

June
2010

THE MONITOR

Published Monthly for members of the Amateur Radio Clubs in Virginia's Central Shenandoah Valley

Field Day Committee: Volunteer(s) Needed Welcome Center Manager – Friday PotLuck Dinner Coordinator

The Field Day Committee is still looking for a couple of people to man the Welcome Center. They do not have to be hams, but could be wives, etc.

We also need someone to assist in the setup of the Friday Night Pot Luck Supper.

The Welcome Center manager helps the coffee pot stocked and snacks out during the contest. One person might be able to handle both positions. Any volunteers should contact Bob, N1QEQ or James, NN4JM via email at n1qeq@aol.com, or cwdxchaser@gmail.com



VARA Meeting Tuesday, June 1

The regular monthly meeting of the Valley Amateur Radio Association will be held on Tuesday, June 1 at Shoney's in Staunton. Dinner starts at 6:00 pm, business meeting at 7:00.

MARA Meeting Thursday, June 3

MARA's monthly meeting will be held June 3 at the Wood Grill in Harrisonburg. Dinner starts at 6:30, Business meeting at 7:30, followed by the program. This month, Ellsworth will be presenting a video on the BS7H DXpedition to Scarborough Reef.

PVARC Meeting: Friday, June 4

The Page Valley Amateur Radio Club will hold its bi-monthly business meeting at the hospital meeting room on Friday evening, June 4, at 6:00 p.m.



VARA President's Message

Every month I tell myself after the club meeting that I will go home and write up my remarks for next months newsletter but somehow it never seems to happen that way.

I do remember that we had a good meeting in May and Ellsworth K4LXG gave an interesting talk. It was supposed to be about his experiences at WSVB but somehow we all got so interested in what he was saying about his introduction to ham radio that we never got to hear much about his professional career. Perhaps he can come back soon and give us "the rest of the story".



If you missed the meeting in May, let me recap just a couple things. We voted to help again with the Bike Festival in October so that will take quite a few volunteers. Keep it in mind. We voted to purchase 4 DVD's about various DX expeditions. They will make good club programs.

The Field Day committee met again and they have worked out lots of details but there are still some key positions that need manned, so when you get contacted, please give careful consideration about what you are willing to help with to make our FD activity a fun, educational experience for everyone involved. Your help is needed.

See ya there Tuesday June 1st.

Jeff W4PJW, President VARA

MARA President's Message

Hello to all. The weather as you know is getting warmer but still rains enough to prevent doing important things like mowing, planting, antenna installation/refurbishing (not necessarily in order of importance), Hi, Hi! I am amazed at how fast time flies particularly since retiring. It is almost time for Field Day and the half-way point through the year. It does not seem as almost half of the year has whizzed by already! If you have not removed your Christmas decorations, just forget it and save them for this year's Christmas.



Since Jeanne and I moved into our new house, I have not had an HF antenna due to lack of trees within a reasonable distance to the house so close to 2 months ago I erected one using my emergency mast for my ham radio trailer. It works fine and I have enjoyed being on HF again. I have contacted Finland, Russia, Japan and Alaska. Yep, I call Alaska DX as it is as far away as some other countries. Most of these contacts I made using 5 watts and CW.

I am very pleased at the attendance at our MARA meetings. We have a strong club and one we can be proud of. Please keep it up!

I am also very pleased at the number of check-ins at tonight's Rockingham County ARES Net when I was Net Control. We had a total of 29 check-ins when the average has been just under 20 check-ins average. There are some new licensees who have told me that they want to join ARES so maybe some more check-ins?

The program for our June MARA meeting will be a DVD program on a DXpedition to a set of tiny rocks in the middle of the Indian Ocean. It may be a lengthy program, so come expecting to spend an hour or so after the business meeting. Until then,
73,

Ellsworth Neff, K4LXG,

PVARC President's Message

Sorry, the PVARC President's message didn't arrive before the publication Deadline



Where are the Field Day Assignments?

Traditionally, the June issue of the Monitor is where the Field Day Assignment Spreadsheets are published. However, this year the editor will be in Colorado starting in mid-June. This means the July issue will come out around the middle of June. So think: publishing the assignments in the July issue will mean the assignments will be much more up-to-date and accurate, and will still be out before Field Day! Look for the tables in the July issue which will come out sometime around June 16.

N4KYM: Clarification on Valley Hams ListServ Reflector

I think some further clarity for the valley Hams list server is needed. When setting it up, we were just trying to basically keep spammers out and jokes and emails like that. It IS entirely OK to use the valley hams server for other hobbies, communications needs, public service, for sale, items wanted, scouting events, astronomy. I think that gives a good idea of the basic intent. There are a couple of items that should not be posted here. Virus alerts..Most are false anyway, and any of those email petitions, and most other stuff that says, "forward this to everyone you know." . This is not the platform for them. Other than that, enjoy communicating with each other and sharing good useful information. I think the number of participants now is around 140.

*Fred - N4KYM
List / Group Mgr.*

Instructions for Signing up for the Valley Hams Listserv Reflector

To start receiving the email messages from the Valley Hams reflector, simply send an email (from the account you wish the emails to go to) address to valleyhams@googlegroups.com

If you want more information before you sign up, go to <http://groups.google.com/group/valleyhams>

147.045 Elliott's Knob Repeater Under New Ownership

I just talked to Scott Fielding and got permission to give out the following information about 147.045.

The 147.045 and 223.300 repeaters on Elliot Knob have been sold to Larry Toten KC8LRN of Hillsboro, WV.

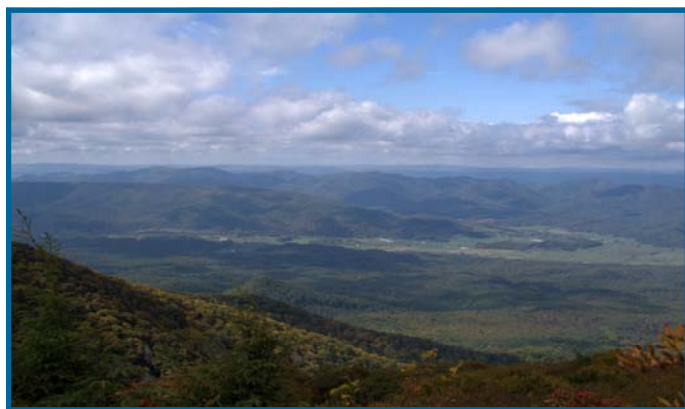
Visit Larry's website at <http://www.frontiernet.net/~kc8lrn/> and you will be pleased to see that he has done some great things with 220 MHz repeaters in West Virginia.

He intends to bring some of the same technology to Elliot Knob and instill new life into one of our local repeaters. The 440 repeater on Elliot will be relocated to Scott Fielding's house near Greenville. K4EME's APRS digi will remain on Elliot as is.

Larry is aware that the local clubs and hams occasionally use 147.045 for club special events and he is in full accord with maintaining that relationship.

Repairs and up-grades to the antennas at the site will begin some time next month.

Jeffrey M. Rinehart W4PJW



KJ4JX: Looking for a Professional Communications Consultant

I need some communications help that will affect everyone in Augusta County.

Problem: The localities of Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County need to replace virtually all of the communications equipment to meet the 2013 federal deadline for narrowbanding and digital. This is going to cost millions to the local taxpayers and we need to keep the politics out of the action. Anyway, I could use the name of a couple of firms that consult to recommend systems and hopefully to stay around to implement such a vast new system. There is also one more factor: NSA and Greenbank. We already know that we cannot have any repeaters that emit to the west. So, being perfectly blunt, we are really unique in undertaking



this task. Thus far, we have not had much luck in securing a consultant to advise this.

My plea is for any ideas, firms, pointers etc to outsource this major undertaking. Hopefully, we can even have a few emergency type hams sitting in on the foundation work to incorporate our capabilities into the new system.

David Metz, KJ4JX

Profiling, Ham Radio Style

Richard Huttinger, AA4RH, suggests that all ARRL members log into the ARRL website and update their profile.

Extensive control is available as what is shown the public: phone number, age, ham radio interests, whether or not your name and address appears in the ARRL on-line directory, etc.

You can even put up a photo if you like.

You can also set it up so that the ARRL will send you notifications when your license needs renewing, your ARRL membership is expiring, etc.

You can also subscribe to a host of free electronic publications you qualify for as an ARRL member, like the ARES monthly E-letter, the Contest update, the Instructor/Teacher letter, the IARU newsletter, E-ARRL bulletins,

If you are an ARRL member, simply log onto the ARRL website the normal way, and in the top center of the screen after you've logged in, you will see the option to "Edit your profile". It's quick and easy.

There are even links to the affiliated clubs. For example, both MARA and PVARC have club pages, and the profiles of all members of both clubs are already "affiliated" with their respective clubs.

Check it out, then make sure your profile is the way you want it.



Baby Picture: March of Dimes Public Service Event (see Monitor article last month)

Bill Hohenstein, KD4XP, SK

William (Bill) Hohenstein, KD4XP, of Bridgewater, passed away on Thursday, May 6 at his home, at the age of 86. He was born in Cleveland Ohio and had lived in the Shenandoah Valley most of his life, retiring from Dunham-Bush in Harrisonburg as Foreman in the Electrical Department. He had served in the U.S. Navy in World War II, including tours in the Pacific Theater as well as in the Atlantic. In addition to being a former member of MARA, he was active in the Myers Hodges VFW Post 8644. Bill is survived by his wife of 63 years, Marie, a daughter (Staunton) and four sons, all of Bridgewater, nine grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.



Greg Czerniak, suffers loss of Brother

Sympathies go to Greg and Lonnie Czerniak on the death of Greg's brother on May 14, in Rochester, NY.



Wayne Bowyer, N4EYZ, Hospitalized

Most valley hams who own towers know Wayne Bowyer, N4EYZ, professional tower climber and safety director of Waynesboro Tower Service. Wayne has installed, climbed, maintained, improved, and otherwise worked on uncountable towers for hams (and radio stations, TV stations, etc.) in the Shenandoah Valley over the past 25 years. Several days before this issue of the Monitor went to press, Wayne began having some medical problems, and at this writing is in the University of Virginia medical center on a respirator. His condition is quite serious, but we are hoping for the best. It appears to be neurological in nature, similar to Guillian-Barre Syndrome, but the latest word is that the doctors believe something else may be at work besides the classic syndrome condition. The prayers and best wishes of the ham community are with Wayne and his family during this difficult time.

W5IY FlagPole Knob Expedition

The W4IY VHF Contesting Group will be operating the ARRL VHF QSO Party on June 12 – 14 2010 on Flag Pole Knob overlooking Harrisonburg VA. Our group has been visiting Flag Pole Knob for this event for over 20years and we contribute to the local economy by purchasing goods and services for this event. We take everything we need up to Flag Pole knob and leave nothing behind.

We ask your help this June with an experiment. We will be setting up on 2meters, 220 and 440 VHF FM. We want to see if how well it would work and generate some fun for those folks who may not have SSB radio's but have FM mode radios.

The exchange would be Callsign and Grid square (FM08).
Example:

CQ Contest this is W4IY...

W4BAT

W4BAT de W4IY please copy FM08

W4IY this is W4BAT FM08

Thanks this W4IY QRZ?...

Sunday June 13th (All Times Local)

Noon – 12:20 2m on 146.55 Mhz Simplex FM
 12:20 – 12:40 1.25m on 223.540 Mhz Simplex FM
 12:40 – 13:00 70cm on 446.0250 Mhz Simplex FM
 13:00 – 13:20 2m on 146.55 Mhz Simplex FM
 13:20 – 13:40 1.25m on 223.540 Mhz Simplex FM
 13:40 – 14:00 70cm on 446.0250 Mhz Simplex FM
 14:00 – 14:20 2m on 146.55 Mhz Simplex FM
 14:20 – 14:40 1.25m on 223.540 Mhz Simplex FM
 14:00 – 15:00 70cm on 446.0250 Mhz Simplex FM

We Hope to see you on the Air!

73, de WA4TK for the W4IY VHF Group

<http://www.kd4oxq.info>

Yes, it's "info", not "com", provided by Jay Stewart, KD4OXQ. Jay's website has lots of good material posted on it, as well as links to some great ham radio sites. He also is working on the forums for local hams. Check out his website often.

<http://www.mcmelectronics.com>

David Tanks AD4TJ shares the website of MCM Electronics, a really good electronics supplier which has surprisingly low prices and good deals:.

VE Exams: June 12

Gayle Shull, KU4XN, wants to remind everyone about the VE exams on Saturday, June 12, starting at 9:00 am at the Woodmen of the World building on Highway 42 just north of Dayton, Virginia.

Also, give thanks to the excellent group of Volunteer Examiners we have in the valley for donating their time and talents to this important public service.

Technician Class License Manual and Exam Changes July 1

The June 12 VE session will be the last one to use the old Technician-class question pool. The new pool, released earlier this year, will be used for all exams starting July 1.

Gayle Shull has a supply of the new manuals covering the new question pool.



N4PKJ: Great Radio/Scouting Special Event!

I just wanted to say thanks to all the hams that assisted with VARA attending and operating from the Stonewall Area Council Boy Scout Expo event this last May 8th. Several hams attended and helped staff an information table and/or operate a radio station set up at the rear of the expo property with other outdoor scouting events. Seven hams bought tickets from me and several more bought tickets from their sons/grandsons scouting unit making amateur radio well represented.

Approximately 14 logged contacts were made with some of these contacts being scouts talking to scouts which is always the goal.

I would like to thank **John Keller (W4ZAO)**, **Gordon Batey (WA4FJC)**, **Scott Newlen (KI4QQZ)**, **Scott Martin (KI4MSJ)**, **Benny Cook (N4BCC)**, **Jeff Rinehart (W4PJW)**, **Albie McCutcheon (AD4KZ)**, **Ray Colvin (KE4HVR)**, **Mac McGrath (KZ1A)**, **Clint Campbell (KB4OLM)**, **Dave Gordon (KB4LCI)**, **Mike Stone (KJ4AAF)**, **Gary Van Fossen (KI4FZV)** and **any-one else** whose name/call has escaped me. Several hams showed up on Friday evening May 7th and helped set up Clint's tip-up tower. Some stayed afterwards to help take things down. It was fun to hear scouts operating from the trailer via Gordon's HF rig which he set up at the PR table to monitor the broadcasts.

I wanted to give a special tip of the hat to Clint Campbell (KB4OLM) for loaning his operating trailer and accompanying tower. That made things go very well. To all, "Thanks muchly".

Stephen Ferguson/N4PKJ



KJ4JX: Rack Mounts, Fiberglass Case

David Metz has a fiberglass military transit case that is approximately 30" x 30" x 30". Inside, lots of foam rubber — he once shipped an R390 at 90 pounds and this case withstood the stress. He is asking \$25 for the case with the foam.

He also has six (6) steel single-unit 19" rack mount cabinets which he is (get this!) GIVING AWAY FREE.

Contact Dave KJ4JX at dmetz@ntelos.net



PVARC Widow's Assistance Program Offers Items from the Estate of KA4LER



The MFJ-784B tunable DSP filter automatically eliminates heterodyne, reduces noise and interference simultaneously on SSB, AM, CW, packet, AMTOR, PACTOR, RTTY, SSTV, WeFAX, FAX, weak signal VHF, EME, satellite -- nearly any mode. You can tune each lowpass, highpass, notch, and bandpass filter including optimized SSB and CW filters. You can vary the bandwidth to eliminate interference. The automatic notch filter searches for and eliminates multiple heterodyne in milliseconds. (Its so fast, that even interfering CW and RTTY signals are eliminated!) Noise reduction works in all filter modes and on all random noise -- white noise, static, impulse, ignition noise, power line noise, hiss. What a way to "upgrade" your older transceiver. MFJ new price is \$279.95, PVARC price is \$100.00.



The MFJ-1020B indoor active antenna offers good performance from an extremely compact package. This antenna system can be set directly on your desk! The MFJ-1020B covers 300 kHz to 30 MHz in five bands. An auxiliary antenna jack is provided. When it is used the MFJ-1020B functions as a pre-selector. Front controls include gain, band select, tune and ON/BYPASS. A red LED indicates power "ON". The auxiliary input and output jacks are RCA phono type. MFJ new price is \$99.95, PVARC price is \$50.00.



AA4KK said it all: "Wow, whatta' set o' paddles! Not only does this key look good, it also is a very smooth and comfortable iambic set!" The Bencher BY-1 iambic key sold new for \$125.00, PVARC price is \$50.00.

If you are interested in any of this gear, contact Sparky Terry at kd4kl@arrl.net

Junken Treasure: Free, Free, Free – All Free! Stock Your Garage at No Charge

Do your part for the planet. Keep the following stuff out of the landfill (or out of Charlie's ETS warehouse)! It's all FREE. All you have to do is call Dave KD9LA at 540-234-0448 or email him at kd9la@arrl.net before June 2.

- Digital alarm-clock radios (several, excellent condition)
- Desktop CD plastic storage racks (new condition), each holds 40 standard CD jewel cases.
- 12" coax jumpers mil-spec with male "N" connectors on both ends
- PCMCIA Ethernet cards for older laptop computers, includes dongle cables
- Dozens of 5-1/4" floppy disks in jackets
- Dozens of 3-1/2" floppy disks
- Various plastic desktop floppy-disk storage boxes
- Dozens of VHS video cassette tapes (they aren't making these anymore -- stock up!)
- Motion Aquarium (light) (see footnote 1)
- Old set of extra-long, extra-heavy-duty automobile jumper cables (15') superflexible cable
- Assorted pipe connectors, 1" (galvanized threaded and PVC)
- BlackoutBuster UPS (needs new battery)
- Silent wall switches, UL listed, 120VAC 15-amp, non-mercury
- Solid Steel wire, 50-foot coil, heavy-duty 9 gauge galvanized, new in box
- Assorted 2" hose clamps, new condition, never used
- Latex-free medical oxygen tubing, new in sealed package, 25' coil with standard oxygen connectors on both ends
- Telephone cable, RJ-11 male on both ends, 20-foot
- Quicken 2003 (software) new in box
- 16-gauge x 7-conductor (heavy-duty!) electrical control cable, 25', stained jacket but in perfect electrical condition.
- Automobile window-mount sunscreen (roller shade type)
- Harbor Lighting item 73831, 3-light ceiling fixture, intended for den, home office, or family room. Never

used

- 220VAC 7-day timer, used to control hot-water heater under peak/off-peak billing cycles, incl weekends, mechanical programmable, includes enclosure, conduit, wiring diagrams for daily control.
- Kenwood PB-3 NiCd battery packs for HT, new in box, never used, but might be up to 12 years old
- Archer TV interference filter, new in unopened blister pack, 450-ohm twinlead-type
- White 4-inch dia. plastic dryer tubing, 4-foot length
- Set of 4 wig-wag semaphore flags, bright-orange, approx 18" square, wooden handles, can be used to flag traffic
- Nightscope 7x magnifying monocular, new in box (NOTE: see footnote 2)

Footnote 1: this item is a flat table-top lamp that simulates a blue lighted aquarium with moving fish images. Must see to appreciate.

Footnote 2. If you think you know what this is, rest assured you will be greatly disappointed. My dad wasted \$19.95 plus shipping on this item two years ago from a TV ad. This Nightscope monocular is brand-new, in perfect operating condition as designed (not necessarily as expected) in the original box and has never been used. Remember, this item is totally completely free, and worth every penny you pay (although not necessarily more). This bargain defies description. Words cannot describe how proud you will be to admit owning this working nightscope. (Yes it works exactly as designed.) You don't find items like this every day. The folks who made and sold this item are marketing geniuses, although by now they are most likely either in Brazil or at the bottom of a river somewhere in New Jersey.

N4NLU: Make Offer – 350 Watt VHF Radio

Charlie Bennetch N4NLU has a Quintron VHF low-band base station for sale. This would make a good 6-meter station or even a repeater as it has a 4-400A tube providing 350 watts of output. Contact Charlie at 540-255-1811 to make an offer or for more information.



May 15 ARES Training Report

Donuts, Coffee, and a Slide Show

Who doesn't like a day that starts with donuts and coffee? It definitely made for a good start to a great day. After a quick fill of sugar and caffeine, we received an overview of how the Harrisonburg/Rockingham Emergency Communications Center (HRECC) works, and what failures they might have which would require ARES assistance. The presentation then moved on to discuss HAM equipment and resources, from dual band radios and antennas to survival supplies in the case of a lengthy and/or remote deployment. The presentation ended with a safety overview about using Public Safety Radio Sites.

HRECC's life goes in circles. That is, calls typically come into them via cell phone or landline, either to a local 7 digit (non-emergency) number, or to 911. They handle those calls, dispatching police, fire and EMS as needed over radio links. The emergency responders keep in contact with HRECC over the duration of the incident or event. When a call comes in, they strive to have units dispatched within 1 minute.

Several things may create a need for ARES to support HRECC.

Landlines and cell phones can go out of service, either locally within the HRECC facility, locally within parts of the calling area, or over the entirety of the area they serve. Their own radio equipment may experience problems which disrupts their ability to communicate with the emergency responders. They might also experience a situation where the HRECC building itself becomes unsafe for habitation, and those operations need to be moved temporarily. Any of these cases, and more we haven't mentioned, might be cause for ARES to be called upon to fill in and rebuild the missing links.

Training also reviewed some procedural items, starting with a reminder that we are relay agents and not interpreters. Tactical

calls signs should be used to identify stations, which helps everyone involved (not just HAM's) to understand who is doing what where. Most messaging would be very rapid and informal, but some forms existed for documenting and transmitting more lengthy, sensitive messages which were less time dependent. Those forms would typically be handled at the HRECC station, so most operators out in the field would need only a notepad to scribble down quick notes.

To help facilitate communications, we need some equipment. The use of multi-band equipment is suggested for a few reasons. First, and foremost, the local terrain has a great deal of variety which lends itself to both VHF and UHF fre-

quencies in many cases. Secondly, many (although not all) dual- or multi-band radios have the ability to be quickly configured as a cross-band repeater. This can be useful for linking two mountain-top towers using UHF, or for extending the range of your UHF HT from inside a building through the cross-band repeating radio out in your vehicle. With multi-band operations, additional antenna considerations may be needed. A single-band 2 meter antenna may work well enough on 440 to work low power with a nearby signal from your HT, but would likely be a poor choice for a link between two distant locations. Other situations might exist where a diplexer is employed allowing a directional antenna on one band to reach back to NetControl, while a small vertical was being used on another band to link with your HT.

The use of cross-band repeat may help reduce message handling errors by providing a "direct link" between the affected area and HRECC. It will not work, however, without the right equipment (cross-band capable radios and antennas), and without the knowledge to configure the necessary settings on the radios. It is suggested that a copy of the manual be kept with the radio, as well as a "cheat sheet" outlining how to configure useful, but less used features. It is for these reasons that we must practice. We must practice using our equipment, and preparing to set it up in ways we might not do on an ordinary day. We must also practice message relaying using simplex only. The equipment necessary for cross-band repeat may not be available, and we must become proficient in the most simple forms of message handling to ensure we can adapt to all cases.

The Scenario: Outage due to EMP in the Bergton Area

A localized EMP in the Bergton area has taken out communications in a part of the county where communications were difficult to begin with. We can point fingers at those NAVY guys later for the mess they have caused, but for now, we need to take action. What has happened? Where are we needed? How do we get there? What equipment should we bring, and what frequencies will we use?

Lunch time (quite a tasty lunch, by the way) was spent organizing and devising a plan while we ate. We were provided with a list assigned locations to set up: relay points at the Little North Mountain (LNM) and Bergon (Bergton Radio) tower sites, a group of HAM's at Bergton Fire (the fire station), and a few to run the radios

in the HRECC building of course. Norman KA4EEN, Ray K4NRA, and Rob KF4ZXO stayed with us for the training until this point, but had other commitments in the afternoon.

Initial plans were to use a separate frequency for each "leg" of communications. This resulted in 3 or 4 frequencies all planned for simultaneous use. It was eventually decided that we would use a single frequency everywhere for simplicity, and the tower sites could be used to relay messages only if needed. It was



expected that they would be needed, given the terrain and distances. A backup frequency was also selected at the time, but no plans were made for its use. Discussions were also had over whether or not to try to use 440. The decisions were largely based on what equipment people had with them.

Passing Traffic

Passing slow moving traffic on some of these back roads can be difficult, but it is nothing compared to the challenge of relaying radio traffic in an emergency situation. While we all knew deep down that the scenario of the day was pretend, treating it like the real thing is what makes the training effective. Once we were all in place, a small bit of initial radio traffic came through successfully. Then the floodgates opened up.

The scenario started with Bryan K4RMY, Gerald KN4FM, Anne KA1SLK, and Jay KD4OXQ at Bergton Fire. While all locations were



online, we initially discovered that they could reach Matthew KD4UPL, Ellsworth K4LXG, and Bob N1QEQ at the LNM tower site directly. LNM successfully relayed the initial messages back and forth between Bergton Fire and Chris KI4BAQ and John W4ZAO who were stationed

at the HRECC. We also managed to quickly confirm that James NN4JM, Herb AA2BF, and Deeter KI4STU at Bergton Radio could reach LNM full quieting with only a 5W 2 meter signal.

Eventually, we relayed traffic about a 2 vehicle accident, a structure fire, a power outage, an allergic reaction, and some domestic violence. It was a busy day in Bergton! Many of these incidents were happening simultaneously. Shortly after we started, but while we were handling traffic for multiple incidents, a report came in that signals from Bergton Fire on the main frequency were interfering with a weather station. From that point on, all communication within the local Bergton area was moved to the backup frequency, and the Bergton Radio tower site was used to relay the information back to LNM. While the primary purpose of the training scenario was designed to practice using simplex only, a dual band repeater was successfully set up and tested between LNM and the HRECC after the main part of the drill was completed.

Equipment Overview

Equipment varied from HT's to multi-band high-power rigs, and transceived electromagnetic waves using a variety of home- and commercial-made single- and multi-band antennas. Basically, it was all comprised of typical HAM VHF and UHF gear, as typical as we typically are. Most of the radio equipment was set up in vehicles at the remote sites, although a few HT's were also employed, as well as the not-so-mobile station within the HRECC building. Bergton Radio used a mag mount (NN4JM) for one radio, and a ¼ wave vertical (KI4STU) on the second radio that had been previously repaired using part of an 11meter antenna whip. A J-pole was also mounted near the base of the tower. A commercial base type triband antenna (K4RMY) and push up pole (KD4UPL) were in use at LNM, as well as a homemade J-Pole on a homemade mast

(KN4FM) being employed at Bergton Fire.

Lessons Learned

This is what it's all about. We wouldn't need to train if we knew it all, and implemented it perfectly every time. There's always someone new (we hope) who needs to learn the ropes, and someone experienced who learns something by seeing through the eyes of a novice again. The day ended with an excellent debriefing session discussing a variety of topics. Naturally, a few mistakes were made, and discussed during the debriefing. Ideas were raised for future improvements.

Some of the radio traffic originated with HAM's instead of with the emergency personnel. This generally is not the right way to do things, especially when the traffic is an attempt by the radio operator to obtain information that they think *might* be asked for later. This occupies the airwaves, and may delay an emergency message. Special cases always may exist, such as trying to validate that critical information was indeed received and delivered successfully. The few cases were discussed thoroughly during the debriefing.

When the backup frequency was put into use, it resulted in the two radios at the Bergton Radio site overloading each other's front ends. At first, this interfered somewhat with messages coming from LNM, but when we realized what was going on we were able to adapt. Simply ensuring that we did not transmit on the local Bergton frequency while LNM was talking with us solved the problem. Because this did introduce some (albeit small) delay in the handling of traffic, it was not an ideal solution, but seemed better than the time that would have been wasted due to repeated messages or mistakes in copying. A better solution, suggested at the debriefing, would have been to us multiple bands, since 2 meter transmissions would have been less likely to interfere with 440. Unfortunately, we did not have a UHF radio at our disposal, so we had to make due with the tools we had.



Other topics of discussion included clearer deployment plans and the use of APRS. It was unclear to some what the methods were to check in once they arrived at their assigned location. Had this been a real emergency, we would not have even had the planning time that we did, so this type of coordination, as well as advanced frequency planning, is important. The use of APRS might also have been helpful in not only determining when HAM stations were in place (or how soon they might be), but also in keeping accurate track of the location of emergency vehicles, should the HRECC have needed that information.

The day ended as it started, on a high note, with everyone happy and in good spirits.

Detrick Merz, KI4STU

Photos by Herb Slade, AA2BF

MARA Secretary's Report – May 6 Meeting

Attendance: Members: 31 Guests: 6 Total: 37

Introductions made all around. Ellsworth (K4LXG) conducted the meeting.

Reports:

New Members: 1st reading: Linda Adams (KJ4UED), Darlene Piotrowski (KJ4UDZ), Kevin McDonaldson (KJ4LDL) and Jerry Rensch (N3MEV). 2nd reading: Justin Rodes (KJ4SIU) (approved)

Secretary's minutes: It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the April minutes as printed in the Monitor.

Treasurer's report: It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the report as printed in the Monitor. As of April 27, 2010 we have a balance of \$3,221.43.

Groups:

ARES/RACES:

Bryan (K4RMY) reported that they would like to have three full crews (4/crew) to work the three stations. The May 15th drill is still open for anyone available to assist. This is an official drill with the ECC. The morning agenda will include a training session around the scenarios that will be tested in the afternoon. Contact Bryan at K4RMY@arrl.net if you would like to participate.

VEC Session – Gayle (KU4XN) reported a good turnout for the April exam. Eight applicants passed the exams. The next VE session will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 12th at the Woodmen of the World building in Dayton. Gayle has several exam preparation books available for anyone interested.

Public Service:

July 16 – 17: Bridgewater parade

Labor Day weekend: Mountain 100 foot race

Announcements:

Bob (N1QEQ) – the committee will meet will be at 6:30 pm on May 20th at the Mt. Crawford Burger King. They still have several slots to fill including manning the hospitality tent and taking care of transporting equipment from storage to the site. The committee would like to purchase Field Day pins for folks who attend.

David (KD9LA) – reported that he received a call from Sunnyside. They had a consultant in who told them they need an emergency plan which should include ham radios. They would like to set up a ham radio station and will pay for all the equipment but would like MARA to provide guidance and assistance manning the station.

Rockingham Memorial Hospital – the ham station will be moved after the main move has been completed.

Old Business: N/A

New Business: It was announced that our club Vice President, Chris (KI4BAQ) has submitted his resignation due to a change in his work schedule. James (NN4JM) will fill in temporarily.

Ellsworth announced an opportunity for the club to purchase 4 DVD's in a series of 8 on dexpeditions. Motion to purchase was made and seconded and approved. The DVD's could be used for meeting programs.

New Call or Upgrades: None to report.

Motion to adjourn, seconded and approved.

50/50 – \$31.00 total proceeds; \$15.50 split won by Chris (KI4BAQ).

Program: Matthew Huffman – emergency backup and alternate power systems.

*Submitted by:
Sheryl Tonini, KJ4DOC,
MARA Secretary*



MARA Treasurer's Report – April 27, 2010 to May 28, 2010



Beginning Balance April 27, 2010 (last report)		\$ 3,221.43
Add:		
Membership and renewals (5 members since last report)	\$ 60.00	
May Meeting 50/50 – Club portion	<u>\$ 15.50</u>	
Total Income		\$ 75.50
Less:		
Printing for Monitor (Feb thru May) – MARA Portion	\$ 208.49	
Purchase of Field Day Pins – MARA Portion	<u>\$ 131.25</u>	
Total disbursements		<u>\$ - 339.74</u>
Ending Balance as of May 28, 2010		\$ 2,957.19

Submitted by David Fordham, KD9LA, MARA Treasurer

VARA Secretary's Report – May 4 Meeting

The meeting was brought to order at 7:00pm by President Jeff Rinehart W4PJW.

There were 19 members present and two visitors, Ellsworth Neff K4LXG and his wife Jeanne.

50/50 was won by Scott Newlen KI4QQZ.

The treasurers report was read and excepted as read.

The VARA voted to support the Fall Foliage Bike Festival again this year.

Al Bonck N3JB said he could order a set of eight DVD's of expeditions at various locations. The VARA voted to order four and Ellsworth said he felt sure the MARA would order four so between the two clubs we can get the full set.

Steve Ferguson N4PKJ explained what was needed for the Boy Scout event at EXPO on May 8, 2010 and asked for volunteers to man the tables, talk to the visitors and operate a working ham radio station from 10:00am until 4:00pm.

Set-Up for the event will be at 6:00pm Friday evening.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56pm.

Ellsworth Neff K4LXG gave a presentation of his experience with ham radio and broadcast radio. His interest in radio began by building a crystal radio and using two tin cans and a string. From that he moved into ham radio and broadcast radio then as an engineer for the Harrisonburg radio stations.

Thank you Ray Colvin KE4HVR for filling in while i was out of town

*Steven Grant W4IIV
VARA Secretary*



PVARC Secretary's Report – May 7 Meeting

Once again the Page Valley Amateur Radio Club held our Eatin' Meatin' at Brown's Chinese Restaurant in beautiful downtown Luray. We had a good turnout from the membership, including several XYL's. Hopefully at future affairs we will have photo's of our fair ladies. While we have had limited success in attracting non-member hams in the locality, we're trying various schemes to entice them to join our semi-monthly social gatherings. Any hams (or "wannabee's") living/visiting the area will be cordially welcomed to join us at our eatin' meetin' with no strings attached.



The table discussions centered primarily on "who will do what" at the upcoming ARRL Field Day event scheduled for the weekend of June 26th & 27th. Leading the effort again this year is Dave K4DPF, Field Day Chairman & PVARC Vice-President. The club goal is for greater membership participation, full time period coverage and FUN for the whole family. Secondly we hope to have display items, signage, and an information table - to explain what is going on to the general public. Last (but not least).. "refreshment to sustain our stalwart warriors of the radio waves!" A promise from PVARC Board Member - Morgan K4RHD to oversee the food preparation has generated great excitement; and, yes - he really was an Executive Chef, trained in the culinary arts in Europe!

Since this was a social meeting no official PVARC business was conducted. Mark N4YSA reminded everyone that our next meeting will be back at Page Memorial Hospital in the Day Room at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, June 4th. This meeting will be the last one before Field Day so please plan on attending.

Submitted by
Sparky Terry, KD4KL
PVARC Secretary/Treasurer

Calendar of Upcoming Events

June 1: VARA Club Meeting
June 2: Highland County ARES Net, 8:30 pm 147.18 repeater
June 3: MARA Club Meeting
June 4: PVARC Club Meeting
June 6: Page County ARES Net 8pm 146.67 repeater
June 7: Rockingham County ARES Net 8pm on 146.55 simplex
June 10: Augusta County ARES Net 7 pm 146.85 repeater
June 12: VE Exam Session – Dayton Virginia 9 am
June 13: Page County ARES Net 8pm 146.67 repeater
June 13: Manassas Hamfest
June 14: Rockingham County ARES Net 8pm on 147.225 repeater
June 16: Highland County ARES Net, 8:30 pm 147.18 repeater
June 18: Beginning of family camping at Field Day Site
June 25: Friday Night Pre-Field Day Banquet at Field Day Site
June 26-27: ARRL Field Day

Mystery Hams of the Month

Your newsletter editor ran into several hams who have been conspicuously absent from the active ham radio scene for the past few years. The photos below show what they look like now. These hams are still alive and doing well. The question is: **Who are they?** (Answers next month.)



Left: Staunton ham, computer wiz, and commuter extraordinaire

Below: Husband and wife team from Bridgewater – musician, former police chief, tower owner, etc.



MASSANUTTEN AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, Inc.

President: Ellsworth Neff, K4LXG
 Vice President: Chris Shirkey, KI4BAQ
 Secretary: Sheryl Tonini, KJ4DOC
 Treasurer: David Fordham, KD9LA
 Board (exp 2010): Bryan Daniels, K4RMY
 Board (exp 2011): James McDowell IV, NN4JM

<http://mara.ws>

MARA meets the first Thursday of each month
 at Wood Grill Buffet on Reservoir Street
 in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Dinner begins at 6:30 pm,
 the business meeting begins at 7:30 pm

Visitors are always welcome.

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

MARA
 PO Box 1882
 Harrisonburg, VA 22801

VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

President: Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW
 Vice President: Gordon Batey, WA4FJC
 Secretary: Steve Grant, W4IIV
 Treasurer: Doug Tippet, N8ESW
 Program Manager: Al Bonck N3JB

<http://w4xd.com>

VARA meets the first Tuesday of each month
 at Shoneys in Staunton on Hwy 250 at I-81.

Dinner begins at 6:00 pm.
 The business meeting begins at 7:00 pm.

Visitors are always welcome.

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

Doug Tippet
 2348 Mosley St.
 Waynesboro VA 22980

PAGE VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

President: Mark Hensley N4YSA
 Vice President: Dave Firestone, K4DPF
 Secretary/Treasurer: Mike "Sparky" Terry, KD4KL
 Board Member: Morgan Phenix K4RHD
 Board Member: : Robert Forrest KJ4HFU

Website to be announced

PVARC meets the first Friday of each month.
 Odd-numbered Months
 at Browns Restaurant in Luray,
 Even-numbered Months in the Day Room of
 Page Memorial Hospital.

The meeting begins at 6:00 pm

Visitors are welcome.

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

Sparky Terry
 PO Box 649
 Luray VA 22835-0649

The Monitor is published monthly by MARA, Inc.
 for members of the three amateur radio clubs
 in the Central Shenandoah Valley.

Distribution is in Adobe PDF format via email attachment
 to all club members in good standing.

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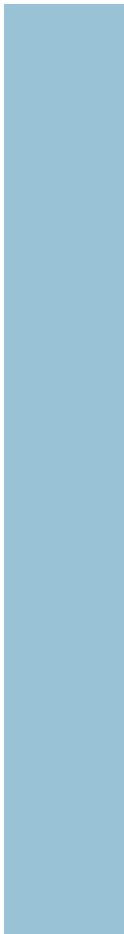
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MARA/VARA/PVARC

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

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