Field Day: June 28-29

See last month’s issue of the Monitor for details regarding Field Day. Or check out the MARA website:
Http://mara.ws

HARRISONBURG
MAYOR
PROCLAIMS
AMATEUR
 RADIO WEEK

See Page 8

SkyWarn Training: Here in Harrisonburg! — July 8

Thanks to Chief Robbie Symons and TV-3, the National Weather Service is putting on a SkyWarn training session right here in the Valley!

Harrisonburg will be the location of a Basics I Skywarn training class on Tuesday evening, July 8th, from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm. The class will meet in the Rockingham County Administration Center, 20 East Gay Street, in the Board of Supervisor’s Meeting Room.

This class is a rare opportunity. Usually, valley hams must drive to Dulles Airport for SkyWarn Training.

The class is free and open to all interested citizens, but advance registration is required.

To register, telephone Chief Symons Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm at 540-564-3175, or email him at:
rsymons@rockinghamcountyva.gov.

Skywarn is a group of volunteer weather spotters, trained to recognize and categorize different types of severe weather, and provide reliable reports to the National Weather Service.

Basics I is the fundamental class required of all spotters. You learn what to look for, and the correct and proper names of all major severe weather phenomenon, how to gauge wind speeds, how to correctly measure rainfall and snowfall, and how to submit severe weather reports to the weather service.

Ham radio is not required to be a Skywarn spotter, but the ham radio SkyWarn nets are a valuable resource for the weather service during emergencies.

If you are interested in helping serve as eyes and ears for the weather service, register for this Skywarn class. Come and find out what it’s all about. There is no cost, and no obligation.
Bridgewater Lawn Party Help Needed

Gerald Nauman is serving as the contact point to organize the Bridgewater Lawn Party public service event.

In this event, hams provide essential traffic control and safety reports as vehicular traffic is diverted around the lawn party and parade routes.

If you can assist on Friday or Saturday evening, July 18-19, please give Gerald a phone call at: 540-434-0859.

KE4HVR Back from Morehead City

Ray Colvin, KE4HVR, just returned from a trip to Morehead City, North Carolina, to visit his son Jeff, KD4SYW, who is a former VARA member. Rumors have it that Ray’s XYL, Nancy, KE4PHP, may also have gone with him, and she may have returned home too!

At left is a photo of the fishing boats of Morehead City, located on the Crystal Coast in Carteret County.

Ray wants everyone to notice that it is not raining in Morehead City!

Dayton Daze...

Pictured at left is the crew from the Shenandoah Valley which visited the 2003 Dayton Hamvention in Ohio, held in May.

From left, we see Bob Van Fossen K4DJG, Jay Suter W4QDC, Billy Hooke KG4JOF, Jason Armentrout N4DSL, Pat Smiley KD4WWF, and Ken Harris, KE4GKD.

Photo provided by KE4GKD
K4EME: Bike Tracker Extraordinaire

One of the fun things about ham radio is the opportunity for experimentation. A rapidly-growing part of the hobby is combining a GPS location receiver with a ham transmitter, allowing other hams to track movements of a vehicle. In my case, the vehicle was a bike, as I participated in the MS-150 fund raiser bike ride.

I did the complete 150 miles plus for the MS-150 in spite of the rainy weather. On Saturday we rode for over 5 1/2 hours a total of 82 miles and most of this was in the rain. The hardest part of this ride was getting out of my warm bed at 3:30 AM on Saturday morning while hearing the rain on the roof and knowing that a wet ride was in store for me!

The APRS/ GPS transponder work without any problems even in the rainy conditions on Saturday. I must have done my energy budget well because the batteries on the bicycle transponder did not give out!

The SAG people which were equipped with APRS equipment said they were tracking me with “Team Dutch” extremely well!

On Sunday however, a dB9 connector must have come disconnected on the TinyTrak-3, causing the bicycle transponder not to operate. When I pulled in for the lunch stop Greg N4PGS informed me that he had not seen my transponder report all morning.

I did not have sufficient time to troubleshoot the problem due to my riding with Team Dutch — they were ready to go. (It is hard to troubleshoot electronics on the fly while drafting 6 inches from the back wheel of the bike in front of you.)

We skipped the next rest stop, but at the following stop I discovered the problem and reconnected the TinyTrak-3.

At the following stop I was informed by another ham that they were tracking me and Team Dutch “fine business”. On Sunday, a much nicer day than Saturday, I averaged over 17.5 MPH for the first 50 miles with 3 other members of Team Dutch.

Most of Team Dutch (including me!) completed the last 72 mile leg of the 150 mile plus ride at around 1:13 PM.

I really enjoyed the ride in spite of the damp weather on Saturday. Once we were all completely soaked, we just made the best of it and had a great time!

I want thank everyone who donated money and supported me and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society on the fund raiser. It was announced on Saturday night that we raised around $200,000 on this bike tour so far for MS.

Vic Alger, KE4LKO had a computer glitch and was not able to recover the APRS data so if anyone recorded APRS history files on our ride, please send them to me.

I had several people to follow me via APRS during the bike ride. Several others reported seeing me via my Web Page link to Findu.com including my sister living in Brookville, PA.

As far as what I learned: J-pole antennas appear to make good bicycle antennas for two meter operation.

I want to thank everyone who helped with this little Ham Radio/Bicycle experiment!

Thanks & 73,
Cowles_K4EME

New 60-meter Band Is Available July 3 — But With Strings Attached

The five channels on the new 60-meter ham band will be open for use starting at midnight the morning of July 3.

This new band bridges the propagation gap for short-haul service, between the 40m and 80m bands. This band should be good for 50-200 mile contacts during the day.

The five channels are available for upper sideband phone only. The maximum ERP allowed power is 50 watts. Further, the FCC has imposed additional recordkeeping requirements on any ham transmitting on the band using any antenna other than a half-wave dipole.

Part 97.303(s) states, “licensees using other antennas must maintain in their station records either manufacturer data on antenna gain, or calculations of antenna gain.” This is to ensure the ERP power limit of 50 watts is not exceeded.

The center frequencies of the five channels are: 5332, 5348, 5368, 5373, and 5405 kilohertz.

Since the only allowable mode is USB, operators should set their carrier frequency 1.5 kHz lower than the channel center frequency.

The band will be available to General, Advanced, and Extra class hams.
Volunteer Examiner Session Report

Thanks to the VEs who helped with the test on SAT, the 6TH of June.

- DON LANDIS  W4XC
- BOB VANFOSSEN  K4DJG
- ANDREW BARBER  AG4XN
- RICHARD HAXTON  KC3AN
- WILLIAM ELLIOT  N4VUF
- HOWARD MULLINS  K4PZC
- NORMAN BENNER  KA4EEN
- GERALD NAUMAN  KN4FM
- RAY RITCHIE  K4NRA

We gave seven tests, which resulted in two new licenses. We have one new technician and one new general ham. Jon Gafaell of Charlottesville became a general, and Chris Shirkey of Mt. Crawford became a technician. In addition, another candidate passed element 3.

Beginning July 1, the technician license question pool is going to be revised, so if you know of someone planning to take the test after June 30, make them aware of the change. The test questions will be changed, and more questions will be added to the pool. If you don't have a new technician manual, the new pool is available on the web.

The next exam session in the valley is scheduled for August 9th.

Gayle Shull, KU4XN

Herb Slade AA2BF: Moving Sale!

I still have most of the sale and free items left, if you couldn't make it last Saturday. They are NOT going with me to AZ, but I would much rather GIVE them to you than to take them to the landfill. True, some of them are junk, but look at the list -- some of them are valuable. I'll accept any reasonable offer, and gladly give away free stuff. The original list is in the Swap and Sell section of the VARA website.

Incidentally, I also have a router, a very good rototiller, and some pipe wrenches and other hand tools. These are for sale or free, depending on the item.

Call me at 540-943-9847 if you are interested. I'll give you directions to my Fishersville QTH if needed. I will be out of town until this Thursday evening, June 19, but will return voicemails then.

Herb Slade, AA2BF

Ten-Tec Paragon Transceiver: Asking $500

Looking for a classic?

Steve W4LK has a Ten-Tec Paragon transceiver, in mint condition, including the matching power supply with built-in speaker. He is asking $500.
Where the Heck is Kitzmiller?

If you listen to NOAA Weather Radio, you often hear stream gauge reports.

These reports give the water level in the area rivers.

If you are like most people, however, you haven’t the faintest idea where most of these stream gauges are located.

The map to the right shows the location of the gauges for the Potomac, Shenandoah, and Rappahannock river basins.

This map is copied from the webpage of the Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service of the National Weather Service.

Online, the map is updated every fifteen minutes, color coded to show which gauges are reading normal, high, very high, and flood stage.

In addition, the webpage contains links to gauges on other rivers and streams throughout the Eastern U.S.

You can access this map and others from the Sterling Weather Forecast Office website by clicking on the left-edge index tab labelled “Emergency Managers”, and then scrolling down to the River Forecast links. The Sterling weather website is at: http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/lwx/

On the Ball...

Congratulations to John Nelson, N3JN, and Bill Jones, KE4FM, for pointing out that New York is the Empire State. It is New Jersey that’s the Garden State, not NY.

What in Blue Blazes does this have to do with Ham Radio? Read last month’s Monitor and find out! Maybe you can be on the ball, too!
RACES Training Session

The Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service is made up of Amateur Radio Operators who are registered members of a local or state-level governmental Emergency Response organization.

In order to be registered member of RACES in Virginia, volunteer hams must undergo training so that they will know what to do and how to respond when called. RACES members cannot simply “appear out of the woodwork” when an emergency happens. They have to know what is expected of them, how to react, and the procedures to interface with the governmental response units. Otherwise, they will probably just be in the way.

A training session was held at the end of May, on the EMU campus, for hams in the area who were interested in becoming trained RACES volunteers. The session was a full day long, and was conducted by N3BO, KE4SKY and KR4UQ. Photos by KD9LA.

Above: The Command Bus
Below: Ed Harris, KE4SKY, trainer
Who's Who in Emergency Communication?

Chief Robbie Symons, Rockingham County Emergency Management Office

Dale Showaleter, N4DAI, District 15 Emergency Radio Officer

David Tanks, AD4TJ, Augusta County Emergency Radio Officer

Vic Alger, KE4LKQ, Rockingham County Emergency Radio Officer

John Nelson, N3JN, District 15 Digital Radio Officer

Above: The command bus sports an impressive power generation system and telephone interface.


Left: Virginia RACES Emergency Radio Officer Tony Amato, KR4UQ

Below: A peek at the ham position inside the Rockingham County Emergency Command Bus.
City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

Office of Mayor
345 South Main Street
Post Office Box 20031
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801
(540) 432-7701/Fax (540) 432-7778

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the City of HARRISONBURG has more than 150 licensed AMATEUR RADIO OPERATORS who have demonstrated their value in public service by providing emergency radio communications; and

WHEREAS, these Amateur Radio Operators donate these services free of charge to those groups requesting their services; and

WHEREAS, the Amateur Radio Operators are constantly on alert for any emergency whether it be local, regional, statewide, nationwide or worldwide, they demonstrate and practice these skills each year during the American Radio Relay League’s Field Day exercise; and

WHEREAS, this year’s Amateur Radio Field Day will take place on June 28th and 29th, and our local radio club, the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association together with the Valley Amateur Radio Association of Staunton, will set up under simulated emergency conditions near Flagpole Knob in the George Washington National Forest and invite the public to attend and participate,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Joseph Fitzgerald, Mayor of Harrisonburg hereby declare the week of June 23-29th, 2003 as

AMATEUR RADIO WEEK

in recognition of this important emergency preparedness exercise and call upon all citizens of Harrisonburg to recognize our local Amateur Radio operators.

Joseph Gus Fitzgerald, Mayor

Attest:

Yvonne Ryan, CMC, City Clerk

The City With The Planned Future
Harrisonburg Mayor Proclaims “Amateur Radio Week”

Thanks to the efforts of Bob Steere and others, Mayor Joseph Fitzgerald of the city of Harrisonburg, officially issued a proclamation designating the week preceding Field Day this year as “Amateur Radio Week”.

The proclamation, which is reproduced on the facing page, recognizes both the Massanutten and Valley Amateur Radio associations.

Update on Phil Peterman, ex-ham

For the old-timers who remember Phil Peterman, an ex-ham who lives in the valley...

At last report, Phil was still in pretty bad shape following his accident on his four-wheeler ATV.

He reportedly has been moved from the University of Virginia Medical Center (where he was in intensive care), to a “Life Care Center” in New Market.

Thanks to Bill Jones, KE4FM, for the update. The best wishes of the ham community go out to Phil as he recuperates.

Forgot your Cell Phone? Use Ham Radio!

Ever find yourself needing to make a phone call, but your cell phone battery is dead?

Pay telephones are getting harder and harder to find these days. And when you find one, chances are it will harder to use than a 1960’s tune-up tube-type HF rig.

But there is a cheap alternative to cell phones if you have your VHF, UHF, or HT radio with you.

Several local repeaters offer direct access to the local telephone system. All you need is a microphone with a touch-tone pad, and a subscription to one of the local phone patches.

Most VHF and UHF rigs today come with a touch-tone pad mic. And most HT’s come with the pad built-in.

If you have one of these, all you need to do is contact one of the local hams who provide phone patch connections, and ask for a subscription.

Subscriptions range in price from $15 per year to $30 per year.

That’s a whole YEAR of local telephone privileges for less than the cost of a single MONTH of cellular phone service! What a deal!

At the cheap end of the scale is the WN4JMU autopatch. This patch operates on the 145.13 repeater, which provides radio coverage to almost all of Rockingham and Augusta counties. This patch allows you to call all phone numbers in Rockingham County, as well as Verona, New Hope, Mt. Solon, and Staunton phone numbers. Cost is only $15 per year. In addition to telephone system access, the subscription provides two auto-dial numbers, making it quick and easy to call those numbers without having to dial the phone number each time. For subscription information, contact David Fordham, KD9LA, at 540-568-3024 or 540-234-0448.

If you prefer the UHF band, you can subscribe to the patch on the 443.150 repeater. This patch allows for you to receive incoming calls, so your family members can use their phone to dial a phone number, and you can answer it using your ham radio. This patch also has some limited provisions for long-distance calls. The cost for this patch subscription is $25 per year. For more information on this patch, call Jason Armen-trout, N4DSL, at 540-269-8141.

If you need access to Waynesboro and Stuarts Draft phone numbers, you can join the Waynesboro Repeater Association for $30 per year. One advantage of this subscription is that you also get free access to the EchoLink system, which ties your 2-meter radio to the Internet using Voice-Over-IP, linking your radio to numerous other repeaters around the world, and even on some HF frequencies. For information on this patch, contact Gordon Batey, WA4FJC, at 540-248-2732.

With subscription rates this low, why would anyone pay $39 a month for cell phone service? The only reason we can think of is that you cannot make business calls on ham radio. You can conduct personal business (like ordering a pizza), but you can’t conduct your employer’s business over the air. Plus, most autopatches limit your calls to three minutes each.

But even if you have a cell phone, an autopatch subscription is a great backup! How many times has your cell phone battery been low when you needed to make a call?

Information on all these patches can be found on the MARA website phone patch information page at: http://cob2.jmu.edu/ fordham/MARA/Patch.htm
VARA Secretary’s Report — June 3rd Meeting

The Valley Amateur Radio Association met at Shoney’s in Staunton on June 3, 2003. The President Benny Cook N4BBC opened the meeting at 7:30pm. There were 28 members present and 10 guests, Bob VanFossen K4DJG, Valerie Hancock K8BZIS, Bruce Trent WB4WVL, Joe Toibert AG4RG, David Pickering KF4JCY, Carol Landes N4JKX, Don Landes WX4C, Kevin Gillissie KG4DBK and Joshua & Jacob, Sons of Frank Green KE4ASC. Welcome to our visitors, and we would like to see all of you back next month.

The 50/50 was won by Kay Cook KF4CZL, congratulations Kay! More money for your cruise?

The VARA Field Day Committee for 2003 is, Terry Kielbasa KG4MWI, Billy Hooke KG4JOF and Mike Reno KG4OON. They are working together with the MARA FD Committee. Billy KG4JOF reported that all station shelters and equipment were taken care of at this time. We will operate 3A again this year. A new logging program will be used this year and all computers will be wireless networked. CT will be on the computers as a back up if needed. The talk-in frequencies will be 147.470 Simplex, 146.850 and 147.315 repeaters.

Alby McCutchen AD4KZ brought to our attention that the three local libraries do not have a license study material for new hams and suggested that the club purchase a book for each of the three libraries and place them on the shelves for perspective hams. Bill Karle KG4UPN suggested we contact the ARRL as a club to get a discount on the books and agreed to make the contact and report back to the club next month.

Since our Club is out growing the room at Shoney’s we have a committee of three, Richard Huttlinger, Benny Cook and Al Bonck that are looking for a new location.

Billy Hooke KG4JOF has the swap shop page completed and Bob McCracken N4JGO has linked it to the VARA Web Page. This will be 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 if you have a digital camera or scanner and can send a picture of the item, that would help it sell. Check it out from the VARA Web Site at: http://www.qsl.net/w4mus/

Butch Washer N5SMQ is the EC for Highland County and Jerry Moats WD4ITN is his assistant. Their ARES Net will be on the Monterey repeater 147.180+ and tone of 100.0 at 8:30pm on the 1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month. They would like to welcome everyone that can get into the repeater to check into the Net.

If your e-mail address or home address is changed for any reason YOU need to notify us so we can make the necessary changes so you will continue to get your newsletter. Also you should update your e-mail address in QRZ and Buckmaster. This is where we look if an e-mail is returned to us.

You can send your e-mail address to: Benny, bennycjr@ntelos.net Ken, ktharris@rica.net Jeff, jmirehart@yahoo.com Ray, colvingr@rica.net David, ford-hadr@mu.edu

On the sick list:
The VARA was saddened by the death of one of our Pioneer Members, Ozro K. Dillon KD4RD. Ozro will be missed very much in the neighborhood and the ham community.

Dan James W4DLJ is getting around with his walker and doing a little driving to the doctor, for treatments and groceries.

Doug Alder N4DUG is recovering from his heart attack and has been doing some light work and on the radio some lately.

Lonnie Czerniak N4WIV, Greg’s (W4GRC) wife, had surgery on her neck on June 4th to repair three vertebrae and is recovering at home.

Lats keep these folks in our thoughts and prayers.

David Tanks AD4TJ Needs HELP with the Augusta County ARES Net. Anyone that is willing to be net control and help David out give him a call. 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.

Mark your calendar and check into the net. Remember without YOU there will be NO ARES NET.

We would like to get training classes started for the Technician level. Anyone interested in helping teach the classes please contact Benny N4BCC, Alby AD4KZ or Richard AA4RH. We need to get some young people interested in ham radio. Listen for any hints that someone may like to learn what ham radio is all about.

PROGRAMS NEEDED…Richard AA4RH, our Program Chairman, asks for anyone who would like to do a program at one of our meetings to give him a call and get a date set up to present it. It does not have to be HAM related. It could be anything you think the group would find interesting.

Field Day is getting close! Make plans to be there and help set up stations, pull up antennas, have fun operating FD 2003. Then comes the time to tear down all the equipment and antennas, pack them up for another year. Don’t forget, we need help tearing down also.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56pm.

Charlie Garner WA4ITY presented a program on what to say and what not to say when stopped for any reason by police, FBI, INS or Customs Service. Some things to remember are, be polite and respectful, stay calm, Don’t get into an argument, remember… anything you say or do can be used against you, do not make any statements regarding the incident, ask for a lawyer, remember the officers’ badge & patrol card numbers, write down everything you remember ASAP, get witnesses names and phone numbers. If you feel your rights have been violated, file a written complaint with the police department’s internal affairs division or civilian complaint board. Charlie also passed out two handouts containing this information in more detail.

Thanks for the informative program Charlie!

Submitted By: VARA Secretary
The June meeting of the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association was held at Evers Restaurant in Mt. Crawford, the meeting was opened at 7:30PM by the club president, Ellsworth Neff, K4LXG, and there were 20 members and 7 guests present.

The secretary's report for the May meeting was accepted as given in the June issue of the MARA monitor.

Sandy Mullins, K4PZC gave the Treasurers report, the clubs balance as of 05/31/03 was $2070.12. The report was accepted as given.

Gayle Shull, KU4XN reminded the club of the VE session on June 14th, at the Woodmen of the World building in Dayton.

Richard Weaver, W3XHX introduced Hugh Pettis, K3EC who just moved to Harrisonburg from Maryland.

Gerald Nauman, KN4FM reminded members of the annual Bridgewater lawn party in July and that help will be needed.

Billy Hooke, KG4JOF announced that the next field day meeting will be June 19th, 6:30PM at the field day site.

Dale, N4DAI thanked the clubs and everyone at the RACES training and advised that there may me a more local training at a later date. Also Dale advised that there will be picture ID's for Rockingham RACES members.

Robert Steere, N1QEQ announced that the City of Harrisonburg has made a proclamation to make the week of field day Amateur Radio week in the city.

It was voted on to support Bike Virginia again this year with the VARA club, the event will be held October 18th and 19th.

The next QRP club meeting will be at the home of Chuck, KD5KA on Tuesday, June 17th at 7:00 PM in Weyers Cave.

The formal meeting was adjourned at 8:22PM and this month’s program was held by Andrew Barbour’s father, who was a project engineer on the 981 foot Mt. Sutro tower in San Francisco. He showed a very interesting slide show of the engineering and construction. After his presentation, Robert Steere, N1QEQ showed a video narrated by Walter Cronkite about the great public service that ham radio operators provide.

Todd Harrison, K4TMH MARA Secretary

Upcoming Events

JUNE
21-29: Free Camping at the Field Day Site
28-29: ARRL Field Day (See the MARA website for details)

JULY
1: VARA Club Meeting
3: MARA Club Meeting
4: Harrisburg (PA) Hamfest
8: Special SkyWarn Basics I Class in Harrisonburg
18-19: Bridgewater Lawn Party Public Service Event
27: BRATS (Timonium-Baltimore MD) Hamfest

AUGUST
2-3: ARRL UHF Contest
3: Berryville Hamfest
5: VARA Club Meeting
7: MARA Club Meeting

Net Schedules: Lots of Places on Web

Thanks to Ray Colvin, KE4HVR, for making up a handy one-page summary of the local Net Schedules.

Ray’s schedule can be downloaded from the MARA website at the following URL:

http://cob2.jmu.edu/fordham/MARA/Nets.pdf

The file is in PDF format (same as the Monitor) and requires the Adobe PDF reader software.

Thanks to Ray for preparing this handy reference.

If you misplace your copy, or if you forget the URL, you can also find the net schedules at the bottom of the “Schedule and Calendar” link from the primary MARA website: http://MARA.ws
MASSANUTTEN AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, Inc.

President: Ellsworth Neff, K4LXG
Vice President: Chuck Vogan, KD5KA
Secretary: Todd Harrison, K4TMH
Treasurer: Sandy Mullins, K4PZC
Board (exp 03): Jason Armentrout, N4DSL
Board (exp 04): Richard Haxton, KC3AN

http://mara.ws

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 per year) should be mailed to:
MARA
PO Box 1882
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

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VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

President: Benny Cook, N4BCC
Vice President: Ken Harris, KE4GKD
Secretary: Ray Colvin, KE4HVR
Treasurer: Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW
Program Manager: Richard Huttenger, AA4RH

http://www.qsl.net/w4mus

VARA meets the first Tuesday of each month at Shoneys Restaurant on U.S. 250 east in Staunton. Meal starts at 6:30 pm. Business meeting starts at 7:30 pm.

Visitors are welcome.

Dues ($15 per year) should be mailed to:
Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW
1344 Hankey Mtn Hwy
Churchville, VA 24421