

July-August  
2008

# The Monitor

*Published jointly by the Valley Amateur Radio Association and the Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc.*

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## **VARA Meeting: Shoneys at 6:00 pm, Tuesday August 5**

The Valley Amateur Radio Association will meet at the Shoney's Restaurant for the August 5 meeting. This is located 1/2 block north of US 250, east of the intersection with Interstate 81, in Staunton (Brands Flat, actually). The dinner begins at 6:00 pm. The business meeting begins at 7:00 pm, followed by the program.

## **MARA Meeting: Wood Grill at 6:30 pm, Thursday August 7**

The Massanutten Amateur Radio Association meets at the Wood Grill Buffet Restaurant on Reservoir Street in Harrisonburg. Dinner starts at 6:30 pm, followed by a business meeting at 7:30 pm. At press time, attempts to line up a full program have fallen through. However, representatives from a motorized touring association will be in attendance and will give an informative talk about their upcoming event in the valley. Come out and enjoy the good food and fellowship on August 7.

## **ARES-RACES MOU On-Line**

As announced at the July MARA meeting, ARES and RACES have combined and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. Local hams (**ALL local hams**) are encouraged to check out the web pages about this new agreement. This document supersedes and replaces all previous arrangements relevant to ham operators functioning in support of governmental-related emergencies.

This document affects all hams who have any intention of volunteering in ANY capacity during a declared emergency — such as a blizzard, flood, hurricane, severe storm, accident, chemical spill, neighborhood evacuation, terrorist attack, aircraft crash, or any other government-declared emergency.

Check out the document itself by going to this website: [http://www.aresva.org/aresva.html#200807\\_MOU2](http://www.aresva.org/aresva.html#200807_MOU2)

Scroll down to the article titled: "As Promised by the Leadership Here is the MOU" and click on the link in the sentence: "The signed document can be found HERE."

The direct link to the PDF MOU itself is: [http://www.aresva.org/pdf/VDEM\\_ARES\\_MOU\\_3\\_July\\_2008.pdf](http://www.aresva.org/pdf/VDEM_ARES_MOU_3_July_2008.pdf)

Also, see the detailed article on **page 8** of this issue of the Monitor.

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## A Request for Assistance in October

*Editor's Note: The letter below was sent to the president of MARA, who has invited Detrick to come to the August 7 MARA meeting and discuss this event. Be sure to come to the August meeting and be prepared to learn more.*

Dear Gene:

I am a member of the Northern Virginia Trail Riders (NVTR, [www.nvtr.org](http://www.nvtr.org)). We are a group of primarily off-road motorcycle and ATV riders.

Annually, we hold an event in the Harrisonburg area, running mainly through the George Washington National Forest.

The event is a mix of on- and off-road motorcycle riding (all of the bikes in the event are street legal). We ride for 2 days during the first full weekend in October, the 4th and 5th this year. Each day we leave out of Natural Chimneys campground, and run a ~120-150 mile loop that heads roughly northward from the campground, eventually heading back to Natural Chimneys.

The bounds of the event are roughly Bergton to the north, Sugar Grove/Franklin to the west, and Fulks Run/Ottobine to the east. We have around 120-150 participants in the event, plus support crews.

Historically, communication has been somewhat challenging for us, which is why I write you today.

The club has Course Marshalls (Marshalls) and Support Trucks spread throughout the event. Presently, our only effective communications are by word of mouth from one Marshall crew to the next (or to a support truck). In the event of a lost rider ("I'm lost/exhausted how do I get back to the course/camp!"), rider breakdown (not uncommon), or worse, injury (rare, but happens), it can be tricky to get information routed effectively to the right people.

By sponsoring the event, we do take on a certain responsibility to our participants to help get them (and their broken bike) back to camp safely. Our biggest challenge, generally, is keeping support trucks in the right areas, or routed to the right des-

tinations. Where distances between two points by bike can often be covered in 15-30 minutes, it can often take an hour or two by truck to travel between the same points. If a truck isn't routed efficiently, they end up back-tracking, and are out late into the night trying to find riders and bikes (not to mention burning off an extra hundred dollars of fuel, with current prices).

Word of mouth is somewhat effective, and what we've been using for years. Given the terrain and distance, cell phones and GMRS/FRS radios are ineffective. There has been talk of renting satellite phones for our crews, but we are not confident that they will be effective.

We are wondering if the local Rockingham or Augusta County HAM community might want to play on the mountain for a few days and help us with comms.

The logistics of how you might be able to help would certainly take a bit more discussion to figure out.

Perhaps I could come down to one of your monthly meetings to discuss things in a bit more detail. I think I'm the only HAM in \*our\* club, so getting radios onto bikes doesn't seem feasible (well, except for mine, but I'm a CW only guy so I'd need advice on a good radio to buy/borrow to carry with me, and how to use one of those "voice" modes).

Oh, we do have lunches "catered" each day by a local Volunteer Fire Department and a Church group, so there would be free (and really good!) food in the deal each day.

Please let me know if this sounds like an idea you might be interested in entertaining. Even if you're iffy on it, perhaps I can come down and sit face to face and tell you a bit more about how it all really goes together. I can bring course maps and anything else you think might be informative.

73, Detrick, KI4STU

## VARA Members: Check the Menu...

VARA is in search mode, looking for a new dinner spot. One of the arrangements to be considered is going to the Mossy Creek Café for the meal, followed by the Augusta County Library in Fishersville for the meeting.

VARA members should have received an email providing the Mossy Creek Café's menu for perusal. Please come to the August 5 meeting prepared to discuss and make a decision on this restaurant arrangement. Thanks to Al Bonck N3JB for obtaining the menu.



## VARA Apparel

Ray and Nancy Colvin contacted the Highland Apparel shop in Monterey about obtaining T-Shirts, hoodies, sweat shirts and caps with the VARA logo.

The establishment is operated by Debbie Washer, the XYL of Butch, N5SMQ.

A quote should be forthcoming and will be discussed at the August 5 meeting. A catalog will be available so everyone can see what the items are.

## VE Exams August 9

The next VE session will be held Saturday, August 9, at the usual location: Woodmen of the World building on Highway 42 just north of Dayton Virginia. The session is open for all tests, new hams, and upgrades. **If you need a study manual, contact Gayle Shull, KU4XN at 540-828-2132.**

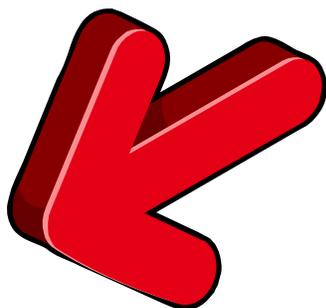
Gayle wants to remind everyone that the Extra Class Question Pool changed July 1st.



## Rockingham County ARES Net Controls

August 4 (simplex): Ray Ritchie K4NRA  
 August 11: Gerald Nauman KN4FM  
 August 18: Gayle Shull KU4XN  
 August 25: David Fordham KD9LA  
 September 1 (Simplex): Bryan Daniels K4NRA  
 September 8: Gerald Brunk K4RBZ  
 September 15: Norman Benner KA4EEN  
 September 22: Hugh Pettis K3EC  
 September 29: EC Showalter KG4KUR  
 October 6 (simplex): James McDowell IV NN4JM  
 October 13: Gerald Nauman KN4FM  
 October 20: Gayle Shull KU4XN  
 October 27: Bryan Daniels K4RMY

This net meets Mondays at 8:00 pm local time. Simplex nets are on 146.550. Other Mondays, the net meets on the 147.225 repeater, which requires a plus offset (+0.600 MHz), and a PL tone of 131.8 Hz.



## Are You Using The 145.130 Repeater Yet?

Do you have it programmed into your memory? The 145.130 repeater uses an occasional tone of 88 Hz, and a minus offset. Be sure to get this frequency programmed into **all** your rigs — base, mobile, and HT's. This repeater will serve as the backup ARES emergency repeater during an emergency in Rockingham County. You don't want to be caught having to spend time in a real emergency putting this repeater in your memory bank. Be prepared! Do it now!

## Kudos to Hugh Pettis K3EC

Hugh's homebrew receiver he assembled in Afghanistan in 1955 was the subject of a very nice article appearing in the August 2008 issue of QST magazine entitled "Homebrew High Adventure, 1955 Style".

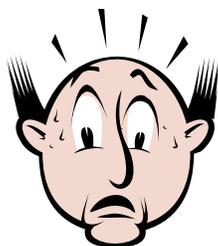


## Kudos to Howard Zehr N9AHQ

The United States Government has named restorative justice expert Howard Zehr to be one of six members of a new Victim's Advocacy Group, a move that represents a major step toward addressing the needs of crime victims at the Federal Level. The VAG will be under the umbrella of the U.S. Sentencing Commission, which develops national sentencing policies and guidelines for the Federal court system. Congratulations to Howard!



## Safety Recall: Radio Shack DC Power Supplies



The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has announced a recall of 160,000 Radio Shack 's popular 13.8-VDC power supplies, cat numbers 22-507 and 22-508.

The affected units have date codes 08A04 through 01A08. (The code format is *mmAyy* where *mm* is the month, and *yy* is the year of manufacture.) These were sold at Radio Shack stores nationwide between October 2004 and January 2008 for between \$50 and \$90.

These units were wired incorrectly and pose a shock and fire hazard. If you have one of these units, immediately unplug it and take it to your nearest Radio Shack for a free repair or replacement. For additional information, call Radio Shack at (800) 843-7422 or visit <http://radioshack.com/recall>.

Thanks to Ray Colvin for this info.



Radio Shack 22-508 15-amp power supply



Radio Shack 22-507 3-amp power supply

## Public Service Report: Bridgewater Lawn Party

Bridgewater Lawn Party Parades July 18-19, 2008

On two rather warm evenings Rockingham County ARES and MARA/VARA club members assisted during the annual Bridgewater Lawn Party parades. The Fireman's parade was Friday July 18th from around 7:00pm until about 8:15pm. On Saturday, July 19th the tractor and old car parade was held from about 6:00pm to 7:30pm . During these times hams from Rockingham and Augusta county assisted the flow of detour traffic around the parade route, gave directions and assistance to those needing it. This is a yearly event that is very import to area repeaters because donations are made by the town of Bridgewater to the various repeaters organizations. This year we had a larger than usual number of hams assisting each night.

Below is a list of those who helped:

### Friday:

Gordon Batey WA4FJC,  
Richard Haxton KC3AN,  
Steve Tennyson KF4ZWK

### Saturday:

EC Showalter KG4KUR,  
Rob Edmunds KF4ZXO

### Both nights:

Sheryl Tonini KJ4DOC ,  
Ray Ritchie K4NRA ,  
Nancy Ritchie KG5JAZ,  
Robert Tennyson KG4CHL,  
Gayle Shull KU4XN,  
Gerry Brunk K4RBZ,  
Bryan Daniels K4RMY, and  
Gerald Nauman KN4FM

Our thanks to all those who helped in this public service activity.

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*Many thanks to Mike Reno, KG400N, for printing and distributing the Monitor each month.*



# MarketPlace

## Tower, Rotator, and HF Beam For Sale – Package Deal Pricing

Five sections of Rohn 25G tower, including a base mounting plate and tapered top section, plenty of new 1/4" guy wire, with turnbuckles and guy-wire preforms, asking \$350 or best offer.

HF Beam: TH3 Jr., Old but in fair condition. Needs 1 part that fastens one element to the boom. Paperwork is included. Asking \$95.

HyGain HD73 Rotator, in working condition, with controller and cables. Special Package Deal: Take the Rotator, Beam, and Tower, **ALL** for only **\$400!**

Call Wayne Boyers, 540-294-3325 (personal cell), 540-569-6880 (work).

## Yaesu FT-901DM Still Available – Any Offer Considered

Vintage analog HF transceiver, plate and loading tuning, RF clarifier, 10m-160m 100-watt all mode AM/FM/FSK/CW/SSB. And the best part of this deal is the price: *make an offer!* Please! Call Richard Haxton, KC3AN, at 540-432-6742.



## Ten-Tec Scout Model 555 Portable HF Rig For Sale

Vintage no-tune compact portable HF transceiver, 50-watts, with built-in keyer. Deal includes modules for 3.5, 7, 14, and 21 MHz. Also includes Model 700C handheld microphone and manual. Excellent quiet receiver, good portable or backup transceiver. Asking \$300 but will entertain offers. Call Paul Wyse W4PFM, 540-434-3065

## Mosley Tri-Band Beam and Rotor For Sale

Dick Smith, W4KHV, in Waynesboro, has a Mosley tri-band HF beam and rotor for sale. No other information was provided by press time. If you are interested in learning more about this offer, email Dick at flyrrs@comcast.net

## 1KW Amplifier For Sale

Jason Armentrout has an Ameritron AL-80A HF 1-kilowatt linear amplifier for sale. The Amprex 3-500ZG tube has very little use on it. The amp is in very nice condition. He's asking \$750. Contact Jason at Jason@atrs.com or call 540-578-3461.



## Legal-Limit Antenna Tuner For Sale

Jason Armentrout also has a Vectronics HFT-1500 roller-inductor 1500-watt antenna tuner for sale. It's a perfect complement to the amplifier above, but can be sold separately. He's asking \$300 for the tuner.



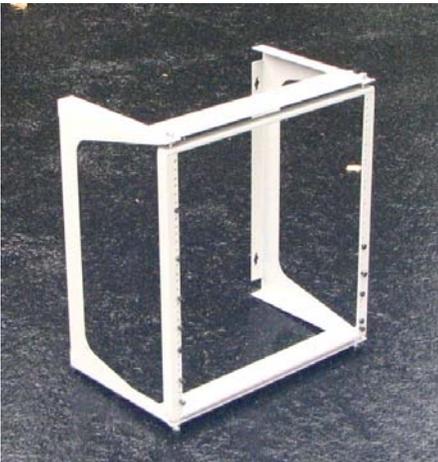
## Wall-Mount Rack Mount For Sale

Mint condition 19" standard rack mount for electronics, designed for direct wall mounting. 22 inches high, 12 inches deep, includes rack mounting screws. Asking \$35

Also available: rack mount power strip and surge suppressor: uses one standard rack position, six outlets, switched, full surge suppression, fused, includes pull-out lights that shine on rack-mounted equipment below. Asking \$35.

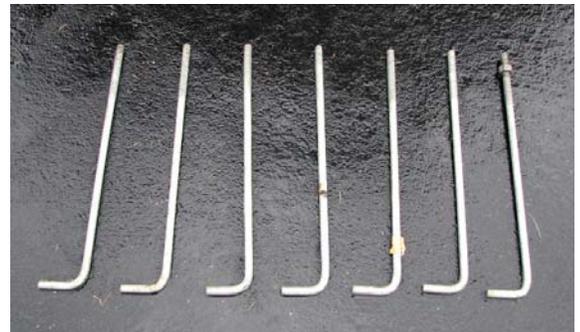
Combo-deal: Save: Buy rack mount and power strip surge suppressor both for \$50.

Contact David KD9LA at 540-234-0448 or leave message at 540-568-3024.



## J-Type Anchor Bolts: Free For Pickup

David KD9LA has seven J-bolts — free to a good home. These are typically imbedded in concrete to anchor a tower to its base. They can also be used to anchor primary beams to a foundation in building construction. They are 3/4 inches diameter, 24-inches long from the end to the turn. Call David at 540-234-0448 or leave a message at 540-568-3024. U-Pickup.



## ARES and RACES Combine and Join to Form One Single Organization

A new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been executed and signed by the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM), ARES, and RACES.

The MOU was signed July 3, 2008, by Mike Cline, State Coordinator of Emergency Management on behalf of VDEM, by Mac McNeer, Virginia State RACES Officer on behalf of RACES, Carl Clements, the ARRL Virginia Section Manager on behalf of ARRL, and Ron Sokol, the ARRL Virginia Section Emergency Coordinator on behalf of ARES.

Dennis Dura, the ARRL Emergency Preparedness Manager, called the MOU “a precedent-setting document” because it essentially makes ARES and RACES one and the same organization in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

ARES is an unincorporated organization of ham operators who have “signed up” as volunteering for service if needed. ARES volunteers can meet and operate as an organization freely, at will, at any time and under any conditions. RACES, on the other hand is a formal governmental operation. A RACES operation exists only when RACES has been “activated” by way of a “declaration” by a government official.

The new MOU essentially says that ARES members are eligible to be RACES members without any additional training, certification, or registration. To quote the document, “This MOU formally recognizes any registered Virginia ARES member also as a registered member of RACES within the Commonwealth of Virginia.”

The MOU also states, “The Commonwealth of Virginia and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management recognizes that the ARRL Virginia Section Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) is the organization representing radio amateurs throughout the Commonwealth. ... In the event of a declaration of a State of Emergency or a local declared emergency as defined in the Code of Virginia 44-146-16, these same ARES stations will automatically become RACES stations and will assume the authorizations and responsibilities as defined under FCC Rules and Regulations” governing RACES operations.”

The MOU provides that, “The ARES or RACES may be

activated by VDEM or by a local jurisdiction’s emergency manager/coordinator or designated person by notification to the state Section Emergency Coordinator, Assistant State Emergency Coordinator, District Emergency Coordinator local Emergency Coordinator, or designated person.”

“VDEM, through the State Amateur Radio Liaison and State RACES Officer, will encourage Local Emergency Managers to interact with VA ARES Emergency Coordinators and other appropriate ARES officials or any other amateur group, club, or individuals to establish amateur radio systems within their jurisdictions.”

Perhaps the most important part of the MOU as far as local hams are concerned is found under section VII of the MOU:

“Pursuant to Section 44-146-23 of the Code of Virginia, a volunteer RACES member does enjoy limited protection from liability to the same extent as a state employee, provided they act within the scope of their training, the limits of this MOU, and the mission assigned by the agency.”

What this means is that any registered ARES volunteer who is acting as a RACES station in an emergency enjoys liability protection the same as any state employee.

Here is an interpretation of the bottom-line meaning of this MOU: If the state or local officials declare an emergency and ask for ham radio help, they will “activate RACES”. Any ham who is currently registered with ARES will be eligible to participate in the RACES operation, and will enjoy liability protection for activities undertaken as part of that operation.

**Note that you must be formally registered with ARES *before the emergency is declared* in order to enjoy this liability protection.**

**Use the registration form on the following page.**

For more information contact Bryan Daniels K4RMY (Rockingham County) or David Tanks AD4TJ (Augusta County).



Amateur Radio Emergency Service®

ARES® Registration Form

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Name:                  |  |
| Call Sign:             |  |
| Mailing Address:       |  |
| City, State, ZIP code: |  |
| e-mail address(es):    |  |
| Home phone number:     |  |
| Work phone number:     |  |
| Cell phone number:     |  |
| License Class:         |  |

Check bands and modes that you can operate:

| MODE                           | HF | 6 meters | 2 meters | 222 MHz | 440 MHz | Others |
|--------------------------------|----|----------|----------|---------|---------|--------|
| SSB                            |    |          |          |         |         |        |
| CW                             |    |          |          |         |         |        |
| FM                             |    |          |          |         |         |        |
| DATA                           |    |          |          |         |         |        |
| PACKET                         |    |          |          |         |         |        |
| Other modes<br>(specify below) |    |          |          |         |         |        |
|                                |    |          |          |         |         |        |
|                                |    |          |          |         |         |        |
| Mobile<br>Operation            |    |          |          |         |         |        |
|                                |    |          |          |         |         |        |

Can your home station be operated without commercial power? Yes [ ] No [ ]

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Contact ARES® and ARRL Section Leaders in your area: <http://www.arrl.org/sections/>.

Learn about ARRL-sponsored Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Courses:

<http://www.arrl.org/cce/>

FSD-98 (07/04)

## VARA President's Message: Field Day Thoughts – Then and Now

Field Day has come and gone, and that has given me time to reflect on Field Days past and present. In fact, I was thinking about my very first Field Day. It was in 1964, and it was nothing like our most recent Field Day event in 2008. It was much simpler in 1964. We did not have computers to hook up, phone or Internet service. All you needed was a generator, a tent, an antenna, a transceiver or transmitter and receiver, a swr bridge, coax, pen and paper. I don't remember any kind of bonus points. You worked phone or cw on 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meters. You might try some vhf, but it was not a popular option where I lived.

It is funny, but I remember my first Field Day as though it were yesterday (in fact it was a lot of yesterdays). I was 17 years old, but not nearly as handsome as I am now! At that time I lived in Rochester, NY and attended Brighton High School. We had an amateur radio club and the club call was K2KHB. The club's equipment consisted of a Knight T-150 transmitter and a Hallicrafters HQ-110 receiver. If I remember right the T-150 was connected to a Heathkit outboard VFO that liked to drift up and down the band. The reason I even mention this is because my first Field Day was a high school club event.

All of us young hamsters were excited about the prospect of heading into the country, putting up a couple of antennas and working all 50 states on all bands. As I have already said, the planning was not as intense as it is today. There were no campers, nor was there a need for firewood. As a matter of fact, our main concern was food. After all, teenagers need, must have food in large quantities to survive. This is especially true where events like Field Day are involved and staying up all night is not an option.

We had two tents and one generator that put out all of one kilowatt. Our antennas were simple, two dipoles, one for each station. I used my own equipment in one of the stations. It was a Hallicrafters SR-150 80-10 meter transceiver with lots of tubes in it. That was it. There wasn't even an antenna tuner because tubes are not that particular when it comes to SWR. Other than food, paper and pens were the most important tools of our Field Day.

When it was time for the contest to begin, we were off like bandits, working as many stations as

we could. Little did we know that disaster was about to strike! Later in the evening the generator went off the reservation and surged to who knows how many volts above 120 volts. I remember the light getting brighter, including the dial light on my SR-150. A short time later, smoke appeared from my transceiver. I was the lucky one. I turned my radio off quickly. The other station was not so lucky. I guess they liked the additional brightness and smoke. In any event, the other operating station suffered severe damage. To make a long story short, Field Day was over just a few hours after it had begun. The generator had bit the dust.

By today's standards, our Field Day was a disaster. No back-up equipment or generator. What were we thinking? Actually, I am not sure what we were thinking. It was just a bunch of teenage hams having fun or at least trying to.

The key word is fun. Isn't that what Field Day is all about, fun and fellowship? The answer is "yes," but there's more. It's a time for teaching and training and for learning how to set up and operate communication equipment under less than ideal conditions.

Field Day serves as an opportunity to learn new skills, and to learn how to work together as a team. Field Day is fun and fellowship with a twist. It is to help us get ready for the real thing if it should ever happen. And probably someday it will. I am not sure we always come to Field Day with the right understanding of why we do what we do in the first place. I think the real purpose of Field Day has gotten lost, overshadowed by the technology and logistics to make it happen. In fact, if I may go full circle, Field Day has become so complicated that it may have lost some of its fun.

Don't get me wrong, we had a great Field Day and for the most part we worked together, but forgive me for saying so, but for the first time in all my Field Days, I noticed a bit of contention among the troops. Maybe it had nothing to do with Field Day. After all, of late we have had to deal with high food prices, energy costs, war and terrorism. Maybe we are just getting a bit cranky because we are older. Maybe our patience is a bit on the short side. Whatever the case, there were some cracks in our usual camaraderie. Maybe it had something to do with technology overload, that is equipment we were not familiar with, and computer set ups we had to adjust to and learn. Or maybe it was the people in the background who could not be

## VARA President's Message (cont'd)

quiet and let us operate. I don't really have an answer. I can tell you that I did not have as much "fun" this year.

What is the solution? We could all learn to be a bit more patient. We could adjust our attitude, roll up our sleeves and get it done. Over the years our total score has declined. It is true that propagation is not as good right now as it was in the past. However, our total score may have had more to do with our lack of enthusiasm than any other factor. Field Day is a 24-hour event that needs operators on the air for 24 hours. The high point of our Field Day this year was the GOTA station. They almost beat the phone station!

I enjoy and look forward to Field Day. I get to see some folks I don't see very often. I take a weeks vacation just to hang out with my friends and play radio. When I play though, I want to do the best I can. In fact, I want to win and make lots of points and have fun at the same time. Perhaps we need to rethink Field Day for next year. Maybe, just maybe it has grown into a complicated mess. In a real emergency, simplicity will win the day.

Of course what I have written is just one mans opinion. But in spite of it all, I am looking forward to next year – CQ Field Day!

Greg Czerniak, W4GRC

## Preliminary Field Day Results

At press time, we did not have the official Field Day Results.

However, unofficially, the word has it that we did much better than last year.

The phone station worked approximately 750 contacts.

The CW station worked approximately 850 contacts.

The GOTA station worked about 450 contacts.

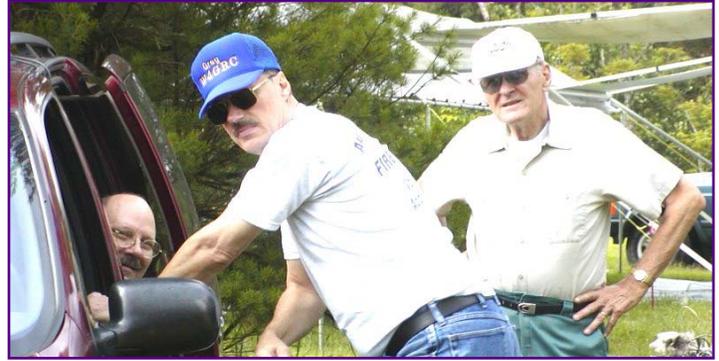
The VHF station did somewhere in the neighborhood of 150.

Overall, the contacts were up this year, even though the sunspots were way down.

But the real measure of Field Day Success is the fun we had. And this year we had plenty.

## Field Day Photos

There's plenty more where these came from. Check out the field day pictures on the web. (;photos by K4DJG)



Thanks to Jeff Rinehart W4PJW for preparing and issuing the special "Field Day Supplement" to the Monitor mailed in June.

## Responsibilities of the FD Chairman



Now THIS is what delegation is all about. Above we see the Field Day Committee Chairman N1QEQ on the left, properly doing what an outstanding Field Day chairman is *supposed* to be doing: delegating responsibility and supervising the actual work. Here, Bob is overseeing the erection of the Field Day tower. Bob did an excellent job of leading this year's field day operation. Thanks, from all of us!

## Definitions of Terms Heard At Field Day (for the benefit of new – and old – hams)

**Lots of specialized jargon was used at Field Day. The following list of definitions was furnished by Don Landes, WX4C, for the benefit of the hams in the area. The definitions may have originated with Ron, K3MI.**

**S.W.R.** -- A term, applied to any part of the antenna system, which means: "Savings-to-Watt Ratio". Based on the inverse relationship of dollars in the bank and effective radiated power.

**Characteristic Impedance** The usual reaction of your spouse when told about the proposed antenna system.

**Traps** -- Devices installed in antennas to collect rain-water, to keep it from running further down the antenna.

**Wind Loading** -- The measure of how much more awkward it gets to handle a big beam as you ascend the tower.

**Balun** -- (Pronounced: "balloon" by many). An anti-surveillance device, installed in coaxial lines at the antenna, to prevent nosy neighbors from eavesdropping on you through their TV sets.

**Transmatch** -- A device mistakenly believed to decrease S.W.R.. The premise is that this device allows you to load up into a mis-matched antenna. Unfortunately, it is the cost of one that lowers your S.W.R.

**House Bracket** -- A device which secures the house and the tower together. It lets the tower do double-duty by holding up the house during severe windstorms.

**Rotator Control Box** -- A device which is designed to let you monitor antenna "windmilling".

**Windmilling** -- A technique whereby prevailing winds are allowed to rotate the antenna, enabling the operator to "scan" the radio horizon.

**Dummy Load** -- A measure of the stress exerted on a tower by a ham who climbs the tower without a safety belt.

**Coax** – (Usually mis-pronounced as two syllables). A term applied to the maneuvering of a piece of transmission line through the attic or walls of a house.

**Db's Gain** – A bunch of yellow-jacketed wasps found a great place to build their nest, at the bottom of the rotator housing on my tower.

**Db's Loss** – Fortunately, lightning struck the tower and the wasps were totally destroyed.

**Vertical** – A much-maligned antenna, said by some critics to "radiate equally poorly in all directions". This is not true, as many who have built one know. In fact, the vertical can have directional characteristics, and not radiate at all in some directions. I hope this clears up that myth once and for all!

**Sloper** – A variation of the vertical, where high winds have affected thin-walled aluminum tubing used in the construction.

**Inverted Vee** – A clever, but inferior, reverse adaptation of the true, "upright Vee", which allows the use of a single support instead of the usual two.

**Dipole** – Another modification of the true "Vee", and used where it is not possible to get the center feed point close to the ground.

**Ground Plane** – Usually, an array of 1/4-wavelength arms extending from the base of some verticals (or "slopers"). These arms are not recommended unless a rotator is also used, to take advantage of their directional features.

**Directional Coupler** – A device inserted into the transmission line which monitors the environment outside the shack, by utilizing the antenna as a remote sensor. For example, when the antenna responds to weather conditions such as severe icing or heavy winds, the coupler will produce indications of these responses. A special directional coupler has even been designed, presumably, to tell you when BIRDS are sitting on your antenna!

**Smith Chart** – An alias, to be used when you don't want people to know what chart you really used to design your antenna.

**Long Path** – The direction you are told to aim your antenna, to work a rare DX station, as suggested by the other fellows in the pileup.

**Element Spacing** – A critical antenna design factor which is optimized to place the tunable traps on a beam as far out of reach as possible, from the tower.

**Diversity Effect** – A property in which the quad-type antenna far excels over the yagi-type antenna. It relates to the number of directions an antenna can collapse into, under heavy winds.

**Selective Fading** – A quirk of propagation, whereby a signal arrives at a distant point by multipath, and where the different signal components arrive with varying phase relationships. This causes the signal to be "cancelled out" at some points. This wonderful effect helps eliminate some of the QRM from distant DX stations when you are trying to copy the pileup.

**"Off the back of the Antenna"** – A technique used by more experienced DX-ers, where the antenna is pointed away from the station being contacted. This creates a challenge similar to running QRP.

**QRP** – Restricting final input power to the transmitter to anything less than 500 watts, on 20 meters.

**Speech Processor** – A "state of the art" device which permits one to communicate with as many others at the same time as possible. However, beginner operators need to learn how to use one properly, to expand the signal beyond a narrow, 3 KHz bandwidth.

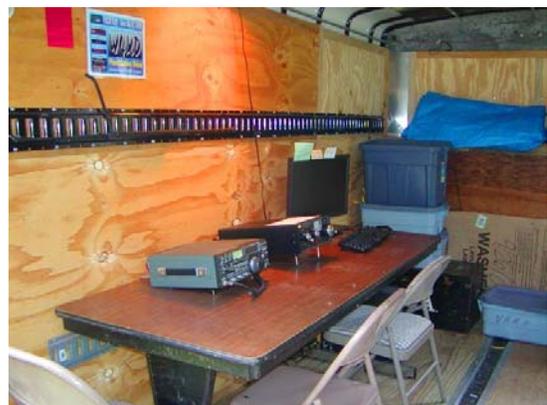
**"IMOKINCALLBK"** – An expression used in a CW QSO, to say: "you send me your QSL card first, turkey, and then I'll send you mine".

**IRC** – An economic instrument, administered by the Postal Service, to control the balance-of-trade deficit.

**Parasitic Element** – A person who takes lists for DX-stations.

**LISTS** – A method of making DX contacts, where some self-appointed person takes a list "on the air" (aka: his buddies on 2-meters) of people who wish to "work" a person in some DX location. This makes it easy for hams who do not have the patience or time to learn real DX skills to get a quick, easy contact. In fact, if you can't hear the actual report from the foreign station, the list-controller will often help ("...OK, there, WB6xxx, did you hear Jose give you a '59' signal report?").

**QSL Manager** – The station you worked in Juan De Nova tells you to send a "Green Stamp" to a ham in Germany who is called a "QSL Manager". It is his duty to send your card to a ham in California, who then (after holding it for 8 months) sends you a QSL card.



## Reflections of the Displaced Confederate

I was first licensed in 1965 as WN3FQJ, then WA3FQJ, and later with a variety of “3-land” call-signs. My desire for a “4” call was finally satisfied in 1996, thanks to the Vanity Call Sign initiative. I filed for and was issued N4XU by the FCC. It’s a call-sign that I consider a “keeper”.

Since I’m relegated to residing in Pennsylvania, as a “Yankee Under Protest”, over the years I participated in many Field Day events with the local amateur radio club in the “Land of Northern Aggression”. And one of my goals while operating the Field Day CW station, was to aggressively search for W4XD. I knew the Valley Gang always participated, because my long-time friend, Kitty Cat Bill – KE4FM – would keep me posted on the activities in the Valley. When I finally worked W4XD, I was then satisfied that my “Yankee-Land” FD had been a success.

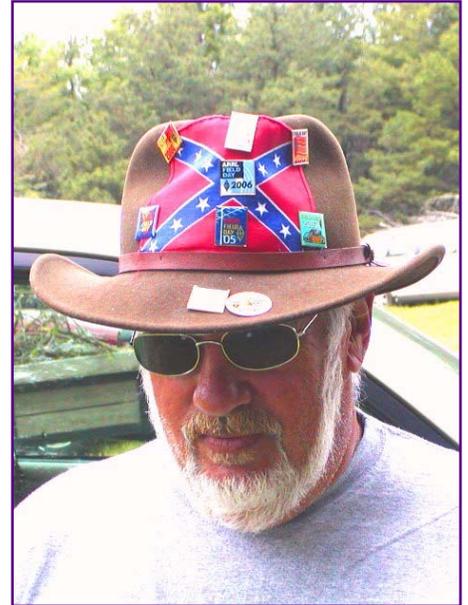
Then, in 1995, I was finally afforded the opportunity to begin active participation with the Valley Gang in Field Day on the mountain. And, every year since then, the last full week-end in June has been set aside for a return to the mountain. It is now 14 years and counting! The only thing that might preclude that would probably be death !

So . . . what’s my point, you ask? Well, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the participants, past and present, of the W4XD Field Day group. Their acceptance, the accommodations, and the courtesies extended to me these past years have been most gratifying. Not to mention the unequaled camaraderie during preparation for the event, and during Field Day operations. And for a number of years after Joe, W4XD, left the Valley, we used N4XU as the FD station call.

The Valley hams are without question, the best I have ever been associated with, bar none ! We always manage to have a very respectable FD score, and still have lots of fun and good times. And, it never rains on Field Day. You can’t beat that !

Field Day on the Mountain has been the pinnacle of my Amateur Radio “career”. Yes, working DX is great, getting that new country is great, but that’s not even a close comparison to the “W4XD Mountain-Top” experience.

Thanks again from that “Damn Yankee”,  
Neal, N4XU. (aka: Displaced Confederate)  
CW forever !!! didididahdidah



## MARA Secretary's Report – June 5 Meeting

Introductions were made all around.

### 1. Reports:

New Members:

2nd reading for:

Robert S. Edmunds KF4ZXO

Daryl Tonini KJ4DNY

Robert Brady KJ4DNX

Approved by unanimous vote

a. Secretary's minutes as printed in the June Monitor, moved, seconded and approved.

b. Treasurer's report - \$2,027.09 Motion to accept , seconded, approved

c. Groups

**ARES/RACES -**

Bryan, K4RMY had ARES membership forms for those willing to join Rockingham Co. ARES

Bryan, K4RMY made a business cards that contains information about ARES and local repeaters to be distributed to all MARA members and ARES members and was passed out to all those in attendance.

**VEC-**

A possible VE session in July at Fairgrounds . More information to follow. Only 1 hour allotted for session. Same weekend as B'water lawn party July 18th and 19th. 6:00 Friday the 18th 5:00 sat.

Discussion of a possible Technician class to be taught in Luray.

d. Public Service-

Grindstone 100 info for first weekend in Oct. There will be a 100 mile ultra mountain race the first weekend in October: Friday thru Sunday. They are asking for hams to help with communications during the race.

More information will follow.

RMH testing of repeaters. RMH would like to test communications between Bath County Hospital and RMH using ham radio. A short discussion was held about which repeaters would be best to use.

Bike Shenandoah is scheduled for Sept. 20th

2. Announcements: Manassas Hamfest Sun June 8th Prince William Co. fairgrounds.

3. Old Business

Field Day Planning Committee-

Updates on spreadsheets

Hauling from storage area will be earlier this year on Monday rather than Friday

Trailers have been obtained.

Friday June 27th Field Day dinner on the mountain

Individuals may be asked to help get equipment to the site.

4. New Business: None

Motion to adjourn ,seconded and approved. Program by K4NRA: Reapters for Dummies

Submitted by

Bryan Daniels, K4RMY

## MARA Secretary's Report – July 3 Meeting

Introductions made all around

### 1. Reports:

New Members: 1st reading for: Sheryl Tonini KJ4DOC

- a. Secretary's minutes to be printed in the Monitor, moved, seconded and approved.
- b. Treasurer's report - \$2,027.09 Motion to accept , seconded, approved
- c. Groups

### **ARES/RACES—**

Bryan, K4RMY had ARES membership forms for those willing to join Rockingham Co. ARES

New Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

Aspect 1 - The VDEM, through the MOU, requires the ARES leadership to provide to VDEM a list of all ARES members. You must be named on the list prior to a communication emergency to be considered for deployment during that emergency;

Aspect 2 - VDEM, upon receiving this list, will be responsible to provide for each named ARES member "limited protection from liability to the same extent as a State employee" during an activation. (You must be newly registered with ARES to receive this protection—prior registrations don't count).

Aspect 3 - Therefore, it is necessary for all ARES members to register anew. To accommodate this a new short form has been placed on the ARESVA.org web site. To assure that no ARES member is mistakenly left off the list, I ask the ECs to supervise the registration of their units. The ECs are free to use any method they wish for this registration. But, I task them to make sure 100% of their unit is registered.

Aspect 4 - When each ARES individual has registered for ARES they will automatically be registered as part of the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) as well. For the first time, due to the work of many administrations we will be known as ARES/RACES.

Aspect 5 - We cannot all register at the same time—it would place too much strain on the system as it now exists. So, the registration will be done by calling select ASECs and DECs to register their region. We will do this one region at a time until all regions one through fifteen are complete.

The ASECs and DECs will work cooperatively to assure their ECs are registering all their members and welcoming any new members that wish to participate.

The registration schedule\* is as follows:

1. July 4-10 - Districts 2 and 4. Bruce Freund, Howard Cunningham, and Tom Lauzon.
2. July 11-18 - Districts 5, 7, 8, & 9. Bill Sprague, Verlan Hall, Joe Imburgia, and Terry Buzzard.
3. July 19 - 25 - Districts 6, 10, & 11. Earl Moore, Anthony Harbour, Christopher Hanslits, and Steve Clary.
4. July 26 - August 1 - Districts 1, 3, & 15. David Damon, Ed Krom, and Mac McGrath.
5. August 2 - August 8 - Districts 12, 13, & 14. Mark Jackson, Geep Howell, and John Ellington.

\*If by chance you miss registering a member, feel free to go back any time after August 8 to register them. After these dates there will be open registration for anyone who gets the word late or has reconsidered their position.

Important Note - Any amateur radio operator who does not register will not be ARES/RACES and will not be covered by the State liability insurance. You do not have to be ARRL to register. All amateur radio operators are welcome to join now if

Continued on next page

## MARA Secretary's Report – July 3 Meeting (continued)

you have not joined before. To be a member you must hold an FCC amateur radio license and never have been convicted of a felony. We welcome all amateur operators from all groups within the Commonwealth of Virginia. All ARES appointees are to register as well, and please expedite this new registration process.

### VEC-

A possible VE session in July at Fairgrounds July 18th 6:00pm . . Only 1 hour allotted for session. Same weekend as B'water lawn party July 18th and 19th. 6:00 Friday the 18th 5:00 sat.

Aug 9 next VE session.

Discussion of a possible Technician class to be taught in Luray.

### d. Public Service-

B'water lawn party July 18th and 19th. 6:00 Friday the 18th 5:00 Sat. Meet at town hall.

Grindstone 100 info for first weekend in Oct. There will be a 100 mile ultra mountain race the first weekend in Oct. Friday thru Sunday. They are asking for hams to help with communications during the race. More information will follow.

Bike Shenandoah is scheduled for Sept. 20th

## 2. Announcements:

Field Day Planning Committee- N4KYM upload pictures of FD

## 3. Old Business None

## 4. New Business

K4DJG--- tower safety - VARA will build a triangular addition to the MARA tower to replace the ladder used in the past.

Motion to accept by N1QEQ

Second by Davd K4DPF

Discussion- there might be stress fractures on the tower due to torque.

Questions about the design....

Amendment made and seconded that Gordon be contacted about our concerns

Amendment approved

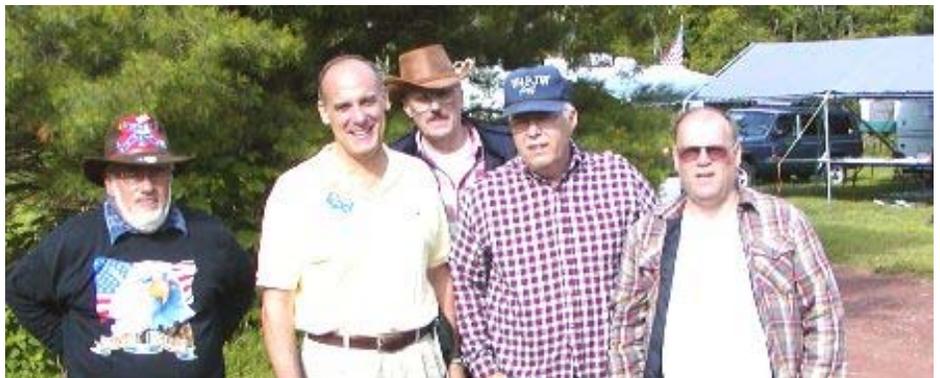
Motion as amended passed

New Call or upgrades: Lois AJ4JI was KF4BFE upgrade to Extra, K4RMY upgraded to extra

Motion to adjourn ,seconded and approved. 50/50 Won by KC4HYT

Program FD pictures

Submitted by  
Bryan Daniels, K4RMY



## VARA Secretary's Report: June 3 Meeting

The **Valley Amateur Radio Association** met at Shoney's in Staunton June 3, 2008. The President, Greg Czerniak W4GRC, opened the meeting at 7:00pm. There were 32 members present and 4 guests, Bob Johnson K14BXQ, Gordon Winn WW4GW, Jim Owens K4CGY and Alan Boaz N4GGC. Welcome to our visitors, we hope to see all of you back for next month.

**50/50** was won by Dave Metz KJ4JX. Dave donated his part to the club. Congratulations Dave and thanks for the donation.

**Mile Post "0" ... Ron Ramsey AB4A from Roanoke asked us to run the Mile Post "0" on the Blue Ridge Parkway again this year. The event will be on September 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. We will need equipment and operators to man the station and greet visitors that stop by as we did last year. We need someone to be in charge of this event.**

**Antenna System for Staunton EOC, (Staunton Augusta Rescue Squad building on Coulter St.)** Scott Newlen K14QQZ said he was told the antenna and coax order was in. a few small parts are still needed for the installation.

**Augusta Co. 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at 8:00pm. This repeater has a minus offset and a tone of 131.8 when needed. The ARES Net will be run on simplex from time to time so listen on the repeater and watch for e-mails to this effect.

**PROGRAMS NEEDED:** Al Bonck N3JB, our 2008 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. Al's e-Mail address is: [margeal@ntelos.net](mailto:margeal@ntelos.net)

### **ON THE SICK LIST:**

**Denny Morland N4XPW** would appreciate cards and visits from anyone in the valley.

**Let's keep Denny in our thoughts and prayers.**

**NOTE contact person : 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 Fred Evans at: [n4kym@yahoo.com](mailto:n4kym@yahoo.com) Also a picture of the item would help it sell. Go to the VARA Web Site at: <http://>

[www.gsl.net/w4xd/](http://www.gsl.net/w4xd/) PLEASE notify Fred when your item is sold.

**e-Mail ADDRESSES: Keep your e-mail address up to date.** Please send them to:

Greg Czerniak W4GRC [grcljc@verizon.net](mailto:grcljc@verizon.net), Doug Tippet N8ESW [dtippett@ntelos.net](mailto:dtippett@ntelos.net), Ray Colvin KE4HVR [colvin@comcast.net](mailto:colvin@comcast.net) and David Fordham KD9LA [fordhadr@jmu.edu](mailto:fordhadr@jmu.edu).

**ALSO**, keep QRZ updated when call signs and e-mail addresses are changed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.

**PROGRAM:** Gordon Winn WW4GW gave a PowerPoint presentation and actual antenna demonstration on building and tuning antennas for maximum dB Gain. He talked about the way antennas were rated by the manufactures. Some rate them by dBi Gain compared to an isotropic antenna which is a make believe starting point of "0" dB Gain and some by dBd Gain as compared to a dipole antenna of 2.15 dB Gain. Using a dipole antenna and a field strength meter for a reference point the true dB Gain and resonance of the antenna you are building or tuning can be found. This is done by replacing the dipole antenna with the antenna you are building or tuning and not changing the field strength meter setting, power to the antenna or coax that was connected to the dipole antenna. The reading on the field strength meter will then tell you the gain of your antenna. Gordon demonstrated the gain of yagi antennas starting with the driven element then adding a reflector element then a director element. As each element was added the field strength meter reading went up.

He also bent the elements of the dipole so they were not straight, then as an inverted vee and as a loop, the field strength meter reading didn't change. He also demonstrated the quad antenna from the driven element up to four elements.

He said the factory antennas, as they come out of the box, do not work as they are rated to without some tuning. Gordon said you could estimate the dB gain of the yagi by multiplying the number of elements by 1.7. He also showed charts of the yagi and quad antenna radiation angles, the quad with the narrower and longer radiation pattern. There were also charts showing the current and voltage levels across the length of the center feed dipole, the middle being the highest current level and the ends being the highest voltage level.

Thanks to Gordon for a great presentation!

*Submitted by*  
VARA Secretary  
Ray Colvin KE4HVR

## VARA Secretary's Report: July 1 Meeting

The **VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION** met at Shoney's in Staunton July 1, 2008. The President, Greg Czerniak W4GRC, opened the meeting at 7:00pm. There were 19 members present and no guests.

**50/50** was won by Scott Newlen KI4QQZ. Congratulations Scott, don't spend it all in one place.

**MEETING PLACE:** Suggestions were made for other meeting places and we hope to have information on several places at our next meeting. We are getting cramped for space especially when we have programs scheduled.

**PICNIC:** Plans have been started to have a picnic September 13, 2008 the second Saturday of the month.

**CLUB APPAREL:** Suggestions were made to purchase apparel to identify our club members during our events. Different types such as caps, windbreakers, hooded sweatshirts were mentioned. We hope to have more information at our next meeting.

**Augusta Co. 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at 8:00pm. This repeater has a minus offset and a tone of 131.8 when needed. The ARES Net will be run on simplex from time to time so listen on the repeater and watch for e-mails to this effect.

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### ON THE SICK LIST:

**Denny Morland N4XPW** would appreciate cards and visits from anyone in the valley. **Let's keep Denny in our thoughts and prayers.**

**NOTE new contact person: 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 Fred Evans at: [n4kym@yahoo.com](mailto:n4kym@yahoo.com) Also a picture of the item would help it sell. Go to the VARA Web Site at: <http://www.qsl.net/w4xd/> **PLEASE notify Fred when your item sells so he can remove it from the list.**

**E-MAIL ADDRESSES:** Keep your e-mail address up to date. Please send them to:

Greg Czerniak W4GRC [grcljc@verizon.net](mailto:grcljc@verizon.net), Doug Tippet N8ESW [dtippet@ntelos.net](mailto:dtippet@ntelos.net), Ray Colvin KE4HVR [colvingr@comcast.net](mailto:colvingr@comcast.net) and David Fordham KD9LA [fordhadr@jmu.edu](mailto:fordhadr@jmu.edu).

**ALSO,** keep QRZ updated when call signs and e-mail addresses are changed.

**Tour of Duty:** Scott Martin KI4MSJ will be leaving in December for a tour of duty in Iraq. Let's all keep him in our prayers.

He gave a talk on the preparation he will be going through before hand. He also plans to set up a ham radio station there and already has his Iraqi call sign Y19MST. Hopefully some of us in the valley will be able to make a contact with him while he is there.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40pm.

*Submitted by  
VARA Secretary  
Ray Colvin KE4HVR*

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

August 2: Roanoke (Vinton) Hamfest  
 August 3: Berryville (Winchester) Hamfest  
 August 2-3: ARRL UHF Contest  
 August 3: Page County ARES Net  
 August 4: Rockingham County ARES Net  
 August 5: VARA Meeting (Shoneys)  
 August 7: MARA Meeting (Wood Grill)  
 August 9: VE Exams in Dayton VA  
 August 10: Page County ARES Net  
 August 11: Rockingham County ARES Net  
 August 14: Augusta County ARES Net  
 August 17: Page County ARES Net  
 August 18: Rockingham County ARES Net  
 August 24: Page County ARES Net  
 August 25: Rockingham County ARES Net

September 4: MARA Meeting  
 September 13: VARA Picnic  
 September 20-21: Virginia Beach Hamfest

October 5: Camp Still Meadows Horse Ride Public Service Event  
 October 17-19: Shenandoah Fall Foliage Bike Festival

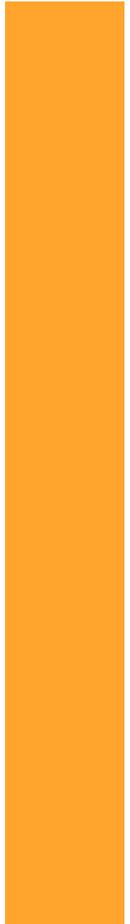
# MARA/VARA

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

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## Return Service Requested

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### MASSANUTTEN AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, Inc.

President: Eugene Rogers KG4JBC  
Vice President: David Fordham KD9LA  
Secretary: Bryan Daniels K4RMY  
Treasurer: Sandy Mullins, K4PZC  
Board (exp 08): Gayle Shull KU4XN  
Board (exp 09): Ray Ritchie K4NRA

<http://mara.ws>

MARA meets the first Thursday of each month  
at Wood Grill Buffet in Harrisonburg.

Dinner begins at 6:30 pm,  
the business meeting begins 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: Greg Czerniak, W4GRC  
Vice President: Scott Newlen, KI4QQZ  
Secretary: Ray Colvin, KE4HVR  
Treasurer: Doug Tippet, N8ESW  
Program Manager: Al Bonck N3JB

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

VARA meets the first Tuesday of each month  
The August meeting will be at Shoneys  
in Staunton at I-81 and US 250.

Dinner begins at 6:00 pm,  
the business meeting begins at 7:00 pm

**Visitors are welcome.**

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

Doug Tippet  
2348 Mosley St.  
Waynesboro VA 22980