

April 2005

The Monitor

Published jointly by the Valley Amateur Radio Association and the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association

VARA President's Message

W4XD !! After several months of work, the club officially has the call sign of former club member (now SK) Joe Moomaw. Many thanks to Ray (KE4HVR) and Jeff (W4PJW) for their diligence in getting this accomplished. Also, many thanks to Bob (N4JGO) for updating the club logo on the club website and also getting the club website to reflect the new callsign (now www.qsl.net/w4xd).

Our March meeting was mostly gearing up for our upcoming events. Many thanks to Richard (AA4RH), Mike (KJ4RM), and Lou (W2LYL) for volunteering to be on the Field Day committee. We have two public service activities in April to help with. The first is the MS-Walk in Waynesboro on April 10th. The second is the Waynesboro Riverfest on April 23rd. The Riverfest is a Waynesboro Repeater Association event that many of our club members participate in. Help in either of these events will be greatly appreciated.

At the March meeting, I had an interesting conversation with Doug Tippet (N8ESW). Doug was telling me about the club he was a member of in Michigan. Their Field Day ham shack one year was a lighthouse. The club, Great Lakes Amateur Radio Rovers, has a picture on their website of the Big Point Sable Lighthouse (www.qsl.net/glarr and click on activities). What an interesting place to be able to enjoy amateur radio from!

In conclusion, our "Quote of the Month" comes from Staunton native, President Woodrow Wilson. In a 1914 speech he said, "If you will think about what you ought to do for other people, your character will take care of itself."

Marvin Henderson
VARA President

MARA President's Message

As spring FINALLY arrives in the area, we get a chance to dig out, emerge outside, and begin planning our events outdoors. Perhaps it is to repair an antenna, or put up a new one. Time to check over all the runs of coax and leader line to make sure they survived the winter OK. Please remember that whenever you are dealing with antennas and such, to pay attention to existing power lines in the air. It doesn't take long to realize that antennas and power lines don't mix! It's also a good time to check to make sure all of your mobile equipment is clean and in good shape. Salt spray from the roads during the winter can play havoc on those power and antenna connectors..... a good cleaning may be in order.

I look forward to finally getting an antenna up at our new house, so I can finally get back on the air. I have yet to set up the shack, but that won't take too long to organize. I just have to figure out which boxes contain what items. Now I just need to find a tower somewhere (sorry, Ellsworth, not interested in a 400'er).....

Spring is also the time when we get called up to assist with the many activities in the area. Please make sure to mark your calendars, and come out and support the clubs. And it's not too late to begin thinking about field day. That time of the year is rapidly approaching as we climb the hills, and set up in search of those magic contacts. And remember, it never rains on field day J

And for April's MARA meeting, be sure to bring out your projects you have been working on over the winter for others to admire, as well as bring those items which have been laying around in the shack for a while. You might find someone who may want your goodies, and raise a little money for the upcoming hamfests at the same time!

Bill Karle
KD4UPN

Waynesboro Multiple Sclerosis Walk – April 10

The Waynesboro MS Walk is coming up on Sunday, April 10, 2005.

The walk begins in Ridgeview Park at 1:00 pm, and will be over by 5:00 pm.

Any ham available to help with this fun event will be welcomed by the MS organization again this year. Hams who can help should plan to be on-site by 12:30 pm or as soon thereafter as you can get there.

You will need either an HT (with fully-charged battery), or a mobile radio for this event.

This is an excellent way of letting the public know how valuable ham radio can be in the community. Given the threats

we face from local BPL activity, we can use all the positive PR we can get!

When traveling into Waynesboro on Route 250 from Fishersville, take South Magnolia (2nd street to the right past US 340). Magnolia takes you right into Ridgeview Park.

Tune into the 147.075 repeater (+.600 offset, no PL needed) for talk-in directions.

If you may be able to help, please contact Marvin Henderson at marvista@ntelos.net or Ray Colvin at colvgr@adelphia.net

Harrisonburg March of Dimes Walk – April 23

The MARA organization has the opportunity to get amateur radio in front of the public once again by providing communications support to the March of Dimes Walk on Saturday morning, April 23.

This is a fun (and very short) public service event, lasting only a couple of hours. The walk starts around 9 am and usually is over by noon.

Ham radio volunteers get a really nifty free colorful T-Shirt, plus a free breakfast, AND a free lunch.

The walk stays on public streets. We can use both handhelds and mobile radios.

Generally the walk covers such a small area, we get by on simplex, so you don't need tone capability.

In light of the great support hams have provided for this even in the past, and the fact that everyone whose helped with this walk enjoyed the morning immensely, we've told the MD folks to pencil us in. We will be looking for signups at the April MARA meeting.

The walk this year will start behind the Harrisonburg Municipal Building (same as last year) and cover several routes, the longest of which is only a six-mile circuit.

If you live in the Rockingham county area, please put April 23 on your calendar.

Waynesboro Riverfest – April 23



The Waynesboro Repeater Association has once again been asked to provide communications support for the Riverfest on Saturday morning, April 23.

The event will start at 10:00 am, and we should be completed with our support by 1:00 pm.

Mobile or handheld operation will be needed.

We plan to meet in downtown Waynesboro at 9:30 am, and work out deployments from there.

Information on the Riverfest itself is at: <http://www.riverspirit.org/R&RR/index.html>

If you can help out, please contact Gordon Batey at GPBatey@compuserve.com

Shenandoah County: Massanutten Mtn Trail Run – May 7-8

The hams in Shenandoah County have been asked to provide communications support for the Massanutten Mountain Trail Run.

This is a one-hundred mile (yes, you read correctly: 100 miles!) run to be held on May 7 and 8.

The run winds its way through some of the valley's most spectacular spring scenery. The radio checkpoints are usually accessible by vehicle, so you don't have to be in top running shape to help out!

Details of the run itself can be found on the web at:

<http://www.vhtrc.org/mmt/2005info.htm>

We will need several hams who have HT's, and a couple with mobile units to support this event.

If you think you can help one or both days, or even part of a day, please contact Larry Miller at lmiller@shentel.net (that first letter is the letter "L", not the numeral one).

Mark Your Calendars...

There will be a great 100 kilometer (yes, that's 100 kilometers!!) footrace on September 17 called the Great Eastern Endurance Run. This run will wind through trails in the forest starting and ending on Afton Mountain. Any event this long through the wilderness obviously requires communications, and the organizers have asked the local ham radio operators for assistance. We need to let them know soon whether or not we are interested. Ray Colvin KE4HVR will probably be bringing this up at the

VARA club meeting, so be thinking about whether you are willing to help. More information on this run can be obtained at: <http://snipurl.com/dryi>

And for those in Rockingham county, Sunday, October 2, is the Camp Still Meadows Horseback Ride in Timberville around Little North Mountain. This is always a fun public service event.



Did You Know...?

A survey of local valley residents conducted by James Madison University students in mid-March showed that less than fifteen percent of the local population said they'd ever heard of amateur or ham radio.

Far more disturbing: less than eight percent (8%) of them knew what ham radio was. Worse, only six percent of those surveyed said they were aware of ham radio's involvement in disaster communication or public service. Most of these knew it only from reading about it in the paper. Only one percent (1%) said they were aware of any ham activity in the local area. One percent!

With BPL coming, we may need some support from the community to keep our hobby.

If hams are to expect support from the community, we have to get out into the community and let people know what we are doing. One of the best ways of doing this is providing public service like the activities listed on these pages. Let people see that we are helping them. So here's the question; Can we count on YOU to come out and help us show the public that our hobby is worthwhile?

Field Day Committee Report

The first meeting of the Field Day committee was well attended on March 17 at the Bridgewater Burger King. The Field Day committee consists currently of Bill, KG4UPN and Ellsworth, K4LXG, from the MARA, and Richard, AA4RH, Mike, KJ4RM, and Lou W2LYL from VARA. Bill volunteered to be chair for the event this year. The meeting was also attended by a number of veteran field operators, including Sandy K4PZC, Bob K4DJG, Andrew AG4XN, Jason N4DSL, and Benny N4BCC, all whom provided much valuable input to the committee.

During the organizational meeting, the members reviewed the logistics lists from the past field day, and made some changes concerning various items. This year, the entire site will be running under the club call sign W4XD. Current plans call for the operation to fall in the 2A station class, with operations for HF phone, HF CW, get-on-the-air station (GOTA), UHF/VHF, satellite, and natural power. Jason N4DSL will be providing high speed internet access for the site again this year.

As time draws near, the committee members will be contact-

ing those members who helped out last year and names are on the lists. We appreciate the services these members provided by the donation of equipment and time, and ask that if possible, you provide support for field day again this year. We also would ask that if your name is not on one of the lists, please consider the donation of your time, services, and equipment to ensure that field day is once again successful. Please be sure to stop by and see one of the committee members before or after the April club meetings, as this will make everyone's jobs much easier.

And if you have any ideas or suggestions to make field day run better, let a committee member know, or better yet, come to the next committee meeting.

The next field day committee meeting will be held at the Bridgewater Burger King, on Rte. 11, on Thursday, April 21st. The meeting will start at 6:30 pm (or thereabouts), so be sure to get there early and share a meal with us.

Bill Karle
KG4UPN
Field Day 2005 Chair

Free Items, For Sale Items

Free to a good home: One huge black satellite TV dish. It is yours just for taking away. Contact Daryl Cline in Harrisonburg at 540-476-0413.

For Sale: Mirage B-310-G VHF Linear Amr for sale, asking \$175, but make offer. Contact Bob McCracken N4JGO at 540-943-1923.

For Sale: Classic Heathkit HW-101 SSB Transceiver. \$80. Contact Bob McCracken N4JGO at 540-943-1923.

For Sale: Zenith G-500 Trans-Oceanic SWR Receiver, \$100. Contact Bob McCracken N4JGO at 540-943-1923.

For Sale: Zenith Royal D7000Y Trans-Oceanic SWR Receiver, Solid-state. \$100. Contact Bob McCracken N4JGO at 540-943-1923.

David Fordham, KD9LA, still has some leftover items from the estate sales of Silent Keys. He has some really great home entertainment center speakers, some TV mast lengths, and quite a bit of telephone wiring, connectors, network jumpers, and similar stuff. Call him with your needs, he'll part with the stuff really cheap. Call 234-0448.

February VE Testing Session Report

My apologies to everyone for not getting this to the Editor in time for the March issue.

We had three candidates earn a new license or upgrade and a fourth candidate passed the General class theory test. Congratulations to Stanley Thomas, KI4GSU, and Todd Jenkins, KI4GSS, for upgrading to General class. Charles Kline, KI4DMC, passed the General theory and hopefully will soon be back for the 5 wpm code test. John Rush, KI4ITE, passed the Technician class test and should be on the air.

Thanks the the VE's that came to help: Ray, K4NRA, Richard, KC3AN, Bob, K4DJG, James, W4POL, Sandy, N4PZC, and Andrew, AG4XN.

Our next test session will be on April 9. I hope we have a good turnout of both candidates for the tests and of VE's to give the tests. Gayle, KU4XN, should be back by then to run the next several test session, and to report on how things were in Florida the pass several months.

Gerald
KN4FM

Commercial Antenna Helps 160m Contesters

Thanks to Elsworth Neff K4LXG, for graciously arranging the use of the abandoned commercial radio tower (450 feet high!) just off the Interstate at exit 243, for the 160-meter contest.

Contestors including N1QEQ, K4RMY, WA4KKL, KD4UPL, N4DSL, and others made 735 contacts, 56 sections, to score 107,778 points in the contest.

Contacts were made with Ireland, the Canary Islands, France, Aruba, Bahamas, and Puerto Rico. Not bad for 160m!



Calendar of Important Upcoming Events

April 2-3: Baltimore (Timonium) Hamfest
 April 5: VARA Club Meeting
 April 7: MARA Annual Homebrew/Trader's meeting
 April 9: VE Examinations in Dayton, Virginia
 April 10: Waynesboro MS Walk Public Service Event
 April 17: Raleigh (NC) Hamfest
 April 17: York (PA) Hamfest
 April 23: Waynesboro Riverfest Public Service Event
 April 23: Harrisonburg March of Dimes Public Service Event
 April 29-30: SE VHF Conference (Charlotte NC)

May 1: Hagerstown (MD) Hamfest
 May 3: VARA Club Meeting
 May 5: MARA Club Meeting
 May 7-8: Public Service Event

May 20-21: Dayton (OH) Hamvention
 May 28-29: CQ WW WPX CW Contest

June 2: MARA Meeting
 June 7: VARA Meeting
 June 11: Winston-Salem (NC) Hamfest
 June 18-24: Camping at Field Day Site
 June 24: Field Day Pot-Luck Dinner
 June 25-26: Field Day

September 17: Great East Endurance Run Public Service Event

October 2: Camp Still Meadows Horse Ride Public Service Event
 October 15-17: Fall Foliage Bike Ride Public Service Event

MARA Secretary's Report – March 3 Meeting

The MARA March meeting was called to order at 7:31 pm by President Bill Karle KG4UPN. Introductions were made.

Two new officers were introduced:
Vice Pres.....Andrew Barbour AG4XN
Sect.....Bryan Daniels K4RMY

There was a report on Doug's N4DUG status since his accident with a model airplane. He has had several surgeries on his hand and seems to be recovering very well.

There were no new calls or upgrades.

Secretary's report was approved as printed. Thanks Phyllis N4VZC for filling in until a new secretary could be found.

Treasurer's report was read and approved as read.

If you have not yet renewed PLEASE DO SO NOW!

Committee reports:

VE report:
2 upgrades to general
1 tech

Next VE session is April 9 at Woodman of the World in Dayton, VA.

ARES/RACES:

Local/County SAR contacted Dale N4DAI about using ham equipment to track a personal locator beacon in an emergency situation. Frequency is 401 MHz. Send any info you may have about use of personal locator beacons to dale@broadwaymetal.com

QRP:

Will meet at 7:00pm on the second Tuesday at Andrew's AG4XN house. If you would like directions please call 540-337-1201. His address is 516 St. James Road, Fishersville, VA. At the next meeting new projects/kits will be discussed.

VMRC:

The 2m rig is working well and but they are dealing with lots of noise on 80m from computers, etc.

Recognitions:

Bill KG4UPN recognized James KI4FZY for winning the Grand Prize at the Augusta County Science Fair for a project on ham radio. For more information see the article in last month's Monitor.

VA QSO party March 19th and 20th:

There have be changes on the rules for this contest. See the web at:
http://www.qsl.net/sterling/VA_QSO_Party/2005_VQP_Rules.html

For a list of upcoming Hamfests please see the Monitor.

Camp Still Meadows is holding a raffle. Horse, anyone?

Field Day Committee:

1st meeting March 17th at Burger King in Mt. Crawford 6:00pm
Elsworth Neff K4LXG and Bill Karle KG4UPN will be our representatives to the VARA/MARA Field Day committee

Jason N4DSL used the old WHBG tower in the south of Harrisonburg to work the 160 Contest on February 25,26 and 27. Elsworth K4LXG said if any one else wants to use the tower to please let him know.

Old business:

Bryan K4RMY will be taking the equipment from Andrew's storage shed and putting it in his storage in Harrisonburg,

Library books are in from ARRL for public library. As soon as the one back ordered book comes in, they will be placed in the library.

New business:

A motion was made to look into the possibilities of a life member status for our club members. Motion passed.

The 50/50 drawing won by Dick W3HXX.

Reminder that next meeting will be a Swap/Home-brew program...

Meeting was adjourned at 8:04pm.

A brief program followed, sharing what books will be donated to the Massanutten Regional Library.

Respectfully submitted by
Bryan Daniels K4RMY

Inside Story Headline

The **V**alley **A**mateur **R**adio **A**ssociation met at Kathy's in Verona on March 1, 2005. The President, Marvin Henderson KF4WDI, opened the meeting at 7:30pm. There were 19 members present and 2 guests, Dick Smith W4KHV and Bob Van Fossen K4DJG. Welcome to our visitors, and we would like to see all of you back next month.

Ray Colvin won the 50/50 drawing. Almost a free meal!

Field Day is coming and we have three volunteers for the Field Day 2005 Committee. Louis Joseph W2LYL, Richard Huttinger AA4RH and Mike Solomon KJ4RM. Thanks to all of you.

Bob McCracken N4JGO has changed the callsign on the Club Logo Patch to W4XD and it looks great. The Club voted to keep the same Logo and check with Dan Beidler KE4JSX to see if he can get some new patches with the new callsign made up.

Riverfest 2005 Gordon Batey WA4FJC announced that the Riverfest 2005 will be held in Waynesboro on Saturday April 23rd. This is where they do the run, bike and kayak along the river. The Waynesboro Repeater Association will be providing communications. If you are available and are willing to help with communications it would be very much

appreciated. Meeting time will be 9:30am down town Waynesboro the event will start at 10:00am and should be over by 1:00pm. Contact Gordon on the 147.075 repeater or e-mail at GPBatey@compuserve.com You can find it on the Internet at: www.roadandriver.homestead.com

The Waynesboro MS Walk is coming up on Sunday April 10, 2005 beginning in Ridgeview Park at 1:00pm and ending at 5:00pm. Anyone available and willing to help will be welcomed by the MS Organization again this year. The Hams that will be helping should be there at 12:30pm or as soon after as they can get there. You will need an HT or Mobile radio for this event. This is another way the Amateur Radio Operators can make their hobby known to the public.

Take S. Magnolia Ave. (2nd street to your right past Rt. 340) when traveling East on Rt. 250 into Waynesboro. Magnolia takes you into Ridgeview Park. Tune into the 147.075 repeater for directions.

Please let us know if you can help.

Contacts:
Marvin Henderson KF4WDI-marvista@ntelos.net
Ray Colvin KE4HVR colvingr@adelphia.net

David Tanks AD4TJ reported that the committee was still working with Fire and Rescue Squads to get antennas installed at their buildings for emergency communications.

David also announced that there is a fox hunt in the planning for April. We will have more information on this later.

ON THE SICK LIST:

Ken Harris KE4GKD is still visiting his doctors regularly. He did enjoy his trip to the Frostfest and had a good lunch at the Toledo Steakhouse in Richmond afterwards.

Lonnie Czerniak N4WIV has her Dad in the hospital in Florida, where he lives, for a leg amputation above the knee.

Lets keep these folks in our thoughts and prayers.

SWAP SHOP:

This is for Ham related

items only. You can send a list of items you have for sale, swap or something you would like to buy, to Billy Hooke KG4JOF at: kg4jof@arrl.net Also a picture of the item would help it sell. Go to VARA Web Site at: <http://www.qsl.net/w4xd/> **PLEASE notify Billy when your item is sold.**

ADDRESSES!!! Keep your e-mail address up to date.

Please send them to: Marvin Henderson KF4WDI

marvista@ntelos.net Jeff Rinehart W4PJW jmrinehart@yahoo.com Ray Colvin KE4HVR colvingr@adelphia.net and David Fordham KD9LA fordhadr@jmu.edu Also, it's good to keep QRZ updated when call signs and e-mail addresses are changed.

ARES NET: David Tanks AD4TJ is looking for Net Controls for the Augusta County ARES Net. The Net will be held on the 146.850 repeater on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 8:00pm. This repeater has a minus offset and a tone of 131.8 when needed. Fox hunts are also scheduled for some months as weather permits.

PROGRAMS NEEDED: Richard AA4RH, Program Chairman, is looking for anyone that would like to do a program for the club. Give him a call and set up a date to present it. It does not have to be HAM related.

It could be anything you think the group would find interesting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm

Ray Colvin
VARA Secretary.

A NIFTY SITE FOR RF EXPOSURE INFO

Ray provided the following site for additional information about testing and compliance with the FCC rules on RF Exposure:

<http://www.projectgroup2000.com/compliance.htm>

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: Bill Karle KG4UPN
Vice President: Andrew Barbour AG4XN
Secretary: Bryan Daniels K4RMY
Treasurer: Sandy Mullins, K4PZC
Board (exp 05): John Nelson N3JN
Board (exp 06): Richard Weaver W3HXH

<http://mara.ws>

MARA meets the first Thursday of each month
at Ever's Restaurant on U.S. 11, just north
of the traffic light in Mt. Crawford.

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: Billy Hooke, KG4JOF
Vice President: Greg Czerniak, W4GRC
Secretary: Ray Colvin, KE4HVR
Treasurer: Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW
Program Manager: Richard Huttinger, AA4RH

<http://www.qsl.net/w4xd>

VARA meets the first Tuesday of each month
at Kathy's Restaurant on U.S. 11 north of
the traffic light in Verona.

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