

The Monitor

Published jointly by the Valley Amateur Radio Association and the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association,
Dedicated to serving those interested in Amateur Radio in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley

Free Ham Radio Tutoring Available in the Valley

Alby McCutcheon, AD4KZ, is offering to help anyone, young or old, rich or poor, better or worse, help learn about Ham Radio.

Alby is willing to tutor, one-on-one, anyone interested in getting a ham license, or anyone interested in upgrading to a higher-class license.

Alby remembers when an old-timer served as his Elmer and taught him everything about this fun hobby. Now, Alby wants to pass along the legacy.

Call Alby at 540-949-7368 and set up an appointment. Alby won't accept a penny for his thoughts.



Welcome to New Hams

Congratulations to some new hams in the valley.

Choe Young, KG4TZI, of Pleasant Hill Road in Harrisonburg, and Mike Hirsch, KG4USG, of New Market, were both licensed over the summer.

And James (Jim) Conis, KG4VOP, just received his license after passing the October testing session, as did Riley Knowles, KG4VOS, also of Harrisonburg, and Charles Young, KG4VOR, of Staunton.

Also, congratulations to Kevin Botkin, KG4SYT, of Staunton, William Karle KG4UPN of Staunton, on

recently joining the ranks of licensed amateurs in this area.

And finally, welcome to Morris Peltz of Fishersville, KG4VOQ.

If you know of other new hams, including moves, or are aware of any new callsigns or upgrades, advise the newsletter editor. (The above information was obtained from the FCC.)



Field Day Results Are In! — #1 in VA, and #1 in our Region!

The 2002 Field Day Results have been posted to the ARRL web-site, as of Monday, October 28, 2002.

The MARA/VARA FD operation ranked #12 Nationwide out of 333 entries.

That ranks us in the top 4% in our classification!

We ranked #1 in Virginia (9 Virginia entries in 3-A) and also #1 in the Roanoke ARRL Region, which includes Virginia, North and South Carolina, and West Virginia.

Again, not bad for a bunch of guys who even managed to have a good time. As in past years, "We Done Good!"

Neal Layman
N4XU

VARA Christmas Party Details

The Christmas Party for 2002 is scheduled for Tuesday, December 17th at Western Sizzlin in Waynesboro, VA. We will meet in the big room to the right as you come in. Plan to arrive at 6:30pm and we will eat at 7:00pm. When you go through the line and place your order they will give you your bill, pay when you leave. This price does not include a tip for our waitress.

Mark your calendars now and plan to join us for another great meal and celebration this Christmas Season.

Western Sizzlin needs to know how many!

Here is the list as of now. If there is anyone not on this list that wants to attend, please send a reply to this e-mail so we can get you included in the head count for Western Sizzlin.

- 1 Ray & Nancy Colvin
- 2 David & Martha Tanks
- 3 Billy Hooke
- 4 Joe Meek & Bobbie
- 5 Joe & Maria
- 6 Bill Karle
- 7 Jeff & Patsy Rinehart
- 8 Al & Marge Bonck
- 9 George Shott
- 10 Richard & Carol
- 11 Mike & Ellen Reno
- 12 Benny & Kay Cook



Problems with your IC-2100H? Try This!

I have heard that some owners of the Icom 2100H were experiencing noise in their radios.

Here is what I found when I installed mine in my 1993 Oldsmobile station wagon: Most, if not all, manuals for mobile radios tell you to ground the radio itself, in addition to the antenna ground, and the negative lead of the power cable. So, being the good amateur that I am, I followed their instructions, and grounded my radio with a heavy-gauge wire, as in my situation the bracket for the radio wasn't going to be grounded.

Uh-oh! I had the noise everyone else had experienced. After some experimenting of try this, and then try that, I removed the ground wire. HEY!

Instantly, the noise was gone. I touched it back to the radio, and the noise returned.

So, I left it off, and have been enjoying my radio ever since. Now, I don't know if this will work for others, but I wanted 2100H owners to know that someone else out there had the same problem, and discovered a fix for it. Enjoy!

Dave Tanks



Several Ham Families Saying Goodbye to Family Members...

Kay Cook's (KF4CZL) mother, Ethel Connor, passed away October 22nd. Kay is the wife of Benny Cook N4BCC for those who didn't know Kay.

Kay wishes to thank all the hams who expressed their sympathy to her and her family during the past few weeks. Your cards, thoughts, and prayers are especially appreciated.

Also, Dick Weaver W3HXH just got the word that his Sister Virginia Driver passed away. Dick cut his vacation short to head back home to be with family.

Also, the mother of Gail Shull (KB4JBF) passed away October 28, just as this issue of the Monitor was going to press. Gail is XYL of Gayle Shull KU4XN.

Our sympathies are with these hams and their families regarding their loss.

VE Report: Four New Licenses!

Thanks to the VEs who helped with the test on October 12:

CHARLES VOGAN KD5KA,
RICHARD HAXTON KC3AN,
ROBERT VANFOSSEN K4DJG,
JOHN NELSON N3JN.

We gave seven (7) tests and issued four (4) new licenses. Five people took tests, four passed Element Two and one passed Element One.

Many thanks to all the hams who help serve the public in this manner!

Gayle Shull
KU4XN

Practically New Drake SWL R8A Receiver for Sale

Ben Harless, of Shenandoah, would like to sell his shortwave receiver. Ben, who isn't a licensed ham but is a serious SWL listener, purchased the top-of-the-line Drake R8A brand new just three short years ago, and it is in mint condition.

The monthly magazine, Passport to World-band Radio, rates the R8A as one of the top models in its class.

The receiver covers 0.5 to 20 MHz, and has features too numerous to mention.

Ben is asking \$950 for this receiver.

If you are interested, give Ben a call in Shenandoah at 540-652-6412.

The Old Dominion Emergency Net

Ray, KE4HVR, gives us the schedule of the Old Dominion Emergency Net. All check-ins are welcome and invited.

Not confident enough to jump in and participate? Well, then, at least TUNE IN and listen! This is the net which will handle our communications out of the area in case our long-distance phones lines are out because of an emergency!

The net meets at the following times as a matter of routine and practice:

- **1st and 3rd Monday 3.947 MHz at 18:30 (6:30pm)**
- **Last Wednesday 3.947 MHz at 20:45 (8:45pm)**
- **Summer 2nd Wednesday 7.243 MHz at 18:30 (6:30pm)**
- **Winter 2nd Wednesday 1.900 MHz at 20:45 (8:45pm)**

Note that we are in District 15! Wait until they call for District 15 before checking in.

Sam Pickering
KE4EKV
Life Member



Local Hero Elected to Life Membership in VARA

Many VARA members recall the headline of the August 1996 issue of the Monitor, which reported on a heroic act by a local ham.

Sam Pickering, KE4EKV, was recognized by the Staunton Daily News-Leader (July 7 issue, front page) for saving a resident from a house fire.

Sam was driving down Delphine Avenue in Waynesboro and noticed a house on fire. He used his ham radio to call for help, then warned residents in the

neighboring houses. Sam, assisted by another passerby, Ken Reynolds, are credited with saving the residents of the burning house and the surrounding structures. The fire was so big, it took 75 firefighters from Waynesboro, Dooms, Augusta County, Stuarts Draft, and Fishersville to control. The heat was so intense, the siding melted on the houses across the street, 80 feet away.

Shortly after that incident, Sam, who was also active in the Boy Scout organization helping

young men grow up and become model citizens, became bedridden due to brain malady and stroke. He is occasionally able to talk on the phone, but otherwise is pretty much house-bound.

The VARA club honored Sam (in absentia) at the October club meeting by voting Sam a life member of the club.

Congratulations to Sam, and greetings to his family.

Electronic Filing is Not So Tough!

Your newsletter editor, KD9LA, recently suffered from an expired license!

Being a very busy man, he had trouble finding the time to log onto the FCC website, and renew his license on-line.

And being a cheapskate, he refused to pay someone else \$5 to do it for him!

When he finally decided to take the time and renew, he was totally embarrassed at how easy and simple the process is.

The only hard part, in fact, was, well, there wasn't a hard part!

First, you go to the FCC's website, click on CORES. You follow some very simple instructions to register with CORES and get your FRN (FCC Registration Number) and pick a password.

Next, you follow the on-screen instructions to associate your callsign with the FRN number.

So far, so good. Finally, you click on the ULS screen, and select Electronic Filing.

Using electronic filing, you can update your address, renew your license, do all kinds of filing, right there with the click of a mouse. In less than three minutes, the whole process was completed!

If there is a hard part, it is going to be remembering where you wrote down the password so you can file updates later! But even this is provided for. At the time you register for CORES, you can enter a "password hint" to jog your memory!

Just to be contrary, David called the FCC's technical support line (prominently displayed on the web page) and told them he forgot his password. The kind gentleman on the other end quoted the password hint. There wasn't even a "push one" menu or any hold music! When Dave asked for the password, however, he was told no, just the hint!

If you haven't tried CORES, ULS, or online filing, don't hesitate!

Riley Backs Off His "Be Quick on 146.52" Admonition

First, Riley Hollingsworth (FCC General Enforcement Counsel) told hams that 146.52 was a national calling frequency, and thus, holding long QSO's on that frequency was a no-no. In an advisory to several Ohio hams, he noted that holding rag-chews on a calling frequency is not good amateur practice, even though it isn't technically illegal.

But then, Hollingsworth noticed that the ARRL-published band plans had failed to note 146.52 as a calling frequency!

Due to the ARRL error, good ol' Riley promptly rescinded his admonition. He wrote the hams, and told them they could "disregard his earlier letter".

Hollingsworth noted that 146.52 should probably still be considered a calling frequency due to common usage. However, in his words, "it's not that big a deal." He admitted he probably jumped the gun and did not consider that in many areas, 146.52 is used as standard simplex VHF frequency.

Because of the widespread usage of the frequency as just another simplex frequency (including here in the Shenandoah Valley by some parties), Riley indicated that he would not enforce the "no rag-chew" policy as long as other hams did not complain about lack of access.

New Mode Catching On In the Valley! Moonbounce and Meteors for Everyone!

Dave Tanks AD4TJ, and Cowles Andrus K4EME (earth-moon-earth) are experimenting with the new ultra-low power modes for moonbounce propagation and meteor-scatter radio communication.

In a recent program at the VARA club, David and Cowles regaled the audience with tales of meager standard VHF stations actually communicating using these new modes, and without benefit of huge arrays and kilowatt amplifiers.

Here is Dave's article on the new mode:

WSJT is a program written by K1JT, Joe Taylor. It's name stands for "Weak Signal communications by K1JT. It consists of 2 modes (at this time), known as FSK441 and JT44.

FSK441 is designed for high-speed meteor-scatter communication using the brief "pings" of signals reflected from the ionized trails of meteors at about 100 kilometers

high. Such pings are typically a few dB above the receiver noise and may last from 10 to a few hundred milliseconds. By using these brief pings, FSK441 facilitates QSOs in the range of 500 to 1400 miles (800 to 2200 km) in the amateur 2-meter and other VHF bands.

In contrast, JT44 is designed for communications with very weak signals of roughly constant strength. The program is able to work at levels 10 dB or more below the weakest intelligible CW signals, and this makes JT44 ideal for tropospheric scatter, ionospheric scatter, and Earth-Moon-Earth (EME) communications. Smaller stations are able to complete EME QSO's much more readily with JT44 than with more traditional modes.

System Requirements

The program is designed to run in Windows 95 or higher, on a Pentium or better, running at 75 mhz or faster, at least 24 mb of ram (more

required for later versions of Windows), 40 mb of hard drive space, a monitor with resolution of 800x600 or better, and a Windows-compatible sound card. You'll need a sound-card interface unit, such as ones designed for other sound-card modes (PSK31, etc.). Both modes require time synchronization between stations, so your computer must be set (and kept) to within 1 second of UTC.

Both modes work by transmitting tones for 30 seconds, and then listening for 30 seconds. During the second transmission (and all subsequent transmissions) the program decodes all info received, and if it determines a valid signal was received, it displays the info in the Decoded Text box. If the program is only able to decode part of a transmission it averages info received over several transmissions to increase the accuracy of decoded info.

The program can be downloaded for free from the WSJT website:

www.pulsar.princeton.edu/~joe/k1jt

Even if you are not interested in using the program, it's worth downloading just to listen to the tones generated by both modes.

Also, here is the website for the PSK31 program "Digipan", also free:

<http://aintel.bi.edu.es/psk31.html>

When you have WSJT up and running, I'm available for testing your setup (as soon as I get mine perfected!) at: ad4tj@arrl.net.

Dave Tanks AD4TJ

More About JT44!

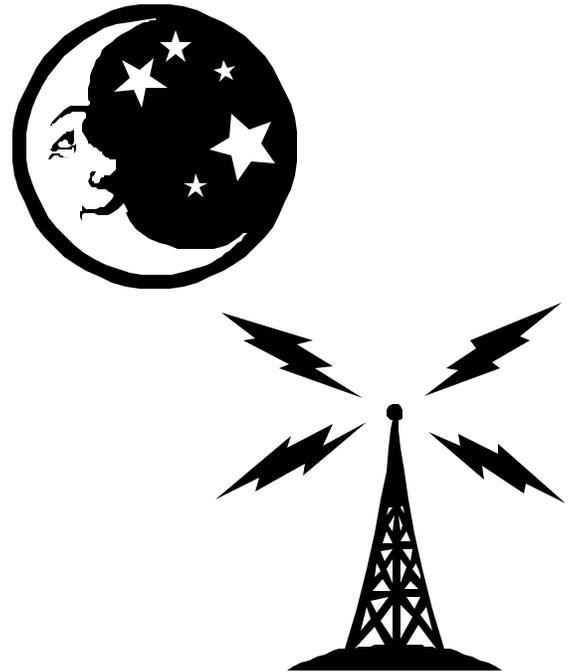
Hi All Potential EME'ers,

I have been playing with the JT44 software now for about a month and have found it to be the best weak signal mode so far, and this includes CW.

You have to be able to hear CW to use it, with JT44 due to its digital signal processing, it pulls signals right out of the noise. You can get a solid copy from signals that you cannot even perceive are there. This technology is the closest thing to magic I have seen so far! It is slow in nature but it gets the message through when the going gets rough!

Jason (N4DSL) and I about a month ago spent some time learning how to send messages with JT44. David Tanks, (AD4TJ) gave a presentation at the last VARA meeting on WSJT software. During the 432 MHz sprint I was able to work **Joe Taylor, (K1JT)**, who wrote the program via JT44 mode. We keep cutting our power from 400 watts to 100 to 10 watts with good copy. At the end I switched out the power slug on my Byrd Watt Meter so I could go lower, down to about a watt. Joe in NJ still copied me well over 200 miles away. Not bad on UHF!

Cowles Andrus K4EME



Wear Your Call On Your Sleeve... or your hat!

At the VARA club meeting, it was announced that we now have a local (Valley) source for embroidered items with your callsign on it!

SEAM in Waynesboro is willing to put callsigns on good quality caps for just \$10. This is competitive with the hat vendors you find at hamfests.

SEAM has a large collection of possible fonts and embroidery styles to select from. They also are set up for small custom jobs such as putting your name and call on your jacket, wind-breaker, or blankie. You can even get your shirts monogrammed at low, low prices! For more information, email SEAM at: seam43@yahoo.com or call Gretchen Edwards at 540-943-7030.



Cell Tower Locator URL

Berkana.com

Ever wonder who is putting up that cell phone tower in your backyard? Wonder who operates that funny-sounding transmitter on the tower down the street?

Point your web browser to:

[Http://www.berkana.com](http://www.berkana.com)

This site has a tower identifier and locator database. Simply type in the city and state, and the site will tell you who owns what, and even draw you some maps showing the precise location of all the towers in the area.

The only catch? The towers must be registered with the FCC. So you probably won't find a ham antenna farm listed unless it is required to be registered.

MARA President's Message: Seeking Ideas for Programs!

Hello to All!

Well, another year has come and gone and I don't know where the time has gone.

"Elections" have also come and gone and it looks as if you're stuck with me for another year. Hi!

I wish to welcome aboard Todd Harrison, K4TMH as the new Secretary and Richard Haxton, KC3AN as a new Board Member.

I wish to thank Phyllis Haxton, N4VZC for the great job she did this year as Secre-

tary. I appreciate her enthusiasm, faithfulness and keeping me straight. Thanks again, Phyllis!

I also appreciate the support of the club members this year. You're a great group!

One of the biggest problems faced this year has been finding programs for the club meetings each month. **PLEASE**, pass along any ideas or suggestions for a program to Chuck Vogan, KD5KA or myself. This does not have to be related to ham radio, but would be of interest to the club members.

I would also like to hear from anyone regarding their interest in ham radio that many club members may not participate in, such as Cowles Andres' operating with EME (communication by way of the moon) and satellite communications, etc.

Almost all of the QRP group's Tuna-tin Twos have been completed and tested and they all work! More details will follow after contacts have been established between the members. In the near future, as members venture from the area, their

Tuna-tin Two will go with them and contacts will be attempted with other members of the group. It's a lot of fun, so come join us!

Looking forward to the new year and I hope the club will become more involved with other projects and goals.

Thanks again for your support.
73,
Ellsworth

VARA Vice-President's Message

Hello to everyone.

Thanks for everyone showing up at Shoney's on October 1, 2002. I opened the meeting at 7:30 pm. There were 20 members present and 6 guests: Bob VanFosson K4DJG, Joshua and Jacob Green, Kay Cook KF4CZL, Marvin Henderson Sr. KF4KNN, Marvin Henderson KF4WDI.

Congrats goes to Marvin KF4KNN on winning the 50/50.

Welcome to our club Bill Karle KG4UPN as a new member....

Great job on getting the VARA home pageup and running goes to Bob McCracken N4JGO.

We voted to give Sam Pickering KF4EKV a lifetime membership to the club.

Everyone come out to see us at Western Sizzlin on Tuesday, December 17,2002 for our annual Christmas Party. We would love to have you.

Well that's all I have for now....

*Benny,
N4BCC*

Public Service Report Number One: Bike Shenandoah

Bike Shenandoah, Sept 28, 2002.

There were 113 riders participating in this event, with routes ranging from 5 to 100 miles.

We provided support only for the 30, 62 and 100 mile rides.

Hams were stationed at the four rest stops, and they also did a little "riding around" to keep track of everyone.

There were also two sag vehicles which used cell phones to keep in touch. I have not heard that we lost anybody, so we must have done our job.

I would like to thank Brian, KG4RMY, Doug, N4DUG, Matthew, KD4UPL, and Ray, K4NRA for their help.

I want to also thank the Shenandoah Valley Repeater Group for the use of the 147.315 repeater. It provided

good coverage to all the rest stops except the one at the Hebron Mennonite Church which is located in the Fulks Run area. Copy at that rest stop was a little difficult, but proved that we could communicate under less than ideal conditions.

Gerald Nauman
KF4FM

Some Upcoming Events

NOVEMBER

- 2-4 ARRL CW Sweepstakes
- 5 VARA Club Meeting
- 7 MARA Club Meeting
- 8-9 Japan International SSB Contest
- 16-18 ARRL Phone Sweepstakes
- 21 Augusta County ARES Net (146.85)
- 22-23 CQ WW DX CW Contest

DECEMBER

- ?? MARA Christmas Party?
- 6-8 160-meter Contest
- 14-15 ARRL 10-meter Contest
- 17 VARA Christmas Party
- 31 Straight Key Night

JANUARY

- 2 MARA Club Meeting
- 4-5 ARRL RTTY Roundup
- 7 VARA Club Meeting

FEBRUARY

- 9 Frostfest (Richmond VA Hamfest)

Public Service Report #2: Shenandoah Fall Foliage Bicycle Ride

Note that this is no longer a Bike Virginia event. This was the last year that any affiliation will exist with the Bike Virginia organization. This is now a local event organized and sponsored by local people. Next year we will have all new magnetic signs and all new road signs etc.

Having said that, now on to some of the highlights of the event. This was the 12th annual biking event held during October in the central Shenandoah Valley. Local amateurs have been involved with each of these, and our participation is valued by the organizers but more importantly by the bikers themselves. I had several bikers thank me for our part in the ride. If you were one of the sag vehicles or listened to the activities, it was obvious that we were very busy hauling exhausted riders or those with mechanical failure. As it turned out we also had to report and in some cases correct signage, which was either incorrect or missing. I know of at least one case where bikers got off the course because a turn arrow sign was missing. We went looking for them and found them considerably off course.

Net control was again set up and supervised by Clint KB4OLM, using his communications trailer. Clint and David AD4TJ were net control all day Saturday and Clint and Billy KG4JOF were net control on Sunday. Billy is one of the relatively "new" hams around and it was good to see him and several other new ones participating. We used the 147.225 repeater on Saturday. Thanks to Don N4RAG and his crew for providing a great machine with excellent coverage for us all the way from Staunton to Sengers Glen and out in the National Forest around Todd Lake and Elkhorn Lake – it even had coverage around the Staunton Dam area.

Just a side note about coverage – every year the bicycle event officials are provided cell phones and promised that there will be coverage even out in the mountains – and regardless of who the service provider has been, the event officials find that they must look to the amateurs for reliable communications. I was with the coordinator of the event all day Saturday and the only time her phone rang was while we were still in Staunton. Poor cell phone coverage is just one

more reason why our service is vital for the safety of the bikers.

On Sunday, we used the 147.045 repeater located on Elliot Knob. Scott, KE4CKJ and his group keep his repeater in fine working order and it certainly had no problem covering the area where the bikers were. There were a few spots however, out around Sherando Lake, which had spotty coverage. When that happened, we just switched over to our backup frequency of 147.075 on Afton Mountain. Thanks again to all the repeater owners, trustees and regular users who allowed us to tie up their machines all day.

Unlike most years, we had no serious injuries to care for. We only had to call the rescue squad one time this year and the lady refused to be transported. First aid was administered for scratches and bruises and apparently a sprained wrist. As far as we know, she did not finish the ride but chose to return home to North Carolina - yes, North Carolina. People come from all over the east coast for this ride. For example, I sagged one man and woman back to the starting point and

while in route found out they drove all the way from Florida just to ride in our beautiful mountains.

We had good participation both days from the local ham clubs and from some who are not club members too. Thanks to Doug N4DUG from the MARA club for coordinating their club members' help. A rough count shows 13 helpers from the Harrisonburg area and 20 from the Augusta County area. It sure is good to see the two clubs cooperating in activities such as this. In the event of a "real" emergency, coordination between the two clubs will be invaluable. One last word of thanks has to go to Ken KE4GKD and Ray KE4HVR for many hours of planning and extensive work printing and collating the paperwork for our club participants.

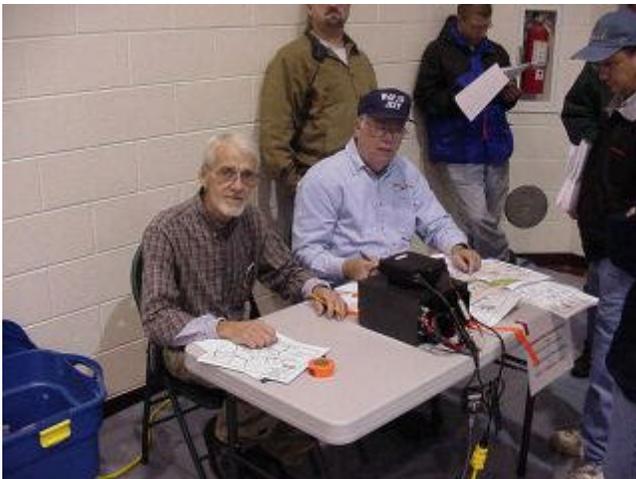
Thanks to everyone who participated and we'll see you next year for the 13th Annual Shenandoah Fall Foliage Bike Festival to be held October 17-19, 2003. Check out www.shenandoahbike.org for more information about next year's event. Thanks,

Jeff W4PJW

Thanks to the Fall Foliage Bicycle Ride Support Crew!

Bill	KG4UPN	Doug	N4DUG	Joe	W4LIG
Benny	N4BCC	EC	KG4KUR	Ken	KE4GKD
Billy	KG4JOF	Frank	KE4ASC	Mike	KG400N
Bob	K4DJG	Gayle	KU4XN	Pat	KD4WWF
Bob	N1QEQ	Gerald	KN4FM	Paul	KG4GCA
Clint	KB4OLM	Gordon	WA4FJC	Phyllis	N4VZC
Cowles	K4EME	Greg	W4GRC	Ray	KE4HVR
Dale	N4ATF	Herb	AA2BF	Richard	AA4RH
Dan	KE4JSX	Jason	N4DSL	Sandy	K4PZC
David	AD4TJ	Jeff	W4PJW	Stin	KE4SSF
Dick	KC3AN	Joe	KD4FKT	Terry	KG4MWI

Photos of the Bike Virginia Support Effort!



MARA Secretary's Report: October 3, 2002 Meeting

MARA Meeting – October 3, 2002
Evers Restaurant

MARA meeting, 7:30p.m. at Evers Restaurant was opened by the president, Ellsworth Neff. All those present introduced themselves and gave their call signs. There were 23 members present and no visitors.

Secretary's Report: None due to our joint picnic in August. It was reported that all had a good time at the picnic despite the weather.

Treasurer's Report: K4PZC gave typed copies of the July, August and September reports. The current total of assets are \$1,556.57. Thank you Sandy for a good and accurate job.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Service: N4DUG requested volunteers for the Horseback Ride this Saturday, October 6. It will be the first time we take this project. The ride is to raise support for the Camp Still Meadows which provides horses and training for handicapped children.

Doug also asked for volunteers to provide communications for the

annual MS walk on Saturday, October 12.

On October 19, there will be a Bike Trail Ride from Staunton to Singers Glen. This has been voted upon and will be a MARA sponsored event. Motion was made by Gerald, seconded by Sandy, discussed, voted upon and accepted by the members present. Further information will be on 146.85 at 7:30a.m. on October 19 with later use of the 147.225 during the day.

ARES: No report from Dale, N4DAI

ARES NET: Norman requests net control operators for the Monday Net.

VE EXAMS: Gayle, KU4XN, Said the exams will be held Saturday October 12 at 9:00a.m. Examiners are requested to appear at 8:30a.m.

FIELD DAY: No new reports at this time.

OLD BUSINESS:

The QRP Association will meet on October 15 at 7:p.m. at Chuck Vogan's QTH in Weyers Cave. Hopefully they will complete their min-

ture code transmitters and will be able to test them. New members always welcome.

No information was available on the proposed swap meet.

NEW BUSINESS:

New Members: Bill Karle, KG4KPN was voted in as a new member. Welcome Bill. Hope you will join in and enjoy our activities as much as the rest of us do. We find it a pleasure in the many possibilities available in our association.

50/50: The 50/50 was won by N4DUG. The club richer by \$11.00

ELECTION:

The business portion of the meeting concluded with the election of new officers for the coming year.

The following were elected:

President: Charles Ellsworth Neff, K4XG

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

The business portion of the meeting concluded with the election.

PROGRAM:

KD5KA, Chuck presented us with a wrap-up of his three motorcycle trips across the United States. He had a large map marking the routes that he and his companions followed. His first trip covered approximately 7400 miles. His last trip over 6000 miles. He said that next year his trip will be to a beach so he can laze in the sun. It was very interesting following his routes and experiences along the way. Before he left on the trip he gave us a schedule which he attempted to follow. He was able to make radio contact with some of us. Thank you for the run down Chuck.

The meeting was closed by 9:15. p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Phyllis Haxton, Secretary

VARA Secretary's Report: October 1, 2002 Meeting

The Valley Amateur Radio Association met at Shoney's in Staunton on October 1, 2002. Vice President Benny Cook N4BCC opened the meeting at 7:30pm. There were 20 members present and 6 guests, Bob VanFossen K4DJG, Joshua and Jacob Green (sons of Frank Green), Kay Cook KF4CZL, Marvin Henderson Sr. KF4KNN, Marvin Henderson Jr. KF4WDI

The 50/50 was won by Marvin Henderson Sr. KF4KNN, congratulations Marvin!

Bill Karle, KG4UPN was voted into the Club as a new member. Welcome to the VARA Bill!

Thanks to Bob McCracken N4JGO, for a great job on getting the VARA Web Page up and running. Here is the URL: <http://www.qsl.net/w4mus/>

The Bike VA date is Oct. 19th and 20th so mark your calendars and plan to help support your Amateur Radio Club in this event. This year Bike VA SAG Communications will be handled totally by the Amateur Radio Clubs. The meeting place for this year will be at Shelburne School just off Grubert Ave. for both days. The Saturday route will be from Staunton to Singers Glen. Sunday's route will be from Staunton to Middlebrook. Meals will be furnished both days and everyone will get a T-Shirt for their services.

The VARA voted to give Sam Pickering KF4EKV a Lifetime Membership to the club.

VARA CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Christmas Party for 2002 is scheduled for Tuesday, December 17th at Western Sizzlin in Waynesboro, VA. We will meet in the big

room to the right as you come in. Plan to arrive at 6:30pm and we will eat at 7:00pm. When you go through the line and place your order they will give you your bill, pay when you leave. This price does not include a tip for our waitress. **Mark your calendars now** and plan to join us for another great meal and celebration this Christmas Season.

On the sick list:

Ozzie Dillon KD4RD has been in the hospital again but is back home at this time and on oxygen full time. Dan James W4DLJ is able to drive to regular therapy here in town and doing well with it at this time. Lets keep both of these 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 has moved to 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 Ken KE4GKD, Alby AD4KZ or Richard KF4QZG. We need to get some young people interested in ham radio so listen for any hints that someone may like to learn what it is all about.

Richard KF4QZG, Program Chairman, asks for anyone who would like to do a program at one of our meetings to give him a call and get

Continued—

VARA Secretary's Report

— *Continued*

a date set up to present it. It does not have to be HAM related, anything you think the group would find interesting.

We are still looking for a suitable location for the Swap Meet and hope to have one scheduled soon.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23pm

David Tanks AD4TJ presented a program on new digital communications called FSK441 and JT-44. He had a laptop computer set up for us to listen to the different modes such as, PSK-31, FSK-441 and JT-44. FSK-441 being frequency shift keying seemed to be the least pre-

ferred mode. JT-44 is critical on computer time setting but sends the packet for 30 seconds then receives for 30 seconds. This is why computer time setting has to be the same for both the transmitting and receiving stations.

Thanks to David for this digital presentation!

*Submitted By:
VARA Secretary
Ray Colvin KE4HVR*

Ham Camp Songs

Natural Chimneys Campground, travel trailers, lawn chairs, ham radio operators and their families, hey — what could be better than this? Music, that's what! For some reason, the rhythm of Morse Code just doesn't have the harmony that good old fashioned pickin' and grinnin' do. Check out the variety of instruments being played at the informal campout at the end of October! And of course, some people (ahem) just played dumb (picture at right).



Some things to remember: Club dues are coming due. — If you want to receive the Monitor electronically, send an email to fordhadr@jmu.edu. Electronic Monitors carry pictures in full color, and arrive about five days ahead of the paper copies. — Also, check out your antennas, ground wires, and supports before the winter snow and ice arrives!

MARA/VARA

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

Return Service Requested

MASSANUTTEN AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, Inc.

President: Ellsworth Neff, K4LXG
Vice President: Chuck Vogan, KD5KA
Secretary: Phyllis Haxton, N4VZC
Treasurer: Sandy Mullins, K4PZC
Board (exp. 02): Bob Tennyson, KG4CHL
Board (exp 03): Jason Armentrout, N4DSL

<http://cob2.jmu.edu/fordham/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:
MARA
PO Box 1882
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

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