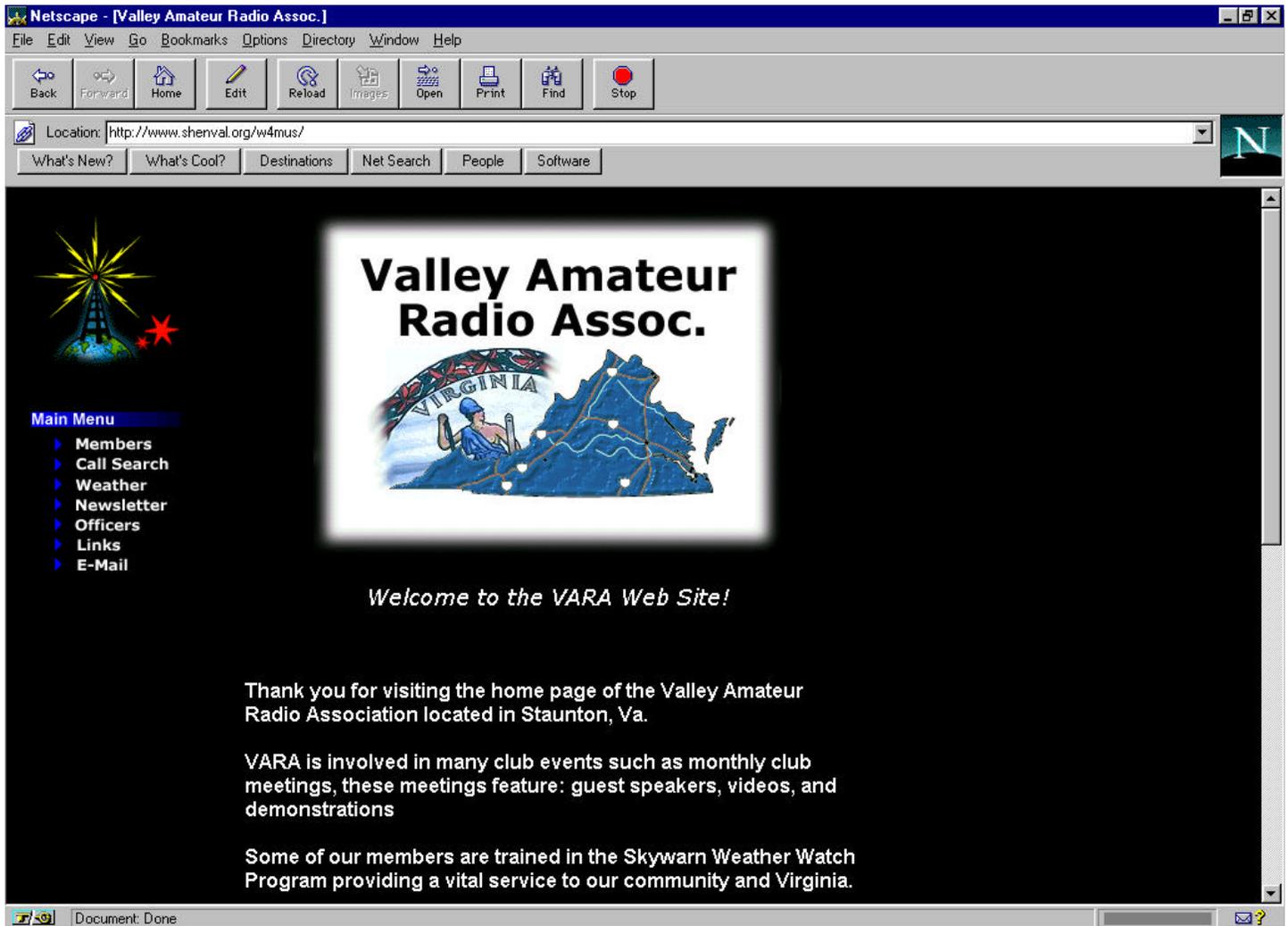
PART 97 PROPOSALS

There is still time to file comments with the FCC regarding the proposed changes to ham radio licensing system. This proposal, as well as a private proposal by the ARRL, has a significant impact on the make-up and structure of the Amateur Radio Service.

Summaries of both proposals were given in the September issue of the Monitor two months ago. Details of the proposals, as well as instructions on submitting comments, can be found on the ARRL web page:

<http://www.arrl.org/news/restructuring/>

VARA HOME PAGE FEATURED



Last month, we featured the MARA Home Page, which can be found at: <http://cob.jmu.edu/fordhadtr/MARA>.

This month, we feature the VARA Home Page, which can be found at: <http://www.shenval.org/w4mus/>

The VARA Home Page is maintained by Shenandoah Valley Web Hosting, and was initiated by Buck Mowbray, N3RIQ. It makes great use of graphics and applets, but still loads very quickly. The page is part of Amateur Web Ring.

Like the MARA page, the VARA Home Page has links to the email addresses of members, and provides a page listing the club officers. But in addition, the VARA Page has its own weather link, and its own callsign lookup function.

The VARA page provides access to back issues of the MARA/VARA Monitor, too.

Web Ring, in conjunction with the Shenandoah Valley Web Hosting, will provide space for individual web pages for hams in the valley area. They also provide space for other organizations, such as the Grottoes Fire Department. If you are interested in having your own web space, use the link on the VARA page to obtain more information.

Take a look at the VARA page on the 'Net. If you have comments or questions, send them to Buck, N3RIQ.

MARA SPECIAL SERVICE REPORTS

SEPTEMBER 12th

The 25th Annual varsity Cross-Country Foot Race was held on September 12, at Eastern Mennonite High School in western Harrisonburg. This is a race in which the area high school students compete with each other in an off-track race. This year there was a total of 320 runners, comprising three classes: girls, boys, and juniors (coed).

Hams serve to report accidents and emergencies, since the race takes place on public streets, roads, highways, and generally “across the country” instead of on a dedicated track. Hams also serve to relay the race status and results of checkpoints back to race headquarters.

Christy Neff, the head of the event, said the race goes much smoother and better with our help. She is already looking forward to our assistance next year.

KE4EEN served as net control. Hams helping with this event were:

- **N4FGY Puff**
- **K4NRA Ray**
- **KF4BFF Enos**
- **KF4DDI Paul**
- **KE4LKQ Vic**
- **KB2TBL Dan**
- **KN4FM Gerald**
- **KF4YGO Doug**
- **KA4EEN, Norman**

OCTOBER 3rd & 4th

We had a very pleasant weekend for the Johnny Appleseed Horseback Ride, held north of Timberville. They used the same route for the ride as they have for the past few years.

This year, the ride had a new activity: the Pony Express game. This game required the riders to pick a number card randomly from a box at each check point. At the end of the ride, the riders would turn in their cards. The rider with the highest sum (from the numbers on his or her card) received a gift.

There were 53 horses in the ride on Saturday, and 52 on Sunday. A total of \$9,000 was raised by this event.

Net control on Saturday was David, KF4SVR. Net control on Sunday was Colin, N4ZFY.

Those hams helping with the communication for the Johnny Appleseed Ride were:

- **KF4BFL Wilton**
- **KF4BFB Walt**
- **KD4UPL Matthew**
- **KF4BFC Bob**
- **KB2TBL Dan**
- **KA4EEN Norman**
- **N4ALS Glen**
- **N4ZKH Marshall**
- **KE4ZLD David**
- **K4RNA**

OCTOBER 17th

At the front steps of JMU’s Duke Hall, the JMU marching band, the Royal Dukes, and the cheerleaders, helped to put the 145 walkers in gear for the Annual Multiple Sclerosis (MS) fund-raising walk.

The walk went very well, and the staff was happy with the turnout and the good job they did to bring in \$17,000 for the MS Society.

The Hams provided communication in case of emergency, as well as status reports to the walk headquarters.

Norman, KA4EEN served as Net Control. Those hams helping were:

- **KF4BFC Bob**
- **KF4BFF Enos**
- **KN4FM Gerald**
- **N3GLZ John**
- **KD4DDI Paul**

A hearty “THANKS” to all the hams who helped with this event!

*Norman Benner,
KA4EEN
MARA Special Events Coordinator*

BIKES, BIKES AND MORE BIKES!

They were everywhere - Big ones, little ones, red, blue white and green ones. I was informed by one of the Bike Virginia people that over 1300 had registered for this year's event. At first it didn't seem like that many were there but after seeing how many were parked over at Natural Chimneys and up at Todd Lake, I knew we had more participants this year than ever before.

New this year were the bikes with a special kind of trailing single bicycle wheel that was attached just below the seat of the main bike and tagged along similar to a trailer. It had it's own handlebar, seat and peddles so that a youngster could "help" peddle but not steer. There is probably some name for this contraption, but it was cute and effective. It seems there are more and more families getting involved in this sport.

There were of course, the familiar bikes built for two and the bikes with the more conventional two wheel trailer that carried a baby or very small child. There was at least one bike that had a wire cage attached to the handlebars and inside was what appeared to be a cat. I didn't get a good look so it may have been a bird or something else. Whatever it was, it just shows the extent these bikers go to in making this a family event.

A special thanks is extended to **KB4OLM** who provided his communication trailer and operated as NCS both days. Also, a special thanks to **KE4YEX** who brought the Stuarts Draft Emergency Response vehicle for use all day Sunday. A big thank you also to **KE4GKD** who spent many hours, behind the scenes, helping me get this activity organized. Thank you also to the regular users of the repeaters who let us "take over" their machines for this activity. Repeaters used were 147.225 and 147.075 Saturday, 147.045 and 147.075 Sunday.

On Saturday, we had approximately 20 hams involved in patrolling the routes. As it turned out, we could have used a couple more to completely saturate the coverage of the course. The new route this year up to the Singers Glen area was not as popular as I had thought it might be but perhaps that is how it is the first time you try something new. The most excitement on this new course involved someone who turned some of the directional arrows along the course the wrong way. This sent some bikers off in the wrong direction and really messed things up for a while. Thanks to Gayle, **KD4JVA** for discovering this and getting it corrected before too many were led astray. Also involved in the re-directing effort was Doug **KF4YGO**, who although not officially involved in the event, was helpful in getting some wayward bikers back on course while he did his "homework".

Our most serious mishap on Saturday involved a biker with severe "road rash". The Mt. Solon Rescue Squad was called to "clean him up" but he refused transport to the hospital for a better evaluation. There were other minor bumps and bruises

and of course the typical blisters and sore muscles but thankfully nothing really serious.

On Sunday, we had about 15 hams involved in coordinating our efforts. There weren't quite as many bikers on Sunday, but since the course was shorter and more concentrated, it seemed like there were just as many.

Sunday's mountain bikers got a real workout this year. The short trail (15 miles) started at Sherando Lake and went up a foot trail to a spot near the parkway. They followed a trail parallel to the parkway to the north and then descended down a different trail back to Sherando Lake. We could not patrol these trails so the best we could do was to monitor the start and ending points. The longer mountain trail started at Sherando and continued along a mountain road behind Shenandoah Acres, then went up the mountain on a jeep trail and from there followed the short trail back to Sherando Lake. This longer course (30 miles) intersected with the short trail near the parkway. At this intersecting point a rest stop was set up where Cowles **KB4CNI** was stationed to provide communications if needed. Cowles reported several groups of about 25 bikers each who gathered at this rest stop. There must have been nearly 100 who traveled the mountain course. Fortunately, no serious problems were reported. If there had been an emergency, it would have involved carrying the injured out on foot.

The Bike Virginia organization could not have been nicer to us. They really appreciate our efforts on behalf of the bikers. They were generous by providing us with very nice heavy long sleeve shirts, free lunch tickets and anything else we needed or requested. They have been donating \$100 to both MARA and VARA each year and this year, for some reason, they surprised us by donating \$200 to each club.

This activity each year provides good training for our ARES participants. It was significant this year that we had exceptional response from our local ARES officials. Those involved were **N4ZDQ**, EC Rockingham County. **AD4TJ** EC, Augusta Co. **KB4LCI**, EC Pocahontas Co. WV. AEC's involved included **W4PJW**, **KD4FKT**, **KE4GKD** and **KA4EEN**.

Other participants included: **N4TRH** **KB4OLM**
KD4WWF **KE4HVR** **KE4LKS** **KE4JSX** **N4ZHV**
W4GRC **KF4QAV** **KB4CNI** **KE4ZLD** **KF4QZG**
KE4YEX **KD4JVA** **KD4SYW** **WB8GIF** **KF4PFR**
KB2TBL - sure hope I didn't miss anyone.

Thank you to all who came out to help!

*Till next year,
Jeff W4PJW*

VARA CHRISTMAS PARTY PLANS

The VARA Christmas Party will be at Buckhorn Inn, west of Churchville on Route 250 on Thursday December 17th at 7:00pm.

This event will take the place of the December club meeting.

The cost of the buffet meal is \$10.90 each, (Includes coffee or tea, tax and tip). Add .85 for soft drinks.

Buckhorn Inn would like to know how many plan to attend so we can give them an approximate number by November 23rd. You may call Nancy Colvin KE4PHP or Ray Colvin KE4HVR at 886-1559 or on the 146.850 or 224.680 repeaters.

Pay Jeff Rinehart by check (made to VARA) or cash on or before the night of the party. Jeff will write one check for Buckhorn Inn.

*See you then,
Ray and Nancy Colvin*

MARA CHRISTMAS BANQUET PLANS

The MARA Christmas Party will be held on Thursday, December 3rd at 6:30 pm at Pano's Restaurant.

Pano's is on Route 11, South Main Street, just north of Pleasant Valley Road. To reach it, take I-81 to the south Harrisonburg exit (Exit 243), turn right at the end of the exit ramp, and Pano's will be 2 blocks on your right.

You can order off of a special menu like last year. The selections on the menu will include Baked Chicken, Chopped Sirloin, Combination Seafood Platter, and Trout with Baby Shrimp. All items cost \$6.95 per person, and come with baked potato or french fries, salad, and dinner rolls. You can also have Spaghetti with Meat or Marinara Sauce with salad and garlic bread for the same price. Your drink will be an additional \$0.70, or you can get a drink and a dessert for \$1.70 extra. Your final price will also include a 15% gratuity and 8.5% meal and sales tax.

You do not have to preregister, prepay, or even make advance reservations. Pano's would like an approximate count, so if you are thinking of attending and have not already signed up, please contact one of the club officers.

The MARA Christmas Banquet is open to all hams, not just members of the MARA club. Visitors are welcome.

VARA SECRETARY'S REPORT

October 14, 1998 Meeting

The Valley Amateur Radio Association (V.A.R.A.) club meeting was held at Gavid's Restaurant in Staunton on October 14, 1998. The meeting was opened at 7:30 p.m. by the club president, Ken Harris (KE4GKD). A round of introductions was made. There were 28 members and guests present.

The 50/50 raffle collected \$28. June Waldmuller (KE4PKJ) was the winner.

The secretary's report was accepted as printed in last month's newsletter.

Jeff Rinehart (W4PJW) passed around the treasury report and discussed the report. It was accepted as read.

Daniel Farrow (KB2TBL) was accepted as a 1999 secretary nominee.

The V.A.R.A. Christmas party will be held at Buckhorn Inn which is located West of Churchville on Route 250 on Thursday December 17th at 7:00pm. Contact Ray Colvin (KE4HVR) or Nancy Colvin (KE4PHP) before November 23 and let them know if you are going to attend. The restaurant needs to have a head count by this date.

David Tanks (AD4TJ, M.A.R.A. President) gave a talk on ARES and gave out some signup forms. If anyone is interested or needs more information pertaining to ARES contact David.

Gordon White, one of our guests, gave an informative and interesting presentation on "License Plates", including amateur tags.

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 was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

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

**Due to the Thanksgiving Holidays, the deadline
for the December Issue of the Monitor is
Tuesday, November 17th.**

MARA SECRETARY'S REPORT

October 1, 1998 Meeting

At 7:31 pm, President David Tanks (AD4TJ) called the regular monthly meeting of the MARA club to order, with 21 members present.

Committee Reports: Public Service – Norman (KA4EEN) reports that a Net Control Operator is needed on October 19 for the Rockingham County ARES Net. The whole month of November is open. -- The Johnny Appleseed Horseback Ride is this weekend (October 3rd and 4th). Help is still needed for Sunday the 4th. -- The MS Walk at JMU is on October 17th at 9:00 am. Signup sheet is going around. – The EMHS Race went very well. Several participants showed their appreciation for the club's help.

Dale, N4DAI, announced anyone needing an ARES Net Control Operator Manual could contact Colin Hester, N4ZDQ, at 833-5558.

David, AD4TJ, announced that the Bike Virginia Ride will be on October 24th and 25th, same route as before. It will start between 7 and 8 am. Help is needed, a signup sheet is going around. Mag mounts and HT's will be needed for some to ride with officials.

Treasurer's Report: Matthew Huffman, KD4UPL reported a balance of approximately \$1800.

President Tanks announced the candidates for the 1999 officers: President: David Tanks AD4TJ, Vice President: Sandy Mullins K4PZC, Secretary: Wilton Thomas KF4BFL, Treasurer: Matthew HuffmanKD4UPL, and incoming Board Member: Walt Lam KF4BFB. All officers accepted the nomination. Nominations were closed and the slate was voted by acclamation. The new officers will take over at the November meeting.

Old Business: none

New Business: Ray, K4NRA announced that we would like to have a few operators at Pence Middle School on October 29th and 30th (a Thursday and Friday) for an Amateur Radio Awareness demonstration. He also has an HF antenna and rig available. Anyone available, please contact Ray.

John, N3GLZ reports any DX'er interested in the PAQSO party, he has information, including the rules.

Paul, WV3J, gave an interesting report on the Gamma Ray Burst from a nearby star, and a short talk on the Spartan Sprints contests.

The Christmas Banquet signup sheet is going around again.

Matthew, KD4UPL, point out Alinco's new credit card sized HT, the DJ-C1T 2m and CJ-C5T dual band, are on sale.

President Tanks asked for discussion on the Christmas Banquet menu. After little discussion, a motion was made and seconded for it to remain as it was last year, Menu #1. Motion passed.

President Tanks spoke on the annual dues for two members living in the same household. He suggested dropping from \$24.00 per year for two members, to \$18.00 per year for two members in the same household. Rusty, N4YET, advised that this question arose at the

time the club was incorporated, and our lawyer advised us not to do this due to having two "classes" of membership in the corporation. Ray K4NRA made a motion to have the board look into this. It was seconded, and passed.

David Fordham, KD9LA, the newsletter editor, reported on price increases in printing, and the upcoming price increase in postage. He pointed out that with the new prices, if more than 106 copies were mailed in a month, it made sense to print and mail 200 copies using the Bulk Mail rates. Bulk mail allows up to 50 pages for about \$0.13, whereas first class will cost \$0.33 for five pages, a newsletter more than five pages will require a second stamp. If we can get a significant number of members to receive the newsletter electronically (email) only, and get the number of copies printed and mailed below 106 between the two clubs, the costs will go down significantly. David emphasized that he works at the clubs direction and will take whatever course the club decides. As long as the MARA club wishes to go jointly with the VARA club, David would prefer to have both clubs approve any changes. No action was proposed, the report was for the membership's information only.

David also reported that about 60% of the membership copies were going to MARA members, and 40% going to VARA members, while about 60% of the complimentary copies were going to nonmembers in Augusta county. David asked if there was any objection to splitting the cost of the newsletter 60/40 with MARA picking up the extra 10%, and no objection was expressed.

Ray suggested we look for ways of using some of the club's finances to help our local ham community. Several ideas were raised: flyers passed around the community to advertise upcoming licensing classes; a new local ham directory; buying an keeping cardoor magnet signs. David Fordham KD9LA and John Lasher N3GLZ agreed to form a committee to investigate possibilities and make a recommendation.

Dale N4DAI said he would investigate the interest in a ham radio licensing class.

Other announcements: Rusty N4YET reported the road to Reddish Knob was undergoing major repair. -- Remember, the Frost-Fest is in January. – QST published an article on the FCC plans for restructuring the ham radio service.

Paul, WV3J won the 50/50.

No further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:32 with program following by David Tanks, AD4TJ.

*Minutes taken by
David Hughes,
KF4SFR
Acting 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, K4PZC
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, W4PJW

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.

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