

October 2000

# MARA/VARA MONITOR

Published Monthly for Radio Amateurs in the Shenandoah Valley

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## "Wassup?" .... Read On!

Once again, this month's Monitor is packed with local news! Hams in the Shenandoah are really going to town with all the activities! Maybe we can hold an olympic-style contest and give out gold, silver, and bronze medals for submitting the best newsletter article! The judging would be hard this month, for sure.

Remember, if you are reading this on paper, you can receive it by email a few days earlier and in living color.

And if you are reading this on your computer, you won't get a paper copy unless you specifically request one through your club president.

Keep those articles and announcements coming!

*David Fordham, KD9LA*



Official sponsor of the "Best Monitor Article" games...

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## VE Test Session Results...

**MARK YOUR  
CALENDARS NOW!**

**NEXT VE TESTING SESSION**

**SCHEDULED FOR  
NOVEMBER 4, 2000**

As most hams know, VE testing has resumed in the Valley. A test session was held Saturday, September 9, in Dayton, Virginia.

I would like to thank all hams that made that testing session a success. We had 18 people show up for testing, with a good percentage passing their test.

Four people retested, giving us a total of 22 test elements given. I would like to congratulate all who were successful. I'd also like to encourage those who were not to not give up. We look forward to seeing you again soon.

Again thanks for all the good help.

*Gayle Shull,  
KU4XN*

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## She'll Be Coming' Round the Mountain When She Comes...

**"If the mountain won't come to the hams, then the hams will go to the mountain." — Mohammed (paraphrased)**

**A group of hams did that very thing during the recent RTTY contest. Below are some photos of the event. No official word on how the contest ended up. But hey, you don't need to keep score to have fun!**



W4PJW Tries out his new RTTY software. Does that new program really require TWO keyboards, Jeff? Hams are known for innovations.... Look at the innovative deployment of the printer holders just off Jeff's left hand.



N4DSL tries his hand at contesting. Of course, in a RTTY Contest, you actually try out BOTH your hands at contesting!



Dale, N4ATF, discovers the real allure of contests on the mountain. Here we see him enjoying a pile-up, racking up the points. The fact that his son Jason is the one in the camper running the rig and computer actually adds to the enjoyment that Dale is getting out of the contest.



More hams enjoy the pile-up while overlooking the rough and rustic atmosphere. Rumor has it that Jay, W4QDC got too enthusiastic working the keyboard and that's why his arm is in the sling. Notice the keyboard in W4PJW's lap... apparently that new software requires two people to operate!



If you look closely, you can tell who N4DSL is OSO'ing with right now. Can you read the screen? How about the frequency they are using? (Hint: Look closely at the rig!) Notice that Jason is wearing glasses!

## EMHS Varsity Track Meet – Report...

On September 9th, 2000 members of MARA helped with the Eastern Mennonite High School Varsity Track Meet. This is an annual event, requiring several ham operators to support and staff the various sports stations, sort of like a mini-olympics!

After beginning to feel as though no one would be able to help because of the numerous other ham-radio event conflicts that day, I was pleasantly blessed with five Hams who able to help.

Many, Many thanks to **Jason (N4DSL), Bob (KG4CHL), Robert (N1QEO), Vic (KE4LKO), Matthew (KD4UPL).**

Also, thanks to **Steve (KF4ZWK)** who although not officially a volunteer for the event, provided assistance to the event staff and myself by notifying us of a runner who needed assistance at

a point along the course where we were not able to see easily.

As it turned out, there would be others to follow who also needed assistance. I am sooooo glad we were able to help with the event.

Dave Beckler, Athletic Director at EMHS called me at work on Monday to express his gratitude to our club and to say how much he appreciated the help provided. We were able to get critical information to the trainers and coaches participating in the event quickly, and our help was noticed by parents and others as well.

GREAT JOB GUYS !!!!!!!!!!!

*Doug Alder, N4DUG  
(formerly KF4YGO)  
Net Control*

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*“Public Service —  
It’s Where It’s  
At!”*

## Big Mountain Repeater PL Changes... Now 131.8

Bob, W3MMC, would like to notify all hams that the Big Mountain Repeater now requires a PL of **131.8 Hz**.

The repeater had previously been set up to use a PL tone of 123.0.

**If you have programmed in the 146.625 MHz repeater into your rig recently, you might want to check your PL setting.**

Remember, you should always have the local repeaters (including the proper offset and PL tone frequency) programmed into your radios. This

way, you’ll be prepared to respond at a moment’s notice to emergencies, weather situations, and even fun ragchews. How long will it take you to come back on the air when the net control says, “everybody go to 146.625”.

The Big Mountain Repeater is the primary machine for SkyWarn activity in the valley. It is an open machine, and all hams are invited to use it, including its link capability with the Outback Link System. See the August 2000 issue of the Monitor for more information on the Outback network.

## Attention Digital Hams: Multiple Sound Card Settings!

Here’s a really neat URL to download a handy program. You can setup and save multiple windows audio settings for different programs.

I have one for PSK31, one for RTTY, one for my SSTV program and then the normal one. It is a really handy program if you use your sound card for digital modes on the radio.

<http://www.msaxon.com/quickmix/>

*Daryl, WB4YEX*



Can you BELIEVE IT?  
Some Hams Still Don't Have Windows....



Don't get caught unprepared!

## Old Dominion Emergency Net – Be Prepared!

The Old Dominion Emergency Net meets Alternating Mondays and Wednesdays, in the evenings. Hams both in and out of the Commonwealth of Virginia are invited to check in.

Check-in's are by order of the 15 ARES Districts, followed by out-of-state stations.

In order to make the job a little easier on the NCS, be sure to give your call sign using ITU phonetics, name, location, RRL appointment (if you have one).

Also, give your emergency power status **only** if you are using emergency power during this net. The emergency power status should be nothing more than "emergency power 16 hours" or whatever approximate run time you have while participating in the ODEN. It is not necessary to specify "commercial power" or give a full inventory of your radio equipment. I

f you do not have a generator or battery running your rig while on the ODEN, no emergency power status should be given. This will help save time during the check-in process and allow more time for the round of comments. Also, if you cannot stick around for your turn of comments, please let the NCS know so he will not think you've experienced a tragedy in the shack (and maybe call 911 to come rescue you).

ODEN is generally looking for new net control operators to gain practice in emergency communications. These nets are generally a step or two above the local ARES nets in terms of discipline and practice for real emergencies. Are you up to the challenge of running one of the Commonwealth's finest emergency nets?

Below are the Dates of the upcoming ODEN Nets, along with the current net control assignments.

*Ray Ritchie, K4NRA*

### October

**Mon. 2nd** - K4DND / Dave  
(75M at 1830)  
**Wed. 11th** - W4TLM / Terry  
(160M at 2045)  
**Mon. 16th** - AF4CD / Lynn  
(75M at 1830)  
**Wed. 25th** - WA4JR / John  
(75M at 2045)

### November

**Mon. 6th** - N4IF / Fred (75M  
at 1830)  
**Wed. 8th** - NB30 / Steve  
(160M at 2045)  
**Mon. 20th** - KOIBS / John  
(75M at 1830)  
**Wed. 29th** - W4VIC / Vic  
(75M at 2045)

### December

**Mon. 4th** - K4DND / Dave  
(75M at 1830)  
**Wed. 13th** - W4TLM / Terry  
(160M at 2045)  
**Mon. 18th** - WA4JR / John  
(75M at 1830)  
**Wed. 27th** - NB30 / Steve  
(75M at 2045)

## Local VHF ARES Net Line-Up



It's always a good time to start preparing for emergencies!

ARES nets are intended to provide an opportunity for hams to test their gear, and prepare themselves for emergency service. Most ARES nets in the valley are informal and relaxed. All hams are invited and urged to check into ARES nets as often as time permits.

The Page County ARES net meets every Sunday evening

at 8:00 pm local time on the 146.625 Big Mountain Repeater.

The Rockingham County ARES net meets every Monday night. The first Monday of every month, the net meets on 146.550 simplex. All other Mondays, the net meets on the 145.130 N4YET repeater on Massanutten Peak.

The Augusta County ARES Net meets monthly, on the second Thursday of the month, on the 147.075 Waynesboro Bear Den Repeater.

Hams from all counties are welcome on all nets, not just the ones for your county.

Check in & join the fun!

## Items For Sale or Trade...

For Sale: A brand new never-been-used Icom-718 all-band all-mode HF transceiver covering 160 to 10 meters. This was the grand prize won at the Virginia Beach Hamfest, and will make a great easy-to-use rig for anyone who has just upgraded to General Class. It is reviewed in the July 2000 issue of QST. Price: \$699.00, but if you can find a better price which includes shipping and sales tax, I'll beat it. The radio is, of course, under full warranty.

Gerry Brunk (K4RBZ)  
Tel. 540-434-0440 (H)  
540-432-4467 (W)

For sale, Yaesu FT-690R 6-Meter all-mode. Lots of accessories. Try out the "magic band"! This rig is in Excellent condition. Asking \$350 or best offer. Also Realistic HTX-100 10m mobile (\$75), Kantronics KPC-3 TNC (\$75). Offers accepted.

Matthew Huffman KD4UPL  
Phone: 833-4129  
Email: needmore@rica.net

Brown Snyder N3BES (yes, that's a new call!) is looking to trade modules for his Kenwood Tri-bander. He has for trade the 220 MHz module, and he would like to trade for a 440 MHz module. He is willing to do a little horse dealing on the side, so if you know anyone who needs the 220 module, contact:

Brown Snyder, N3BES  
Phone: 540-434-3133

A ham operator in the Staunton area is a recent retiree and he is moving into a retirement community which doesn't permit him to erect his antennas or talk to foreign countries (only kidding!). As a result, he is liquidating his entire, contest-level station. At press time, an inventory was not available, but it is rumored to include a tall tower, and a classic Collins digital transceiver. For more information contact the "trustee of the sale:

Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW  
Phone 540-337-7337

## MARA President's Message

I want to thank Clayton Towers for the program he presented last month about his life as a weather data collector in the Bridgewater area. Weather is something that we have no control over, so we can only take what we get.

By now the summer months are over and fall is here. The weather won't be all that good for outdoor activities, so now is the time to get our antennas repaired or a new one put up and checked out before the winter months.

For those that have recently upgraded and now have HF privileges, there are some big contests coming up between now and the end of the year. These contests are a good

chance to easily work a lot of new countries. The DX stations want to work you for the contest points, so if the pile ups become too big, just try them later.

This month's program will be presented by Clint Campbell, KB4OLM. Clint is an active VHF'er, and will tell us about the equipment, antennas and operating techniques that he uses.

For those that have only worked two meters FM, there is more of life to be experienced on the amateur bands above 30 MHz. Clint has taken his trailer with a lot of VHF gear to the mountain top for Field Day, so most of us have seen his set-up in use here. Now is our chance to hear him tell all about it.

Clint is also active with the DX packet cluster, and has a repeater that he takes care of. Obviously he is a busy guy!

I hope to see a lot of the members at this month's meeting. It is time to elect new officers for the coming year.

*Gerald, KN4FM*



Take Me To Your Leader!  
Come Choose Your New MARA Officers!

## Nothing's Constant Except Change!



We can bear-ly keep up with all the changes.

*Thanks to all the hams who have informed the Monitor Editor of recent changes! Below could be called the "Gossip" column of the Monitor! If you don't see your change below, submit it to the newsletter editor!*

**Claude Phillippy, N4QLV**, has a new email address: [cphillippy@planetcomm.net](mailto:cphillippy@planetcomm.net)

**Norman Benner, KA4EEN**, just received his Extra class ticket. Congratulations!

**John Nelson, KA4KQX**, has a new address at 4035 South Main Street, Harrisonburg. His new email address is [jnelson@nelsontechnical.com](mailto:jnelson@nelsontechnical.com)

**David Tanks, AD4TJ**, has a new temporary address while he works on his dad's house: 1232 Laurel Hill Road, Verona. New Phone number too, Dave?

**David Gordon, KB4LCI**, formerly of the Green Bank Radio Observatory, has moved to Chatham, and is now at 610 Oakland Drive, Chatham, VA 24531.

**Doug Alder** received a new call. Formerly he was KF4YGO, his new call is **N4DUG**. Appropro!

**Charles Vogan** received a new call, **KD4KA**. Chuck is the daddy of an entire family of hams in Weyers Cave.

Welcome to **Don (Mac) McGrath, KZ1A**, new VARA Member. Don lives at 103 Hook Lane, Staunton, his phone is 885-0492. His email is [KZ1A@arrl.net](mailto:KZ1A@arrl.net). Also, welcome to **Claude Winters, KG4HTL**, also a new VARA Member.

Congratulations to the following new hams in the valley:

**KG4JOC, Ralph Shull II**, of Bridgewater

**KG4JOD, Diana Shull**, of Bridgewater

**KG4JOE, Bryan Fordham**, of Weyers Cave

**KG4JOF, William Hooke**, of Verona

**KG4JOG, Jane Nesselrodt**, of Mt. Sidney

## The World's Greatest Ham Shack!



A Really Rare DX Station 123 Miles Above the Surface of the Earth, Aboard the Orbiting International Space Station

The **ham radio station aboard the International Space Station** has been delivered and installed. The station still will need a few minutes worth of set up once the first crew arrive next month. All three astronauts named in the first crew will hold ham licenses, and plan to work earth-bound amateurs whenever the opportunity arises. This month's CQ magazine has a nice article on ham radio aboard the ISS. When was the last time you got to talk to an orbiting astronaut from your HT?

## VARA President's Message

### NEW MEMBER

I would like to welcome Mac McGrath, KZ1A to our club. Mac is a recent transplant to Virginia. I also want to thank Mac for helping out on September 9th during the combined VARA and MARA VE session in Dayton. Welcome aboard Mac!

### SHENANDOAH FALL FOLIAGE BIKE FESTIVAL

The 10 Annual Shenandoah Fall Foliage Bike Festival is getting closer. 1200 cyclists will participate in the Fall tour. The dates of the tour are October 20-22 and V.A.R.A. will be called upon to assist along with MARA We do this every year and it helps the club. So mark your calendar, and make plans to help out. Radio operators are needed on Saturday and Sunday. If you can help please send me an e-mail at [grcljc@cfw.com](mailto:grcljc@cfw.com) as soon as possible. We will need at least 20 people on Saturday.

### E-MAIL AND THE NEWSLETTER

Augusts newsletter was sent electronically to all those who desired to receive it. It seems that everyone was content to receive the newsletter electronically for the most part. Again, those who would rather receive a hard copy in the mail, please let me know and I'll pass on the information to Dave, KD9LA.

### EXAMS RETURN TO THE VALLEY

I would like to express my appreciation for the help of all those involved in bring Amateur Radio testing back to the Valley. The session in September went quite well considering as a VE team we were working together for the first time. A special thank to Gale for taking the initiative and for his willingness to do the paper work and leg work.

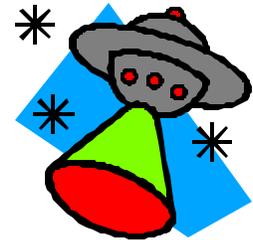
### ELECTIONS FOR NEW OFFICERS

At the last VARA meeting, a nomination committee was established. Nancy, KE4PHP; Lonnie, N4WIV; and Joan, KF4CWR comprise the nomination committee. If you desire to serve in some capacity in the club let one of the committee members know. Elections will take place in October during our Annual meeting. Friends, we need you to attend this meeting!

### CONCLUSION

Just a short report this month. Thanks to all who have made my first year as president an enjoyable one. You deserve all the credit for making the club work. I hope that this coming year will be just as exciting!

73, Greg, W4GRC



Take Me To Your Leader, Too!  
Help Select the VARA Officers Also!

## Free Service to ARRL Members!

Wouldn't it be great if you could change your Internet Service Provider without having to get a new email address? Wouldn't it be great **not** to have to notify all your friends (not to mention the *Monitor* editor) of a new email address!

Well, if you are a member of the American Radio Relay League (and you ARE, aren't you?) you have a free, no-strings-attached, **permanent** email address already waiting for you! Your address is [yourcall@arrl.net](mailto:yourcall@arrl.net). (Substitute **your** callsign.)

And the great thing is, you can change your Internet email provider as often as you like and you can still retain the same [yourcall@arrl.net](mailto:yourcall@arrl.net) email address! How does this work? Here's how.

The [yourcall@arrl.net](mailto:yourcall@arrl.net) address is what's called a "front-end" address. No matter what your regular email address is (say, for instance, you have an email address of [David@juno.com](mailto:David@juno.com), or [Tommy-Gunn@aol.com](mailto:Tommy-Gunn@aol.com), or [SillyMe@rica.net](mailto:SillyMe@rica.net), or Hey-

[You@cfw.net](mailto:You@cfw.net)), you tell everyone your email address is [yourcall@arrl.net](mailto:yourcall@arrl.net)!

Then, you go to [arrl.net](http://arrl.net) and set up your arrl account to forward your email to your real account at aol, juno, rica, or cfw. This service is free.

If you later decide to drop aol or rica in favor of, say, sprint or mci or worldcom, all you do is go to the arrl site and change your forwarding information! You don't ever have to tell your friends that you've changed!

Of course, if you change your *callsign*, well, then, you've got more problems that just email! But you can cross that bridge when you come to it.

For now, make it easy on everyone. Register with the arrl site, and *stop making those changes to your email address, even when you change it!*

This service is found at [www.arrl.net](http://www.arrl.net). Follow the links to the Members Only page.



Never change your email address again!  
Even when it changes!

## Are You Spaced Out?

*Below are some briefs from the exciting world of amateur satellite communications:*

After several years' delay, the **Phase III-D satellite** is **now scheduled for launch on October 31**, Halloween this year! This satellite promises to let Joe Ham, with little more than an HT, work the world on VHF and UHF, quickly, easily, and without the need for tracking antenna arrays, specialized digital modes, high power gain antennas, or narrow-band filters. Any FM radio and decent antenna should be sufficient. Check out the P3D satellite in the back issues of any ham magazine, or contact AMSAT for more information.

**The SETI League** Inc has received a small equipment grant from the American Astronomical Society to help it construct a transmitter to **bounce microwave signals off the moon's surface**. The project, "A Lunar Reflective Test Beacon for Radio Astronomy and SETI," will enable amateur and professional radio astronomers to calibrate their receiving systems by providing a stable reference signal from a known point in the sky. "We should be ready to start bouncing interesting microwave signals off the lunar surface early in 2001," said Paul Shuch, N6TX, the SETI League's executive director. The SETI League, a nonprofit organization that's spearheading a privately funded search for evidence of extraterrestrial life--has 1200 members in 59 countries. Many of them also are Amateur Radio operators. For more information, visit the SETI League Web site, <http://www.setileague.org> or email [info@setileague.org](mailto:info@setileague.org).

## Briefs from All Over

The **Sunspot Cycle** continues to be great for ham operators this year. There is no sign of slowing up yet. It is a really great time to be on HF, working the world. This past week has seen the largest solar flare and storm in 10 years. While such disturbances interrupt communications for the short run, overall, they improve propagation for the average general-class ham, and even offer opportunities for rare skip on the higher bands.

New Jersey city says "Both hands on the wheel!" The Township Council of Marlboro, New Jersey, got the nod from the state Department of Transportation to put signs up on all roads leading into the area that say **Marlboro prohibits the use of cellular telephones while driving**. Local law-enforcement officers say they will wait until the estimated 50 signs have been planted before they begin handing out warnings and tickets. **New Jersey's State Senate will watch the Marlboro development before it introduces a statewide ban on talking while driving**. While the ordinance apparently does not mention hands-free devices, it does say drivers who don't keep both hands on the wheel while talking could be fined up to \$250. — From ARRL letter

Looking for an excuse to drive I-81 down to Tennessee? The venerable **Ten-Tec Company** is sponsoring a **hamfest** on **October 7**. Check it out at: <http://www.tentec.com/Amateur.htm> (note there is no hyphen in the tentec.com address.)

Would you like to get a **weekly email giving the latest ham radio news**? ARRL offers a free update service giving advanced notice of news, happenings, late-breaking events, etc. to its members. It is called, "**The ARRL Letter**". Information is available at the Members-Only website at <http://www.arrl.org>. You will be offered an opportunity to subscribe to the ARRL Letter at the time you register with the members-only site.

The IARU Administrative Council has selected "**Providing Disaster Communications: Amateur Radio in the 21st Century**" as the theme for **World Amateur Radio Day 2001**. The occasion will be marked next **April 18**. The selection was designed to help dispel the notion that technological changes have bypassed and diminished the future role of the amateur services. The IARU also wants to reaffirm the importance of Amateur Radio as a resource to help mitigate the effects of disasters by providing communications to aid humanitarian efforts.

## MARA Secretary's Reports

### September MARA Meeting Minutes

#### **NEW MEMBERS**

- One new member, Robert (I didn't catch the call, sorry!) was voted into the club unanimously.
- The membership application was read for Charles Vogan KD5KA and will be voted on next meeting

#### **ELECTIONS**

Gerald KN4FM stated that there will be several openings for officers in the club. Any nominations should be given to him for the following positions:

1. Vice President
2. Treasurer
3. Secretary
4. One Director

#### **PUBLIC SERVICE**

- Doug N4DUG asked for help with the cross country race Saturday, September 9 at E.M.U.
- Doug also asked for help with the M.S. Walk on October 21. The report time is 0830.
- No information is available yet on the Johnny Appleseed Ride
- Norman KA4EEN needs net control operators

#### **ARES**

- Dale N4DAI noted that October is the month for the SET, but an exact date has not yet been set

#### **VE SESSIONS**

- Gayle KU4XN stated that the first VE session would be held Saturday, September 9 at the Woodmen of the World building. He expects a large turnout

#### **CHRISTMAS PARTY**

- The question was raised as to where the Christmas party would be held. It was noted that reservations need to be made soon. No one offered an opinion whether the party should be held at Eaver's or Pano's

#### **MISC**

- Dale, N4DAI presented unique QSL cards to local amateurs who made contact with his vacationing group in North Carolina
- Gerald KN4FM asked for ideas for programs and volunteers to be presenters
- Clayton Towers gave an interesting program on his experiences with the weather and amateur radio
- The meeting concluded at 2020

*Minutes Taken by  
Steve Tennyson KF4ZWK  
In the absence of the  
Secretary, Wilton Thomas, KF4BFL*

**Editor's Note:** The minutes from the several MARA Meeting still have not been forwarded to the Newsletter editor. We are currently missing the minutes from the **April** 2000, the **June** 2000, the **July** 2000, and the **August** 2000 meetings. MARA is a legally -incorporated entity. It is important that these minutes be maintained and made publicly available to the membership. We could lose our tax-exempt status if this legal requirement is not kept. If you know where the missing minutes are, please notify the President of MARA, or the newsletter editor.

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## More Info on Emergency Communications

An "**Emergency Communications" Web Site** now is available: <http://www.arrl.org/field/emergency/>. The page provides a ready-reference Web Site with links to the latest ARRL bulletins, The ARRL Letter, and weather reports as well as to other Amateur Radio organizations active in emergency operations, such as the Hurricane Watch Net, The Salvation Army Team Emergency Net (SATERN), and SKYWARN. There's also an Emergency Communications "Q&A" section, and a link to contact various ARRL Headquarters personnel during an emergency. Other linked resources include The Net Directory, IARU member societies, ARRL field leadership and club-search.

**Notice: Emergency Communications course site moved:** The Emergency Communication (EmCom) Certification pilot project outline and related materials have been moved. The new URL is <http://home.earthlink.net/~w0ipl/emcom-rd.htm>. If you experience any problems with the new URL or have any other questions or concerns, contact ARRL Certification Specialist Dan Miller, K3UFG, [k3ufg@arrl.org](mailto:k3ufg@arrl.org); 860-594-0340. Miller says the program is proceeding on target, and Part 1 of Level I is expected to debut in late October.

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*The conference agreed to support the reduction of all Morse Code Testing speeds to 5 WPM*

## Morse Code: Dit-dit-dit Dah-dit-dah?

The 11th International Amateur Radio Union Region III Conference ended September 1 by resolving to seek the ultimate removal of Morse code proficiency as an International Telecommunication Union licensing requirement for HF operation. As "an interim measure," the conference agreed to support the reduction of all Morse code testing

speeds to 5 WPM. "IARU Region III strongly supports Morse code as an effective and efficient mode of communication," the resolution said in its preamble. However, it believes that the position of Morse as a qualifying criterion for an HF amateur license is not relevant to the healthy future of amateur radio."

## Last Minute Briefs

**Alpha/Power to cease linear manufacturing:** Amateur linear amplifier manufacturer Alpha/Power Inc of Longmont, Colorado, has announced plans to cease engineering and manufacturing operations once the current run of Alpha 87A and 99 amplifiers is completed. Alpha/Power said that that warranty and post-warranty service will continue to be available. Dick Ehrhorn, W0ID/W4ETO, says that "a combination of health issues and family obligations" has made it impossible for John Brosnahan, W0UN, the president and technical director of Alpha/Power, to continue at his present pace with Alpha/Power. Ehrhorn said he's "not willing to risk that Alpha legacy" with someone else, "Nor am I aware of any person or entity with the desire, the proven ability, the commitment, and the resources to acquire Alpha and perpetuate the standards to which we've been dedicated for thirty-one years." Ehrhorn says the company remains open to "serious discussions," however. In 1996, Ehrhorn and Dave Wilson, AAORS/G3SZA, bought back the Alpha amplifier business from ETO, which had merged with Applied Science and Technology in 1995. Ehrhorn founded ETO in 1970 and designed all the early Alpha linears. By 1995, it was a \$20-million company. For more information, visit the Alpha/Power Web site, <http://www.alpha-power-inc.com>.

Those attempting to register or use the FCC's Universal Licensing System occasionally (maybe that's an understatement) have been frustrated when entering a licensee name only to have the ULS come back with a "no matches" response. Unfortunately, the FCC database does not recognize the period "." after an initial, such as in "John Q. Public" and the ULS is not programmed to disregard a "." in a name query. When entering a licensee name to search, enter the last name first, followed by a comma and no punctuation after any middle initial. But wait! If there's a "Jr" or "Sr" or Roman numeral such as II or III after the name, the FCC database includes the suffix as part of the last name. This means if you search on the ULS or on one of the many call sign sites on the Web--for licensee John Q. Public III, you must search for "Public III, John Q" or the name won't show.

## VARA Secretary's Report

### September 5, 2000 Meeting

The Valley Amateur Radio Association club meeting was held at Gavid's Restaurant in Staunton on September 5, 2000. PRESIDENT GREG CZERNIAK W4GRC opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m.. There were 22 members and guest present.

50/50 was a total of \$27.00 and won by Mark, one of the owners of Gavid's so it split \$13.50 for each.

Clint, KB4OLM informed the club that negotiations are still on going with the tower that Waynesboro is donating to the club.

Lets all welcome Claude Winters, KG4HTL & Donald McGrath, KZ1A our newest members to the club.

David, AD4TJ Needs HELP with the Augusta County Emergency net. Anyone that is willing to be net control and help David out give him a call. David also has the forms for the D.M.V ID. Cards.

We have the time, date and cost of the Christmas Party. It will be December 5<sup>th</sup>, same day as the normal club meeting night. Time is 7pm and we will eat at 7:30pm. Cost is \$11.00 per person. Children 5 and under eat free, over 5 to 10 will be half price-\$5.50. The menu is country style steak, western ham, fried chicken, salad bar, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, green beans, lima beans, macaroni & cheese, baked apples. Dessert will be cobbler & ice cream.

November 15<sup>th</sup> is the cut off date for reservations for the Christmas party, so please make your reservations early so we will know how many to prepare for. Send your checks to Jeff W4PJW

1344 Hankey Mtn Hwy, Churchville, Va. 24421.

OK Now is the time to send your money to Jeff for the Christmas dinner don't be late, let's get in now.

We have a Nominating Committee consisting of Lonnie, N4WIV Joan, KF4CWR & Nancy, KE4PIP. If any club member is interested in the office of Treasurer or Sectary please let the committee know. We will try to fill the offices at the next club meeting. Greg, W4GRC will stay on as president for next year. Thanks Greg and you have done an excellent job this year.

BIKE VIRGINIA: October the 21 & 22: We will need a lot of help this year so please be ready to volunteer at the next club meeting. We will make a list of who can help on Sat. & Sun.

Clint, KB4OLM & Jerry, K4RBZ Gave an excellen reports on VECC & DXCC this was a very interesting talk and I am sure everyone enjoyed it. Thanks Guys and a job well done.

PLEASE check your address on QRZ and make the necessary changes. Also add your email address if you have one. Remember ULS all AMATEUR'S have to register. The address is FCC.GOV/WTB/ULS

A motion to adjourn the V.A.R.A meeting was made by Frank, KE4ASC and seconded by Ray, KE4NNV. The motion was accepted and the meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

*Submitted by:  
Pat Smiley, KD4WWF  
Secretary*

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*November 15 is  
the deadline to  
reserve for the  
Christmas Dinner.*

## Calendar of Events

**October 3: VARA Meeting (Staunton)**

**October 5: VARA Meeting (Harrisonburg)**

**October 7: Ten-Tec Hamfest (TN)**

**October 14: Stafford (VA) Hamfest**

**October 20-22: Bike Virginia (Augusta County)**

**October 21: MS Walk (Harrisonburg)**

**October 21-22: Boy Scouts—Ham Radio Jamboree on the Air – Special Event**

**October 22: Westminster (MD) Hamfest**

**October 22: November Monitor Deadline**

**October 28-29: CQ WW DX SSB Contest**

**November 2: MARA Meeting**

**November 4: VE Testing Session (Dayton?)**

**November 4-6: ARRL CW Sweepstakes**

**November 7: VARA Meeting**

**November 15: Deadline for VARA Christmas Dinner Reservations**

**November 18-20: ARRL SSB Sweepstakes**

**November 25-26: C Q WW DX CW Contest**

**December 5: VARA Christmas Party**

# MARA/VARA

c/o David Fordham  
131 Wayside Drive  
Weyers Cave, VA 24486  
Phone: 540-568-3024  
Email: fordhadr@jmu.edu

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## First Class Mail

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### MASSANUTTEN AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

President: Gerald Nauman, KN4FM  
Vice President: Sandy Mullins, K4PZC  
Secretary: Wilton Thomas, KF4BFL  
Treasurer: Matthew Huffman, KD4UPL  
Board (exp. 00): Steve Tennyson, KF4ZWK  
Board (exp 01): David Hughes, KF4SVR

<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 per year) should be mailed to:  
Matthew Huffman, KD4UPL  
5166 Mt. Clinton Pike  
Harrisonburg, VA 22802

### VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

President: Greg Czerniak, W4GRC  
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. 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