

February 2001

MARA/VARA MONITOR

Published Monthly for Radio Amateurs in the Shenandoah Valley



Last Call for Dues...

If you have not yet renewed your membership in MARA or VARA, this will be the last Monitor you receive, either paper or email.

Use the handy renewal form on the last page of this issue to send your check to the treasurer of your favorite club.

Butch Nutty, KD4RWS, SK

The local ham community lost another one of our own January 24, when Charles (Butch) Nutty passed away at his shop.

Butch had been a long-time Staunton resident. He was well-known for his CB dealership. He had a reputation for fine workmanship in his repairs. Nationwide, many over-the-road truck drivers knew and respected him for his communications

expertise. Butch passed the ham radio exams in 1993, and became active in the amateur community. Many local hams saved time and money by letting Butch repair their rigs rather than wait for factory service.

Butch will be missed. The entire ham community extends its condolences to his family.

VE Exams – February 3

Volunteer Exams will be held on Saturday, February 3, 2001, at the Woodmen of the World building on Highway 42, just north of Dayton, Virginia.

Advance reservations are not required. Walk-ins are welcome and invited.

Cost of this session is \$10.00. The cost covers the entire testing session, regardless of how many test elements a candidate takes.

Coordinator of this session is Gayle Shull, KU4XN.

The registration starts at 9:00 am. Testing will begin as soon as all participants are registered.

If you hold a General class or higher ham license, you are qualified to serve as a Volunteer Examiner. Give Gayle a call at 540-828-2132 for more information.

Directions to the session:

From Harrisonburg, take Hwy 42 (South High Street becomes John Wayland Highway) south one mile past the WalMart supercenter. The Woodmen of the World building is on your right.

From Interstate 81, take Exit 240 (Bridgewater, Mount Crawford). Go west on Highway 257 (towards Bridgewater). Go 3 miles, into Bridgewater. Turn right at the traffic light, onto Highway 42. Follow 42 north just over 3-1/2 miles, and the Woodmen of the World building will be on your left.

Future VE testing sessions are now scheduled for **April 14, June 2, August 4, October 6, & Dec. 1.**

SkyWarn Training Classes

The National Weather Service (NWS) has announced the following courses to be offered in February. All courses below will be held at the Sterling (Dulles) Weather Forecast Office.

BASIC I — This is the fundamental SkyWarn course. You must take Basic I before you can take any other SkyWarn courses. Completing this 3-hour course qualifies you as a full SkyWarn weather observer, and you will

receive your SkyWarn locator ID. This course will be held on February 28th, from 7 pm to 10 pm.

BASIC II — This is a followup course for those who have completed Basic I training several months ago. This course is optional, and provides additional weather training and reporting briefing. The Basics II class will be held February 15th, from 7 pm to 9 pm.

Both courses are free of charge. Hams are welcome and invited to attend. Advance Registration is required.

To register, telephone Melody Paschetag at 703-260-0107, extension 226. Or you can email her at melody.paschetag@noaa.gov.

Further information is available at the Skywarn web site, linked from the MARA home page (see back cover of this issue).

Virginia ARES Training Course

Free training is available for Virginia ARES members. This all-day course is intended to give ARES members complete overview of the operation of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service. In Virginia ARES is tied to the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service, and operates under the direction of the state emergency services agencies.

The training will be held Saturday, February 10th, at the State Police building in the Fontaine Research park, on the west end of Charlottesville.

This location is right off the 29 By-Pass, just north of Interstate 64, and is easily accessible from the Interstate.

Advance registration is required.

Registration and more information is available from the www.aresva.org web page. You can also access the registration and info page from links from the MARA home page (see back cover of this issue of the Monitor.)

Corrections to Last Month's Monitor...

We aim to please. Our proofreaders like to find little mistakes and errors, so every now and then we put a few in, just to keep everyone happy. Of course, occasionally the mistakes make it past the proofers. Then we are happy to make corrections.

Last month, we stated that Gerry Brunk made the DXCC honor roll with over 340

contacts. It actually should have been exactly 340 contacts.

We accidentally referred to Chuck Vogan's call as KD4KA. Chuck has a "5" call, KD5KA.

We stated that Dave Tanks, AD4TJ, earned 64,000 points in the VHF contest.

The total should have been 11,000 points, but David still placed first in the state of Virginia.

And finally, the newsletter itself carried the date of January 2000, when in fact it was indeed the January 2001 issue.

Thanks to everyone for their patience.

Dave Gordon, KB4LCI, Status Report

Most hams in the area remember David Gordon, KB4LCI. Dave lived in Pocahontas County, West Virginia, and maintained the local repeater, weather observation station, and other little diversions related to ham radio.

David recently left his job as an astronomer at the Green Bank National Radio Observatory. He now lives with his family

in Danville, Virginia, but still maintains his MARA membership.

Dave writes to say that he just passed his General RadioTelephone Operators license exam.

He also is instrumental in developing the Danville Amateur Radio Society's web page, to be found at:

<http://www.mindspring.com/~dxcq/dars/>

You can sometimes catch David on the air on the 147.330 KI4ZR repeater, which covers from the Shenandoah Valley across the Blue Ridge all the way to Danville.

For Sale Items

John Bobbio, KB4YSP, is selling a dual-band handheld, Alinco DJ-580. The deal includes a speaker mike, 2 rubber ducks (440 and 144 MHz), 2 desk chargers (fast charge and slow charge), and a 12volt DC car adapter. He will also include a new battery pack. The price is \$125. Contact John at 540-480-6213.

Matthew Huffman, KD4UPL, is selling a 6-meter all-mode transceiver, Yaesu model FT-690R. This deal includes all accessories, and Matt certifies the radio is in "great" condition. He is asking \$350 but will accept a good offer. Call Matthew at 540-833-4129.

Bill Jones, KE4FM, has a Mustek 1200ED scanner for sale. This scanner is very little used and in mint condition. It was purchased new in 1999. Bill has the software on CD-ROM for Windows 95/98/2000, for a 200 Pentium and higher. A cable is included which connects the scanner to your PC's printer port, and the cable has a port for your printer so you don't have to be messing with cables to switch between the printer and the scanner. Bill is letting this package go for only \$75, so call him quick. If you don't have \$75, make an offer! Bill can be reached at 289-9801 or email at wwjones@gte.net.

MARA President's Column

For those of you that were at the last meeting, you heard part 1 of Ellsworth's presentation on lightning protection for radio antenna systems. Briefly, he got into what is a good ground system, and what is not. He also talked about the need for surge suppressors and some other things that should be done to minimize lightning damage. If you missed last month's meeting, this is your chance to still learn what is required to properly protect your station.

Also at the last club meeting I mentioned that Field Day will soon be upon us (okay, I know it isn't until June) but now is the time to get started with the planning phase. Each year the MARA and VARA clubs get together for a joint effort to show just what we can do. If you would like to be on the committee to organize this event, come prepared to volunteer.

For those of you that enjoy building things, I want to remind you that the April program is homebrew night. If you don't have a project to bring and show yet, you still have time to throw something together.

I hope to see each of you at this month's meeting.

Gerald, KN4FM

VARA President's Column

Our first meeting of the new year opened on a high note. The spirit is good and there seems to be a genuine desire to advance the cause of amateur radio. Ray, KE4HVR assumed his office as secretary and Joan, KF4CWR likewise assumed her responsibility as treasurer. Richard, KE4QZK stands ready to fill in for the president at a moments notice, and has the task of lining up programs for our monthly meeting. Thanks to all, past and present for the job you have done or doing.

I would also like to thank the following for their willingness to serve on the 2001 Field Day Committee. Thanks go out to Clint, KB4OLM; David, AD4TJ; and Benny, N4BCC. These men have their work cut out for them, so let's help them when they ask for our support!

At our January meeting I suggested we write a mission statement. The club members were challenged at our meeting to come up with a mission statement and present it at the next meeting. If you did not attend our last meeting,

by all means, feel free to write a mission statement of your own and bring it with you to our next meeting. I would suggest you focus on three areas when writing your mission statement. Fellowship, community service, and education.

I am excited that our club has a real desire to help others obtain their amateur radio license. The plan right now is to set up a special event station and use it as a method of introducing the community to amateur radio. While manning our special events station we can sign up interested individuals who would like to learn more about our hobby and obtain their license. The question we're attempting to answer at present is what type of event in and around our community can we use to set up a special events station? There are several hams doing research to answer the question. Suggestions include some type of event that is held at the Frontier Culture Museum, or perhaps a special

event station could be set up at Gypsy Hill Park to celebrate the reactivation of the train. A nice certificate would be sent to those who request it. We don't have a time, nor do we know where our special events station will be. So all suggestions are welcome.

That's all your president has this month. I want to encourage every member to attend the next meeting and bring a friend. We have a great time, and there is always something interesting to share during our monthly programs. If there is a program you would like to see us have, just let us know and we'll do our best to bring it about!

-73 From Greg, W4GRC -

Amateur Radio Scholarships

Are you a licensed amateur planning on going to college or university,?

You are qualified to apply for over a hundred different scholarships to help you pay for your tuition, books, and expenses.

The ARRL Foundation itself sponsors over a dozen scholarships, ranging from \$250 to \$2000 each. Information can be found at: www.arrl.org/arrlf/ The application deadline for ARRL Foundation scholarships is generally February 1, so hurry.

Also, the Foundation for Amateur Radio (FAR) sponsors a large number of scholarships (almost 75!) ranging up to \$3000. Some of these scholarships are specifically reserved for applications from Virginia. In many cases, the applicant does not need to pursue a radio-related course of study. Application forms and additional information are available by letter or QSL postmarked prior to April 30, 2000, from FAR Scholarships, PO Box 831, Riverdale, MD 20738.

Also, the Dayton Amateur Radio Association accepts applications from amateurs all over the country for their annual scholarships. For information, send a SASE to Dara Scholrshhips, 45 Cinnamon Ct., Springboro, OH 45066-1000. DARA's deadline is usually around May for the following year's awards.

WA4EEN Needs Net Control Stations...

Imagine the D.C. beltway with no signs, no pavement or lane markings, no exit or entrance signs, and no speed limit! Chaos!

Getting a bunch of hams together on one frequency can be every bit as chaotic.

In an emergency, however, it is critical to have a large number of hams on the same frequency. Thus, one ham is designated Net Control to organize the group. All other stations agree to follow the directions of Net Control, and things go smoothly.

But being Net Control in an emergency is a very difficult job. For this reason, we have on-the-job training, but without the stress of a real emergency: ARES Nets

The Shenandoah Valley has three ARES Nets which meet every Sunday night, every Monday night, and the 2nd and 3rd Thursday nights of each month (see the schedule on page 7). The Rockingham County net is a net that rotates the position of Net Control among local hams, in an effort to increase the pool of experienced Net Control operators.

Norman, Benner, KA3EEN, is the highly esteemed Net Control Coordinator for the Rockingham County ARES Nets.

If you would like to try your hand at serving as Net Control, give Norman a call at 540-289-5801, or check into one of the ARES nets and ask for KA4EEN. He has prepared a script to make the job easier.

Participants of the nets are great fellows (and gals), and they understand a new control station's apprehension. The group is always happy to welcome a new Net Control station.

King David's Nine Little Alligators... Where's your Inventory?

In past issues of the Monitor, KD9LA has written about the "gotcha's" that spring up on you when you are serving an emergency assignment.

A good emergency communicator must be prepared for all the alligators that pop up and interfere with your assignment to drain the swamp.

One step in being prepared is to know in advance exactly what frequencies you can operate on.

No, I'm not talking about what frequencies your radio will transmit and receive

on. I'm talking about which frequencies you can communicate on!

In an emergency, you can't afford to waste time "trying out" different repeaters in order to find one that you can work from your location. It wastes time if you have to test a simplex frequency to see if it will work between your station and a Net Control, EOC, fire station, or other post.

Don't wait until an emergency. Create an inventory of workable frequencies. On the following page is a list of 2m repeaters that can be worked from various

areas of the valley. Which ones can you work from your QTH? From your closest fire station with an HT? From your car in various areas of the county?

On the next ARES net, listen on the input as the stations check in. Which stations can you copy direct from your QTH?

Knowing your capabilities can be critical in an emergency. Start listing your inventory today. And if you know of repeaters not listed on the next page, let KD9LA know so they can be added.

FREQ	LOCATION	CTCSS
145.110	Dunmore, (Pocahontas County, West Virginia)	
145.130	Massanutten Peak, 5 miles east of Harrisonburg (<i>occasional tone</i>)	88.8
145.190	Moorefield (West Virginia)	118.8
145.210	Linden, VA (3 miles SE of Front Royal)	131.8
145.285	Zions Crossroads, North of Charlottesville	
145.470	Stuarts Draft (off air?)	
146.625	Big Mountain, 5 miles east of New Market, VA, Outback Link System	131.0
146.670	Luray, Page County ARES	114.8
146.685	South Charlottesville	100.0
146.700	Staunton	131.8
146.730	Frederick, MD	
146.745	Berkeley Springs, West Virginia	123.0
146.760	Charlottesville	88.5
146.790	Fairfax	
146.805	Covington, VA, west of Lexington (<i>occasional tone</i>)	118.8
146.820	Winchester, VA	
146.850	Hermitage, 3 miles north of Waynesboro	131.8
146.880	Richmond	
146.895	Bucks Elbow Mountain, 10 miles ENE of Waynesboro, N4RAG link system	131.8
146.910	Tysons Corner, NE of Vienna	
146.925	Charlottesville	88.5
146.985	Roanoke	
147.045	Elliotts Knob, 15 miles west of Staunton	131.8
147.060	Frederick, MD	
147.075	Bear Den Mountain, 7 miles east of Waynesboro	
147.090	Spruce Flat (Marlinton) West Virginia	131.8
147.120	Culpeper, VA	
147.165	Warrenton, VA	
147.225	Lairds Knob, 5 miles NE of Harrisonburg, N4RAG link system	131.8
147.285	Spruce Knob, WV (West Virginia HAMTALK system)	103.5
147.300	Bluemont, 5 miles north of Front Royal VA	146.2
147.315	Harrisonburg, EMU campus	
147.330	Rockbridge, 3 miles east of Buena Vista	
147.345	Franklin, WV	
147.360	??? Stuarts Draft, 5 miles south of Waynesboro	

MARA Minutes – January 4 Meeting

Meeting was opened by President at 7:35. All members and guests identified themselves. There were 36 members and 2 guests.

Committee Reports:

Treasurer's report: Present total is \$2175.

VE: There will be VE Exams on Feb. 3 at the Woodman Building.

ARES: Dale, N4DAI is the Emergency Coordinator for District 15. Congratulations Dale. There will be state training available in Charlottesville next month. It is sug-

gested that all those involved in ARES reregister using the web address www.aresva.org. There will be ARES patches available at \$3.50 ea. ARES ID cards also will be available. There will be special training for ARES - possibly in March.

There was a talk by Mark Bowers regarding a rally road race possibly using amateur radio for communications. He was considering the possibility of using some of our club members.

The 50/50 was won by Todd Harrison. His share was \$18.00, Club \$18.00.

Program: The topic "Preventing Damage From Lightning Strikes" was given by Ellsworth Neff, K4LGX. This program has all of us wondering if our antenna protection systems are adequate. Grounding of the tower is of most importance and inadequate in most amateur installations. Ellsworth plans to have a followup at our next meeting.

Meeting closed at 8:45p.m.

Phyllis Haxton, Secretary

VARA Minutes – January 2 Meeting

The Valley Amateur Radio Association club meeting was held at Gavid's Restaurant in Staunton on January 2, 2001. President Greg Czerniak W4GRC opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. There were 15 members present and one guest, E C Showalter KG4KUR from Weyers Cave.

The 50/50 drawing was a total of \$16.00. \$8.00 went to the Club Treasury and \$8.00 to the winner, Nancy Colvin KE4PHP, congratulations Nancy.

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 has the forms for the DMV ID. Cards if you need one.

Richard KF4QZG will be our new Program Chairman for 2001

We have a 2001 Field Day Committee of three, Clint KB4OLM, David AD4TJ and Benny N4BCC.

Greg W4GRC is working on a new Web Page for the Club. It would be of help to Greg if you would check your address, e-mail address and home page address if you have one on QRZ and Buckmaster.

We would like to have a Mission Statement for the Club, think about this and bring your ideas to the next meeting. Greg said, "This is your homework"

Also we would like to get training classes started for the Technician level then move on to the 5-WPM code class. Anyone interested in helping teach the classes please contact Greg W4GRC, Alby AD4KZ or Richard KF4QZG.

The motion was made, to run a Special Event Station as a way of getting more people interested in ham radio, by Richard KF4QZG and seconded by Clint KB4OLM. The Frontier Culture Museum was one location mentioned. Any other suggestions on local events that would draw a crowd and spur some interest in ham radio would be appreciated.

A motion to adjourn the V.A.R.A meeting was made by David AD4TJ and seconded by Ray KE4NNV. The motion was accepted and the meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.

Clint KB4OLM gave a presentation on the Packet Cluster. Demonstrating with a computer and discussing the components, how they are interfaced, how they communicate one to another and the commands to get the needed information from the Cluster when working DX, sending and receiving messages or watching for DX Spots. Thanks to Clint for this presentation!

REMINDER: It's time to pay your dues for 2001 and keep your Newsletter coming.

*Submitted By:
VARA Secretary
Ray Colvin KE4HVR*

February Calendar Events...

Feb 1: MARA Club meeting
Feb 3-4: FYBO QRP Field Day
Feb 3-4: 10-10 Winter QSO Party
Feb 4: Page ARES Net 146.625
Feb 5: R'ham ARES Net 146.550
Feb 6: VARA Club meeting
Feb 8: Augusta ARES Net 147.075

Feb 10-12 CQ RTTY WPX contest
Feb 11: Page ARES Net 146.625
Feb 12: R'ham ARES Net 145.130
Feb 15: Digital Pkt ARES Net 145.75
Feb 16: March Monitor Deadline
Feb 17-18: ARRL Int'l DX Contest
Feb 18: Page ARES Net 146.625

Feb 19: R'ham ARES Net 145.130
Feb 24-25 CQ WW 160m SSB contest
Feb 24-25: CQC QRP QSO party
Feb 25: Vienna Hamfest

For more information, see the links on the MARA schedule page.

MARA Membership Renewal Form

NAME: _____ CALL _____

EMAIL: _____ HOME PHONE: _____

ARRL MEMBER: Yes No REGISTERED VA ARES: Yes No SKYWARN ID: _____ (If you have one)

Are you interested in receiving the *Monitor* electronically in Adobe PDF format? Yes No I Already Do

If your address on the mailing label is correct, no further info is needed; otherwise complete the following:

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP+4 _____

WORK PHONE (optional): _____

Mail with a \$12 check payable to:

Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc., c/o Sandy Mullins K4PZC, 149 North Street, Elkton, VA 22827

VARA Membership Renewal Form

NAME: _____ CALL _____

EMAIL: _____ HOME PHONE: _____

ARRL MEMBER: Yes No REGISTERED VA ARES: Yes No SKYWARN ID: _____ (If you have one)

Are you interested in receiving the *Monitor* electronically in Adobe PDF format? Yes No I Already Do

If your address on the mailing label is correct, no further info is needed; otherwise complete the following:

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP+4 _____

WORK PHONE (optional): _____

Mail with a \$15 check payable to:

Valley Amateur Radio Association, c/o Joan Pitsenbarger KF4CWR, 352 Campbell Street, Staunton, VA 24401

MARA/VARA

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

Address Service Requested



MASSANUTTEN AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

President: Gerald Nauman, KN4FM
Vice President: Steve Tennyson, KF4ZWK
Secretary: Phyllis Haxton N4VZC
Treasurer: Sandy Mullins, K4PZC
Board (exp 01): David Hughes, KF4SVR
Board (exp. 02): Bob Tennyson KG4CHL

<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:
Sandy Mullins, K4PZC
149 North Street
Elkton, VA 22827

VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

President: Greg Czerniak, W4GRC
Vice President: Richard Huttinger, KF4QZG
Secretary: Ray Colvin, KE4HVR
Treasurer: Joan Pitsenbarger, KF4CWR

<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:
Joan Pitsenbarger, KF4CWR
352 Campbell Street
Staunton VA 24401