

The M.A.R.A./V.A.R.A. Monitor

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

PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS NEED HELP!

October is one of the busiest months for volunteer communicators.

If you can help with any of the events below, please, we beg you, please give up a little of your time to “play radio” with us. The events sponsors know how efficient we are, and have come to rely on ham operators to support their activity.

OCTOBER 1-2: Johnny Appleseed Horseback Ride. Probably too late to help by the time you read this.

OCTOBER 16: -- MS Walk in Harrisonburg. Communicators need an HT or a mobile radio with battery and portable antenna. Meet at JMU’s Dukes Hall on South Main street at 8:30 am. Net control is KA4EEN, use 145.130 for talk-in.

OCTOBER 15-17: Bike Virginia Bike Ride – communicators can stay in their vehicles and ride the route while reporting in on their mobile rigs. For more information, contact Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW, at 540-337-7337.

These events are just a few of the ways that radio amateurs justify our use of valuable radio spectrum. Do your part to help out!

MARA PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Hello fellow club members! Fall is upon us, and that means more opportunities for Public Service. Please plan to help out on the many events scheduled for October.

Thanks to John WA4KQX on his great program on Direction Finding. Maybe his talk will inspire some DF antenna projects and activities.

Want to learn about RTTY, SSTV, ATV, and PSK31? Then the October MARA meeting on the 7th at Ever's Restaurant is the place to be!!!! Vic KE4LKQ is going to do a live demonstration of these 4 digital modes. Come on out and see these exciting modes. Remember, the meetings are open to all amateurs and/or any persons interested in Amateur Radio.

Soon it will be December, and that means the Christmas Banquet. Mark your calendars now for December 2nd, 6:30 pm, at Ever's Restaurant.

See you at the meeting October 7th!

*David Tanks AD4TJ
MARA President*

The deadline for the November issue of the Monitor is October 20.

ARES on Stand-by

LOCAL HAMS MOBILIZE FOR FLOYD

Hurricane Floyd wreaked havoc all up and down the Eastern Seaboard as he passed in early September.

Coastal areas of Virginia were inundated with high water. Luckily, the Shenandoah Valley received nothing more than a heavy rainstorm, accompanied by some strong breezes.

But valley hams were ready!

Captain Jimmy Junkins, commander of the Harrisonburg Emergency Operations Center (EOC), asked hams to stand ready to assist authorities in case governmental communications systems were interrupted.

Rockingham County EC Dale Showalter, N4DAI, along with Claude Phillippy, N4QLV, convened an ARES net on the 145.130 repeater on Tuesday night. They quickly took a count of available operators and their locations.

They organized the local ham talent into a ready-and-waiting cadre. The storm was still several hundred miles off, but ARES operators were already staged, armed with tentative assignments, relief schedules, and backup plans.

The net was on standby almost continuously on Wednesday and Thursday as the storm approached. Fortunately, the brunt of the storm bypassed us and no actual mobilization was needed.

However, to test the preparations, communications were established with Virginia State Emergency officials in Richmond, the Tidewater area, and other locales on HF. This HF link would be the lifeline out of the valley in case the phone network or governmental channels were rendered inoperative by the storm.

The exercise was fruitful. There was some confusion in other areas of the state regarding the state-wide HF frequencies. Some locations did not

receive updated frequency information in time for the call-up.

HF operations took place on the 40 and 80-meter phone bands. Rusty Bowman (N4YET) handled the direct HF operations, with Dick Weaver (W3HXH) standing by as backup.

By Thursday evening it was apparent that hams would not have to man their fire stations, rescue headquarters, and other areas in the staffing plan. A debriefing net was held Thursday night, and the hams could breathe a sigh of relief that no major damage had been inflicted on our area.

Norman Benner (KA4EEN), Ray Ritchie (K4NRA), Gary Morin (KE4DFH), and Colin Hester (N4ZFFQ) also participated in the leadership and execution of the plans. It was reported that over thirty-two (32) hams checked into the Rockingham County nets prepared to serve. Many thanks to all who volunteered.

N4ZFFQ New DEC

OTHER ARES NEWS

Colin Hester, N4ZFFQ, has been appointed District Emergency Coordinator for District 15, which includes Augusta and Rockingham counties, as well as Rockbridge, Bath, Highland, and Alleghany (VA) counties.

Page and Shenandoah Counties are part of ARES District 1, along with Clarke, Frederick, and Warren counties. District 1 DEC is Fred Wetzels, W4KRT.

As a reminder, following are the ARES county emergency coordinators according to the ARES Virginia web site (www.aresva.org):

- **Augusta County:** Dave Tanks AD4TJ
- **Bath County:** Charles Merica N4IF
- **Highland County:** vacant
- **Page County:** Jeff Maiden KE4ZLH
- **Rockbridge County:** Dan Welsh KI4ZR
- **Rockingham County:** Dale Showalter N4DAI
- **Shenandoah County:** vacant

Health Reports

HAMS ON THE MEND

Joe, N4TRH has been undergoing chemo on the other side of the mountain, and still has a few treatments left to go. He sure would appreciate your continuing to keep him in your thoughts.

Also, Pat KD4WWF has been able to get out and around a little bit after his back operation, but is still considered under the weather. Please keep him in mind, too.

*Information provided by
Ray Colvin KE4HVR*

List of Allowable Countries Now on the Web

THIRD PARTY TRAFFIC

As a ham, you can talk on the ham bands to almost any other amateur in the world. However, you can't handle messages or other traffic for third parties with any ham unless that ham lives in a country which has signed a third-party traffic agreement with the United States.

Which countries have third-party agreements?

The current list of third-party agreements is at www.arrl.org/field/regulations/io/3rdparty.html

Now it's easy!

GET INTO APRS

A beginner's guide to APRS (the Automatic Position Reporting System), combining packet radio with Global Positioning System receivers, is now available free on the web. Check out the 25-page white paper by G3NRW, on the World Wide Web at <http://www.netro.co.uk/whitepaper.htm>

Testing One Two Three? Ready to Upgrade?

VE EXAMS OCT. 16

VE Exams will be held on Saturday, October 16 at Massanutten Vo-Tech Center on Pleasant Valley Road in Harrisonburg.

Registration starts just after 9:00 am, and the exams proper will start promptly at 10:00 am.

To reach the location, take Interstate 81 to exit 243, turn right at the light at the end of the exit ramp, turn right again at the next light (Pleasant Valley Road), cross the Interstate overpass, and the Center is ¼ mile down on your right. Proceed to the far left building and look for the cars with the ham license plates.

All candidates need a photo id. If you are upgrading, be sure to bring the original of your current license.

Direct from Swaziland!

WORLD CLASS DX'ER NOW RESIDES IN VALLEY

DX'er Jon Rudy, 3DA0CA (also known as N0NM) has left Swaziland and is now in the (yep, that's right!) the Shenandoah Valley!

With thousands of QSO's to his credit, giving out the "rare ones", we now have the opportunity to learn from a master. Perhaps some locals caught the article on pages 81-82 of the September QST, giving Jon's story.

Jon is here with wife Carolyn (N0PRH, aka 3DA1AV) attending seminary at EMU. If you hear N0NM on the air locally, ask him, "How's DX?"

FOR SALE

FOR SALE: 60' crank up tower w/ HyGain rotor, no base. Cable probably needs replacing. Good condition. \$300

Tri-bander beam - 18' boom. 10, 15, 20 meters w/ module for 30 or 40 m. \$300.

Items belong to Herb Slade, AA2BF – Fishersville. Contact Dan, KE4JSX, at 540-942-2557 or ke4jsx@juno.com

FOR SALE: Yaesu FT-840 HF transceiver, like new condition with FM board and AM filter \$500 or \$600 with Yaesu MD-100 desk mic. Todd Harrison 298-1399
k4tmh@arri.net

The following items are listed by various local hams, and appear on the BlueRidgeTrader.Com public bulletin board operated by Doug Zirk, KE4RME.

- Kenwood TM-733 Dual-band VHF/UHF transceiver
- STANDARD C558A 2M/440 dual band handheld transceiver
- MFJ-1270C tnc-2 packet controller w/cables
- TPL 2-to-70-watt VHF amplifier, SSB/FM
- Kenwood TS700A 2m all-mode transceiver
- Yaesu FT-One HF transceiver
- HTX-100 10-meter transceiver
- Heathkit SB-102 transceiver w/power supply
- Heathkit SB-200 1200-watt amplifier
- Kenwood TS-430 w/CW filter and power supply
- 40-foot tower

For information on the above items, point your web browser to <http://www.blueridgetrader.com> or call Doug at 540-833-4320.

WANTED TO BUY (or RENT or BORROW)

Fellow Shenandoah Valley Ham:

I am building a NorCal 40A QRP rig, and I would like to purchase, rent, or have access to several pieces of electronic test equipment to use in connection with the self-study tutorial textbook titled "The Electronics of Radio" that is based on the engineering and design of the NorCal 40A.

I don't know anything about test equipment, so if you have any suggestions, or know where I can acquire, or have access to the following test equipment in the Harrisonburg area, I will be grateful:

- a. A 50-Mhz oscilloscope with a 10:1 probe
- b. A 15-Mhz function generator
- c. A 35-130 dB sound-level meter
- d. A 10-Mhz counter with 10-Hz resolution
- e. A 120-dB attenuator

Thank you, 73.
Scott W. Lowe, WA0TPN
Broadway, VA
540-896-2107
Email: swlowe@rica.net

Brown Snyder is looking for a good used Kenwood TS-440 Rig. If you've got one you're willing to part with, call Brown at 540-434-3133

Paul Inninger, KD4DDI, is interested in a Heathkit DX-100B. Call Paul at 540-652-8781.

Claude Phillippy, N4QLV, is seeking good 2-meter and 440 MHz rigs and old TNC's to complete the valley area ARES BBS. If you've got an old TNC gathering dust on your bench, give Claude a call at 540-434-2416.

Top Score in the Valley?

CONTEST CONTESTANTS

AD4TJ has been active in the contests. Dave scored 704 points in the January ARRL VHF Sweepstakes, racking up 44 QSOs in 16 multipliers, and did all of this on the 6-meter and 2-meter bands!

Also, Dave scored a very respectable 60,152 points in the winter 1998 10-meter contest, racking up 204 contacts and 73 multipliers, in the low power class!

In that same contest, the group effort, using KB4OLM's callsign, and consisting of Jeff (W4PJW), Colin (N4ZDQ), Ray (N4NRA), Rusty (N4YET), Matthew (KD4UPL), John (N3GLZ), Charlie (WA4ITY), and Vince (K2VJ) and Richard (KF4QZG), scored 188,336 points, with 448 contacts and 158 multipliers, also on low power!

Simply Tune It In!

FREE MORSE CODE PRACTICE EVERY DAY!

Honing your morse code skill? Tune into the ARRL's free morse code practice sessions.

Slow code practice is sent at 7 pm EDT on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; at 9 am on Wednesdays and Fridays, and at 4 pm and 10 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Slow code practice is sent at 5, 7, 10, 13, and 15 words per minute.

Fast code practice is sent at 4 pm and 10 pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and at 9 am and 7 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Fast code practice is sent at 10, 13, 15, 20, 25, 30, and 35 words per minute, but in reverse order (fastest to slowest) to let you really test your competency!

Frequencies of the morse code practices are available with most shortwave receivers. Tune to 1.818, 3.5815, 7.0475, 14.0475, 18.0975, 21.0675, or 28.0675. Choose your frequency based on time of day and propagation conditions.

Get it right!

USE CARE

Be careful with messages handled for the general public.

A ham went on a business trip to Florida last summer. Since he was to be gone for two weeks, he made arrangements for his wife to join him in the second week. They were going to make a short vacation of it, seeing some of their old friends.

As was his custom, he used the National Traffic System to send a message to his wife letting her know he had arrived safely.

Unfortunately, the delivering ham was not careful about dialing the right phone number when he went to deliver the message. Worse, he failed to check identities.

He unknowingly dialed the wrong number and got a poor widow whose husband had just been buried that morning. Imagine the poor widow's reaction when the delivering ham read the message:

Dearest Sweetheart, I arrived late last night. I knew it would be hot here, but the heat is unbelievable. I've already met many of our old friends. The schedule calls for you to arrive here around midnight next Monday. I'm looking forward to seeing you. Your loving husband.

ARES BBS Coming

Claude, N4QLV, and Colin, N4ZDQ, are putting together an ARES packet BBS to support digital communication in the valley during emergencies. More information will appear in next month's Monitor. Look for the HBRGGB on 145.730.

Form 610 Gone!

ULS: UNIVERSAL LICENSING SYSTEM UP AND RUNNING FOR HAMS

The Universal Licensing System is up and running. Gone are the Form 610's so familiar to amateur radio operators. The ULS became effective for radio amateurs on August 16, 1999.

What does this mean for the average Joe Ham? It means you need to register your callsign with the new ULS service, that's what.

Hams are encouraged to "register" with the ULS *before* their license term expires, to expedite their renewal process. You don't *have* to register now, but, shoot, why wait? You won't be allowed to make any changes to your license – renewals, upgrades, vanity callsign requests, address changes, *nothing* – until you've registered. Full details of how to register your callsign with the FCC database are given in an article on page 85 of the September issue of QST.

You can register on-line, or manually using the new FCC Form 606. Form 610's are discontinued.

If you have on-line web browsing capability, you might want to read the informative MARA/VARA article on the MARA web page:

<http://cob.jmu.edu/fordhadr/MARA/ULS.htm>

If you don't have on-line web access, you can register manually by requesting Form 606 from the FCC's forms distribution center. Call 1-800-418-3676 and be ready to spend a few minutes on the phone listening to instructions on how to obtain a paper copy of Form 606, which comes with its own set of instructions. (Note: the experience of getting the manual form is enough to convince you that perhaps you really are better off establishing Internet capability in your home today!)

The ULS promises faster and easier electronic filing of license renewals and changes, improved data accuracy, and enhanced electronic access to FCC licensing information. The existing callsign database has already been loaded into the ULS system. All that remains is for currently-licensed hams to register in the ULS database.

Remember, registering is not optional. You must register before you can make any changes to your license.

Does Gettysburg have your Current Address?

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The FCC requires all hams to maintain current address information on the license database.

If you have recently received a new 911 street address, your post office will be shortly discontinuing (or may already have discontinued, as in the case of 24 hams last month) your Route *n* Box *nn* address.

If the FCC discovers that your RR *n* Box *nn* address is no longer valid, and you have not notified them officially of the change, your license is *cancelled*. Period.

And don't think they won't find out. The FCC now mails out renewal notices to hams about 90 days before their license expires. If your renewal notice is returned for a bad address, your license is *kaput*.

You must then retest to regain your license privileges. There is no grace period for license cancellations.

So don't risk it!

Be sure the FCC has your current address on file. And this means that you must register with ULS! So what are you waiting for? In the words of the Nike shoe commercial, borrowed from Spencer W. Kimball, "Just Do It!"

The MARA Web Page has been updated with current calendar information.

Event Report

EIGHTH ANNUAL BIG MOUNTAIN REPEATER PICNIC AT BOB'S KNOB

Great Balls of Fire!

What a great day for the annual picnic: Sunday, August 15th.

We welcomed more than 70 folks to the bash. The only dampened spirits occurred when the pre-advertised BBQ'd Ribs didn't appear. (The cook had a family emergency in California which forced a last-minute detour.)

However, Joe Pehan, W4LIG, came to the rescue and filled in the gap with more than 180 home-made German Sausages!

By the way, Joe's XYL, Maria, earned a Bob's Knob cook's apron for helping keep those sausages moving!

Of course, the grilled hamburgers, hot dogs, and perennial iron kettle of cooked beans helped a lot, too, in fending off the hunger.

There were a bunch of helpers who made the picnic a success.

The picnic table working party was a little understaffed at first, but two trips to the Bergton Fairgrounds moved enough tables to the Knob so that everyone had a seat. (Nobody had to "wait tables", if you know what I mean.) Thanks to the table crew: Bob (WB4WRE), Ray (K4NRA), David (KF4SVR), Wilton (KF4BFL), Kevin (WF4WWM), and the supervisor, Bob (W3MMC).

The cooks deserve special recognition: Kevin (KF4WWM), Bob-9 (WB4WRE), Leon (WA4ZQW), Joe (W4LIG) and his XYL, Maria.

Also, I need to toss a few flowers to the ladies who managed the serving tables, sliced the tomatoes and onions, and kept the food ready in abundance. This

crew consisted of: Nancy Ritchie (XYL of K4NRA), Winnie Cooper (XYL of SK Marshall), Cathy (AE4UM), Helen (WA4ODD), and Missie (XYL of K4PZC).

Now for the providers of the feast: David (KF4SVR) brought the tomatoes. Kevin (KF4WWM) brought the breadstuffs. Ice came from Sandy (K4PZC) and son. Plus, a hearty "thank you" goes to all the people who brought covered dishes!

Wilton (KF4BFL) took care of talk-in, as well as 50/50 sales, and the sign-in operation. And we can't forget Erv Whalen (KT4DS) for setting up the volleyball court.

The winner of the 50/50 drawing was Cathy Whalen (AB4UM), who came all the way from Manassas!

When you have so much good help, picnics like this are easy!

Although this year's picnic attendance was slightly smaller than last year's, repeater donations were up!

Thanks to A-L-L!

*Bob Neimeyer, W3MMC
President and Licensee
Big Mountain Repeater Association*

WAIT A MINUTE!

Whoa! Hold It! Where are the minutes?

One thing is for sure. They ain't in the *Monitor* this month!

Neither club submitted meeting minutes in time for this month's newsletter. Now for the \$64 question: "What about *next* month?"

MASSANUTTEN ARA

President: David Tanks, AD4TJ
Vice-President: Sandy Mullins, K4PZC
Secretary: Wilton Thomas, KF4BFL
Treasurer: Matthew Huffman, KD4UPL
Board (exp 99): Bob Hughes, KF4BFC
Board (exp 00): Walt Lam, KF4BFB

<http://cob.jmu.edu/fordhadr/MARA/>

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 22802

THE VALLEY ARA

President: Dan Beidler, KE4JSX
Vice-President: Richard Huttinger, KF4QZG
Secretary: Daniel Farrow KB2TBL
Treasurer: Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW

<http://www.hamsnet.net/w4mus/>

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

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