

**Published Monthly for Radio Amateurs in the Shenandoah Valley**

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Valley ARA  
Meeting Night  
Changed to  
Tuesdays!  
See article on page 6!

## Monitor Has New Look!

The calendar has changed. The date formats on your computer are different, too. The money in your wallet sports a new look. Even the stodgy old ham radio magazines have changed!

So, why shouldn't the *Monitor* change, too?

To tell the truth, there is another reason for the new look. Your newsletter editor is finding it harder and harder to devote the hours every month necessary to put out a quality newsletter.

Lots of new software packages claim to save time.

Being something of a technology nerd, your editor decided to put a new product to the test.

This month's *Monitor* is being prepared using a tool called "Publisher". Put out by the infamous know-all-be-all company in Redmond, Washington, this package claims to allow a user to prepare a high-quality publication, such as a newsletter, in about 50-75% of the time of "Old Reliable", Microsoft Word.



Most material appearing in the *Monitor* is submitted via E-mail. Word97 made it easy to cut and paste the text, but formatting has always been problematical. Publisher promises to put an end to the misery with its auto-import-and-convert functions.

So, the bottom line is, this month's issue is an experiment. If less time is spent this month, this appearance might be a keeper. Otherwise, ... well, remember the New Coca-Cola?

**DON'T FORGET  
TO RENEW  
YOUR MEM-  
BERSHIP DUES!**

Use the handy  
renewal form  
On page 7!

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## MARA President's Message

Christmas has come and gone once again, and I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays with friends and family. Now that all of the season's rush is over, maybe we can settle down and enjoy amateur radio.

If you have HF privileges and have not checked out 10 meters lately, you don't know what you are missing. Propagation was great for the ARRL 10M Contest on December 11 and 12. It seems that every time

I get on for more than a short time I work a new country or two. Conditions should continue to be very good for the next few years, so if you don't have HF privileges, learn the code and join the fun! If you need a radio, (or other toys) don't forget Frostfest in Richmond on January 16.

*(continued on page 2)*

Speaking of working DX, Jon Rudy, NONM, will have the program for the January meet-

## MARA President's Message (continued)

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*World-famous  
DX'er  
to give  
MARA Program  
at January Meeting*

*(Continued from page 1)*

ing. Jon spent five years in Swaziland working for the Mennonite Central Committee and Eastern Mennonite Missions.

John is presently a student at the seminary at EMU. He has held call signs 3DA0CA, ZS5UZ, A2/ZS5UZ, 9C1CO, 7P8ZZ, I4/NONM and ZR5JER.

If you want to learn more about his amateur radio experience in Africa, check the No-

vember 1998 issue of *QST*, page 33 and 34, or better yet, come to the meeting.

I hope to see everyone at the January meeting, at Ever's Restaurant north of Mt Crawford on Rt. 11, at 6:30 pm for those wishing to eat there, and at 7:30 for the meeting.

*Gerald Nauman, KN4FM*

## Standard no longer a "standard"

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*Service is still  
available for  
Standard  
equipment.*

Through the early days of ham radio, right up until the 1970's, hams knew the big equipment manufacturers: Drake, Collins, Heath.

Then, in the 70's, the names changed. Yaesu, Kenwood, Icom, Alinco, Azden, and Standard became the flag-bearers.

Alas, Standard is no longer with us. They have announced they are dropping the ham radio line.

However, hams who own Standard equipment will still be able to obtain factory-like service on their gear.

Ray Colvin, KE4HVR, provides the name of a service establishment who has obtained spare parts and is willing to service the equipment. You can learn more information by clicking on the Repair and Service links at COMDAC.com website.

The service provider is SAR Services. They can be reached at 1792 Nash Drive, St. Joseph, Michigan, 49085, telephone 616-429-2334.

They are open 6-9 EST.

## W4BRH, SK

Bill Jones, KE4FM, provides some sad news.

James Landrum, Jr., W4BRH, passed away on December 12. Jim was instrumental in the establishment of the Big Mountain Repeater, (146.625).

Jim was also a good friend to many hams in the valley. A resident of Dayton, Virginia, Jim provided Bill with his second 2-meter contact. Lew

Hensley WB4NIC and Elsworth Neff K4LZG, are two of the many hams who fondly remember Jim.

Jim was well-known among the Old-Timer's in the valley, and it is with sadness that we learn of our loss.

## Jay Suter, W4QDC, Helps Franklin Recover from Hurricane Floyd

While vacationing at Myrtle Beach during September, most of the news on both TV and newspaper were related to the extensive damage done by the flooding brought on by hurricane Floyd.

I have more than a passing interest in Eastern North Carolina, having worked my first full time job in an AM radio station in Wilson. I made many new friends and thoroughly enjoyed their unique "southern hospitality".

I followed the local news telling of the hardships created by the worst flood ever experienced in many of the areas.

I decided then and there, that I wanted to help out in some way.

Returning home, I didn't have to wait long. Our church has a disaster response group called MENNONITE DISASTER SERVICE, which I will refer to as MDS. The Region I director called and asked if I could go to Franklin, VA to help set up our unit headquarters.

The operation would require setting up two-way radios for the base station and to install in at least two mobile units. Also, there was the need to wire the building for phone, fax and computer.

I loaded my truck with my trusty service monitor and all the ham gear that would be useful for checking two way radios which operate just above the 2 meter band in the 154 mhz band.

Several years ago, W3HXX and myself, equipped a new 35 foot travel trailer for MDS to use as a fully equipped radio unit complete with antenna. This was on the site. We used the Isopole antenna for the base, and soon had things up and run-

ning.

Installing the mobiles was almost fun and I encountered very few problems. Those I did encounter, were easily solved.

Having installed all the radios, I only needed to check each unit for power out, correct frequency and deviation. No problems there.

Next, was the telephone, fax and computer wiring. This was very straight forward and was done after several hours or so. Radio Shack came to the rescue with a manual fax/computer switch.

I was there for three days and enjoyed every moment. I hope to return soon to help on some of the homes being rebuilt for those unable to help themselves.

The next call was to go to Snow Hill, NC to help set up another operating headquarters. No radios to work with here, but when I completed the telephone wiring, there was plenty of electrical wiring to help with.

There was some excitement connected with this trip. At about 35 miles out of Snow Hill, I had a human body malfunction, and needed to quickly locate a hospital. Remember, I had worked in Wilson 45 years earlier, but there was no resemblance to the city I once knew. I had a little problem locating the Emergency Room entrance. I almost rolled my truck over when I ran over a foot high curb with both a front and rear wheel.

After a two hour stay there, they patched me up and I was able to continue on to Snow Hill. I did call back

*(Continued on page 4)*

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*"The operation would require setting up two-way radios for the base station and ... mobile units."*




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*"Installing the mobiles was almost fun..."*

*“I was there for three days and enjoyed every moment.”*

## W4QDC (continued)

*(Continued from page 3)*

home to my local doctor and got his okay.

I am looking forward to making a return trip for a week and going out to help in the reconstruction. This is one of the benefits of retirement.

Even though our efforts seem so small, when compared to the total damage, we do find people very appreciative of the

assistance we are able to offer. Overall, it was a very good experience!

*Submitted by  
Jay Suter, W4QDC*



Hams will be manning fire stations, rescue squads, the EOC center...

## Hams Prepare to Help Community with Y2K Readiness...

By the time you read this, the Y2K situation will be over.

But as this is being written, hams are preparing to serve the public, as always, should the normal communications infrastructure of the valley fail.

Under the guidance and direction of the county Emergency Coordinators (EC's), amateur radio operators in Page, Rockingham, and Augusta counties are organized and ready for action.

Hams will be stationed at fire stations, rescue squad buildings, the EOC centers, and several other critical locations selected by EOC officials.

Additional hams will be standing by at their homes and places of employment, monitoring the air waves, and ready for action should their assistance be needed.

The hams will provide self-contained, battery-operated stations to link critical services in the unlikely event that the Y2K bug brings down the normal public service communications facilities.

It is with pleasure that hams donate their time and talents to assist the professionals in serving our communities.

Simpler is better. Pat Smiley KD4WWF, reports that back in the hey-days of the space race, NASA needed an instrument which would allow astronauts to write in zero gravity. The engineers put their heads together, and came up with plans for a zero-gravity pen. The research and development cost ran well over a million dollars, but the pen worked well, and even achieved modest consumer acceptance among the general public. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union cosmonauts, when also faced with the challenge of writing in zero gravity, used a pencil.



## Out of this World...

Many hams in the valley have new multi-mode radios capable of receiving CW and sideband signals on VHF and UHF.

This capability opens up the world of orbiting ham satellites.

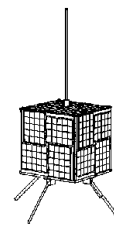
Get your feet wet. One of the easier satellites to copy is the CW message from LO-19.

LO-19 is a tiny (7-inch square) microsat orbiting 780 km above the earth's surface. It transmits

a simple CW message on 437.125 MHz using about 1 watt of power, so a beam antenna will greatly enhance your received signal strength.

Many other satellites are also copyable with these multi-mode rigs. For a more complete listing, refer to the AMSAT web pages:

<http://www.amsat.org>.



LUSAT-OSCAR 19

## License Upgrades, Anyone?

Remember, Ham Radio Examinations are given in the Valley on the third Saturday of the even-numbered months.

Exams are given at the Massanutten Vo-Tech Center on Pleasant Valley Road in Harrisonburg.

To reach the center, take Interstate 81 to exit 243. At the end of the exit ramp, turn right onto US 11 North, go 1 block and turn right again onto Pleasant Valley Road. The center is 1/2 mile down on the right.

For 2000, the cost of each sitting is \$6.65.

For the year 2000, the exam dates are:

- February 19
- April 15
- June 17
- August 19
- October 21
- December 21

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*VE Tests are administered the third (3rd) Saturday of every even-numbered month.*

## Marine Expedition On the Air Soon

Phil Gonzales, HK3SA, reports his Amazon Queen 2000 ham radio expedition is nearly ready to get under way. Gonzales says the four to five-month long journey aboard the 47-foot wooden Amazon Queen will cover almost 3000 miles--from Iquitos, Peru, to the Atlantic Ocean near Belem, Brazil.

Gonzales told the ARRL he expects the expedition to begin the second week of January, but crew members might be on the air as early as the first of the year. The expedition hopes to use the call sign 5K9AQ, although Gonzalez said that was not certain,

and the actual call sign could be different.

Gonzales says the purpose of the voyage is to bring the world together through the use of Amateur Radio and the Internet. "We will be transmitting daily photographs from the voyage," he said.

The crew will be active primarily on HF SSB and plans to check into the Intercontinental and Maritime Mobile Net on 14.300 MHz "every few hours." The expedition will maintain schedules with several other nets as

*(Continued on page 6)*



Maritime Mobile HF SSB

## Dxpedition (continued)

*(Continued from page 5)*

well. The primary operating frequency will be 14.347 MHz. Other frequencies include 7.0935 (Amazon Net frequency and outside the US phone band--Ed), 21.287, and 28.400 MHz.

The Amazon Queen 2000 Expedition is interested in setting up schedules with schools on SSB or other modes. Gonzalez said he hopes to have CW, AMTOR, and SSTV capabilities on board, and may even have 6-meter capability. Cliff Clark, KZ9E, is coordinating phone patches from US schools to the Amazon Queen. He is active on 14.300 MHz. He also may be contacted at kb9ksl@midwest.net or call 618-648-2499. Teachers seeking additional informa-

tion about Amateur Radio in the classroom should visit <http://www.arrl.org/ead/teacher/>.

For more information, visit the Expedition's Web site, <http://www.amazonqueen2000.com>. Contact Gonzalez via e-mail to [phillincolombia@openway.com.co](mailto:phillincolombia@openway.com.co). QSL via Roberto Rey, HJ3PXA, and include an SASE or IRC for return postage.

## FCC Mum on Restructuring the Amateur Service

### *Restructuring Expected Any Day*

Still no word from the FCC regarding restructuring the Part 97 Amateur Radio Service.

The FCC had leaked word that they would be issuing a Report and Order "before the end of the year". But alas, the end of the year is here, and no R&O.

If the Commission follows the majority view expressed in comments filed with the commissioners, the service will see reduced code speeds for full HF privileges, and possibly a reduction in

the number of different license classes. The code requirement is set internationally, but the speed requirements are under FCC control.

Keep watching the ARRL bulletins and checking the ARRL website for news. Changes to the service, once announced, probably will not be implemented for at least several months.

## VARA MEETING NIGHT CHANGES IN 2000!

Attention VARA Members!

At the November meeting, it was voted to change the normal VARA meeting night to the **first TUESDAY** of each month!

Mark Your calendars! January meeting on Jan 4th



# MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

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**MARA** — the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc

*MAIL WITH \$12 TO Matthew Huffman, KD4UPL, 5166 Mt. Clinton Pike, Harrisonburg, VA 22802*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CALLSIGN: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ARRL: Yes No      ARES: Yes No      SKYWARN ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in receiving the Monitor electronically in PDF format?      Yes No

If your address label is correct, no further information is required. Otherwise, complete the following:

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP+4: \_\_\_\_\_

WORK PHONE (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

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**VARA** — the Valley Amateur Radio Association

*MAIL WITH \$15 TO Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW, 1344 Hankey Mtn Hwy, Churchville, VA 24421*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CALLSIGN: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ARRL: Yes No      ARES: Yes No      SKYWARN ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in receiving the Monitor electronically in PDF format?      Yes No

If your address label is correct, no further information is required. Otherwise, complete the following:

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP+4: \_\_\_\_\_

WORK PHONE (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

*The deadline for submissions for the February Monitor is January 18.*

## THE MASSANUTTEN ARA

President: Gerald Nauman, KN4FM  
Vice President: Sandy Mullins, K4PZC  
Secretary: Wilton Thomas, KF4BFL  
Treasurer: Matthew Huffman, KD4UPL  
Board (exp 00): Walt Lam, KF4BFB  
Board (exp 01): David Hughes, KF3SVR

<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. The meal starts at 6:30 pm.  
The business meeting starts at 7:30 pm.**

Visitors are welcome.

Dues (\$12) per year should be mailed to the Treasurer,  
Matthew Huffman, KD4UPL, at 5166 Mt. Clinton Pike,  
Harrisonburg, VA 22802

## THE VALLEY ARA

President: currently vacant  
Vice President: Richard Huttinger KF4QZG  
Secretary: Pat Smiley, KD4WWF  
Treasurer: Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW

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

**VARA meets the first Tuesday of each month  
At Gavid's Restaurant on U.S. 11 south in  
Staunton. The meal starts at 6:30 pm.  
The business meeting starts at 7:30 pm.**

Visitors are welcome.

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

## MARA/VARA MONITOR

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