

December 2005

The Monitor

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

MARA Christmas Banquet: December 1 at Traditions—6:00 pm!

The MARA Christmas Banquet is scheduled for Thursday, December 1, at Traditions Restaurant, at 635 Mount Clinton Pike.

This is in Park View Plaza, on the corner of Virginia Avenue (State Route 42) and Mount Clinton Pike in north Harrisonburg.

Menu: BBQ Pork, BBQ Ribs, Fried Chicken,

Homemade rolls, large soup, salad, and vegetable selection. Desserts and drink included. Price: \$12.00 per person (the restaurant requires payment with one check, so come prepared to pay the treasurer or his designee)

Questions or directions, call: Mike
Reno KG400N 540-448 0564.

VARA Christmas Banquet: December 6 at Kathy's — 6:00 pm!

On December 6th, the Valley Amateur Radio Association will celebrate the Christmas season with a special time of fellowship. The club will meet at Kathy's Restaurant at 6:00 P.M. for supper as usual. Then the adventure begins. We will exchange gifts. Ah, but there's a catch. First, we don't want you to spend all your Christmas money. So, here's the plan. Go and purchase a gift for around \$5.00 and wrap it up. Then bring it with you to the meeting. Now the gift does not have to be serious. It can be anything you want it to be. Use your imagination.

Each person who brings a gift will be given a raffle ticket. When your number is called, you can come up and receive a gift. You must un-

wrap it and show everyone else what you picked. But, don't get too fond of the gift. Here is why. The next person who comes up will also take a gift and open it, and if they don't like their gift, they can take your gift in exchange. We will continue to do this until we run out of gifts.

So hamsters and spouses, makes plan to attend and have a good time. Dress is casual. I like jeans myself! Let's laugh a little or a lot and enjoy our time together.

73,

Greg, W4GRC

VARA President's Message

Tonight I have been reading the ARRL Club President's Workbook. This book was printed in 1991 and was edited by Rick Palm (K1CE). Although we are not an ARRL affiliated club at this time, this workbook has several appropriate ideas for our club. I would like to share a few of these with you. These are helping me focus in on what the purpose and goals of our club should be.

There are four "big picture" ideas that is suggested that each club should pursue. Number One is to seek and broaden the Amateur Radio experience and capabilities of your members. I have been reading over membership forms of our members and am impressed at the amount of knowledge and abilities that so many of our members have. Number Two is to develop our club as a resource to the community. Our work with communications during fun community events and during emergency situations helps increase our value to the community. Number Three is to develop our club as a resource to local hams. We should always be willing to help one another in their amateur radio related needs. And Number Four is to

develop our club as as integral part of the Section's Field Organization. We are not an affiliated ARRL at this time, but we need to continue to develop our role in ARES, RACES, Augusta County Emergency Operations, and with other local ham radio clubs.

As we approach Christmas, I want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas. Despite all of the hustle and bustle Christmas can become, it is important for each of us to remember the true meaning of the Christmas season. I wish for everyone a truly Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Our "Quote of the Month" comes from Rick Palm (K1CE), who in the workbook I previously mentioned writes "Members are the lifeblood of your club." I want each one of you to know that you are an important of VARA.

Marvin Henderson
President, VARA

Request for Volunteers: Augusta County ARES/RACES

Hello all amateur operators in and around Augusta County.

Whether you are a member of ARES, RACES, or not, if you would like to be included in an updated call-up list of available help, please e-mail me.

Please include your name, call, address, nearest town and fire station to you, and phone/pager numbers that can be used to contact you.

Also, let me know if you have 4-wheel drive, generator power for your house, a generator

you can take with you for portable operations, whether you have HF AND VHF capabilities matching your license privileges, and anything else you can think of that may help in determining what our response abilities may be.

Thanks for taking your time to do this. This will certainly help me put together our response plans.

73, David Tanks

Emergency Radio Officer for Augusta County

Corrections and Additions

Last month's issue of the Monitor incorrectly identified a photograph as being of Benny, N4BCC, working on the Bike Ride. The photo should have been identified as Marvin, KF4WDI, President of VARA.

Additionally, three hard-working hams were left off the "thank you" list for participation on the Bike Ride. Norman Benner KA4EEN, James McDowell KF4FZY, and Bryan Daniels K4RMY, should have been included in the list.

Our apologies for overlooking these fine contributors.

Thanks for Old Computer Help...

Ed Troutman WA3TFX, put out a call for help in replacing his stone-age 8088 computer. Thanks to the large number of hams who responded to Ed's call, he is now fairly well fixed up, according to Jeff W4PJW. Thanks especially to Ray Colvin KE4HVR, Durwood Humphries, WA4ZPB, and Bob Van Fossen K4DJG, as well as Jeff Rinehart W4PJW, for the great response, offers, etc.

Thanks also to everyone else who responded.

URL for York County PA Ham Club Newsletter

Don Landes, WX4C, provides us with the new URL for the Keystone (York, Pennsylvania) Amateur Radio Club. Located just up I-81 a ways, they have some very interesting articles in their newsletter. Check out: <http://www.w3hzu.org/>

Can Hams Tell Where You're From Without Resorting to a Callbook site?

Do you say "Youse guys" or "Ya'll"? Do you call it a "soda" or a "Coke"? When five o'clock rolls around, do you eat "Supper" or "Dinner"? See whether you talk like a Yankee or a Rebel:

Thanks to AG4XN for this one: <http://alphadictionary.com/articles/yankeetest.html>

Listen to your HF Audio from Across the Country!

I found this very interesting website. You can transmit on 3840 kHz, and hear your own audio coming back at you on the Internet from four different locations in the western U.S. I just worked KE7EU in Oregon and WT7P in Elko Nevada, and heard my audio coming back to me from Art Bell's (W6OBB) receiver in Pahrump, Nevada, via my computer. Give it a try: <http://www.smeter.net/receive/receive.php>

VE Examinations Dec 3

The next Volunteer Examination Session is Scheduled for **December 3**.

Note that this is a change from the normal "second Saturday" rule.

We usually start registration at 9:00 pm sharp, with the exams starting immediately upon completion of the paperwork. We are usually done before noon.

If you are interested in becoming an examiner, please contact Gayle Shull, KU4XN, at 540-828-2132.

Need to Give Away Something?

If it is ham radio related, send an email to the Monitor editor, and he'll put it in the next issue.

If it is not ham radio related, however, rather than carrying it to the dump, list it on the Shenandoah Free-Cycle listserv mailing list. About 90% of the stuff (read: garbage and junk) that is listed on the freecycle board ends up being picked up by someone who actually WANTS it!

What's more, FreeCycle is great place to ASK for stuff that you want, but don't want to pay for. You never know when someone has something lying around picking up dust, and when you ask for it, they're willing to part with it if you'll just drive over and take it off their hands. Hey, you never know till you ask!

To get the most out of freecycle, you have to "sign up" and "join" one of the groups. But it is very easy. You can even sign up to get an email digest of the stuff that's listed, so you don't have to worry about checking the board every day.

To check out FreeCycle, go to the website: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/shenandoahvalley-south-freecycle/>

Tally Ho! The Fox and the Hounds...

The Augusta ARES sponsored a Foxhunt on Sunday afternoon 11-6-2005 on 146.49 FM. Gordon, WA4FJC with the assistance of his son, son-in-law and daughter-in-law was the wily fox.

The weather was superb as the temperature was about 80+ degrees F with a bright blue sky and a good time was had by all.

Bob, K4DJG found the fox at 2:20 PM. The three other hunters came wandering in throughout the afternoon.

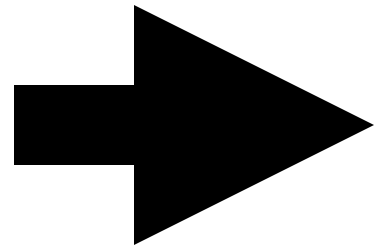
Participants included:

WA4FJC Gordon Batey- FOX
KG4EHM Jered Weaver- Fox assistant
Michael Batey - Fox assistant
Margaret Batey - Fox assistant
K4DJG Bob VanFossen -TOP Hound
K4EME Coles Andrus -Hound
KE4HVR Ray Colvin -Hound
W4PQK Jess Hancock -Hound
KD4HOA Donna Hancock -Hound
KI4FZV Gary VanFossen -Hound

Thanks to Gary, KI4FZV for the attached photographs.

Bob K4DJG will be the fox for the next outing.

73 Gordon WA4FJC



Open Letter From Bob Steere, N1QEQ

Over the past week or so, I have had the opportunity to communicate via email with Jim Junkins, head of the EOC. For those of you who don't know me, I am always trying to think up new ways to promote our hobby and our clubs via different types of Public Relations. With a couple of exceptions, the local media tends to be a non-factor. The bright spot was the video coverage we got for FD from the cable channel out of Woodstock. TV3 was approached twice by me in person about doing a story on the RMH station, but it was like talking to a brick. If the Woodstock station was approached again, I'm sure they would be delighted to do it. But that's for another time.



I had asked Jim whether the EOC could have the mobile COMM bus in the Veterans Day Parade in Harrisonburg on the 13th. It couldn't be arranged. I then sent him an email again asking him if he would consider putting it in the Harrisonburg Christmas Parade which is the first weekend in December. The reason I mentioned this was to see not only whether he would be interested in putting it in the parade, but having it operating during and after the parade with hams manning the amateur position.

As I thought further, and if he is agreeable to it, wouldn't it be something to have someone or some company lend us a flatbed trailer or a low-boy trailer which would have several operating positions active on it during and after the parade. The parade breaks up at the County Office Building parking lot. They could be communicating with the bus; with the station at RMH; with other hams scattered throughout the city and county at Fire halls, schools, etc. Speakers mounted on the trailer could be providing continuous audio to the people watching the parade.

Not only good PR for the EOC, but Amateur Radio and the RACES/ARES groups working together.

These are just my thoughts, but if people are interested, a small sub-committee should be formed at the meeting. If there is interest, I would be glad to help as much as I can, but cannot be the leader. I have quite a bit on my plate with my responsibilities at the American Legion.

Bob Steere

N1QEQ

Power Supplies For Sale

Ray Colvin lets us know that Fred Fitzgerald has two Lambda regulated power supplies for sale. One is a six-amp supply (LK-345A), and the other is a 3-tier rack-mount 33 amp supply (LMF-12). Both are in great working condition. \$50.00 takes them both. Contact Fred at

freddyfitz@yahoo.com

MARA Secretary's Report – November 3 Meeting

The May MARA meeting was called to order Thursday, November 3, 2005 at 7:30 pm. Bill Karle KG4UPN Presiding.

Introductions were made.

Secretary's report was approved as printed.

Treasurer reported a balance of \$1614.40

Announcements and Committee Reports:

VE: Dec 3 next VE session

ARES/RACES: Bryan K4RMY announced that he had 14 MARA members sign up for ARES last meeting. Another invitation was given for any other members. Also, he stated that Jason N4DSL accepted a position as Assistant EC for Digital Communications and is waiting to here from several others about accepting AEC positions to help. He hopes to have some training and drills after the first of the year.

QRP Group: RockMite Kits came in. Door prizes at next meeting. This may be the last meeting at Andrew's AG4XN — Next Tuesday Nov. 8th at 7:00pm

Upcoming Events...

December 1: MARA Christmas Party at Traditions Restaurant

December 2-4: ARRL 160m Contest

December 3: VE Exams in Dayton Virginia

December 6: VARA Christmas Banquet at Kathy's in Verona — see article on page 1 for important information

December 10-11: ARRL 10m Contest

December 25: Christmas

December 31: Straight Key Night

Old business:

Vote on officers slate was done by acclamation:

President: Dick Weaver W3HXX
Vice President: Gerald Nauman KN4FM
Secretary: Bryan Daniels K4RMY
Treasurer: Sandy Mullins K4PZC
Member at Large: David Gordon KB4LCI
Member at Large: Jason Armentrout N4DSL (to take over for Dick W3HXX since he is President)

A BIG thank you to those that worked the Fall Foliage Bike event

Brief discussion of MARA status as an incorporated club. No action taken.

New business: None

50/50 Drawing was held and won by Sandy K4PZC \$15.00

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm

Respectfully submitted by
Bryan Daniels, K4RMY

A Last-Minute Tidbit Submitted by Gerry Brunk, K4RBZ

The readers of QST have chosen David Fordham, our Monitor editor, for the QST Cover Plaque award for his fine article in the July 2005 issue of QST entitled, "IEEE 802.11 Experiments in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley." Congratulations, Dave, on writing this outstanding article, and receiving this well deserved honor! — Gerry K4RBZ

VARA Secretary's Report – November 1 Meeting

The **V**alley **A**mateur **R**adio **A**ssociation met at Kathy's in Verona on November 1, 2005. The President, Marvin Henderson KF4WDI, opened the meeting at 7:30pm. There were 20 members present and 5 guests, Bob Van Fossen K4DJG, Andrew Barbour AG4XN, John Bottemiller N4SYH, David Pickering KE4JCY, Charlie Eckman KI4LHD and his mother Edie Eckman. Welcome to our visitors, and we would like to see all of you back next month.

50/50: Winner was Earl Flower KF4CZN, congratulations Earl!!!

Richard Huttinger AA4RH received the order of CD's and Tapes from ARRL to be used for programs at the club meetings but wasn't too pleased with them. Some will be of interest for our club program.

VARA OFFICERS FOR 2006 ARE:

President: Marvin Henderson
Vice-Pres: Mike Solomon
Treasurer: Doug Tippet
Secretary: Ray Colvin
Programs: Richard Huttinger

ON THE SICK LIST:

Queenie, Clinton's (KB4OLM) wife still has health concerns but is improving.

Denny Morland N4XPW is home from the nursing home and continuing therapy at AMC.

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 8:05pm.

Richard AA4RH presented a video of the 1935 ARRL Station and the operating staff in their early years of operation. The video showed a lot of the early equipment such as the Dictaphone, old royal typewriters, the early tube radio with the monstrous transformers of high voltage. One operator made contact across the leads of a transmitter and was electrocuted. It also showed the old ticker tape machine used to send out the ARRL Bulletins. Ladies did the accounting and filing by hand. The ladies also did the ARRL Membership certificates on the old typewriters. The video gave the names of most of the personnel and told a little about their career there.

Thanks to Richard for sharing that with us.

Submitted By:
VARA Secretary

Ray Colvin KE4HVR

MARA/VARA

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

NOTE MEETING TIME CHANGES!!
SEE PAGE 1

MASSANUTTEN AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, Inc.

President: Richard (Dick) Weaver W3HXH
Vice President: Gerald Nauman KE4FM
Secretary: Bryan Daniels K4RMY
Treasurer: Sandy Mullins, K4PZC
Board (exp 06): Jason Armentrout N4DSL
Board (exp 07): David Gordon KB4LCI

<http://mara.ws>

MARA meets the first Thursday of each month
The December Meeting is at Traditions
on Mt. Clinton Pike in Harrisonburg.
Meal starts at 6:00 pm.

Visitors are welcome.

Dues (\$12 per year) should be mailed to:

MARA
PO Box 1882
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

President: Marvin Henderson, KF4WDI
Vice President: Mike Solomon KJ4RM
Secretary: Ray Colvin, KE4HVR
Treasurer: Doug Tippet N8ESW
Program Manager: Richard Huttinger, AA4RH

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

VARA meets the first Tuesday of each month
The December Meeting is
at Kathy's in Verona.
Meal starts at 6:00 pm.

Visitors are welcome.

Dues (\$15 per year) should be mailed to:

Doug Tippet
2348 Mosley St
Waynesboro, VA 22980